THE INTERPLAY OF RELIGION AND POLITICS: A CASE STUDY OF PAKHTUNS IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores religious fundamentalism in Pakistan with special reference to the rising influence of the religious political parties in post 2000 period. Taking the case study of Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal and its rise to power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this thesis attempts to investigate the reasons and factors that helped the religious political parties to get a mainstream position in national and provincial politics. This study analyzes the above phenomenon through Martin Riesebrodt’s theory. The theory argues that there is a link between patriarchal pattern of a society and the emergence of religious fundamentalism within that society. Although, the dissertation is partly based on the existing literature on the subject to explain the socio-political behavior of Pakhtuns in Pakistan; however, a major part of the dissertation is based on the ethnographic study of Pakhtuns and their culture. Unlike the previous studies and available literature on the socio-political behavior of Pakhtuns which primarily dealt with the historical and political factors contributing to the religious fundamentalism in the Pakhtun society, this thesis focuses on the socio-cultural aspect of the current situation.

The findings led to a conclusion that the socio-cultural behavior of the Pakhtuns has played a significant role in the rise of political Islam in the region. Pakhtun society is for most part a patriarchal society and the traditionalists always try to preserve this patriarchal culture of the society. However, with the processes of modernization and urbanization, the patterns of patriarchy are undergoing transformation. This scenario has posed a challenge to the traditionalists who attempt to preserve and protect the patrilineal system of the Pakhtun society. Consequently, the rise of traditionalist forces and religious fundamentalism including the rise of religio-political parties in the Pakhtun region is evident. These traditionalist forces take the help of religion for conserving the patterns of patriarchy and resultantly the society goes through the wave of religious fundamentalism including the religious extremism and religious politics. The election campaign and the policies of Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal in 2002 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP) indicate how the religio-political parties attempted to protect and promote the traditional patterns of patriarchy in the Pakhtun region.
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<td>CII</td>
<td>Council of Islamic Ideology</td>
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<td>FATA</td>
<td>Federally Administered Tribal Areas</td>
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<td>FCR</td>
<td>Frontier Crimes Regulation</td>
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<td>Movement for Restoration of Democracy</td>
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<td>NAP</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Every society has certain values and ideals which give due reflection to the outlook, perceptions and aspirations of its members. Social values are classified into two broad categories: religious and cultural. Being the “word” of God, religious beliefs and values play a more dominant role in a traditional society compared to cultural values. Cultural norms, on the other hand, lack a divine sanctioning authority and, therefore, they are not considered as sacrosanct. This, however, does not imply that culture has no significance in determining an individual’s mindset and social behavior. In practice, religion and culture have a mutual relationship: we might find religion acculturated or culture spiritualized. It is because of this interdependence between the two that it becomes difficult – or even impossible – to define or draw their boundaries.

The socio-political culture in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly NWFP), before the partition of India, was, for the most part, secular. The way people led their lives was according to the pragmatic paradigm of Pakhtunwali1 that evolved during the millennia of their eventful history. Religion had merely a symbolic and ceremonial role. It constituted only a partial identity of Pakhtuns. Briefly, Pakhtuns had acculturated Islam. Furthermore, the role of clergy in the Pakhtun society was confined to rituals and had never been political. The current radicalization, therefore, is an astonishing fact for the observers of the Pakhtun society.

Caught in the vortex of international politics, made to fight for the interests of others, the Pakhtun society has not only remained poor but has earned a perverted name for itself. Intolerance and militancy seem inherent to Pakhtun society. The secular values and traditions of the society have gradually given way to religious fundamentalism and extremism. As a result, the traditional social fabric stands substantially corroded. In short, moral chaos and anarchy prevail in Pakhtun society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Whereas the radicalization of Pakhtun society is generally considered to be a fact, the reasons behind the trend are subject to debate, division and controversy. Christofe

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1 The Pakhtun code of conduct.
Jeffrelot\(^2\) argues that religion was politicized during Pakistan Movement, which proved instrumental in the partition of British India. Moreover, it was presented as a *real* identity of the nations and communities comprising Pakistan, for the sake of political integration.

Robert Hefner\(^3\) suggests that the secession of East Pakistan threatened the unity of Pakistan maintained by a common religion. The populations showed tendency that individual identities of various racial and linguistic groups came to surface. As a result, the state had to weaken these identities and wear away cultural and nationalist stereotypes. It tactfully exploited the flaws inherent in the local cultures and traditional social institutions. It revived the religious identities. Religious fundamentalism was glamorized and extremist religious organizations were sponsored. As a consequence, the Pakhtun nationalist political forces made great efforts to protect their cultural identity. Sensing gravity of the situation, the Pakistani establishment pursued a rigorous policy of assimilation vis-à-vis the Pakhtun society. Islam was assigned a greater role in determining the “new” Pakhtun identity. With greater support from certain other states, religious education schools were established, supported and protected.

Apart from the generally emphasized domestic causes, Hassan Abbas\(^4\) claims that events in the neighboring Afghanistan were more responsible for the radicalization. He believes that the secular nationalist government in Afghanistan had a long-standing claim over the adjacent Pakhtun territories incorporated in Pakistan. Pakistan considered such elements in Afghan government a potential threat to its unity and integrity. In order to destabilize the Afghan government, it supported the dissident religious elements that had launched insurgency against the government. The civil war in Afghanistan resulted in the Soviet intervention in December 1979.

Ahmed Rashid\(^5\) holds that although the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan might be the starting point of Pakistan’s cooption of militants, it wasn’t the high point. After the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in 1989, Pakistan continued supporting these extremist elements in the pursuit of its ‘strategic depth’ policy. The support

\(^5\) Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: How the War against Islamic Extremism is being lost in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia*. (London: Allen Lane, 2008).
extended to the Taliban government in Afghanistan was in accordance with that policy. After the demise of the unpopular Taliban regime as a result of the US invasion of Afghanistan, these elements entered into Pakistan. However, the allegations of nexus between the extremists and Pakistani establishment remain undisturbed. The militants got organized in the tribal areas of Pakistan in order to evacuate Afghan territories from the Allied forces.

The Taliban consolidated their control in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Malakand. They have not only been launching attacks on the Allied forces but also imposing their version of Islam in the areas under their control. They have been frequently violating human rights with impunity. Killing people, setting houses of the opponents on fire, blowing up girls’ schools and colleges, and confining women to domesticity are some of the practices that are in vogue.

Likewise, Zahid Hussain\(^6\) claims that it was under the mounting international pressure that Pakistan has embarked upon military operations in FATA and Malakand with the purported aim of dismantling the Taliban network. The operations, however, created further mayhem in the region including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The people already battered by the Taliban rule had to suffer in almost every possible way – fatalities, injuries, dislocation, mental torment and the disruption of economic and social life.

The available literature on the religious fundamentalism and rise of Islamists to the political power in the Pakhtun region primarily deals with the external factors. Most of the explanations in this regard entail the dynamics of regional and international politics. Moreover, there is hardly any explanation which discusses the theoretical relationship between religion and politics or, to be more specific, Islam and politics. The existing resources either deal with the issue at hand in a more subtle manner or explain the phenomena in the historical context.

In the available literature, there is hardly any study about the rise of religious fundamentalism among Pakhtuns specifically. The religious fundamentalism and rise of religious politics are discussed and explained in general and regional context, and not in

the context of ethnicity and culture. Similarly, most of the above mentioned literature presents political aspect of the issue and ignores the social aspect of the problem. Political dimension of the religious fundamentalism is, no doubt, an important component of the overall phenomenon; however, this is not the only factor which caused the radicalization of the Pakhtun society over the past three decades. There are various other dimensions and aspects of the issue that need to be discussed and discovered.

Keeping in view the limitations of the current literature on the interplay of religion and politics, I have tried to give a new and diverse explanation to the ongoing political chaos and social unrest in the Pakhtun region. I have selected the Pakhtun ethnic group and society as my case study because much of the existing literature deals with religious fundamentalism in general and not Pakhtun specific. Moreover, apart from the political factors of the rise of religious politics, I have raised some social and cultural aspects of the interplay of religion and politics among Pakhtuns.

Moreover, I haven’t relied on mere historical context and the external factors. Rather my thesis primarily involves the theoretical explanation of the interplay of religion and politics and focuses on the internal socio-cultural aspects of the phenomenon. I have tried to explain the relationship between religion and politics theoretically, though I have also discussed briefly the practical interplay of Islam and politics in the course of history.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The rise of political Islam among Pakhtuns of Pakistan, the rise of religious fundamentalism and the rise of religious political parties and leaders in the Pakhtun areas of Pakistan are various phenomena under discussion and are different aspects of the process of social change in the Pakhtun society which need to be explained and analyzed theoretically. There are a few theories and authors who attempted to explain the phenomenon of social change, in general, through the perspective of religion, secularism and the interplay between the two. Taking into consideration the various aspects of the study I have reviewed a couple of theories to comprehend the rise of political Islam and the place of religion in the Pakhtun society. In the following lines I have briefly discussed some main theories and explanations in this regard. After discussing a couple theories relating the phenomena I will discuss, at the end, the theory which I have applied to this study.
Max Weber

One of the major theories, regarding the rise of a particular form of political leadership and force in a society, is the “Max Weber’s Theory of Charismatic Leadership”. Max Weber has presented the idea of three main types of authority: the bureaucratic, the traditional and the charismatic. The charismatic authority is often related with the religious leadership. Weber seems to associate the concept, primarily, with the religious leaders and warriors. However, at some points he also refers to the demagogues (political leaders) as charismatic if possessing certain qualities such as the ability to control the hearts, minds and emotions of the people.

Some political scientists and sociologists in the modern times attempted to relate the Weber’s theory of ‘Charismatic Leadership’ to the rise of ‘new religious movements’ in the world. For example Eileen Barker holds that the ‘new religious movements’ have the tendency to have leaders who exercise considerable charismatic authority and influence, and have the special powers and knowledge. He argues that the charismatic leaders lack accountability and enjoy unquestioning obedience by the followers. However, another scholar George Chryssides contradicts Barker and says that not all religious movements have charismatic leaders necessarily.

Max Weber stresses in his treatment of charisma, the characteristics of innovation and revolution. He holds that the charismatic leader rejects the prevalent social settings involving religion, politics, etc. and issues a demand for change. Max Weber’s theory seems, at a cursory glance, relevant to the emergence of religious fundamentalism and rise of religious political parties and leaders in the politics of Pakistan in general and Pakhtun society in particular. The charismatic religious authority of Maududi and Mufti Mahmood during the democratic era of 1970s might be considered a factor of the growing influence of religious political parties in the country. Similarly during 1990s the charisma

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of Osama bin Laden and Mullah Umar might have infused the wave of religious extremism in the Pakhtun region; because according to Weber, the charismatic leader is not necessarily to be an admirable individual. According to him the manic seizer and the demagogic talent of Napoleon and Cleon (an Athenian general and statesman in B.C. era) are just as much ‘charisma’ as the qualities of Jesus.

Although, at a superficial level, Weber’s theory seems relevant to the rise of religious fundamentalism and the rise of religious political leadership in the Pakhtun society, yet it has certain shortcomings due to which I did not apply this theory to my work. The charisma is not limited to the religious leadership and personalities. It is difficult to determine whether they were Mufti Mahmood and Maududi who possessed the qualities of charismatic leadership or it was the demagoguery of Bhutto which made him a true charismatic leader during 1970s. Similarly, it is unrealistic to conclude that the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) rose to the political power in Pakhtun areas in 2000s due to the charismatic leadership.

**Kenneth Medhurst**

Another theory which attracted my attention during the review of the existing literature on the theoretical debate about the interplay of religion and politics is the Kenneth Medhurst’s views on the process of secularization. The struggle for political power between the religious and secular forces in the Pakhtun region can be termed as an ideological conflict and could be analyzed through the perspective of a patterned relationship between the two forces. In other words secularization is the most important ideological change in the process of political development in developing countries. And the current political chaos and civil unrest are a part of the overall process of secularization in the course of political development.

The ‘secularization’ is a complicated and multifaceted process by which the religious and political forces detangle from each other. The concept of political power is redefined and this results in new complexities and tensions. The religious forces develop new relationships, in the due course, with state and society. The complexities and tensions are further intensified by the other processes of development e.g. the process of politicization of masses through adult franchise. These developments lead the political and religious forces to the struggle for survival and to subdue one-another. The already established
traditional power-structure is threatened and the religious leaders as well as the institutions of the state face new problems and complications.\textsuperscript{12}

Kenneth Medhurst discusses the process of secularization and presents three main models or types of secularization; each model representing a distinct stage in the process of secularization. The first type or model is the ‘confessional polity’ in which the political leaders do not cease to legitimize their rule in religious terms and continue with it. Although they do so in a pluralistic frame of reference but give official patronage to one religious option. The religious forces feel threatened and attempt to get support of the masses against the challenges to their authority.\textsuperscript{13}

Medhurst mentions the second model in this regard with the title ‘religiously neutral polity’. This model represents the second main stage or phase in the process of secularization. In this phase the process of secularization gets rid of the religion as a foundation of political system, however, religion remains a part of the political realm. Various religious forces are considered as ‘one group’ which is competing for power with other types of groups. Medhurst holds that religious groups find themselves in a complex and politically pluralistic situation in which their religious agenda is given less recognition as compare to the first model. In this stage the religious forces convert into interest and pressure groups or even political parties in an attempt to preserve their political interest.\textsuperscript{14}

The third model, according to Medhurst, which represents the third phase in the process of secularization, is the ‘anti religious polity’. In this phase the state actively attempts to remove any religious presence from the political realm. The state even tries to remove any noticeable religious presence, in the society, whatsoever. State and society are generally developed on the basis of materialism without any ideological or religious symbolism and practices. In other words the religious forces are marginalized, if not completely eradicated, in the polity and society.\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
Medhurst’s theory of secularization could be applied to the political and civil unrest in Pakistan. The state and society of Pakistan can be placed in one of the above mentioned stages of secularization. In the first appearance, Pakistan’s political system has entered the second stage of secularization. However, it is difficult to determine whether Pakistan’s polity and society have completely moved away from the first stage. The ‘Objectives Resolution’ and the Islamic provisions in the constitution give the impression that the first stage still lingers on. Moreover, Medhurst’s theory does not discuss the anthropological and cultural aspects to the conflict between religious and secular forces. Hence, it cannot be applied to the ethnographic study of Pakhtuns, to be more specific. Therefore, I moved on to another theory and applied it to my study. In the following lines I have discussed the theory which I have chosen for my study:

**Martin Riesebrodt**

My dissertation, to a great extent, involves the ethnographic and sociological analysis of the Pakhtun society. I have tried to explore and explain various aspects of Pakhtuns’ culture and traditions. More specifically, I have focused on the perceptions of Pakhtuns regarding Islam, Pakhtunwali and various components of their socio-cultural norms especially the pattern of patriarchy in the Pakhtun society. In order to explain the contemporary interplay of religion and politics in the Pakhtun areas and the rise of religious fundamentalism, I have applied Martin Riesebrodt’s theory.

Riesebrodt has explored the phenomenon of contemporary religious fundamentalism by focusing on the relationship between patriarchy and religious fundamentalism. He holds that the patterns of the ideology of patriarchy and masculinity have a typical relationship with the rise of religious fundamentalism and radicalism. He argues that in the modern times the processes of urbanization and development have posed serious challenges to the ideology of patriarchy and masculinity. Moreover, the state also adopts certain policies, sometimes, which undermine the patriarchal structures of the society.\(^\text{16}\)

The result of this struggle between patriarchal traditionalism and the processes of modernization, secularization and urbanization is the rise of religious fundamentalism.\(^\text{17}\)

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next generation, which results in a moral crisis. This sense of crisis corresponds with the structural changes in the economic, social and political institutions which become depersonalized. The transformation of the economic, social, and political institutions also transforms the gender relations within the family. In response the traditionalists and religious fundamentalists (both activists and intellectuals) demand for a return to a fundamentalist religious order that would renew the patriarchal control within the family and would revive the paternalistic authority in social, economic and political institutions. Thus the religious fundamentalism rises and the society witnesses increased interplay of religion and politics.

I have tried to explain the rise of political Islam in the Pakhtun region through Riesebrod’s theory. Pakhtun society is basically a patriarchal and patrilineal society in which the elements of masculinity and machismo have unique status and importance. However, with the process of social change the patriarchal structure of the society has started being transformed. This transforming patriarchal pattern alarmed the survival of the traditionalists’ value orientations, therefore, a counter force in form of religious fundamentalists has emerged which paved the way for a greater role of religion in the politics of Pakhtun region.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In this dissertation I have attempted to achieve following goals and objectives:

1. To evaluate the role of religion in politics;
2. To explore and deconstruct the way the state used religion as a policy-instrument, and the ramifications of these policies on the socio-cultural and political outlook of the Pakhtun community;
3. To uncover the informal factors that play a significant role in determining political discourse in a state;
4. To understand the nature of the current socio-political situation of the region;
5. To find out the dynamics of change in a particular society, that resultantly give rise to certain debates about the socio-political conflicts within a society.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The mere fact of the US intervention in Afghanistan and the recognition of Pakhtun community across the Durand Line as epicenter of the current wave of international militancy prove the importance of the issue at hand. Regrettably, media, both local and international, could not give a disinterested coverage to the military operations, given the reckless nature of the military operations and the inability of international media to have access to the affected areas. The research aims at bringing into light the real picture of the Pakhtun society which has been blurred by interests and misconceptions.

The research also highlights the causal relation between the international politics and the developments in the region. The study has assumed further significance at a time when the efforts of reconstruction in Afghanistan are severely hampered by the radicalization of Pakhtuns. The study aims at finding ways and means not only to understand but also to cope effectively with the unrest caused by militancy in the region.

This study is also important because it’s not only a historical and political analysis of the Pakhtun society but a major part of the dissertation is based on the ethnographic and sociological analysis of the Pakhtun society. I have tried to link the cultural values of Pakhtun society with the contemporary rise of religious politics and fundamentalism in the region. As mentioned above it’s not merely a descriptive and historical research rather it attempts to explain some existing phenomena and explore new social and political phenomena associated with Pakhtuns.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In my dissertation I have tried to find the answer of the following main research question:

1. What led to the rise of religious fundamentalism and the rising influence of religious political parties in Pakhtun region of Pakistan in post 2000 period?

Other related research questions are:

2. What is the potential role of religion in politics?
3. What is the role of Islam in politics?
4. Is secularism of a society a given or does a society have to adopt certain attitudes and undergo processes to achieve secular ideals?
5. What has been the traditional role of Pakhtunwali in determining the social and political attitudes of Pakhtuns?
6. What is the relevance of Pakhtunwali with Islam?
7. How is Pakhtunwali related to Patriarchy?
8. What are those domestic, regional and global factors that impelled a segment of Pakhtun community to get radicalized in the post 2000 period?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Considering the research question this can be said that this study involves all the three types of research: descriptive, explanatory and exploratory. The primary concern was to examine the relationship between religion and politics with a special focus on the Pakhtun region in Pakistan. A substantial portion of the study has analyzed the interplay of religion and politics in the theoretical perspective and the Islam and politics in the historical context. Moreover, as a background study I have also spared a portion for the description of the role of religion – Islam in the state’s (Pakistan) political, constitutional and legal system. Moving from the descriptive to more explanatory and exploratory research, I focused on the Pakhtun society in Pakistan and tried to explain the rise of political Islam among Pakhtuns over the past few decades. This explanation entails both theoretical and ethnographic aspects of the study.

Moreover, I have focused on the post 2000 period and the rising influence of the religio-political parties in Pakistan. This period is significant in more than one way: first, the religious parties in Pakistan entered an electoral alliance for the first time and formed a common platform, Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) in this period; second, though the religious parties had already remained the part of government in the past e.g. Jamiat-i-Ulama Islam was a coalition partner with the National Awami Party (NAP) in then NWFP government during early 1970s, however, in post 2000 period the religious parties formed government in NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) exclusively. Not only this but, they were part of the Baluchistan government and won a sizable number of seats in the National Assembly as well. In this context, for the first time in Pakistan, the religious forces successfully emerged through general elections and acquired utmost significance in national politics.
Collection of Data

Taking into account the descriptive, explanatory and exploratory nature of the research I relied on both the primary and secondary types of data collection techniques i.e. document analysis and interview and observation.

Document Analysis: Collection of data on such a critical issue presents various challenges. However, since I belong to the area under investigation, it gave me a unique advantage over others to gain access to some very useful informants. However, I also understand that the nature of the topic was somewhat sensitive to provoke reaction; therefore, I was careful in my access and methods of enquiry. There is some interesting literature on Pakhtun identity\textsuperscript{20} that presents not only on the anthropological aspect but political as well. These studies have given me an insight to the in understanding the relationship between Islam and Pakhtun identity. Similarly, there is another interesting study\textsuperscript{21} on the cultural aspect of Pakhtun identity that helped me a lot in devising different themes of my study. In the scrutiny of documents I have primarily relied on the running records i.e. books, journals, magazines and newspapers, etc.

Observation: Since this study is partly ethnographic, therefore, apart from reviewing and analyzing the existing written record on the subject, I have used some primary methods including observation. Since I belong to the area under study, I had the advantage and opportunity to observe the socio-cultural and political behavior of the Pakhtuns as an insider. I wandered on the roads and streets in Peshawar (one of my sample areas), travelled in the local transport (buses, vans, etc.) and visited a couple of hujras (a meeting place), etc. Observation, as a primary tool of data collection, provided me with the first hand information about the political and social behavior of Pakhtuns. Mostly I did unstructured observation and tried to gather as much information as I could. Sometimes, asking question from someone makes him/her conscious and he/she might not give a genuine answer, whereas an unstructured and unnoticed observation might produce more authentic, genuine and real information about someone’s behavior.


**Interviews:** In continuation the ethnographic study, most of the data in chapter 3 and 4, and some part of the chapter 5 is based on the interviews I conducted with my interviews. Interview, like observation, is also a primary technique of data collection and proved very useful in collecting the relevant information about the major research questions of the study. I have conducted interviews with 40 common participants while 2 with the religious clerics. A complete list of participants is given at the end. In total, I interviewed 42 people. Most of the interviewees were reluctant to get their interviews recorded and it also had the possibility to make them less candid in expressing their views, therefore, I decided to take notes of their interviews in notebook. This proved useful in a sense that most of the respondents became more candid and open in sharing their opinion regarding role of religion – Islam in the social and political life of Pakhtuns.

**Interview Kind:** The interviews were semi-structured which gave me the margin of asking counter questions in response to the answers given by the interviewees. Furthermore, most of the questions were open-ended which helped me to collect maximum data and real viewpoint of my respondents. An interview guide is given at the end. I also attempted to avoid difficult and technical terms and used alternate simple words. For example instead of patriarchal structure and patriarchy I used male dominance, etc. I adopted a flexible approach in following the interview guide. This helped me in gathering relevant information.

**Identifying the Interviewees:** The identification and selection of the interviewees was a critical stage. I wanted to represent the general viewpoint and perceptions of Pakhtuns and not of any specific group. Therefore, I selected the participants on the basis location, gender, age and education. As far as the location is concerned, I selected respondents from Peshawar district (including the suburb area) and Khyber Agency. Selecting Peshawar and Khyber Agency (20 each from both) was for the purpose to represent the Pakhtuns from both settled and tribal areas. The second criterion was the education. I interviewed 20 literate/educated and 20 illiterate/ uneducated Pakhtuns. By literate or educated I mean the ones who could read and write including the holders of higher education degrees. The third consideration was the age. Majority of the respondents belonged to the age group between 30 and 40. I wanted to focus this age group because

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22 See appendix I  
23 See appendix II.
they were young as well they had entered the phase of their career/professional lives. However, a couple of respondents were in their late 40s too. The fourth consideration was the gender. Although, I desired to conduct interviews from an equal number of male and female participants, yet given the conservative nature of the Pakhtun society, particularly the tribal and rural areas, I could not do so. 34 out of my 40 respondents were male while I could interview 6 female participants (mostly from Peshawar).

**Translation:** As my study is related to the Pakhtun ethnic group, all of my respondents were Pakhtuns either tribal or settled. Since I also belong to the Pakhtun region, the interviews were conducted in Pashto language. It was easier for the respondents to answer the question in their mother tongue. One of the reasons of conducting interviews in Pashto was that half of the respondents were illiterate and could not understand English. A couple of them couldn’t speak even Urdu, the national language. An advantage of conducting information in Pashto was that respondents could use Pashto proverbs and metaphors in their expression. I, after conducting the interviews, translated the responses in English. Since I knew both Pashto and English sufficiently, I did the translation work myself.

**Data Analysis**

As mentioned above, this study has mostly used the qualitative data to support the arguments, including semi-structured interviews, observation, etc. The data collected was carefully analyzed which enabled me to devise major themes within the data collected. These themes are represented and discussed in the last three chapters (3, 4, and 5) of the thesis. The themes are namely: a) Islam, *Pakhtunwali* and Patriarchal Structure in Pakhtun Society; b) Transforming Pakhtun ideals of Masculinity and Patriarchy and the Rise of Religious Politics and Fundamentalism; and c) Pakhtun Province and Islamists’ Rise to Political Power. The first two chapters (1 and 2) provide a theoretical and background study of the topic and are primarily based on the document analysis as a technique of data collection.
CHAPTER – 1

AN APPRAISAL OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND POLITICS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The presence and significance of religion and religious beliefs in public affairs cannot be ignored. Almost every day we come across, through media, the instances which demonstrate that various individuals, groups and institutions which hold the religious realm have an enduring and significant relevance in political sphere. Whether it is the legislative process in a particular country; political violence in a certain society; or the voting behavior of a specific group or community, religion and religious beliefs evidently play an essential role in shaping and molding these socio-political attitudes. The most familiar and important example is of the Middle East where religion, in the shape of Islam, Christianity and Judaism is a vital feature of the domestic and international politics.

Religion and politics have an irrefutable and important but a complex and complicated interaction with each other. Whether these are the three main levels of politics: local, national and international; whether it involves the common people, promoters of a certain cause, or the foremost leadership; whether it deals with legislatures, interest groups, or political parties and political philosophies; whether it is the well-off democratic world, the socialist world, or the poor developing world, religion and politics are related. It is, therefore, assumed that the ideas of secularism and modernism have not eliminated the role of religion in politics or vice versa. Although notable changes have occurred in their mutual relationship over the past decades, but these changes, by any means, have not broken this relationship.

In order to better understand their relationship it is imperative to set out some general thoughts. In this regard, we should first turn to some relevant definitional issues, because clear understanding is always preceded by clear definition.

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2 Ibid., 4.
1.2 THE MAIN COMPONENTS

1.2.1 Politics

The question ‘what is politics’ seems simple but it is difficult to answer this question in a most precise manner. In order to acknowledge the different elements that make up the relationship between politics and religion, I start with one encyclopedia’s definition: “a process whereby a group of people, whose opinions and interests are initially divergent, reach collective decisions which are generally regarded as binding on the group, and enforced as common policy.”\(^3\) Now some important elements can be derived from this definition to find out what the sphere of ‘politics or political’ is that ‘religion’ might involve.

The above cited definition describes ‘politics’ as a process, a set of activities that form a particular group’s shared way of life; by which that group exercises the power i.e. the function of those activities is to make collective decisions. This is important to focus on the correlation which might exist between the religious life of the group and those activities. These ‘groups’ might be ranging from family units to the entire human race, because all the levels of groups have a corporate life which contain individuals with different opinions and interests with varying degree. All types of groups undergo a formal or informal ‘political process’ while making collective decisions.

It is of interest to analyze how ‘religion’ influences the decision-making process of a family or of a community or any other group of smaller or greater level/scale. Among these groups is a group which is defined by religious membership – religious group. These groups also take collective decisions, which is a political process. Studies show that this internal political activity held in a religious group affects the manner of external dealings in a secular political world and vice versa. However, this relationship between religion and politics is a complex one.\(^4\)

Usually the process ‘politics’ is reserved for greater or larger groups which occupy a local, regional or national territory. Various studies have been conducted to focus on the role of religion at each of the abovementioned levels. There are studies and reports of how religion overlaps the political processes of a village, town or a community, which can be

termed as ‘communal politics’. These researches also include the case studies of regions or provinces and even more common studies are of countries or nations. My case study – ‘Pakhtuns in Pakistan’, however, deals with all the three levels of groups: Pakhtuns as an ethnic or communal group; the study of the region Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; and Pakhtuns as a nation.

Apart from the feature of collectivity, another main point in the definition of politics is the process of decision-making. It involves transforming the divergent opinions and interests of people into points of convergence through a system of conflict resolution. How this purpose is achieved varies from case to case considerably. These conflict resolution mechanisms may include act of violence and coercion, the use of customs and traditions in different cases, and the conscious effort of devising a constitution or a written contract/agreement which clearly lays down the formula of how the power is exercised.

The formal institutions central to this process form ‘the state’ by which people are controlled and their lives are regulated. The state includes various agencies such as government (comprising executive, legislature and judiciary) and civil service which is the administrative apparatus of the state. In order to enforce its decisions, the state also incorporates the agencies like police, military and paramilitary forces which comprise the coercive apparatus of the state. All these institutions are central to the political process in a state and, therefore, the relationship between these institutions and religion gains vital importance and needs to be scrutinized closely. Constitutional and legal studies have been conducted, in developed and developing countries, to view the relationship between these institutions and religion. Moreover this focus of study also raises the issue of the role of religion in interpretations of law. In this regard, in many Muslim countries the role or contribution of religion to the understandings of law is very much evident.

Similarly some other important state institutions also deal with religious realm either directly or indirectly. For example legislators, who run the business of legislature and enact laws for the state, may have their religious motivations and they may treat a variety of issues that relate to religious sphere, in a specific manner. Religion has a strong impact

on law-making process of country, especially the laws relating family issues, capital punishments, property laws, etc. The same is the case with other agencies and institutions within the state apparatus such as the political executive or the government headed by either prime minister or president and other ministers. They may also have religious motivations while executing their authority directly or indirectly.\(^7\)

However, this is not only the state or the institutions which exercise power and authority that politics is all about. In fact there are other important agencies and institutions outside the state apparatus that seek to influence the decision making process and the public policy. Sometimes these agencies even overshadow the formally designated official institutions. This factor broadens the scope of the correlation of politics and religion, and makes this relationship between the two more complicated. This is the reason that political scientists tend to deliberate on ‘political system’ and do not only focus on the ‘state’. For example one of the leading political scientists of the 20\(^{th}\) century David Easton speaks of a number of ‘input’ factors and forces that not only generate demands but also influence the decision-making and implementation. There are three main elements which play important role in this regard: political parties, interest groups, and common citizens.\(^8\)

Numerous studies have been conducted on the relationship between political parties and religion. These studies include religious outlook of the party office-bearers and leaders, religious disposition of the parties’ manifestoes and programs, and religious composition of their mass support.\(^9\) This research, as part, also looks into the relationship between religion and the political parties which have strong hold in the Pakhtun areas of Pakistan. Some of these parties have strong links with religion e.g. Jamat-e-Islami (JI) and Jamiat-e-Ulama Islam (JUI), while some other lack the religious character e.g. Awami National Party (ANP). Later part of the research deals with this aspect of the issue in detail.

Interest groups or pressure groups have also been the subject to research and inquiry in this connection. Generally, pressure groups are defined as the formal or informal


structures, in a political system, which seek to influence the decision-making process and public policy without any attempt to become themselves the political office-holders in the state, while political parties seek to come into power directly. Religious groups (as pressure groups) in a political system play an active role by promoting their specific views regarding a particular issue of public policy. They can do this by lobbying and influencing the legislators and legislative process, they may also get into contact with the ministers and executive, or even they go to the judiciary and courts in favor or against a particular issue. They also sometimes make connections with some political parties, and make alliances with other interest groups with whom their interest converge. They may also mobilize masses and start religio-political movements and influence public opinion through media.  

Mass of citizens is at the grass roots of the edifice of power. A rich pattern of interconnection exists between its ‘political’ and ‘religious’ behavior. In this regard the most important act on the part of mass populace is their voting behavior. Voting, in competitive systems, is the most important means by which common citizens play their role in the game of power. This particular phenomenon highlights many important issues regarding the relationship between religion and politics. For example, it is noteworthy that to what extent their decision or voting behavior is influenced by religious considerations. Although in most of the cases religion may not play an overt role in this regard, but still it plays a passive role in molding public opinion and voting behavior along with other consideration i.e. economic, ethnic, racial, lineage, etc. in many countries. All the three abovementioned elements i.e. political parties; pressure groups; and mass populace, are interrelated as well: religious pressure groups motivate and mobilize masses and influence their electoral behavior as they react to the political parties and their candidates during elections.

Although voting behavior is the most common mode of expression of political behavior of the mass populace, however, political behavior is not confined only to it. There are a number of other ways through which citizens express their desires, aspirations and interest. One particular activity is the protest or agitation. Many inquiries conducted on

11 Peter M. Butler, Polling and Public Opinion, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 27.
the issue have found religious roots in this phenomenon – protest, as was the case with
voting behavior.\textsuperscript{12} There are numerous examples from developed and developing
countries where people do protest against various public policy and law-making matters
on religious considerations, such as protests and mass movements against issues of
abortion, same sex marriages, blasphemy, etc. Similarly another significant form of
public political behavior, and even of more extreme nature, is ‘political violence’. There
are instances that religion or religious slogans were used to reject the government its
policies. This tendency can intensify the sense of alienation from a political regime and
can end in political violence and uprising against the regime ultimately.

Political actions on the part of citizens in the form of voting, protest or political violence,
reflect the mass political culture. This point also extends the connection between religion
and politics. For example to what extent religious considerations are associated with a
particular political culture, is an interesting and relevant issue to be investigated. Generally the religious beliefs are closely and systematically associated with ideologies in
the political sphere, for example religion and fundamentalism; religion and nationalism;
religion and conservatism, etc.\textsuperscript{13}

From the above discussion, it is learnt that devising public policy or making collective
decisions for a group of people – politics, is a multidimensional and complex
phenomenon. From the level of domestic politics to the level of international politics, and
from the common citizens to the political leadership, the political system includes variety
of elements subject to religious influence.

1.2.2 Religion

After having analyzed the term ‘politics’ now I will try to describe and explain the term
‘religion’, and will also analyze the characteristics of the term which in one way or the
other involve the ‘political sphere’. In an oversimplified attempt one can describe religion
in terms of existing religions in the world – Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, etc.
However, there must be some particular features of the term which distinguish it from
magic, superstition, and other ‘isms’ in the world like Socialism, fascism, etc. This notion
leads us to explain and define the term ‘religion’ or ‘religious experience’ in a more

\textsuperscript{12} J. Jenkins and B. Klandermans, \textit{The Politics of Social Protest}, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota
Press, 1995).
\textsuperscript{13} K. D. Wald, \textit{Religion and Politics in United States}, (New York, St. Martin’s Press, 1987), Ch. 3.
specified manner. Religion is based on, and has three distinct themes and characteristics respectively: supremacy or transcendence, ultimacy and sacredness.  

Supremacy or transcendence of the religion means that it is associated with supernatural entity and reality i.e. man in this ordinary world is encountered with powers which are much greater than his own. In this sense ‘religion’ has a preeminent and supreme claim over the adherent or believer and his everyday life and social order. In this way it also extends to influence the ‘political realm’ especially when it comes to take collective decisions concerned to that social order. Hence, this characteristic of religion in interconnected to collective decision-making – politics.

The other feature of religion is sacredness i.e. it is distinct from the profane things. Analyzing religion from this approach demarcates it as a system of belief which invokes a sacred cover. The term religion is generally used to define a system that organizes the world in sacred manner. To the extent to that people use sacred for defining and organizing their world and lives, this also involves a correlation with political and social domain. The feeling of a supreme power which is evoked by ‘the sacred’ makes the believer to attempt to order ‘the profane’ (worldly affairs) in a manner consistent with those greater interdictions.

Same is the case with the third characteristic or theme of ‘religion’, ultimacy. Religion articulates the basic values of society that address the very basis of the meaning through a sense of superior purpose and impact. Religion connects humans to the ultimate conditions of their existence. In this way, religion also commands and directs the lives of believers; it sets all other aspects of human existence underneath that ultimate concern. Hence, politics, yet again, is made related to, and is endorsed by religion. However, by its very characteristics, religion also becomes subject to the exercise of political authority. Although these three important themes – supremacy, sacredness and ultimacy help us understand how religion and politics fit together, there is of course much more to it than that. It is true that belief is the central idea of religious experience, however, there are

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other important aspects too which need to be discussed and brought into the view in order to understand different ways in which religion is linked to ‘political sphere’.

1.3 LINK BETWEEN POLITICS AND RELIGION

Religion is a matter of personal experience, practice and action, for example rituals, offering prayers, etc. This makes religion ‘visible’, and this visibility can become entangled with the political realm. One thinks, for example, offering prayer or performing some other religious practices of a political leader to invoke the support of God in connection with governmental action and policy, or mixing religious and political ideas while taking oath as an office-holder by politicians and civil servants.

It is common observation that religious ceremonies require the designation of certain buildings and places as sacred in which the religious activities are conducted such as mosques, temples, synagogues and churches, etc. Indeed, generally, this physical apparatus is equated with religion. Here too, we can find its connection with political sphere. Conflicts surrounding Babri Mosque in Ayodhiya, India, and Golden Temple at Amritsar, India are examples of this point. One can learn from these examples that the notion of ‘sacred places’ suggests the idea that religion does not only have meaning at the individual or spiritual level, but it also has a communal and corporate character like politics.

This is another level of relationship between religion and politics. Here this relationship necessitates the ideas of group solidarities and inter-group conflicts at the same time. Both solidarity and tension or conflict might have a religious factor which revolves around the shared or conflicting images of the sacred. Moreover, they also can acquire other elements, either economic, ethnic, or culture, etc. That is why the inter-group ‘religious’ tensions are very complex phenomena to be analyzed. Once again, this necessitates to understand the relationship between politics and religion in its proper socio-economic and cultural context.

In a community of believers we may find some sort of role differentiation or division of authority between common believers and those who take some distinctive position, as a prophet, priest, pastor or spiritual mentor. This role differentiation in Christianity, for example, has resulted in highly elaborated religious institution with several levels of authority and multiplicity of integral agencies. This institutionalization makes the relationship between religious elements and political world very diversified and interesting. The Roman Catholic Church is a relevant example in this case, with concentration of power in the person of Pope and different organs of the Vatican state.

An important point needs to be taken into account here is that, as far as the relationship between religion and politics, in terms of impact of one on the other, is concerned, it’s a two-way relationship: if on the one hand it is observed and analyzed that how religious community, leaders and institutions influence power-politics, on the other hand various researches have been conducted on how political authority deals with religion.

A fundamental point here is that these linkages between religion and politics are of various kinds and they may change with the passage of time. In other words the relationship is of dynamic nature. In the following lines I have tried to explain and explore the pattern(s) of change in this connection:

1.4 DYNAMIC NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP

In the above discussion we have made an assumption that politics and religion have their distinct spheres of meaning and action, at least theoretically. This notion is more relevant in the modern societies where the ideas of modernization and secularization have made politics separate from religion. However, this is not the case generally in traditional societies and cultures. In those societies religion and politics maintain a close link. In fact some religions and its adherents do not believe in the compartmentalization of the two, however, this dualism is common in the western societies.\(^{20}\)

\(^{19}\) Ibid., 114.
1.4.1 Traditional Societies

In traditional and pre-modern societies the relationship between politics and religion was one in which both were closely connected and integrated with each other. The practices and beliefs of religion established and entered into the core of political process, sustaining and backing the exercise of political authority. On the other hand religious sphere was also extended by political concerns. Both religion and politics formed one contiguous and interconnecting set of actions and beliefs. In that system religious considerations were part and parcel of the entire social and political life of individuals and society. For example, laws were based on the sacred texts as divine instructions, and the education was only religious in content and it was imparted by the religious or spiritual leaders.\(^\text{21}\)

This pattern of the relationship between religion and politics applied to Buddhist and Hindu societies. In the West it was a basic feature in the medieval ages where the Roman Church was in authority. The ancient societies and tribal societies are also examples in this connection. However, this basic pattern had some variations depending upon formal institutional mechanism of particular polities and religions. One of the basic factors lay in whether the political power and religious power was exercised by the same leader or by different leaders. The Hindu culture and early Islamic polities are the examples of the former, where religious and political authority was exercised by the same leadership. On the other hand there was a ‘church model’ as well which is typical of the early arrangements of Buddhist and Christian institutions.\(^\text{22}\) This system represented distinct political and religious structures controlled by complementary but different leaders. Where this differentiation took place, a wide array of power relationships between the two became evident: In some societies political authorities extended their control over religious structures and institutions; in some societies religious institutions created theocratic type of administration; and in some other societies both structures adopted the model of coexistence.

1.4.2 Modern Societies

In the modern world the situation regarding the integration of political and religious structures has changed to a great extent. This arrangement of the integrated model is


\(^{22}\) Ibid., 7.
mainly of significance as cultural and historical legacy. However, its reiteration and resonance can be found in present-day patterns. For example the Monarch, in England, is still the head of state and Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Some still consider Christianity as a significant ingredient of political and social identity. Or for example in the recent past in Nepal King Birendra\textsuperscript{23} was seen as incarnation of Vishnu\textsuperscript{24} by traditional sector of the society.

Saudi Arabia is another example of the pattern. The alliance between a political leader Muhammad Ibn Saud and a religious activist Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab resulted in the establishment of first Saudi state in eighteenth century. Contemporary Saudi Arabia too maintains the centrality of this religious factor in its state affairs and its constitution is not secular. Moreover, Shariah\textsuperscript{25} is the basis of legal system. However, the case of Nepal and Saudi Arabia are exceptions. In most of the cases the substance of such arrangement has been diminished over the past century.

1.4.3 Secularization

The main factor that has contributed the most to this end is the process of secularization. Secularization is the basic and most significant ideological and structural change in the course of political development. However, the concept of secularization itself is controversial: some consider it as anti-religious and not neutral. Furthermore, the variety of meanings given to it by various authors adds more to the complexity of the concept. Some others criticize it for being defined as a linear process. Nevertheless, in spite of these problems with the term and concept of secularization it led to a trend whereby societies in the world have gradually shifted away from being focused around metaphysical and sacred. Hence it does suggest that religion has lost certain authority and power in society. And it also indicates that a transformation and change in the basic relationship between religion and politics has occurred.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{23} King Birendra was the 11\textsuperscript{th} king of Nepal and died in 2001.
\textsuperscript{24} Vishnu is a Hindu god who is also known as Hari and Narayana. He, in Hinduism, is described as having four hands.
\textsuperscript{25} Shariah is the Islamic legal system and is, primarily, derived from Qur’an (the basic text of Islam) and Hadith (teachings and sayings of the Holy Prophet PBUH).
Some sense of the nature of transformation that this process involves can be witnessed if we distinguish some of its basic parts. Following are the constituent parts of ‘secularization’: 27

- Ideological Secularization: it is the process by which fundamental values and belief-systems that are used to assess the political sphere and to give it meaning cease to be uttered in religious terms.
- Policy Secularization: it is the process by which the state ceases to control society on the basis of religious principles, and extends the public policy domains and service provisions of the state into the spheres which previously belonged to religion.
- Agenda Secularization: it is the process by which needs, problems and issues related to political process cease to have religious content, at least overtly, and by which solutions adopted to resolve those problems are no longer developed on the basis of religious criteria.
- Constitutional Secularization: it is the process by which the official character and objectives of the state cease to be couched in religious terms, and by which religious institutions cease to be conferred special constitutional status and support.
- Institutional Secularization: it is the process by which religious structures lose their political character and power as a movements, interest groups or political parties.

In short secularization is a multidimensional and complex process in which political and religious spheres disentangle from each other. This results in further complications and tensions as the concept of political power is redefined and the religious sphere develops new and distinct relationships with the state and society. Such complications and tensions are further intensified by other processes of development. For example, the politicization of the mass populace through the granting of adult franchise creates challenges to both

political and religious leadership. Improvement in the means of communication especially the mass media also challenges the conventional patterns of political and religious communication. Religious leaders as well as state institutions also face extensive problems of economic development and social change which threaten the already established power relationship.

Medhurst proposes three models representing various stages in the process of change in integrated polity. Through these models we can have an idea of what these changes involve. According to Medhurst, first is ‘the confessional polity’. In this the political leaders do not cease to legitimate their rule in religious terms and continue with it, however, they do so, in a pluralistic frame of reference, by giving official propensity to one religious option. Similarly, religious leaders also try to get support against the threats to their authority. The anticipated result of this is to prevent the wave of pluralism and to conserve the traditional monistic pattern as much as possible. The contemporary examples of Iran and Colombia are relevant in this regard.

Another model, according to Medhursts, is ‘religiously neutral polity’. This pattern arises when the secularization process gets rid of religion as the main basis of political system. The religious forces are seen as one group among many others competing for political power. He further emphasizes that secularization does not remove or abolish religion from political realm. He views it a matter of religious groups finding themselves in a more politically pluralistic environment in which their specific programs and goals are given less recognition. Therefore, this is the stage where these religious forces transform into pressure groups or even political parties to preserve and uphold their interests.

Third model, according to Medhurst, is ‘the anti religious polity’. It reflects the active effort by the state to remove any religious presence within the political sphere. Furthermore, in most cases, the state even attempts to eliminate any noticeable public religious presence whatsoever. Polity and society in general are to be developed on the basis of materialism without any religious symbols and practices. However, these efforts to eradicate religion from society have failed so far. Although the historical pattern of the

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30 Ibid.
change suggests that religion will not regain the position of centrality like it had in pre-modern eras, but there is ample reason to believe that the interconnection between politics and religion has not and will not become vanished.  

Politics and religion do not continue to lose their mutual relationship and relevance even in modern liberal-democratic polities in the West. Hadden and Shupe have conducted an interesting study and proposed the idea of the ‘cyclical theory of secularization’. According to them the process of eliminating the sense of the sacred from polity and society has the tendency whereby religion is eventually invigorated and revived. They hold that secularized answers to the existence of man and purpose of his life are unsatisfying. They further argue that within new structures of patterns of belief, religion is finding fresh significance and power. This might be, according to them, a post-secular religion in a possibly post-secular culture.

Time will prove whether or not these ideas withstand the test of history. There are instances of some forms of religion declining, and the movements of secularization are succeeding. However, at the same time, there are a number of examples of religion’s revival and growth, a resurrection that revitalizes the relationship between politics and religion. Rise of Islamic fundamentalism against secularized western values, victory of Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria in 1992, and victory of Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2002 are relevant contemporary examples. These instances suggest not an early breakup of religion and politics.

1.5 AN OVERVIEW OF ‘ISLAM AND POLITICS’

Islam does not believe in compartmentalization of societal forces and institutions. It is generally believed that Islam makes no distinction between religion and politics. According to the orthodox point of view, a state based on Islamic principles is an

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31 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 17.
34 Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), called al-Jabhah al-Islamiyah lil-Inqadh in Arabic, is an Islamist Political Party founded by Abbasi Madani in Algeria. The party won majority seats in the national legislative assembly in 1991-92 general elections.
35 Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) was an alliance among Islamist parties during the general elections of 2002. The alliance formed government in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, and remained in alliance with Pakistan Muslim League PML-Q in Baluchistan province from 2002 to 2007. Later part of this thesis discusses this in detail.
essential part of the religion itself. Islam expounds the idea of an *Ummah*, this unites Muslims without regard to geographic nationalism, racial and ethnic identity, or any other differences. Theoretically, according orthodox school of thought, *ummah* should be under one government or ruler, however, some other jurists and political theorist in medieval times, recognized the authority and legitimacy of separate rulers and governments. From the orthodox point of view the division of Islamic world into different countries is terrible and the idea of ‘modern nationalism’ is even worse. Islamist (fundamentalist) movements throughout the world favor Islamic universalism and rebuff modern nationalism. After founding the first Islamic state of Medina in 622 AD, Holy Prophet (SAW) himself became its first ruler until his death after ten years. This was the most clear example of the combination of religion and politics or state. Following are some Islamic terminologies which reflect the political nature of the religion – Islam.

*Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb*: The territory controlled by the Islamic state is called *dar al-Islam* which means ‘Abode of Peace’ and theoretically *dar al-Islam* is in permanent state of war with the areas which have not been merged yet, these areas are called *dar al-Harb* which means ‘Abode of War’. The whole is to be incorporated, eventually, through peaceful means or in reaction against *dar al-Islam* because Islam forbids aggression. However, this classical or orthodox theory is not conjured by most of the present-day Islamist movements in the world for example Islamic Brotherhood in Egypt, Islamist forces in Iran who brought revolution in 1979 and the religious political parties in Pakistan. On the other hand, there are exceptionally a few (fundamentalist) movements still vow and attempt to invoke the orthodox theory, for example Taliban in South Asia and ISIS in the Middle East.

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37 Ummah is Arabic word which means nation or community. It is commonly used for the collective community of Muslims.


39 Ibid., 25.

40 Dar al-Islam is one of the divisions of the world in Islam. The term is used by Islamic scholars to refer to those countries in the world where Muslims practice their faith as the ruling sect.

41 Islamic scholars refer this term to the countries where Islamic law (Shariah) is not in force. It is to be annexed with Dar al-Islam and its citizens to be converted or tolerated as long as they pay Jizya.
Dhimmis: Dar al Islam is composed of not only Muslims but also the Dhimmis (protected religious minorities) who are allowed to live freely according to their own religious law and would pay a special tax as a substitute of the military services which is mandatory for Muslims. However, yet again most of the contemporary Islamist movements do not invoke such orthodox theory and do not seek the restoration of the status of Dhimmis for non-Muslims.

Shariah: Shariah is the body of revealed divine law based on Qur’an and Sunnah or Hadith. Shariah is believed to provide complete rules to guide Muslims in all walks of life. It includes family laws, penal laws, civil laws and commercial laws, etc. These are divine laws and cannot be altered. Even, according to some conservative believers, the gates of Ijtehad, to reinterpret laws, have been closed in favor of Taqlid. However, many allow greater scope for Ijtehad. This is considered the prerogative of the highly qualified scholars, and the common believers are supposed to follow their interpretations. The ruler of Islamic state is supposed to be defender of the territory and the faith at the same time – combining political and religious roles. The latter implies that he will enforce divine law – Shariah. The classical Islamic conception suggests that the ruler has no legislative authority he will only enforce the law of God. Although it seems apparently a theocracy – rule of God, through His vicegerent or caliph, but it is different from theocracy in spirit because the ruler is also bound by that law. It is, in the words of Majid Khadduri, a nomocracy.

Ulama: In Islam there is no concept of priests or priesthood. There is no religious function which can be performed only by a specialist sanctified person. Any Muslim can lead the prayer, can preach or whatever. However, the category of Ulama is somewhat different. They are the graduates of Madrasahs. This category arose as early as the institution of Madrasahs came into existence. These ulama perform different religious

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42 The term literally means protected people. Historically it refers to the non-Muslims living in Islamic state. They had their rights fully protected in their community, however, they would pay Jizya – a special tax in lieu of the military services which was mandatory for Muslims who also would pay zakat (alms).
43 Ijtehad means independent reasoning. It is referred to the decision making process in Islamic through personal effort and independent of any school of jurisprudence. Only scholar expert in Qur’an Hadith, Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and analogical reasoning can take part in the activity.
44 Taqlid literally means to follow without any proof. In Islamic context it refers to accepting and following the interpretations of earlier scholars and adherence to one of the established schools of jurisprudence.
46 The term Ulama (singular alim) refers to the religious scholars among Muslims.
47 A specific type of religious school for the study of Islam.
function in an Islamic society. They are also teachers in madrasahs (institutions of higher learning) and maktabs (institutions of elementary education). Another function of the ulama in an Islamic state is to perform judicial functions either as a Qazi (judge) or a Mufti (jurist) because they are the specialist in the Shariyah. The central theme and element of madrasah education is Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) that is why ulama are considered to be as jurists.

Ulama, however, are different from the Church in Christianity. The latter is an institution or organization, while the former are category of people. Therefore, they cannot be compared with Church in their correlation with the state. A relevant analogy than the concept of Church and state is the concept of ‘separation of powers’. In Islam, God is the legislator; ruler holds the executive authority; while ulama, among other functions, serve as judiciary. According to Donald Smith, contrary to the Church, the nature of religio-political system is organic because here the two systems are closely integrated: religion and politics are considered same entity.48 Even in the modern world, this combination of political and religious roles is an important feature of Islamic societies. Modern westernizing rulers in the Muslim countries have asserted strict control over religion, especially curbing the prerogatives of ulama, instead of straight away separating religion from politics. The later part of the thesis discusses how ulama came in active politics in Pakistan and succeeded especially in Pakhtun region.

1.6 ISLAM AND POLITICS IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Islam arose in central Arabia during seventh century AD. This religion swept around the world and presently is the second largest religion in the world with more than one billions adherents. It was not simply a spiritual community, rather it became a political community as well, a state or empire. It became a religio-political movement and religion became an essential part of the state and society.49 As discussed above Islam includes faith and politics. This belief is rooted in Qur’an and Sunnah and thus mirrored in Islamic history and politics. Aza’an (call for prayers) begins with the phrase Allah o Akbar (God is the Greatest), the same is the traditional Islamic battle cry. This reflects the combination of religious sphere and political realm in Islam.

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Any understanding of Islam begins with God and His Prophet (SAW). For the guidance of mankind, God sent messengers throughout history. However, Muslims believe that God’s revelations were distorted and tempered with the passage of time. Therefore, God sent Muhammad (SAW) as the last Prophet and gave him the final revelation Qur’an. Qur’an and the practice of Prophet (SAW) set the foundation of the straight path and fundamentals of the Islamic Law – Shariah. Muhammad (SAW) is not the prophet but a model of Muslim life. Man’s duty is thus to surrender to God’s will and carry out His commands. God has given all of His creation to mankind as a trust. In this sense Man is the vicegerent of God on earth and has vocation to establish and spread Islamic order (God’s rule) on earth. Islam deals with both individual and societal life. Ummah (Muslim community) is the main vehicle for the realization of God’s will as Qur’an says that Muslims are the best community who order good and forbid evil.

The tribal solidarity was replaced with a community of believers by Islam. Religion became the basis of society/community – Ummah. All members of this community are equal before God. Qur’an says that whoever does a good deed, whether man or woman, God will give him/her good life, and they will be rewarded according to the best of their actions. He further says in Qur’an that Muslim men and women are guardians of one another who enjoin good and forbid evil and obey God and the Prophet (SAW). The divine mandate of God was established took substance in the first Islamic state of Medina under the leadership and guidance of the last Prophet (SAW).

1.6.1 Medina (first Islamic State)

In Medina Muhammad (SAW) was the first ruler. He was the prophet, head of the state, leader of the army, lawgiver and judge at the same time. His authority was based on Qur’an: “Obey God and the Prophet”. Furthermore, the Prophet (SAW) was the model upon which the believers were guide their lives. Qur’an says: “You have the best model

50 Qur’an, 3: 40.
51 Qur’an, 33:40.
52 Qur’an, 33:21.
53 Qur’an, 31:20-29.
54 Qur’an, 2:30.
55 Qur’an, 3:110.
56 Qur’an, 16:97.
57 Qur’an, 9:71.
58 Qur’an, 3:32.
in the life of God’s messenger.”

Through military actions and wise diplomacy Muslims expanded and established their authority in central Arabia. Islam flourished under the leadership of Muhammad (SAW) both as a religion and as a sociopolitical system. Mecca was subdued and old tribal system was Islamized and modified. And tribes of Arab were united into a single community with a common faith – Islam. For the first time in Arab a uniting force, in the form of Islam, emerged with the help of which Arabs (Muslims) became able to challenge the big empires of the time i.e. Byzantium and Persia and transform the political and social life of the Middle East.

After the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in 632 AD, Muslim community was faced with two political challenges entailing political authority: the issue of succession and the problem of possible political division.

1.6.2 The Caliphate Era

The era of Holy Prophet (SAW) was followed by the Caliphate period. This period is divided into three phases: the era of Pious Caliphs or Rightly Guided Caliphs, the rule of Umayyad dynasty, and the rule of Abbasid dynasty. The caliphate era is of importance because it is the source of the development of Islamic political institutions. Particularly the era of first four caliphs is of great significance for not only what they did in their just rule but also for the fact that both conservative and modernist Islamic activists return to their (Pious Caliphs’) time for guidance in their effort to define the Islamic nature of modern states.

The Rightly Guided Caliphs (632-661 AD): The caliphate period started with the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW). The Prophet had not designated his successor or established a system of electing Caliph. Leading companions of the Prophet (SAW) selected Abu Bakr (RA) as their leader. He had been an adviser and close friend of Muhammad (SAW). He was known for his piety and political prudence. He became the first Caliph of Muslims and assumed the title ‘successor of the Holy Prophet’. He was the political, military, judicial and financial head of the state. Besides this he was also the religious or spiritual

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59 Qur’an, 33:21.
61 Caliphate is an Islamic form of government in which the ruler (Caliph) is both political and religious leader of the community, and a successor to the Holy Prophet (SAW).
head of the community, though not a prophet. He led the Friday prayers and his name was mentioned the sermon.\textsuperscript{62}

He nominated, in his life, Umar (RA) as his successor. So after his death Umar (RA) became the second caliph. He was also a close companion of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Under him the Muslim empire expanded rapidly ruling the Persian and two-third of Byzantine empires.\textsuperscript{63} He is also called ‘Farooq’ (his epithet) for his just pious nature. On his deathbed he appointed a selection committee to select a caliph after him from amongst themselves. After due consultation, Uthman (RA) was selected as the third caliph after Umar (RA). A pattern was established to select caliph from within the Quraysh tribe which was the tribe of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Ali (RA) succeeded Uthman (RA) after the assassination of the latter by a group of rebels. Ali (RA) was a cousin as well as the son-in–law of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

These first four caliphs are known as Pious Caliphs or the Rightly Guided Caliphs. All of them were the companions of Muhammad (SAW). The patterns for the organization and administration of Islamic state were founded in that period. The model of their government had followed the practice of Holy Prophet (SAW). They exercised political, judicial, military and financial control of the community. They were selected by the methods of election, consultation and nomination. The conquered areas were divided into various province administratively, and military garrison towns were established these provinces, for example, Basra, Kufa and Fustat (Cairo).\textsuperscript{64} These conquered territories were administered by governors who were mainly military generals. The mosque served as religious and public centers of the towns. Islamic system of taxation was established comprising Zakat (wealth tax), Ushar (land tax) paid by Muslims and Jizya (poll tax) paid by non-Muslims.

The eras of Holy Prophet (SAW) and the Pious Caliphs are regarded exemplary period of Muslim life in many respects. Firstly, God revealed His final book Qur’an and sent the last Prophet (SAW). Secondly, the Islamic community and state was established which was bonded by a religious identity. Thirdly, the sources of Islamic law – Shariah were

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., 47.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 88.
established this period. Fourthly, it is this period that serves as a reference point for conservative and modernist Islamic reform. This was the time when God’s message and the Prophetic claims were realized in true sense which were validated by the success and power that Islamic state gained at that time.65

Rule of Umayyads (661-750 AD): The rule of Umayyad dynasty started in 661 AD. It was an imperial, dynastic rule dominated by military aristocracy. Umayyads shifted the capital from Medina to Damascus which was a cosmopolitan city. Ummayads continued expansion of the Islamic state from this new center. Within a hundred years the Islamic empire became greater than the former Roman Empire. Its boundaries extended from Spain (Europe) to the border of China (South Asia).66 The Arabian tribes achieved new levels of political organization and motivation with unity of purpose and centralized authority provided by the religion – Islam. It was the religious motivation and enthusiasm which enabled Muslim armies to overrun Persian and Byzantine empires in that short span of time. Religion was a part and parcel of the political ambitions. Jihad67 which is a religious and political struggle at the same time (holy war) brought religious as well as economic and political benefits for Muslims. It was the religion – Islam with its social and political implications that sparked the integration process and caused the ultimate success in the conquests.

During the reign of Yazid, second Umayyad ruler, a civil war broke out which laid the foundation of Shiism or Shii Islam. A political movement resulted in a religious or sectarian division proving a strong connection between Islam and politics. Hussain (RA) son of Ali (RA) revolted against Yazid.68 The implications of this initially small rebellion would be magnified in the later Islamic history and its political impact became evident in contemporary Iran. The memory of the battle of Karbala, between the army of Yazid and Hussain (RA) and his small number of companions, provided a religiopolitical paradigm for Shii Islam.69 This incident provided Shiism with firstly, its major theme – the battle of the forces of good and evil; secondly, its major goal – the establishment of

65 Ibid., 12.
67 In Arabic Jihad literally means struggle or resisting. The Islamic scholars derive two meanings of Jihad: an inner spiritual struggle which is regarded as greater jihad; and an outer physical and material struggle against the enemies of Islam.
69 Ibid., 129.
social justice and righteous rule; thirdly, its pattern of political leadership – the Imam. One of the major legal and political differences between Shii and Sunni Muslims is the Sunni concept of Caliphate versus Shii concept of Imamate. Caliph is elected or selected leader who enjoys political, economic, military, judicial and to some extent religious authority (theory of Caliphate has been analyzed in this chapter with detail). On the other hand Shii Muslims believe that the leadership belongs to the direct descendant of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and Ali (RA) who is the first Imam. Furthermore, he is the final interpreter of Shariah as well as the political leader of the community.

*Umayyads* introduced and established various distinctive institutions to further consolidate centralized authority associated with Islamic government – Caliphate. For example they established the institution of Arab monarchy which was the basis of *Umayyads*’ power and stability. Contrary to the practice of Pious Caliphs, Ummayads made the succession hereditary and confined to them only. This is the reason that many Islamic historians term their rule as un-Islamic. That society was based on the establishment of Arab aristocracy in spite of its Islamic character. Arab Muslims were treated preferentially – they were the privileged class of the society. Apart from the division on religious basis between Muslims and non-Muslims, the society was also divided on racial and ethnic lines between Arabs and non-Arabs.

Moreover, they adapted the practice of market inspector from Byzantine and expanded it to include not only market supervision and inspection but also the duty to assure that Islamic teachings and principles were observed. This was another example of their attempt to integrate religious and political spheres. The market supervisor thus became a supervisor of public morals as well. He was to keep check over and report any fraudulent and corrupt business practices such as defective measures and weights, etc. and to keep check on the public observance of fast during the month of Ramadan. The similar institution was established in Pakistan during Zia-ul-Haq’s rule as a part of Islamization process. This is discussed in detail in the later part of the thesis.

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70 Instead of Caliphate, Shii Islam recognizes Imamate as lawful institution as a successor to the Prophet (SAW). According to Shii Islam Imam is divinely appointed as contrary to the elected position of Caliph.


72 Ibid., 154.
Another major institution established during Umayyads’ rule was the institution of Qadi (judge). Initially Qadi was the member of governor’s administration – a secretary. However, with the passage of time it flourished as a full-fledged distinct government position and institution with the mandate of enforcing shariah – Islamic law. This development also laid the foundation of shariah court – the cornerstone of Islamic judicial system.

In spite of these developments and institutional progress under Umayyads, their rule was considered un-Islamic and at odds with the teachings of the Prophet (SAW) by many Muslims due to its imperial practices and luxurious life-style of the caliphs. Critics of Umayyads were of the opinion that Islam could not permeate in every aspect of life and was not reflected in legal, social and political life. They held that the vastness of the empire with different prevalent customary laws resulted in a great diversity in the legal and political system of Islam. The opposition emerged in the due course of time and most of the opposition groups were carrying out religio-political movements. These groups include pious Muslims who viewed this new system of luxury and social privilege as deviation from perfect Islam; Shii Muslims; and non-Arab Muslims who were treated as second class citizens and they viewed this practice as contrary to Islamic egalitarianism. This opposition to Umayyads reflected the close connection between Islam and politics. All the opposition groups shared the tendency to wrap their response and criticism in Islamic terms. As a result of this religio-political movement Umayyads fell in 750 AD, and Abbasid dynasty came to rule over Islamic empire.

Rule of Abbasid Caliphs (750-1258): The Abbasids assumed power under the hallmark of Islam. Hence their rule was also characterized with the combination of religion (Islam) and politics. They adopted the ideology of restoring pure and primitive Islam. They promised a more Islamic sociopolitical system contrary to the Umayyads. Their rule was accepted and justified by the masses and most of the learned people – elites by denouncing Umayyads’ rule as impious and un-Islamic. Abbasids vowed and took care of aligning their rule, government and policies with religion – Islam. They adopted and modified Ummayad tradition by taking greatly from Persian tradition with its divinely

73 Ibid., 160.
74 Ibid., 161.
The title of the Caliph was changed from ‘vicegerent of Prophet (SAW)’ to ‘vicegerent of God’ reflecting that he was enjoying divine authority. The caliph was the commander of armed forces, led the army during war, and also led the Friday prayer. He was also responsible for the implementation of shariah and defense of the Islam as well as Islamic state. Thus the ruler enjoyed a position of both political and religious leader.

The most significant contribution of Abbasids towards religion was the development of Islamic law – shariah. They undertook substantial efforts to establish a legal system based on Islam. Although there is no concept of priest or priesthood in Islam, however, during Abbasids’ rule a class of learned people – Ulama was established. The reputation and influence of ulama was based on their knowledge of Islam including Qur’an and the tradition of the Holy Prophet (SAW). They were theologians, jurists, and educators at the same time. Government’s patronage to this prestigious class resulted in the development of Islamic legal theory.

Under Abbasids the Islamic jurisprudence initiated and flourished in a systematic manner and by the end of the ninth century it had formed a comprehensive and organized code of law which provided the well-established principles for Islamic state and society. This was the era when various schools of law were established. These included, among others, four main schools of Sunni sect namely Hanafi, Maliki, Hanbali and Shafii; and one Shi'i school namely Jafari. The Islamic law was considered comprehensive as it covered the individual as well as the social aspect of life. The law was generally divided into two kinds: duties to God including prayers, etc. and duties to fellow beings such as laws relating economic and social transactions, family and commercial laws, etc.

Religion provided the main identity for and ideological base for the political and social life throughout the caliphate era. Muslims saw the world divided in dar al-Islam and dar al-Harb. It was regarded the duty of all Muslims to struggle for extending the Islamic rule.

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76 Ibid., 22.
77 Ibid., 75.
wherever possible. Thus all the Muslims were the preachers of Islam or missionaries either as traders, merchants, or soldiers. All the major state institutions including caliphate, taxation, judiciary, education system and social welfare system, etc. were based on Islam. The coins bore the Qur’anic verses. In short the Islamic identity and ideology was part and parcel of the politics.

It is evident from the above discussion that Caliphate is the most important political institution in Islam. This is the institution in which Islam and politics are combined, at least in practice, as caliphate, either of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, of *Umayyads* or of Abbasids, was in one way or the other associated with Islam. However, the relationship between Islam and Caliphate or between Islam and politics for that matter is not that simple and direct, rather it is highly debatable and a complex one. In order to further explore and explain the nature of this highly significant and most debated political institution in Islamic history I now turn to assess the theory of caliphate and its relevance or non-relevance with religion – Islam.

1.7 **ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON CALIPHATE**

From the abovementioned account it is clear that Muslims have been fairly practical and realistic in their approach to state and its institutions. The formation of the caliphate of Rightly Guided Caliphs in 632 AD was based on the tribal norms and customs of that time. Caliphs were either selected or elected by mutual consultation and consensus. Rule of *Umayyads* was rather a form of monarchy which in Islamic terminology is called *Mulikiyyah*. However, the Abbasids modified *Umayyad* model by borrowing some elements from the Persian model. Similarly, the formation of later caliphates followed their respective contemporary styles and forms of administration and political system.

Muslim political philosopher of the ninth century, Ibn Qutayba has discussed the institution of caliphate in considerable detail. He holds that until his time the account of the early caliphate was not organized with reference to the sacred text Qur’an and the prophetic tradition. Following are some of the most significant points regarding the

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79 Ibn Qutayba was an Islamic scholar of Persian origin. He also served as a judge during Abbasid era. He died in 889 AD.

institutions of caliphate. We can proceed further successfully by taking into consideration these important points related to the theory of caliphate:

- Generally speaking the concept of Caliphate is broadly framed in a non-religious customary traditional structure of transfer of power as there was no set criterion of the transfer of political power in Islam after the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW).  

- The only religious reference made at the time of Abu Bakr’s (RA) selection was that the Holy Prophet once instructed Abu Bakr (RA) to lead the prayers even in his presence. However, one viewpoint about this is that it is rather an evidence of Abu Bakr’s closeness with the Holy Prophet (SAW) and not related directly to religious point.  

- Majority of the Islamic historians and scholars do not mention the necessity of the political leadership in religious (Islamic) term. Rather they take it more in administrative sense and hence relate it to rationality.  

- Even at the time of the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW) there were more than one proposal and suggestion about the criteria of succession and form of the polity. However, with consensus one of those criteria was adopted.  

- The mention of Quraysh tribe in terms of eligibility for the post of Caliph is a later phenomenon. In the works of early scholars there is no mention of the Hadith that relates leadership with the Quraysh tribe and thus it became a necessary qualification the caliph.  

- In the early political theories of caliphate the term ‘caliphate’ or ‘caliph’ is used in the ordinary meaning of succession. It is not used in any technical meaning. In other words the important point in the early political theories is the rule of succession and not the institution of caliphate itself.

1.7.1 An Appraisal of the Pre-modern Theories of Caliphate

There is sharp diversity and difference of views about the concept in the pre-modern political theories of caliphate. Some of the scholars support the absolute and unrestrained

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81 Ibid., 56.  
83 Ibid., 25.
authority of the caliph on the basis of both religion and rationality, however, most of these scholars were state officials themselves e.g. Abu Yusuf and Ibn Muqaffa. On the other hand there are scholars and theorists who challenge and question the legitimacy of absolute power e.g. Al-Jahiz. Generally there works and ideas reflect the contemporary political debates and narratives of their respective times. The Umayyads’ rule, as mentioned earlier, was more based on and influenced by the Roman system of kingship. However, the concept, meaning and nature of caliphate changed significantly under Abbasids. They were influenced by the Persian system and emphasized the element of divinely nature of caliphate by moving to a more religious and authoritative caliph.

Ibn Muqaffa held the opinion that caliph’s authority was absolute and unquestionable because it was based on religious conviction and, hence, the source of legitimacy was religion. This religious conviction was common between caliph himself and the military. The caliph enjoyed vast divinely powers. The caliph was a source of unity for Muslims he unified Muslims through unity of belief and Islamic law. Various schools of law had established during Abbasid rule. Therefore, Ibn Muqaffa advised the ruler to govern people by regulating all these diverse laws which would unite the divided people. In other words he suggested to apply the Aristotelian principle of ‘unity through diversity’. He suggested that the ruler should establish a new code of law broadly based on customs and practices; tradition and analogy; and his own judgments and assessments. In his opinion, though, caliph’s authority was not flawless but it was exceptional and distinctive.

Another jurist Abu Yusuf believed that the institution of caliphate as a source of all political power was the choice of God. He viewed the caliph as a vicegerent of God and shadow of God on the earth. He referred to the Qur’anic verse “O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result”. He held the view that it was a duty of the people to obey their ruler because the ruler (caliph) was like a shepherd of his subjects. Abu Yusuf did not refer to the principle of election, rather, he viewed, that

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84 Abu Yusuf was a qadi (judge) during Abbasid Caliph Harun al Rashid’s rule. He was a prominent jurist and Islamic scholar of that age. He died in 798 AD.
85 Ibn Muqaffa was a political thinker and adviser to the Abbasid Caliph al-Mansoor. He died in 759 AD.
87 Qur’an, 4:59.
the absolute authority of the caliph and its legitimacy was based on the practices of ‘Rightly Guided Caliphs’. 88

However, another notable theorist, al-Jahiz speaks of a more rationalized legitimacy of the caliph’s authority. 89 He takes the position that human beings, by nature, are voracious and greedy. Therefore, there must be a common authority to regulate the people. He anticipates Thomas Hobbes in his description of human nature. However, he does not endorse the idea of absolute authority of the caliph. He sees rule of law as the basis of political authority. He validates the right of the subjects to oppose the breach of the law even by the ruler. The people, according to him, have the right to criticize and remove the caliph who deviates from law.

1.7.2 The Classical Medieval Islamic Theory of Caliphate

During tenth and eleventh centuries the military institution was highly influential and instrumental the appointment of caliph. The newly emerged position of ‘sultan’ actually belonged to the army general. All the political powers, in practice, were exercised by ‘sultan’. The rise of army and sultan to power has been a fundamental part of the political theory of that time. The first and foremost name comes to one’s mind in this regard is Abu Hasan al-Mawardi, the first notable Arab political theorist. Al-Mawardi discussed at length the administrative power structure synthesizing different practices and theories in a systematic brought the element of religion, in the form ‘divinely authority’, in politics. 90 He was of the opinion that God delegated political power to caliph, hence, caliph alone can delegate his authority to others. He tried to justify the institution of ‘sultan’ which was the actual ruler in most parts of the Islamic empire for all practical purposes. Al-Mawardi enunciated the primary qualifications for caliph and also discussed in detail his powers and functions having taken into consideration the limitations inflicted upon him by the political circumstances.

He has discussed this political theory and ‘rules of government’ in his famous book al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya. In this book on Islamic political theory he assimilated all the

88 M. Q. Zaman, Religion and Politics under Early Abbasids: The Emergence of Proto Sunni Elite, (Boston: Brill, 1997), 96.
previous political practices about the types of caliphate such as election of the caliph by community as a whole, appointment of successor by the retiring caliph, selection by an appointed committee, hereditary transfer of power, and military direct intervention, etc. The methodology he adopted reflected the pragmatism in Islamic political thought. For such pragmatist ideas he is regarded as the pioneer of the ‘doctrine of necessity’. In his formal ‘theory of government’ he primarily focused on what formulated a valid delegation by a caliph of his assistants and functionaries especially Wazir (Minister). Due to political expediency, he even lessened the political functions of the caliph as the executor of Islamic law – Shariah by the possibility of realization.

Al-Mawardi in his book al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya lays down two primary methods of caliph’s appointment in Islam: Election by the political elite of the community (ahl al-aqd wa’l hall) and nomination by the preceding caliph. The example of first method is the selection of Abu Bakr (RA) and Uthman (RA) while the example of the second method is the nomination of Umar (RA) by the first caliph Abu Bakr (RA). This is important to note here that he does not mention or refer to Qur’an and Hadith at this point. He simply tried to assimilate the historical practices into his political theory. This is also important to note that he validated by his theory the hereditary appointments made by Umayyads and Abbasids.

Al-Mawardi describes seven qualifications as a criterion of eligibility for the caliph: (1) he must be a just person in every respect, (2) he must be a knowledgeable person both in terms of worldly and religious knowledge so that he could do Ijtehad, (3) he must be a man of wisdom in dealing with his subjects, (4) he must be physically fit to perform his functions including leading the army, (5) he must be mentally sound person, (6) he must be a courageous person, (7) and he must be of the Quraysh descendant. However, in practice, the caliphs did not possess most of these qualities. Majority of them, for example, were uneducated hence unable to perform the activity of Ijtehad. Hence in the later political thought some of these qualifications were removed particularly that of knowledge.

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91 Ibid., 32.
92 Ibid., 33.
94 Ibid., 95.
As far as the last qualification is concerned, al-Mawardi put forward two statements of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in this regard: “Quraysh are the leaders” and “Let the Quraysh lead”, however, the authenticity of these sayings of the Holy Prophets (SAW) is disputed and controversial. Nonetheless, this principle was strictly observed for centuries. Even this condition was not mentioned in the works of early Islamic scholars i.e. Ibn Muqaffa, Abu Yusuf and al-Jahiz, etc. The scholars who disregard this qualification cite another saying of the Holy Prophet (SAW): “Obey the ruler, even if he is a Habashi (African) with a small head like raisin”.

Although Ibn Qutayba spoke of the caliph being a member of Quraysh tribe, but his argument was based on rationality and logic and not on religion. He argues that since the Quraysh was a powerful tribe and since people would not easily follow and obey other tribe’s member, therefore, the caliph should be from the Quraysh tribe. On the other, al-Mawardi supports this qualification with Hadith. One of the reasons of associating political sphere with religion was the anti-Mutazilite movement of that time. Al-Mawardi and later on al-Ghazali were on the forefront of that religio-academic movement with political motives. Furthermore, reference to a Hadith of the Holy Prophet (SAW) provided more legitimacy than Ibn Qutayba’s logical exposition that Quraysh were powerful enough to be obeyed by others. Abbasid caliphs of twelfth and thirteenth centuries had no power in actual and were appointed and removed by military generals who were not even Arabs. With the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, however, the situation had changed completely. This qualification as well as the Hadith is not mentioned the Ottoman political theory. Similarly modern Muslim political theorist also rejected this condition.

Other contemporary political theorists, particularly al-Ghazali, of that time also endorsed the caliph’s religious/spiritual status as a vicegerent of God and emphasized his religious and worldly missions of defending the faith and administering the state affairs

95 Bukhari, Sahih, Chapter ‘Adhan’, Hadith 652.
96 Mutazila was a school of Islamic theology which established during Umayyads’ rule and reached to its zenith during Abbasids’ rule. Mutazilites were known for their overemphasis on rationality and reason as the basic source of knowledge. They held that the institution of government or state was the dictate of reason and not shariah. However, al-Mawardi and other mainstream Muslim political theorist of that time argued that government/caliphate was necessitated by shariah – religion, hence, proving that the ruler/caliph enjoyed a divine authority.
97 Patricia Crone, Medieval Islamic Political Thought, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 68.
98 Ibid., 176.
respectively. Al-Ghazali also discussed in detail the relationship between caliph and sultan. According to him caliph was a symbol of unity and supremacy of the Islamic law – shariah as a defender of faith. However, sultan was the holder of actual administrative and coercive power as a military commander. He also legitimized the sultan’s rule by force, and sultan’s decisions of appointing and deposing caliphs. He seems realistic in his thoughts and writings.\(^99\) In the post Abbasid period caliph held only a symbolic position which also dispelled the distinction between de facto and de jure rule. Similarly another writer of that time Ibn Jama’a also validated the seizure of power by force and attributed to it all the constitutional powers as well which delineated by the early scholars and jurists.\(^100\)

### 1.7.3 Later Political Theory of Islamic Polity

Later on another writer Ibn Taymiyya seemed more radical and denied even the mandatory nature of the caliphate. He was of the view that true caliphate was only of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and lasted for thirty years only. He was of the opinion that the ruler must obey the Islamic law – shariah. And the subjects should obey the ruler as long as the latter abides by Islamic law. He held that the legitimacy of the political power lies in the observance of Divine law and if the ruler does not follow shariah he loses the legitimacy. In his theory he focused on shariah, as a legitimacy of authority, instead of Qurayshite decadence, selection or election by political elites, military power and hereditary succession.\(^101\)

This visible change in the Islamic political theory was partly a result of the Mongols’ coming into power and elimination of caliphate practically. Mongols introduced new political ideas which revitalized the political debate on the issues of governance. Ibn Aqil and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawaziyya held that the governance must be based on justice and shariah and on oppression.\(^102\) However, Ibn Taymiyya held a different position, he argued that justics and shariah are two different concepts and cannot be taken in identical meanings. For him ideal caliphate modeled on prophethood which ended after thirty years.

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\(^102\) Ibid., 30.
of the death of Holy Prophet and the caliphate after that period was not pure or true one and claimed its legitimacy only in terms of Islamic law – shariah.

In short we can say, from the above discussion, that there was diversity and continuous change in the theory and institution of caliphate and Islamic rule in the early, medieval and later Islamic political thought. Muslims adopted caliphate as a principal form of Islamic polity after the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW). The institution of caliphate, both as a theory and as a form, changed drastically and constantly over the centuries, and finally perished in 1924 with the end of Ottoman Empire. The caliphate started declining and disintegrating during the late Abbasid rule. In tenth century there were three parallel caliphates in the Islamic world: Abbasids in Baghdad, Umayyads in Spain and Fatimids in Egypt. Abbasid caliphate practically came to end in 1258 with the rise of military to power in the form of sultans. In the early sixteenth century Ottomans assumed the political power and achieved the title of caliph and developed their model as a powerful polity. In other Muslim countries the rulers adopted various other titles like Amir, Sultan, Shah, etc. Some of them sought legitimacy to their authority by requesting mandate and authorization from the caliph, however, most of these rulers did not deem this authorization by the caliph as important. Gradually with the passage of time Ottoman Empire weakened as a result of its wars with neighboring countries. The caliphate’s status was reduced as a symbolic entity only and the Grand National Assembly finally abolished it in 1924.

1.7.4 The Modern Islamic Scholars and the Concept of Caliphate as an Islamic Polity

The impact of the elimination of Ottoman Caliphate in 1924 on the modern Islamic political thought was deeper than even the abolishment of Abbasid caliphate in thirteenth century. Initially there were some movements in the Arab countries by nationalists to transfer the caliphate back to Arabs. There were three primary potential competitors in this regard: Sharif Hussein of Mecca, King Fuad I of Egypt and the Bey of Tunisia. A group of leading ulama of al-Azhar and the president of Supreme Religious Court were in support of King Fuad. On the other hand Sharif Hussein of Mecca was supported by a group of religious scholars gathered at Al-Aqsa in Palestine. British government was also

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103 E. I. J. Rosenthal, Political Thought in Medieval Islam, 5.
104 Grand National Assembly the official title of the unicameral legislature of Turkey.
supporting Sharif Hussaein of Mecca, however, the French government was behind Bey\(^{105}\) of Tunisia.

In 1926 some concrete efforts were made by Muslims and a formal conference was convened in Cairo, however, it ended inconclusively and no decision could be taken with regard to the successor of Ottoman Sultan Abd al-Hamid II. Two other meetings were also held in the same year in Cairo and Mecca, but yet again they could not agree on a name. Similarly in 1930 and 1931 a few more meetings were convened to solve the issue of caliphate, however, the issue remained unresolved as the imperialist powers of time including British and French also had stakes and thus hindered reaching to any conclusion. Arab non-Arab division among Muslims was also factor responsible for the indecisiveness.\(^{106}\)

Muslims of the subcontinent viewed the situation completely from a different angle. The abolishment of Ottoman caliphate had a deep impact on the politics and Muslims of British India. They were severely shocked by the new developments because they considered the Ottoman Caliphate as a symbol of unity and Islamic political survival. In the following lines I would discuss the views of some modern Arab and sub-continental Islamic political thinkers over the Islam – Politics relationship in general and institution of caliphate in particular:

**Rashid Rida:** In 1923, Rida, an Egyptian scholar, formulated the doctrine of caliphate responding to the political exigencies of his time in his book *Al-Khilafa wal-Imama al-Uzma*. In his political theory Rida mentioned two important elements to the idea of spiritual caliphate: the need for the independence of Islam as most of the Muslim countries were controlled by colonial powers directly or indirectly, and promotion of a democratic system based on consultation and *shariah*. His argument was that classical idea of caliphate was not practicable hence not a feasible option. He revised and rearticulated various Islamic ideas and concepts relating politics e.g. *Shura* (consultation), *Ijtehad*, etc.\(^{107}\) He favored a democratic form of government and put limitations on the

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\(^{105}\) Bey was the title of monarchs in Tunisia who remained in power from 1705 until 1957 when the monarchy was abolished.


authority of caliph. He also distinguished caliphate from monarchy. In his thought *shura, Ijtehad* and Islamic la – *shariah* conferred Islamic identity to a modern republic. He also showed Arab Nationalism in his theory by reviving the condition of *Qurayshite* origin for caliph. Moreover, he also revised the capacity of *Ijtehad* as a qualification for caliph and associated it with religion once again like the classical medieval theorists.\(^{108}\)

**Ali Abd Al-Raziq:** Al-Raziq denied the religious necessity of the political authority – caliphate. According to Al-Raziq neither Qur’an nor Hadith demand or reject the caliphate. Islam is rather indifferent on the question of caliphate in his opinion. He argued that Muhammad’s (SAW) mission was that of a prophet and not a political leader. He held that no one has a right to claim Muhammad’s (SAW) political successor because he was primarily a prophet and prophecy came to an end with his death. According to him Ummah was spiritual and had no relationship with politics. He was more near to the viewpoint of Mutazilas and explained political authority in rational and not in religious terms. However, his political theory was highly criticized and denounced by leading *ulama* of Egypt because his ideas were undermining the chances of King Fuad to become a new caliph after the collapse of Ottoman Empire.\(^{109}\)

**Taqi Al-Din Al-Nabhani:** Another contemporary Arab political activist Al-Nabhani, tried to revive the Islamic caliphate both as a writer and as a political activist. He emphasized the point Divine revelation in connection to political authority. He considered the revival of caliphate as the basic goal of Muslims. He held that Muslims were obliged to obey the religious command and the Divine authority. This obedience was not possible until an Islamic state was founded with a caliph as its ruler.\(^{110}\) His political party *Hizb al-Tahrir* considers caliphate a general leadership for the entire *ummah* to uphold *shariah*. It believes that the establishment of caliphate is a duty of all Muslims. It endorses the classical medieval political theory of caliphate except the conditions of capacity of *Ijtehad* and *Quraysh* origin. It neither regards modern election method necessary nor rejects it. It combines the classical theory based on ideological framework of Islam with modern ideas with the modern ideas of rule of law, independent judiciary, representative government and consultation. It regards caliphate a government which is based on the

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concept of ummah and citizenship regardless of any race, cast, ethnicity or creed. Among various Islamic political movements Hizb al-Tahrir has a profound influence on young Muslim generation of not only the Arab world but also the non-Arab Muslims countries.\textsuperscript{111}

\textit{Abu’l Kalam Azad:} Contrary to the Arab Nationalists, Azad supported the Ottoman Caliphate. He was one of the forefront leaders of the ‘Khilafat Movement’ in India. In his book \textit{Mas’ala Khilafat} he rejected the republican form of government and favored Ottoman Caliphate.\textsuperscript{112} He also criticized the classical medieval political theory of Islam especially the condition of Quraysh origin. He explained that this idea was against the teachings and injunctions of Islam. He argued that the acceptance of general statement of the Holy Prophet (SAW), regarding Quraysh as leaders, as a Hadith was actually the result of a several centuries’ rule of the tribe.\textsuperscript{113}

\textit{Muhammad Iqbal:} Contrary to the other mainstream political thinkers and activists in subcontinent, Iqbal supported the abolishment of the Ottoman caliphate in 1924. He regarded the change in Turkish political system as a reflection of an \textit{Ijtehad} in the modern world. He was also against the famous ‘Khilafat Movement’ and appreciated the political reforms under Kamal Ataturk as a revival of Islam. He praised the act of Grand National Assembly of Turkey and welcomed the republican form of government. He viewed the republicanism very much consistent with Islam and regarded it the need of the time and indispensable.\textsuperscript{114} Here the important point is that whether it is caliphate or republican form of government, scholars attempted to validate and justify it through the religious paradigm. He argued that the decision of Grand National Assembly, in the capacity of \textit{Ijtehad}, had proved that caliphate does not necessarily belong to a single person, therefore, can be vested in a group of persons or an elected body e.g. parliament.

Iqbal was primarily concerned with the ideas of secularism, Islam, nation-state, form of government, etc. while dealing with the issue of caliphate. Iqbal argued that law-making was based on the concept consensus of Muslims – \textit{Ijma’a} in Islam. Therefore, he firmly

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{114} Iqbal Singh Sevea, \textit{The Political Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal: Islam and Nationalism in Late Colonial Era}, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 122.
believed that the political sovereignty was vested in people – *Ummah*. Therefore, the political authority could not be confined to one individual in the form of caliphate. In other words he viewed democracy as an important and vital aspect of Islamic polity. Furthermore, he knew that the idea of a universal caliphate was no more a feasible form of option for Muslims. He argued that even in Islamic history various schools of thought were divided on the nature and justification of caliphate: *Khawarij* believed that there was no need of the institution of caliphate, *Mutazilites* believed that it was a matter of political expediency only, majority *Sunnis* believed that it was demanded by religion, and *Shii* sect believed in the divine nature of caliphate.

Another important element in Iqbal’s writings is the concept of secularism.\(^{115}\) He viewed secularism not an un-Islamic idea in itself. He argued that there is a difference between the idea of secularism in the European context and in the Islamic context. In the European context it was concept based on the necessary separation of Church and State, however, in Islamic context the idea of secularism simply means the separation of functions which is not an alien concept in Islam. However, he believed that Islam does not support idea of dualism by dividing material and spiritual worlds. He argued that Islam constitutes a society with civil laws believed to be revealed by God.

*Sayyid Abul A’ala Maududi*: Sayyid Maududi was one of the most notable Islamic political thinkers of the modern time. His ideas have a profound impact on the politics of many Muslim countries in South, South East Asia, and West Asia. He was not only a thinker but also a political activist; he founded *Jamat-i-Islami* in 1942, a political party which has influenced the political system and political process of a number of Islamic countries throughout the world. As far as his thoughts on the relationship of Islam and politics are concerned, he clearly lays down the principle of sovereignty of God which constitutes a true Islamic state. He judges the political ideas and concepts of modern democracy through the religious perspective.\(^{116}\)

His views on Islam and politics or state are quite distinctive and his views have greatly influenced the Islamic political thought is Pakistan. According to him an Islamic state is demanded by Islam itself. He criticizes the western concept of democracy like Iqbal and

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\(^{115}\) Ibid., 177.

speaks of an Islamic democracy. According to him Islamic state can be termed as a ‘Theo-democracy’ this democracy is the opposite of western democracy. The difference between the two is the concept of sovereignty which belongs to people in the western democracy while in Islam it belongs to God. He regards the Islamic law – shariah a complete system which entails all the aspects of individual and social life. However, the state has only to perform the function of law-finding and not the law-making. The supreme law of the state in the form of shariah has already been established by God.  

In Maududi’s political theory religion is inseparable from politics and vice versa. This along with the idea of indivisibility of God’s sovereignty and establishing an Islamic state are primary premises of his political theory. However, his critics argue that his disposition of divine in order to support his idea of inseparability of politics and religion is flawed. They hold that there are many flaws in his theory of inseparability of religion and politics which are covered by his imaginative interpretations. They further believe that he was driven by his subjectivities which cannot be termed as divine.  

**Amin Ahsan Islahi:** Islahi’s views on the relationship between Islam and politics can be understood by analyzing his concept of an Islamic state. His primary emphasis, in this regard, is on the Shura (consultation) system. He considers Shura as the central theme of an Islamic state. He holds that in early period of Islam the system of Shura was simple, however, in the contemporary world the situation is different and now there can be various forms and types of shura. He was not against the modern conception of elections and held that this system can be adopted with necessary modification.

Amin Islahi was contemporary of Sayyid Maududi and also remained member of Jamat-i-Islami as Naib Amir (Deputy Chief) for some time, however, he left the party later on. Islahi wanted to write a book on the political theory of Islam, however, he was busy in writing exegesis of Qur’an and could not write a comprehensive book. Nonetheless, he wrote several articles on the subject. Later on his articles were compiled in a form of a book. Islahi considered theocracy as an incorrect form of government. He regarded the

existing Islamic political theory as insufficient which rather portrayed Islam as supportive of theocracy which was more in line with papacy.\textsuperscript{121} For him an Islamic state was not much different from an ordinary state in its material sense. It only differs in goals and principles.

\textit{Javed Ahmad Ghamidi}: Another distinctive Islamic scholar and student of Amin Islahi, views the relationship of Islam and politics or state from a different angle. He is of the opinion that there is no and should not be any religion of the state. He even criticized the famous Objectives Resolution in the constitutional history of Pakistan. This resolution, he says, laid the foundation of sectarianism and hatred on the basis of religion in Pakistan. He further says that caliphate is \textit{not} a religious term, nor is there any order by the religion to establish caliphate in the world. Moreover, he argues that there is no mention in Qur’an and \textit{Hadith} of Muslims as one nation. He is against the concept of the nation on the basis of religion. Muslims have a relationship of brotherhood and nationhood, he argues. He, like Islahi, considers the system of consultation – \textit{shura} as a basis of the political system. In this regard, he considers the modern institution of parliament as equivalent of the \textit{shura} system.\textsuperscript{122}

He holds that the state has no mandate to fully implement the Islamic law – shariah, hence, denying a direct relationship between Islam and politics. Islam gives injunctions to individuals and not to the government or the state. Most of these injunctions are related to individual’s relationship with God, hence humans are not responsible before anyone regarding these matters. He says that an Islamic society is based on justice and benevolence. And the state has the primary function to ensure justice and eliminate suppression and injustice. Therefore, assuming the state as a theocracy in which the state will be implementing \textit{shariah} is wrong.\textsuperscript{123}

\textbf{1.8 CONCLUSION}

The relationship between politics and religion has been a vital theme of the ancient, medieval and modern political theory. One of the basic factors for this importance of religion in the political theory is that religion makes strong claims over people’s

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.
commitment. For example Islam says that all people owe obedience to God’s will. Thus it is unavoidable that religious allegiance will sometimes clash with the demands of politics. If on the one hand religion, sometimes, comes in conflict with political process, on the other hand, religious beliefs also support politics in various ways. The political theorists see this support as much important as the conflict between the two. That’s why this relationship between the two has remained one of the most important themes of political theory over the centuries.

There is no doubt that secularism is spreading in the world rapidly, and this trend is the result of and connected to the process of economic development in some ways. However, religion still continues to demonstrate as an important political phenomenon across the world including developed and developing countries. Political theorists in this regard proposed the idea of the ‘cyclical theory of secularization’. It means that process of removing the sense of the religious beliefs from the political process and society has the propensity whereby religion is ultimately reinvigorated and revived. Although people might wish for a divorce between religion and politics but the practical reality is somewhat different. Religion continues to influence politics and politics in turn also exerts its influence and authority on the religious sphere. This has been the pattern of the social processes throughout the history. However, the nature and dynamics of the mutual relationship of religion and politics kept on changing.

As far as the relationship between politics and the Islam is concerned, it has been subject to controversy and confusion. The Islamic political theorists do not have a consensus on the existence and nature of the role of religion in politics or vice versa. Even in the early years of Islamic history there were sharp differences of opinion among various sects and groups of Muslims. Khawarij, Mutazilas, Sunni, and Shi‘i groups had divergent ideas and political ideals. Islam itself does not lay down any clear injunctions with regard to political authority. This is the reason that after the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW), Muslims were faced with the challenge of who should be the successor of the Prophet (SAW). Similarly there was no mechanism of transfer of power, hence, the first four caliphs of Islam (Rightly Guided Caliphs) were appointed through different methods.

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Similarly the institution of caliphate, which is considered central to the Islamic polity, has been subject to controversy both in theory and practice. No single theory of caliphate exists in Islamic political thought. Various political thinkers have discussed and presented this institution in different ways. Some regard it a demand of religion, invoking a close relationship between religion and politics. However, others consider it a purely political institution demanded by the political necessity, suggesting an absence of relationship between politics and religion. The classical medieval political thought related to caliphate is different from the early political theory in Islam in many ways; similarly the modern Islamic political thought is in conflict with classical medieval theory of caliphate. Moreover, the modern Islamic scholars also do not agree on the question of relevance and place of religion in politics or vice versa.

This confusion and divergent opinions regarding the relationship between religion and politics denotes that Islam deliberately tries to maintain a distance between spiritual and political sphere. This is the reason that there is no mention of an ‘Islamic state’ in Qur’an and Hadith. At the most an Islamic society is mentioned, which is based on justice and benevolence. Any attempt to construct an Islamic state would direct towards the realization of these principles – justice and benevolence ‘Adl wa Ihsan’. However, the practical situation is somewhat different. In actual practice, contrary to the widely held opinion of scholars, Islam has been playing a vital role in determining the political discourse in most of the Islamic countries. In the next chapter I have tried to analyze the role of religion – Islam in the politics of Pakistan.
CHAPTER – 2

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN PAKISTAN: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The relationship between religion and politics in the context of Pakistan is older than the state of Pakistan itself. It was religion – Islam on the basis of which All India Muslim League demanded a separate homeland for the Muslims of India. This idea of a state on the basis of religion took shape in late 1930, and gradually assumed the shape of a movement in 1940s. This movement, historically called Pakistan movement, succeeded in August 1947 when a new state emerged on the map of the world in the name of Islam. Since then, religion – Islam has been playing a significant role in the political and constitutional development of the country. Islam has remained a focal point the country’s political, economic, social, and constitutional debates. In almost all the political regimes in Pakistan, whether democratic or military rule, Islam has always been a central theme of state ideology in one way or the other. In this chapter I would discuss the factors responsible for the rise of Islamist political influence in the country as well as the consequent events and policies adopted by various governments and regimes in the country.

2.2 ISLAM AND POLITICS BEFORE PARTITION

Islam for the first time in country’s history was politicized during Pakistan Movement. Interestingly this instrument (Islam) was used for both in favor and against the creation of Pakistan. On the one hand there was All India Muslim League which expounded Two-Nation Theory that Hindus and Muslims were two different nations and could not live together in one state, hence, a separate state was demanded in which Muslims could freely practice their religion – Islam. This plea ultimately got successful and the British India was divided on the basis of religion. However, on the hand there were traditional Islamist forces (primarily Ulama) opposing the creation of Pakistan and partition of India arguing that this was a territorial division of Muslims which was against the spirit of

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Islam. They argued, Islam believed in ‘Universalism’ and opposed the concept of ‘Nationalism’. They rejected the concept of a separate homeland for Muslims considering it as alien to the Islamic philosophy. Consequently, an ideological controversy started between the Islamist groups and the mainstream Muslim political leadership. The latter believed that traditional ulama were not capable of leading Muslims because of their exclusive orthodox and conventional education and unawareness of the dynamics of the politics in contemporary world.

In order to counter the anti-Pakistan movement Islamist forces, the western educated Muslim leadership in All India Muslim League adopted the policy Muslim populism which greatly drew on religious values. In their mass contact campaigns they transgressed and disregarded their pure constitutional and legalist approach and replaced it with the Islamic slogans. They promised to restore the past glory of Islam in the new state, hence, became able to win the support of the majority of Muslims. On the other hand, the traditional ulama and Islamist groups continued with their argument against the creation of Pakistan. There were two main Islamist forces which were directly engaged in the political process at that time: Jamiat-e-Ulama Hind and Jamat-e-Islami.

### 2.2.1 Origin of Two Main Religious Political Parties

Jamat-e-Islami (JI) and Jamiat-e-Ulama Islam (JUI) are two major religious political parties in Pakistan. Both of them have their roots in the British India. JUI is the offshoot of a religious seminary at Uttar Pardesh India founded by some Islamic clerics in 1866 with the name ‘Dar-ul-Ulum Deoband’. It was one of the revivalists movements began in the aftermath of War of Independence 1857 and focused on the revitalization of the religious and social life of Muslims of India. In the beginning the Deobandis were apolitical and were basically concerned with the religious quality of individual lives of Muslims. At the time of First World War they were far away from politics and political issues. However, during the famous Khilafat Movement majority Deobandi Ulama joined Jamiat-e-Ulama Hind (JUH) which was founded in 1919. In this way their journey of politics started in British India. During 1920s they had the anti-Imperialist slogans as their

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3 Ibid., 17.
political agenda. However, with the failure of Khilafat Movement they also lost their energy and could not sustain their political agenda. They, once again, shifted their primary focus from politics to the cultural and religious lives of Muslims.

During 1940 the party revived its program and objectives and reentered the political realm. It was against the concept of Two-Nations Theory, hence, opposed the partition of India. However, it split into two factions. Jamiat-e-Ulama Islam affiliated with All India Muslim League and the main faction Jamiat-e-Ulama Hind maintained its loyalty with the Congress party. Election of 1946 was the first test for JUI. In that election JUI could not perform well in the Pakhtun areas of then NWFP. This indicated that congress, a secular political party, had strong roots in the Pakhtun region. Neither JUH nor JUI could win the support of Pakhtuns before partition.5

Although Pakhtuns had diversified opinions over the issue of creation of Pakistan, the Pakhtun province NWFP joined Pakistan in the referendum held in 1947. JUI started its politics with narrow influence in the new state of Pakistan and mainly focused on the Pakhtun population of NWFP and Baluchistan provinces. In the subsequent years it emerged as one of the strongest Islamist groups in the country and formed governments in these two provinces along with their allies in 2002. Their rise in political power has been discussed in detail in the later part of this thesis.

The other main Islamist political party is Jamat-e-Islami (JI). Like JUI it has also roots in the British India. JI was founded by a reputed Islamic scholar Syyed Maududi in 1942. Unlike JUI, JI had its roots and support in the urban areas. This party also claimed to represent the educated middle class of Muslims. Unlike JUH, JI since its formation had a political ideology.6 The basic philosophy of Maududi was that reformation of the individual lives of Muslims was not possible without reforming the society and political system. According to him the Islamic law – shariah could be enforced only with the coercive power of the state. However, this tendency in JI was shaped fully after the creation of Pakistan in 1947.

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5 Ibid., 90.
2.3 ISLAM AND POLITICS IN THE INITIAL CHAOTIC YEARS

The role of religion – Islam in the political discourse started soon after the independence in 1947. Ulama started demanding for an Islamic constitution. In other words they began struggling for their share in the political power. Among various Islamist forces, JI was on the forefront. It evolved into a political party and redefined its program and goals. Maududi argued that his primary objective was the establishment of an Islamic state even before the creation of Pakistan. He started a movement for the formation of Islamic constitution. He held the opinion that Pakistan was not an Islamic state rather a Muslim state ruled by secular minded politicians; and that only JI had the ability to achieve the goal of creating an Islamic state and implementing the Islamic law – shariah. He further argued that Muhammad Ali Jinnah himself assured the people that the constitution of Pakistan would be based on Qur’an. According to him there was no capable leadership after Jinnah to achieve this goal and only the religious leaders had the capacity and mandate to implement what Jinnah had promised. On the issue of constitution-making, ulama and religious leaders reiterated that the source of formation for the legislature would be shariah only. Religious political parties, particularly JI, demanded that the Constituent Assembly should declare that:

- In Pakistan sovereignty belongs to Allah and the government shall only enforce His will;
- The source of all legislation shall be shariah;
- All the legislation repugnant to shariah would be null and void;
- The government’s authority shall be derived from and exercised within the limits of shariah.

In January 1948 JUI also came up with its proposals for an Islamic state. It demanded that the government should establish an office/designation of Sheikh a-Islam and should appoint a distinctive Alim on this position. JUI also proposed to constitute a committee comprised of the religious scholars to prepare a draft constitution and submit it to the

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9 Ibid., 126.
10 Ibid., 128.
Constituent Assembly.\textsuperscript{11} After having taken into consideration these and other similar demands and proposals by religious leadership, Liaqat Ali Khan, first prime minister of Pakistan, brought the famous Objectives Resolution in the Constituent Assembly in March 1949 according to which the future constitution of Pakistan would be based on the principles of Islam.

2.3.1 Objectives Resolution

This was the first success of the religious political forces in Pakistan. An apparently secular government under the leadership of a western educated prime minister Liaqat Ali Khan could not resist the pressure by Islamist forces and introduced such resolution which was not only criticized by the minority representatives in the Assembly but also the moderate segment in Muslim community and their representatives in the Assembly.\textsuperscript{12} The resolution was thoroughly debated for several days and a large number of the members of Assembly, especially non-Muslims from East Pakistan, expressed their grave apprehensions about the new policy of the government. They termed it as contrary to the commitment and aspirations of Jinnah, and showed strong reservations against it. They held that this resolution was not the voice of Jinnah but the \textit{ulama} of Pakistan. However, the government kept assuring the non-Muslim groups that their positions and status would be safe and secure and their rights would not be impaired by any means.

Liaqat Ali Khan stressed that by creating the state of Pakistan, Muslim League (ML) only fulfilled half of its agenda. And it will complete its mission by establishing an Islamic state as a laboratory where Muslims can experiment upon the injunctions of Islam which enable us to make our contribution to the progress and uplift of the human beings in general and not only Muslims.\textsuperscript{13} He further argued that this resolution would not lead to a theocratic state and would thus establish an Islamic democracy. He seemed to be confident and sure that Islamic system was a democratic one. Religious forces endorsed the viewpoint of Liaqat Ali Khan and argued that only an Islamic state could withstand against the waves of imperialism and monarchy in the world.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 122.
On the other hand the opponents of the Objectives Resolution were convinced that this was against the spirit of democracy. Their views were thoroughly analyzed and concluded in the Munir Report.\textsuperscript{14} The authors of the Munir Report held that the political system in Pakistan could not be termed as democratic because according to Objectives Resolution sovereignty in the state belonged to God and the authority which the rulers exercised was His sacred trust. The philosophic foundation of democracy, they argued, rests on the notion of ‘popular sovereignty’ i.e. majority of the people has the right to establish and shape laws and institutions according to their own understanding and desires without regard to any other sacred law. However, this was not possible in an Islamic state according to the Objectives Resolution, they argued. Justice Munir said that if the prime minister had tried to bring such resolution in the life of Jinnah, the latter would never have given his assent to the proposal. He further highlighted the points in the Resolution which were contrary to the viewpoint of Muhammad Ali Jinnah about the state of Pakistan e.g.:\textsuperscript{15}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Muhammad Ali Jinnah said that in Pakistan sovereignty will belong to the people of Pakistan, nonetheless, the Resolution starts with the idea that sovereignty belongs to God. This was the negation of the basic concept of democracy and popular sovereignty and restricted the powers of the representative assembly of the people;
  \item In the Resolution it is mentioned that the rights of minorities shall be protected with regard to their worship and practice of religion, while Jinnah had said that there will be no minority on the basis of religion in Pakistan;
  \item The idea of religious minority and majority is against the concept of equality itself; hence, it is contrary to the principles of democracy and even Islam.
\end{itemize}

However, Liaqat Ali Khan kept trying to dispel the view that the Objectives Resolution envisioned a theocratic state in Pakistan. He continued pledging that the political authority in Pakistan would be exercised by the elected representatives of the people. In this regard, he argued, we shall abide by the principles of social justice, equality and tolerance as enunciated by Islam. He further elaborated that Islam was against the

\textsuperscript{14} It was a report submitted by a committee chaired by Justice Muhammad Munir after making an enquiry into the anti-Qadiani riots in Lahore in 1953.

\textsuperscript{15} Muhammad Munir, \textit{From Jinnah to Zia}, (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1980), 36.
priesthood so there was no question of theocracy; it stands for freedom and believes in the equality of all men and the right of individuals to enjoy the fruit of their effort and skill if honestly applied. Finally the Resolution was passed on 12 March 1949. Later on the Objectives Resolution was adopted as a preamble to the first constitution of Pakistan framed and promulgated in 1956. Approval of the Resolution by the Assembly was the evidence that religious forces in Pakistan were becoming stronger and started influencing public policy and political process in the state.

2.3.2 Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal 1952

The first outcome of the growing role of religion in politics in Pakistan was the demand from ulama to declare Ahmadis as minority. Ahmadis organized a public gathering in May 1952. After that the religious political parties convened an all party conference in Karachi on 2 June 1952 under the initiative of Maulana Lal Hussain Akhtar. It was the first occasion that formal demands were presented against the Ahmadis. The conference also set a board of ulama to chalk out the further strategy in this regard. A month later on 13 July 1952, another All Parties Convention was convened in Lahore. This was attended by majority of Muslim political parties. All the parties unanimously demanded Ahmadis to be declared non-Muslims. In this convention Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (United Council of Action) was originated. This alliance comprised of nine religio-political parties. Interestingly apart from the religious political parties, ten members of Muslim League also attended a meeting of the council on 22 July 1952. A ‘shariat committee’ of the council was also formed in October 1952 to establish the religious basis of the demands against Ahmadis, however, surprisingly the Shi‘i ulama were not given representation in the committee. Religious forces formally started a movement - Tehreek-i-Khatm-i-Nabuwat against Ahmadis in Pakistan.

*Tehreek-i-Khatm-i-Nabuwat* (Movement of Finality of Prophethood) by the religious political parties led to a law and order situation in the shape of anti-Ahmadi riots in Lahore 1953. The riots started in February 1953 and soon the situation got worse as the

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18 Ibid., 70.
riots were getting more violent day by day. In order to cope with the rising law and situation, Governor General Ghulam Muhammad handed over the city to army on 6 March 1953. This was the first Martial Law in history of Pakistan. Although this movement was suppressed by the government initially and religio-political parties in Pakistan remained generally and apparently unsuccessful in giving the state a substantive Islamic character, but their efforts set a pattern for the future discourse of Pakistan’s politics as Ahmadis were declared non-Muslims much later in 1974 through a constitutional amendment. The originally an ideological cum law and order issue turned into a constitutional debate in Pakistan which was the evidence of a strong interconnection between religion and politics in Pakistan.

2.3.3 The 1956 Constitution and Religious Forces

The first constitution of Pakistan was adopted by the second constituent assembly on 29 February 1956 and it was implemented on 23 March 1956. The Islamist forces in Pakistan found the constitution an Islamic one. Especially Jamat-i-Islami termed it as an Islamic constitution. The Islamic provisions were part of the Directives Principles of state policy, however, this part was not enforceable in courts. It was reaffirmed in the preamble that the state would take steps to enable Muslims of the country to order their lives according to Qur’an and Sunnah. The constitution ensured that no law in the country would be valid if it were contrary to Qur’an and Sunnah.

For head of the state it was compulsory to be a Muslim, however, there was no mention in the constitution about Islam as a state religion. Although apparently it seemed that the constitution represented the ideology of the traditionalists or conservative religious section of the country as the Islamic provisions were included and the Objectives Resolution was made a part of the preamble, however, the framers of the constitution tried to draft a balanced document with regard to role of religion in the state affairs. On the hand the traditionalists were under the impression that their cause could be advanced by the inclusion of Islamic clauses, however, on the hand the liberal democratic section of the society saw nothing objectionable in the form of Islamic provisions.

20 Ibid., 41.
Generally the religious forces and ulama found it an acceptable document without much criticism and debate. At least the framers of the constitution accepted the fact that Islam had an undeniable role to play in the state affairs and politics, and because of this reason they gave the religion its due place in the constitution. The Mjlis-i-Shura (Consultative Committee) of Jamat-i-Islami issued a statement on 18 March 1956.\footnote{Ibid., 197.} According to the statement the preamble of the constitution and directive principles have settled the long debated issue between Islamic and un-Islamic forces in the state in the favor of Islamic forces.

### 2.4 THE STATE OF RELIGION AND POLITICS IN AYUB ERA

On 7 October 1958 president of Pakistan Iskandar Mirza declared Martial Law in the country and abrogated the constitution. General Ayub Khan was appointed Chief Martial Law Administrator who removed Iskandar Mirza from the office and assumed the presidency on 27 October 1958. After three years of military rule, Ayub Khan introduced his own constitution to further strengthen his authority. This constitution of 1962 recognized the presidential system, federal structure and Islamic principles apparently. However, in actual it was neither a presidential and federal in real sense, nor did it entail any Islamic character in the strict sense of the term.\footnote{Lawrence Ziring, The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958-1969, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 24.} The official name of the country – Islamic Republic of Pakistan was replaced with Republic of Pakistan, however, later on due to the growing pressure from religious forces it was restored with a constitutional amendment. In the directive principles there was reference to shariah and Islamic way of life regarding lawmaking, but the authority to implement laws enacted according to such principles was given to the state, and nobody had the right to question the state’s discretion.

Under the constitution an advisory council of Islamic Ideology was set up. Its members were mainly from the administration or the lawyers’ community. Some ulama were also part of this advisory body but they were not from the mainstream religious groups and known for their modernist and liberal views. Apart from the council of Islamic Ideology another institution was also formed with the title Islamic Research Institute. Dr. Fazl-ur-Rehman was the first president of the institute. He was known for his modernist and
liberal approach towards Islam. Ulama and religio-political parties continued exerting pressure on the government regarding the (un)Islamic nature of the constitution. Ayub Khan could not resist the pressure and agreed to restore the Islamic features of the 1956 constitution through amendments to the constitution in 1963.24

It seemed that Ayub Khan was against using religion in politics as he did not declare Islam as the state religion unlike the constitution of 1956. Nevertheless, he was also aware of the fact that abandoning Islam as a state policy would prove detrimental and dangerous particularly to his rule. While discussing the role of Islam in Pakistan’s politics in his book Friends not Masters, he wrote: “Any attempt at interpreting the tenets of Islam and adapting the laws to conform to the requirements of the time is a signal for the ulama to raise the slogan of heresy”.25 He believed that Qur’an contained on a rules and principles of direction and did not stipulate a detailed constitution to run a country. He argued in his book that Islam did not prescribe any specific form of government or even a method to elect the head of the government was not established.26

2.4.1 Curtailing the Role of Ulama in Politics

As far as the question of Islamic principles is concerned, Ayub Khan was of the opinion that it should be the right and privilege of the community to interpret the Islamic principles. In saying so he attempted to marginalize the role of ulama in politics. Ayub khan was convinced that Ijma (consensus) of the community was the solution to the socio-political issues faced by Pakistan.27 He also seemed influenced from Iqbal in his approach towards Ijtihad. He held that the right to interpret the Islamic principles and laws had shifted from handful of individuals – ulama to the people’s representative assemblies in modern times. He argued that this was the most significant development in the legal and political development of Islamic societies. The growth of republicanism and gradual development of representative assemblies in Islamic societies constituted a vital step in advance, he argued in his book.28

24 Ibid., 27.
26 Ibid., 128.
27 Ibid., 199.
28 Ibid.
It was because of this argument that he left the important matters relating legal interpretation of Islamic principles to be decided by the assembly. However, he also formed Council of Islamic Ideology backed by Islamic Research Institute. This might be to neutralize the religious forces and ulama who wanted their share in the country’s legal and political system. Moreover, Council of Islamic Ideology was formed in an advisory capacity with minimum authority over important decision-making related to legal and constitutional issues; and even this body was not only comprised of ulama but legal, economic and administrative experts as well which further curtailed the influence of ulama in this regard.

Ayub Khan knew that ulama would not be satisfied and would blare up with these arrangements. In support of his measures and arrangements he argued that ulama wanted to grab all the powers relating lawmaking and constitution, yet they had failed so far to produce any model constitution for the country. This was the evidence of their internal differences and inability to agree on principles and hence drafting a constitution. He further said that ulama just wanted to gain and retain more and more power and maintain monopoly over the religious as well as the sociopolitical life of the individuals. He said that ulama wanted to judge and govern the people, and would regard a constitution Islamic only if it were drafted by them. This, he said, was neither acceptable to him nor the people of the country.29

2.4.2 Jamat-i-Islami during Ayub Era

Ayub Khan’s distrust about the ulama and religious forces in the country and their role in the politics led to the outlawing of the most organized religious party – Jamat-i-Islami. He deemed the activities of JI as a threat to the security of the state.30 It is interesting to note that all the government servants, both civil and military, were asked to submit an undertaking that they did not have any link with JI. Earlier the imposition of martial law in the country was also, partly, to spoil the growing influence of JI in country’s political process. And soon after assuming the power Ayub Khan banned JI along with other political parties. JI was well aware of the Muslim Brotherhood party’s fate in Egypt,

29 Ibid., 203.
therefore, it refrained from any direct confrontation with the military government. However, in spite of this pragmatic approach Maududi’s JI remained one of the strongest opponents of Ayub Khan’s government.

The JI during that martial law came up with the political motto and slogans of anti-military rule, pro-democracy, and anti-secular, etc. It was badly hurt and offended by Ayub Khan’s liberal approach in politics which was against JI’s vision of an Islamic state. It raised the slogan ‘Stop Innovations’ in 1960s which showed the spirit of its agitation and fear of a political system based on un-Islamic lines. This anti-Ayub approach was also reflective of its anti-West policy. Maududi witnessed the secularization process in other Islamic countries and feared that Ayub Khan was doing the same in Pakistan with the help of America. This shows that JI has been using this political rhetoric, of America’s interference and attempt to secularize Muslims, since 1960s. Maududi believed that Western countries particularly America was threatening upon Islam as a bigger hazard than communism. In short Ayub Khan’s regime was an era of strident political rhetoric by the religious parties in general and JI in particular. However, for a short span of time the interest of JI and Ayub Khan converged during 1965 war with India which brought them on the same page.

JI was also against the introduction of Family Laws ordinance in 1961, however, the religious leaders at the grass root level were not supportive of Jamat-i- Islami in this regard. Ayub Khan introduced these laws before the promulgation of the constitution. According to these laws unrestricted polygamy was abandoned and consent of the current wife was compulsory for a second marriage. Both in urban and rural areas Arbitration Councils were formed; these bodies had to deal with the cases of grant of permission to a man seeking second marriage and reconciliation between a husband and wife, etc. Moreover, these laws made all marriages to be compulsory registered with the registrars. These registrars were appointed by union councils. The registrars were also authorized to perform marriages and for these services they were to be paid a substantial amount of fee. The registrars were mainly the religious clerics who led the prayers in mosques – Imam or Khatib. According to an estimate five million rupees were going to the pockets of these religious leaders. This was the reason that they either supported Ayub Khan or remained

31 Ibid., 470.
32 Ibid., 474.
neutral when Jamat-i-Islami launched a protest against Family Laws describing it as un-Islamic.\textsuperscript{33}

2.4.3 **Opposition from other Religious Groups and Leaders**

Although Jamat-i-Islami was on the forefront of the main opposition to Ayub Khan’s liberal policies, yet other religious forces were also playing their role in this regard. JUI was notable among them.\textsuperscript{34} Ayub Khan’s liberal policies and approach towards politics and state affairs provoked religious leaders and ulama. They opposed the Family Laws Ordinance vehemently. Similarly the family planning laws were declared un-Islamic by majority of the religious leaders, they were of the opinion that using contraceptives was un-Islamic and prohibited. In 1968-69 the main accusations against Ayub regime were of political nature i.e. dictatorship and indirect election, etc. however, during the protests the conservative segment of the society was easily manipulated and turned against the ‘un-Islamic’ policies of Ayub Khan which further strengthened the anti-Ayub campaign by political leaders. Mufti Mahmood of JUI criticized his Family Laws Ordinance during talks between Ayub Khan and political leaders in March 1969.\textsuperscript{35}

Apart from the Family Laws, Ayub Khan also received opposition and criticism from religious groups regarding a few other issues. Among these issues one was the sighting of moon of Shawwal and celebration of Eid; ulama issued decree that it was purely a religious matter and they did not trust government in this regard, hence they refused to accept the decision of government moon sighting committee. Another issue was the book Islam written by Dr. Fazlur Rehman who was the president of Islamic Research Institute. Dr. Fazlur Rehman was a modernist and interpreted Islam in a liberal context. The protest against this book and the author led the latter to resign from his position as the president of Islamic Research Institute. Ayub Khan could not afford the opposition from religio-political forces at that time, hence, he avoided to any confrontation with them on this issue.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{33} Ghazali, *Islamic Pakistan*, 40.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 42.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 108.
Despite the fierce opposition from the religious forces to the liberal policies of Ayub Khan, the active role of Islam in politics remained dormant for most part of his military regime. The role of religious groups in politics was confined to the rhetoric and protest only.

2.5 THE RELIGIOUS FORCES IN POST-MILITARY REGIME

Pakistan Peoples’ Party (PPP) and its leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto emerged in the late 1960s with the slogans of ‘Socialism’. This era is marked with the rise of ‘leftist’ politics in the country. Bhutto raised the socialist slogan of Roti, Kapra aur Makan (Food, Clothing and Shelter) during 1970s election. The Islamist political parties were not clear about the rising phenomenon of ‘Socialism’. They were rather divided on the issue and split into two schools of thought with regard to confronting this ‘leftist’ trend: on the one hand there was a moderate and politically minded group of ulama and religious parties including a faction of JUI leadership who believed that socialism was actually in accord with the anti-imperialist and populist policies of pre-independence Jamiat-i-Ulama; on the other hand there was another group of ulama and religious parties including Jamat-i-Islami who insisted that socialism was a system of kufr (infidelity).\(^{37}\) The former were more adept in aligning their politics with the moderates and of that time. This trend still continues in the politics of JUI even at present day. They happened to be more adaptive and flexible as compare to the other major Islamist party – Jamat-i-Islami.

JUI was led by Mufti Mahmood who took up the responsibility of leftist Deobandi politics in the country which was not expected by many in Pakistan.\(^ {38}\) He was born in the southern district of present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – Dera Ismail Khan in 1919. He studied at a Deobandi madrassah in Muradabad, UP India. Then he came to Mianwali which was a Pakhtun dominated district close to Dera Ismail Khan. Mufti Mahmood developed close relations with Maulana Husain Madani who was a pro-congress leader of JUH. Mufti Mahmood built a political base for himself in his own district. He led the socialist inclined faction of JUI in 1960s and was successful in developing a strong Pakhtun constituency in the southern districts of then North West Frontier Province.

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This was the high time that religion – Islam was building a base in the politics of Pakhtuns of Pakistan.

2.5.1 Election of 1970 and Religious Forces

Although, on the whole, Islamist parties could not perform very well but still they managed to give tough time in two provinces Baluchistan and NWFP (now Khyber Pakhunkhwa) to the then most popular political party of the West Pakistan i.e. Pakistan Peoples’ Party. It was a surprising upset when Mufti Mahmood defeated the chairman of PPP Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Dera Ismail Khan. The political influence and stature of the JUI leader further paid off after Bhutto assumed power in 1971 after the secession of East Pakistan. An agreement was signed between Bhutto, Mufti Mahmood and Abdul Wali Khan of National Awami Party (NAP) which enabled JUI and NAP to form a coalition government in then NWFP. This was the first occasion in country’s history that a religio-political party came into power in a province, though in alliance.

2.5.2 Mufti Mahmood as Chief Minister of NWFP

Mufti Mahmood became the chief minister of the province on 1st May 1972. This was a landmark development in the Pakistan’s political history that an Islamist party assumed power in the Pakhtun dominated province. However, the coalition government of JUI and NAP could not last longer; it remained in power only for ten months. Nevertheless, it proved as a high water mark for Religious influence in country’s politics in general and Pakhtun region in particular. JUI adopted and carried on with the same agenda, set by Mufti Mahmood in 1970s, in the subsequent decades. In his short lived rule, Mufti Mahmood started an enthusiastic Islamization program in the Pakhtun province. He banned liquor, introduced reforms in inheritance law and declared the observance of Ramadan mandatory. He also initiated the scheme to grant interest free loans, however, this could become successful. He further made some unsuccessful attempt towards Islamization e.g. establishing an ‘Ulama Advisory Board’ which was to strengthen the religious influence and role in country’s politics; to make reading of Qur’an and Arabic

39 Ibid.
language mandatory for admission in a university; insisting on a particular uniform for all government servants; banning dowry, and prohibiting gambling.41

2.5.3 Growing influence of Religious Forces

Although Mufti Mahmood’s government was short and unsuccessful, but he was not dissuaded or discouraged after his government fell in 1973. He rather took the role of opposition to the government with reinvigoration. He came up with the demands of sweeping and rigorous Islamic-oriented legislation including amendments to the constitution regarding blasphemy. The pressure he and other religious forces asserted was growing with the passage of time. One of the indications of increasing role of religion in politics was that Mufti Mahmood was made leader of the United Democratic Front, a platform of all major opposition parties.42 The most notable sign of the growing influence of Islamist forces in politics was the declaring Ahmadis non-Muslim. In 1974 Mufti Mahmood of JUI and Maulana Yusuf of the Binori Madrassa Karachi took lead of the anti-Ahmadi movement and demanded them to be declared non-Muslims officially.43 Unlike 1950s, this time the movement got successful and Ahmadis were declared non-Muslims through a constitutional amendment in 1974. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto went along these Islamist initiatives toward the ending years of his rule in an unsuccessful effort to strengthen his increasingly weak position.

2.5.4 The Nizam-i-Mustafa (Order of the Holy Prophet SAW) Movement

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto announced the schedule for the new general elections on 7 January 1977. Bhutto’s position had weakened many folds as compare to his popularity in 1970.44 Although he, during the latter period of his tenure, took some notable measures to win the support of the religious segment of the country, however, the main opposition he faced in the 1977 election was from the religious parties. Nine opposition parties including the religious parties formed an alliance, Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). This alliance adopted an Islamic inspired platform called Nizam-i-Mustafa (Order of the Holy Prophet SAW). This was the indication that religious forces had gained much popularity and influence in country’s politics. Jamat-i-Islami was on the forefront of these opposition

41 See http://www.khyber.org/people/ulema/MuftiMehmood.html
42 Ibid.
44 Ibid., 212.
parties. Even JI announced that its Amir of Sindh province Jan Muhammad Abbasi would contested the election against Zulfikar Bhutto in latter’s home constituency Larkana. However, Jan Muhammad could not file his nomination papers for the election as he was kidnapped by PPP supporters. PNA was running a successful campaign against Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The campaign of the religious parties led by JI was so effective that Bhutto resorted to rigging in the elections. When the result of the election was announced Bhutto’s PPP won 78% of the National Assembly seats.

The PNA immediately denounced the election and termed the results fake and unacceptable. It boycotted the provincial elections, demanded for Bhutto’s resignation and holding of new election. Protests over the results of election started in Karachi quickly spread across the country. Bhutto denied the allegations of rigging and arrested the opposition parties’, including the Jamat-i-Islami, members which further aggravated the tense situation. JI along with other parties conducted street protest and started civil disobedience. The cleavage between government and opposition was deepening. The demands for democratic and constitutional measures transformed into an Islamic social movement under the title of Nizam-i-Mustafa.

Sayyed Maududi of JI invited the government for negotiations with some preconditions: release of all arrested opposition leaders, lifting of section 144, and abrogation of Defence of Pakistan Rules, etc. Bhutto did not respond positively initially, however, realizing later on that Maududi was the main force behind PNA he, attempted to settle the issue with him directly. He went to Maududi’s house on 16 April 1977 in an attempt to break the deadlock, however, the latter only advised him to resign and let a provisional government hold new elections. Other opposition leaders and supporters of PNA were also not in mood of any reconciliation with Bhutto.

Sensing the gravity of the situation Bhutto came up with the strategy of Islamization in order to win the support of religious parties and save his rule. After two days of his meeting with Maududi, Bhutto announced that, in the light of the demands of Nizam-i-Mustafa, all the casinos and nightclubs in the country would be closed down, sale of liquor would be banned, and gambling would be prohibited. Furthermore, he would

45 Afzal Iqbal, Islamization of Pakistan, 87.
46 Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr, The Vanguard of Islamic Revolution, 180.
47 Ibid., 182.
reconvene the Council of Islamic Ideology under the supervision of JUI leader Mufti Mahmood who would keep an eye on the Islamization policies started by the government. However, religious parties rejected these proposals and again demanded for the new elections.

### 2.5.5 Factors behind the Islamization Policies of Bhutto

Although the real and rigorous process of Islamization in Pakistan started under Zia-ul-Haq which has been discussed in the next section in detail, however, Bhutto also took some substantial measures towards promoting Islam as a social system and a political ideology as noted above. Bhutto came in power with the socialist slogan of Roti, Kapra aur Makan and emerged as a leftist party on the political scene of Pakistan. However, strongly leftist and secular stance of PPP was soon changed significantly. Islam started emerging a major source of all policy and lawmaking in the country. Gradually all the significant issues related to public policy were eventually dressed in religious color. In short, soon after, Islam became the legitimizing tool for all political activities. The PPP government resorted to Islamic rhetoric and appeal to Islamic justifications as key guiding factors for law and decision-making. An attempt has been made to explain this trend in Pakistan’s politics in the following lines:

The most immediate factor for this change in Bhutto’s stance and religion becoming a key factor in country’s political discourse was the conditions under which Bhutto assumed power. Pakistan was split into two in 1971. East Pakistan had seceded on the basis of cultural and economic disparities between the two wings of the country East and West. Ethnic nationalism and cultural identity understandably posed a serious threat to the national integrity and solidarity. Therefore, in order to prevent any such tendency in the future, the state deliberately adopted the policy of promoting religion as a common feature of all the people of Pakistan.

Bhutto was also keen to make alliances with the oil rich Gulf States. He knew the significance of such alliances for the socioeconomic uplift of the country. Bhutto sought to develop an ideological alliance with Muslim states, and thus attempted to promote

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49 Ibid., 169.
Islamic brotherhood. Considering this trend in Bhutto’s policy and politics, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates supported all kind of Islamic measures taken by government. These countries also sought to prevent Pakistan falling in the clutches of communism and negating its Islamic identity. So this alliance was in the interest of both the sides: Pakistan wanted to benefit economically from the Arab countries while the later wanted to promote their particular ideology and prevent socialism in Pakistan.\(^{50}\)

Pakistan also initiated its nuclear program under Bhutto in 1974. This was, nonetheless, an ambitious policy and project started by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The western countries particularly United States were not supportive of Pakistan’s move to becoming a nuclear power, hence they turned against the state policy and especially Bhutto regime. Bhutto projected this program as a program of the entire Muslim world because he needed the financial and moral assistance from these Islamic states.\(^{51}\) Bhutto convened the second summit of Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) at Lahore, Pakistan in 1974. This was a right political move by Bhutto to strengthen the bond between Pakistan and Muslim states. It was the time when socialism, the initial guide to policy making, was kept aside and the international politics led to bring change in priorities.

It was not only the international politics in the wake of which Bhutto resorted to adopt a pro-Islam political strategy, but the internal political circumstance were also instrumental in this shift of Bhutto’s political behavior as mentioned above. Bhutto was facing severe threat from the PNA movement in the later part of his rule. PNA was to contest the 1977 elections against Bhutto and this alliance was gaining momentum and popular support which was an alarming situation for Bhutto. The official party-agenda of the PNA was an active role of religion in policymaking. JI also emerged also emerged as a major key player in the country’s politics. As a result Bhutto adopted a seemingly pro-Islam policy in order to pacify and counter his political opponents. The legal structures of the state started being increasingly influenced by the religion – Islam.\(^{52}\)

A number of shariah laws were introduced in the country including banning alcohol, horse racing and gambling, etc. Friday was made the weekly holiday instead of Sunday,


\(^{51}\) Ibid.,

Ulama Academies were established and Qur’anic studies were made mandatory for all students. Musawat – a new newspaper was also founded to propagate the Islamic justification of Bhutto’s rule. Bhutto amended the manifesto of the party and replaced ‘socialism’ with ‘Musawat-i-Muhammad’ (Equality of Muhammad SAW) in party’s manifesto and literature. These steps were taken to prove the dedication of Bhutto and PPP to the cause of Islam. Bhutto saw these measures as a powerful tool to fight his political opponents of PNA.

Apart from these measures he also declared Ahmadi as non-Muslims through a constitutional amendment in 1974 as mentioned above. In short, religion had become one of the most significant political factors to facilitate international and domestic political goals of the government of PPP. Although enhancing the role of religion in politics by Bhutto could not save his vanishing popularity, it underpinned the centrality of religion for the following military regime of General Zia-ul-Haq. It can be concluded that seeds of a lethal alliance between religious forces and military is found in Bhutto’s policy shifts.

2.6 ISLAM AND POLITICS UNDER ZIA-UL-HAQ’S MILITARY RULE

Primarily two major religious parties had been playing a significant role in Pakistan’s political and constitutional development: JUI and JI. The former, however, started losing popularity among the masses towards the end of Bhutto regime. On the one hand it was using the Islamist rhetoric and upholding the agenda of implementing shariah, but on the other had it was also not rejecting the socialist policies of PPP government altogether. This was highly criticized by both critics and laymen. The party was termed as sarcastically pragmatic, opportunist and hypocritical by many. The party had lost both its original agenda and the support it received from masses before and after the partition. It became able to increase its vote bank in Pakhtun populated areas of Baluchistan and then NWFP, however, soon its position started weakening in these areas. In such circumstances JI was becoming increasingly popular and came to the forefront of country’s political scene.

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53 Ibid., 110.
54 Ibid., 115.
2.6.1 Jamati-i-Islami and Zia Nexus

July 1977 marked the beginning of another martial law in Pakistan’s history. General Zia-ul-Haq, who was appointed chief of army staff by Bhutto himself, seized power and overthrew Bhutto’s government. Zia’s era was knowingly the era of extraordinary influence of Islam in political affairs. Zia-ul-Haq started to Islamize all the national institution: civil bureaucracy, courts and army, etc. He passed the Hudood Ordinance, declared the blasphemy as a capital crime by revising Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), and promulgated a variety of other token Islamic reforms and measures which marked as an ideological character of the state of Pakistan. He continued with this approach and ideology until his death in August 1988.\(^57\)

Jamat-i-Islami in that situation was faced with a challenging question of whether to support Zia in his determination about Islamization process or whether to continue with party’s democratic principles and insistence on the civilian rule. After a thorough debate within the party and despite the internal disagreement, party decided to support Zia’s rule and his Islamization process. Jamat-i-Islami became a partner with Zia’s military rule, gave him domestic support and got various important ministries in the cabinet. Mian Tufail, successor of Maududi as party’s Amir, was instrumental in taking this position on behalf the party.\(^58\)

However, the initial years of JI ministers in the Zia government (cabinet) proved disappointing. They were unable to convince the bureaucracy to implement their shariah agenda with the exception of Khurshid Ahmad who was successful in promoting new financial policies by reforming banking sector and zakat system.\(^59\) However, in the Council of Islamic Ideology their influence was much greater than in the cabinet regarding prompting their agenda. Their members in the council helped to formulate a new set of Islamic penal reforms. Similarly their influence in the army was also increasing tremendously and they were given exceptional access to the senior officer

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\(^{56}\) The literal meaning of Hudood (singular Hudd) is limit, or restriction. This is an Islamic concept, based on Shariah that describes crimes against God. These include the religious crimes of adultery, apostasy, consuming liquor, transgression, robbery and theft, etc. Under the Shariah, hudood crimes trigger a set of punishments which are considered to be mandated and fixed by God. These range from public flogging, publicly stoning to death, amputation of hands or public execution.

\(^{57}\) Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan*, 140.

\(^{58}\) Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of Islamic Revolution*, 188.

\(^{59}\) Ibid.
ranks. This happened mainly because of the ‘Afghan Jihad’ in which JI was playing a major role.

The decade of 1980s (years of Soviet-Afghan War) is quite often characterized as the zenith and peak days of Jamat-i-Islami. The party represented the ultimate apex of influence in country’s official circles during that period. However, despite such prime period of JI, it is mistaken to assume that link between the military rule and religious politics was clear and straightforward. Rather the relationship between military rule and the Islamic politics of JI was a complex one. The main factor behind this ambivalent relationship between Zia and JI was the past experience of a military rule under Ayub Khan when there was a reciprocal and occasional manipulation between military government and Islamist parties.

Even in the beginning some elements within the party were skeptical about the opportunities they were given by Zia, and considered them as distraction from their original goal and agenda of implementing a shariah law in the country; they were not much enthusiastic about this close relationship between Zia and Jamat-i-Islami in the initial years of ‘Afghan Jihad’. Later on when Zia became confident of the support from United States, the relationship between JI and Zia started weakening, yet Zia maintain the apparent good relationship with JI because he knew the ability of the latter to mobilize a movement against him through its well organized students’ wing. When JI affiliated candidates performed poorly in the 1985 non-party based general election, Zia began to look for other political parties for popular support.60

2.6.2 Islamization Process

After assuming the power, Zia-ul-Haq criticized the politicians for not taking any concrete steps to Islamize the political, social and legal systems of the state.61 He, therefore, in order to pretend his sincerity with the cause of Islam, took several notable measures with regard to introduce an Islamic system in Pakistan. These measures included contacts and consultation with religious scholars – ulama, promulgating the ‘Hudood Ordinance’, establishing the Shariah Court, setting up shariah benches in the

60 Ibid., 198.
supreme court, setting up the Qazi courts, steps towards developing an Islamic economic system through reforms in banking sector, founding International Islamic University Islamabad, lawmaking regarding Ahmadis, enforcing ‘Shariah Ordinance’ in 1988, reforms in information and entertainment media and so called making a ‘favorable atmosphere’ in which people could live their life in accordance with the injunctions of Qur’an and Sunnah, etc.

The Islamist political parties in Pakistan, particularly Jamat-i-Islami appreciated the Islamization measures taken by Zia-ul-Haq. These forces regarded the Islamization policy as important step toward connecting Pakistan with its original ideological antecedent. However, there were different opinions even within the Islamic groups about the methods, scope, priorities and efficacy of these Islamic reforms. Critics from within the Islamist forces held that these reforms were insufficient and that the Zia government was moving too indolently toward making a true Islamic state. They were also skeptical about the sincerity of the administrative apparatus of the Zia regime regarding implementation of this policy. However, despite their worries and apprehensions ulama were convinced at least about the sincerity of Zia-ul-Haq and his personal commitment to Islam. Jamat-i-Islami was particularly supportive of these measures as mentioned above.

Critics of the Zia regime saw the whole process of Islamization as a distrustful attempt by the military dictator to exploit the religious sentiments of the country’s Muslim population which was well more than ninety percent of the total population, to consolidate and prolong his illegal rule over the country. They accused General Zia-ul-Haq of using and manipulating the religion in order to justify and continue his position as the head of state and to delegitimize his rivals and political opponents. These measures were termed discriminatory against women and religious minorities in the country. The policy was also criticized as an attempt to suppress the already marginalized minority sects within Muslims.

Although the Islamization measures taken by Zia were initially hailed by the ulama and religio-political parties and evoked a significant religious fervor among the people in the beginning, but this enthusiasm on the part of masses and ulama could nod not sustain for

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62 Ibid., 26.
63 Ibid., 76.
long. The gap between expectations of the people and the outcome of the islamization process increased with the passage of time. For example the economic measures taken by the government could not result in any notable change in the distribution of wealth in the country. Similarly at the time of enforcing the Hudood Ordinance in 1979, President Zia announced that with the severe punishments the crime rate would drop significantly. However, the actual statistics of crime rate showed the otherwise story. Furthermore, the Islamization process and the rise of political Islam during Zia regime also resulted in the sectarian conflicts and controversies. Sunni and Shii ulama were understandably at odds with each other on the question as to which interpretation of shariah would be the basis of public policy.

2.6.3 Introduction of a New Political Order

Zia-ul-Haq was of the opinion that Islam did not support the system of majority rule – democracy because Islam stood for the national consensus on major issues relating the people and society. He also claimed that in a true Islamic system there was no place for political parties. He argued that in an Islamic system the social values are determined by the Islamic law – shariah based on Qur’an and Sunnah. And in the presence of the clear injunctions of shariah, there was no room for ideological division and disagreement, he held. In Islam there could be only two parties – the party of God and the party of Devil. He considered the political parties as source of division and within the Muslim community. This was the background of declaring political parties un-Islamic by the Council of Islamic Ideology.65

Similarly the state media also played its role in defaming political parties and propagated that more damage had been caused to the national interest of Pakistan by political parties than any other institution.66 The case of ‘Awami League’ was cited as an example of how a political party caused dismemberment of Pakistan. The conclusion drawn from such arguments by Zia was to evolve a new political order in which the political parties would be completely banned to participate in national politics. He further argued that the effectiveness of the political parties is questioned even in the western countries. In short

66 Ibid.
he was not in mood to tolerate the competitive liberal democratic political culture in Pakistan. In an interview given to a West German daily, which was published after two days of his death, he cited Karl Popper – a western philosopher, whose theory was that a political system could not work with more than two political parties. He said that the developing countries were still in the process of political evolution and time was needed to develop political institutions in a positive manner.67

2.6.4 Holding Referendum

Holding of referendum in 1984 by Zia-ul-Haq was another occasion in the history of Pakistan when religion and politics were combined for the political gains. Zia had realized that despite his repressive policies he was unable to eliminate the political forces in Pakistan who were striving hard for the restoration of democracy and civilian rule. Among them Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) was the most significant one. Sensing the gravity of the situation Zia decided to secure his power and position by getting him elected by a referendum in the name of Islam. A referendum was held on 19 December 1984 on the Islamization policy and military regime of General Zia-ul-Haq in which people were asked to vote for Islam. Zia announced before the referendum that if people voted in favor of the Islamization process he initiated in the country, he would consider it as a vote of confidence by the people to elect him for the next five years.68 The people were asked the following question:

“Do you endorse the process initiated by General Mohammed Zia-ul Haq, the President of Pakistan, for bringing the laws of Pakistan in conformity with the injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Holy Qur’an and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW), and for the preservation of the Islamic ideology of Pakistan, the continuation and consolidation of that process, and for smooth and orderly transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people?”69

69 Ghazali, Islamic Pakistan, p. 51.
Given the fact that Pakistan was created in the name of Islam and more than ninety percent of the population was Muslim, it was far from possibility that the people of Pakistan would answer to the question in negative. And this was the shrewd strategy of Zia-ul-Haq. Many termed this referendum as an insult to the intellect of the ignorant and helpless masses of Pakistan. The opposition leaders were detained as the MRD balled for a boycott of the referendum. According to the official results more than 97% of the total polled votes were in ‘yes’. However, the opposition leaders rejected the results. Jamat-i-Islami was the only major political party which accepted the results along with ‘Pir Pagara’ faction of Muslim League.70

The international press and media severely criticized the referendum.71 The Economist described the referendum as so massively rigged and termed it even worse than any communist regime’s political misconducts.72 Zia-ul-Haq manipulated the so called referendum on his ‘Islamization process’ in order to maintain his position as head of the state for another five years. He later on amended the 1973 constitution drastically which gave him unlimited powers and it was quite evident that he had no intentions to guide the country towards democracy.

2.6.5 Promotion of Jihad and Deobandi Madaris

Unlike JI, JUI had a limited interaction with the military government in the beginning and it started a protest to restore the civilian rule in Pakistan. However, the ‘Afghan Jihad’ changed the dynamics of political discourse in the country. JUI participated actively in the ‘Afghan Jihad’ and its political behavior was shaped profoundly by the state patronage after its participation in the war. The Jihadi campaign against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan which was funded by Saudi Arabia and USA led to the establishment of hundreds of Deobandi madaris (religious seminaries) throughout the Pakhtun region in Pakistan.73 The promotion of Deobandi school of thought these madaris was, no doubt, going in the ideological interest of JUI.

The rapid proliferation of these religious seminaries affected the quality of Islamic education being imparted to the students there. With an intention and objective to justify

70 William L. Richter, “Pakistan in 1984”.
73 Mumtaz Ahmad, “Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia”, 476.
and recruit manpower for the Afghan Jihad, a modified comprehensive curriculum was designed in which the Jihadi ideology became more important and prominent than mere understanding traditional scholarly subjects. The new curriculum was more ideological than academic in nature and purpose. The education system in madaris was changed drastically. The system of an extensive study under a qualified and learned Alim was replaced with a system that promoted something of an independent, franchise system. This planned and calculated transformation in the education system of madaris was part and parcel of the Afghan Jihad. This conflict on the western border of Afghanistan changed the political and religious orientation of Pakhtuns in that of the country. Mujahidin were trained in the Pakhtun tribal areas and Deobandi ulama including Pakhtun head of JUI mufti Mahmood issued religious decrees in support of the Jihad. This new trend of romanticizing Jihad, which was previously not an agenda of Deobandi ideology or politics in subcontinent, led to the rapid radicalization of the Pakhtuns in the north-western part of the country.

2.6.6 Changing Role of Ulama in Pakhtun Society

Another notable effect of the Afghan Jihad on Pakistani society in general and Pakhtun society in particular was that the traditional role of ulama changed drastically. Traditionally the mullah of mosque in a village did not have a separate political role other than his religious function, however, with the changing political dynamics of the region gave mullah the opportunity to assume a new political role and function as a political mobilizer which resulted in a clash of interest between him and the tribal leaders seeking political power and influence. The religious clerics, for political motives, started to control religion rather than be controlled by it. This practice and tendency still continues in the Pakhtun society. The current generation of main religious parties uses the symbol of Islam to mobilize a political base and they have been, so far, successful in the Pakhtun society.

The Afghan Jihad not only caused the madrassah to become as a franchise but at the same time the alim to become as an entrepreneur. During the war these common mullahs

74 Ibid., 478.
75 Ibid., 480.
or *ulama* at the lower level were patronized by the state and hence benefited indirectly, however, after the end of the war they found themselves unemployed and were discouraged by the low prospects available outside the *Jihadi* framework. Therefore, they started to stake out their own claim to political power and wealth in order to satisfy their thirst for power wealth and status that the *Jihadi* culture had whetted. This at the same time also challenged the status and position of the tribal elders in Pakhtun society. Traditionally and historically there was no clash of interest between a *mullah* and the tribal leader and the former was patronized by the latter. The latter, if an officially appointed *malik*, also played the role of liaison between the tribal masses and the state’s political agent. However, the Jihadi culture changed the dynamics and culture of politics in the region.  

The Afghan Jihad and the new political and economic dynamics laid the foundation of a new era of Islamism in the Pakhtun society. It brought a new class of religious clerics to the surface which was largely of the *Deobandi* orientation. This class was more disperse in the Pakhtun society and ideologically entrepreneur than its predecessors. This proved to the most dangerous aspect of the Afghan Jihad. It was this clerical class who in part carried on the most destructive aspects of the Jihad including promotion of ‘Kalashnikov culture’, the rooting of sectarian movements, and creation of both ideological and opportunistic *Jihadi* leaders to the state system even in the post Zia regime.  

The Afghan jihad also affected the demographic profile of the Pakhtun region. Approximately four million Afghan refugees migrated to the tribal and settled areas of Pakhtun region. They soon overwhelmed the education and social service capacity of the government and also dominated the small business and transportation sector of the then NWFP province. Over the time, the refugee camps in the Pakhtun region became recruitment centers for *mujahideen* even long after the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and end of Afghan Jihad. This also paved the way for a large number of foreigners including Arabs, Chechens, and Africans entering into the Pakhtun belt seeking to strengthen the Jihad. The broad international presence and participation in the *jihadi* activities in the Pakhtun region during Zia regime predicted the post 9/11 scenario.

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79 Ibid., 178.
in which this region once again proved a battle ground for religious militants from across
the Muslim world.

2.7  ISLAM AND POLITICS IN THE POST-ZIA ERA

The military rule of General Zia-ul-Haq lasted for eleven long years. During these years
military had consolidated its position and status as the real power broker in the country. It
had also penetrated in the civil bureaucracy systematically through allocating five percent
quota in the top civilian bureaucratic positions to the army officers. The sudden death of
the military dictator on 11 August 1988 paved the way for democracy to restart with new
opportunities and challenges. After the end of military rule, the biggest challenge faced
by the two initial civilian governments was to assert their influence over the all powerful
combination of civil and military bureaucracy. The two major Islamist parties i.e. JUI and
JI remained insignificant and indecisive respectively in this period. JUI’s involvement in
politics was at a minimal level while JI was still caught in the dilemma of choosing
between idealism of democratic principles and realism of political expediencies.

2.7.1  Formation of Islami Jamhuri Ittehad (IJI) and Political Process

In 1988 general elections Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) played a vital role in the
formation of Islami Jamhuri Ittehad (IJI) against the increasingly becoming popular
political force in the country – Pakistan Peoples’ Party (PPP) and its leader Benazir
Bhutto.81 IJI included Jamat-i-Islami (JI) and other right wing mainstream political parties
which were considered pro establishment forces. PPP, somehow, managed to secure the
position of largest party in the National Assembly and formed the government with
Benazir Bhutto becoming first ever woman prime minister in any Muslim state. The IJI
used the Islamic rhetoric during the election campaign and argued that it was
indispensable and necessary to continue with the Afghan Jihad policy. Although IJI lost
the election but it still continued as a hostile opposition to the PPP government which
lasted for less than two years.

The JI was a main part of and played a significant role in the formation of IJI in 1988,
however, it never felt comfortable in the alliance. With Qazi Hussain Ahmad became its
new Amir in 1987 replacing Mian Tufail, the party once again started focusing on idealist

81 Rasul B. Rais, “Pakistan in 1988; From Command to Conciliation Politics”, Asian Survey 29, no. 2,
politics of Islamization and achieving a pure Islamic state. Its politics also included the rhetoric on socio-economic reforms and mass agitation. Qazi Hussain Ahmad was the first Pakhtun Amir of JI and he believed in the mass political mobilization.\textsuperscript{82} With this ideological orientation the differences between the political approaches of IJI and JI were becoming visible.

Before the rise of Mohajir Qaumi Movment (MQM) in Karachi, JI was one of the major political forces in the metropolitan city and it had strong hold over the Urdu-speaking community of Karachi. Its main hub of political activity was the Karachi. However, with the rise of MQM on the political scene of Karachi which was partly engineered by Zia-ul-Haq, JI was weakened substantially in the urban politics of Karachi.\textsuperscript{83} With Qazi, a Pakhtun by ethnicity, assuming the leadership of JI, provided him with the opportunity to find new horizons and strengthen the party in other parts of the country particularly in the Pakhtun region. The new dynamics and shifts in the politics of JI brought it at odd with the IJI. And when latter attempted to convince the army to overthrow PPP’s government, JI parted its ways from IJI. The justification given by Qazi for supporting PPP government was that JI had a principled position to stand by the government for its efforts and support for the Kashmir freedom struggle.\textsuperscript{84}

Meanwhile, the PPP government was overthrown by the President Ghulam Ishaq Khan by invoking article 58(2)(b) of the constitution under the pressure from military. The president dissolved the National Assembly and provincial assemblies and announced to hold new elections. Considering the support from military establishment and poor governance of the PPP government, IJI was all set to win the upcoming general elections. Seeing the opportunity, JI once again joined IJI and contested the general elections of 1990 under its banner. This time JI used the anti-US rhetoric and opposition to the Pressler Amendment under which US stopped giving aid to Pakistan on the account of running a nuclear program. IJI won the national election and Nawaz Sharif became prime minister for the first time. The alliance also formed government in the Pakhtun province NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). After JUI in 1972, it was the second occasion that an

\textsuperscript{82} Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr, \textit{The Vanguard of Islamic Revolution}, 196.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 197.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., 199.
Islamic alliance formed the government in the Pakhtun majority province. Jamat-i-Islami was a part of the alliance.\textsuperscript{85}

Jamat-i-Islami, like past experience, this time also made differences with the IJI. When the latter decided to agree on the terms of settlement to the Afghan crisis, JI criticized the government and decided to part its ways with IJI. Jamat-i-Islami used the rhetoric that it was like to sell the mujahideen and spoiling the path of Jihad. It left the alliance in May 1992 and started protest against the government for its domestic and foreign policies. The government of Nawaz Sharif was dismissed by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan by invoking article 58(2)(b) of the constitution for the second time in the span of three years.\textsuperscript{86}

2.7.2 The Role of Islamist Parties and Groups Revitalized

The second terms of Benazir Bhutto (1993-1996) and Nawaz Sharif (1997-1999) in the governments were eventful years in the history of Pakistan with regard to the growing role of religion and religious forces in politics. The era is marked with notable developments in national and international politics including the emergence of Taliban (a militant Islamic group primarily of Pakhtun ethnicity) in Afghanistan. Both JUI and JI played significant role in the rise of new Islamist forces in the Pakhtun region.

The most significant of the newly emerged Islamist groups was the Taliban in Afghanistan under the leadership of Mullah Umar. The Taliban movement had its roots in the madaris (religious seminaries) proliferated in the Pakhtun settled and tribal areas of Pakistan across the border with Afghanistan during the so called Afghan Jihad.\textsuperscript{87} Many of the Taliban leaders including Mullah Umar had studied at ‘Dar-ul-Ulum Haqqania’ in Noshehra, a district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Its chancellor, Sami-ul-Haq Haqqani leads a faction of Jamiat-i-Ulama Islam – (JUI-S).

However, some scholars are of the opinion that the role of main religio-political parties towards the rise of Islamist forces in general and Taliban in particular has been overstated


\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{87} Hassan Abbas, \textit{Pakistan’s Drift into Extremism: Allah, Army, and America’s War on Terror}, (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2005), 154.
and exaggerated. They hold that it was the poor, less educated and ideologically toughened class of ulama which played the central and most important role in this regard. This class of the ulama was at the core of the movement, while the traditional religious leaders played the role of a broker between institutions, including parliament, government and madaris, and the movement itself. Fazl-ur-Rehman of JUI was the most notable among these traditional leaders. He was supporting the Benazir Bhutto, in her second term as prime minister, and her policy of promoting Taliban movement in Afghanistan. In this way the traditional religious leaders, particularly the Deobandi, saw the opportunity to promote and accomplish their own agenda.

If on the hand JUI was playing significant role in the emergence of Islamist movement in Afghanistan, on the hand JI proved to be significant in influencing a local Islamist movement in the Pakhtun region of Malakand agency during that time. JI indirectly influenced the Tehreek-i-Nifaz-i-Shariat-i-Muhammadi (TNSM). This movement emerged in 1989 in a mountainous area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Previously this was a part of the independent princely states which joined Pakistan formally in 1969. However, locals led by the timber merchants demanded to restore the old status of the region in 1070s. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, then prime minister, responded to the demands by giving a special tribal status to the region. However, this was overturned by the judiciary and subsequently an Islamist movement TNSM emerged with a demand to replace the tribal system with shariah. This movement was led by Maulana Sufi Muhammad. Sufi Muhammad and other leaders of the movement were not well educated ideologues of JI, though, but they were inspired by and had connections with Jamat-i-Islami.

The movement took momentum and finally in 1994 the PPP government had to concede to the demands of TNSM and Sufi Muhammad. The government passed and implemented the shariah ordinance for the Malakand region in May 1994. This ordinance remained in effect for four months. According to the ordinance, ‘qazi courts’ were to be established by the provincial governments. The TNSM started protest and agitation again at the end of

88 Joshua T. White, Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier: Islamic Politics and US Policy in Pakistan’s North-West Frontier, (Arlington: Center on Faith and International Affairs, 2008), 34.
89 Ibid.
91 “View from the courtroom: Maulana Sufi cases depict confused state policies”, Pakistan Herald, 9 February 2015.
the ordinance after four months. In order to avoid any chaos and conflict, the government surrendered to the demands of TNSM and a formal agreement was concluded between government and TNSM. According to the agreement a new shariah system was promulgated and state brought some structural changes to the system of governance system.\textsuperscript{92} The state also adopted an appeasement policy by abandoning the invasive taxation which might anger the religious sentiment of the local people and leadership. Government’s policy proved successful by muting the TNSM leadership until the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 which caused the revival of the movement\textsuperscript{93} for the cause of shariah.

2.8 MUSHARRAF’S MILITARY TAKEOVER AND STATE’S STANCE OVER ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS

In October 1999 General Parvez Musharraf overthrew the elected government of Nawaz Sharif and the country witnessed another military coup. There was a clear difference in Musharraf’s approach towards the domestic affairs and his foreign policy initially. He attempted to promote the policy of ‘enlightened moderation’ domestically. He seemed to be inspired by Ataturk of the modern Turkey in this regard. However, in the foreign affairs he continued with the policy of endorsing and supporting the armed freedom struggle by mujahideen in Kashmir and the Taliban’s rule in Afghanistan. Before the military takeover, Nawaz Sharif was under severe pressure from United States to abandon the policy of supporting Taliban in Afghanistan, and it is perceived by some critics that military coup was an attempt to prevent this possible change in the foreign policy by Nawaz Sharif.\textsuperscript{94}

Musharraf extended his support to the Pakhtun Taliban and state was also protecting the al-Qaeda movement which was operating in the country particularly the Pakhtun region. Musharraf publically confirmed his policy of supporting Taliban in May 2000:\textsuperscript{95}

“I just want to say that there is a difference of understanding on who is a terrorist. The perceptions are different in the United States and in Pakistan, in the West

\textsuperscript{92}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{93}“Activists of TNSM Reorganizing”, \textit{Dawn}, 26 June 2003.
\textsuperscript{95}Ahmed Rashid, \textit{Descent into Chaos} (New York: Penguin, 2008), 48
and what we understand is terrorism.... Afghanistan’s majority ethnic Pakhtuns have to be on our side. This is our national interest.... The Taliban cannot be alienated by Pakistan. We have a national security interest there”. 96

The state’s overt and covert support to the Taliban rule in Afghanistan was hailed and facilitated by the religio-political parties particularly the JUI. During the Afghan Jihad, JUI had established extensive links with the military and ISI, and this was the reason that the party was did not criticize Musharraf’s military coup in 1999. The party’s traditional stance on Taliban issue and Musharraf’s support to the Taliban prevented JUI from any offensive approach towards the military regime. However, Jamat-i-Islami’s case was a little different. Unlike JUI it had significantly less investment in the Taliban regime. 97 It was convinced that Musharraf, despite all his support for militant groups in Kashmir and Taliban in Afghanistan, would not let the Islamists asserting their political and legal influence. JI thus opposed Musharraf’s coup openly and staged protests against him. The government closely monitored the activities of Jamat-i-Islami in order to avert any possible domestic political turmoil and its Pakhtun leader Qazi Hussain Ahmad was also banned temporarily from entering Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. 98

2.9 MAIN FACTORS FOR THE RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE IN POLITICS

2.9.1 A State with Ideology

Pakistan is perceived to be a state with an ideology, and that ideology is religio-nationalism. The rise of political Islam in Pakistan is older than the state itself, as Islam was an integral part of the political movement for a separate homeland by the Muslim community of India before partition in 1947. The leaders of All India Muslim League demanded a separate state where Muslims could live their lives in accord with the injunctions of Qur’an and Sunnah, and where they could practice their religion freely in their individual and collective capacities. This was true at least in terms of rhetoric, if not the real purpose, used by the Muslim politicians for achieving a political interest. Muslim leaders attempted well to articulate their demand in a way that it would base on the

96 Ibid., p. 51.
97 Joshua T. White, Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier, 35.
modern conception of nationalism. They sought to prove that Muslims were a distinct nation from Hindus and hence deserved a separate nation-state. Their attempt went quite successful and a state was created on the basis of religio-nationalism. The case of Pakhtuns (of then NWFP) at that time was a unique one. The province was given a choice to join either India or Pakistan in referendum. Apparently it seems that Pakhtun’s decision to join Pakistan was an affirmation and validation of the Pakistan ideology of religious identity. However, considering the fact that the main Islamist parties were against the partition of India and creation of Pakistan (which in their opinion was detrimental to the idea of Muslims Ummah), leads to the idea that they (Pakhtuns) were more pragmatists in their approach rather than adherents to the religio-nationalist ideology.

2.9.2 Islam as a tool for Legitimization of Authority

After having achieved the establishment of a state with Islamic ideology, the rulers have considered Islam as a major tool for validating and legitimizing their power since the very beginning. This is true especially in the context that many rulers derived this political authority from the coercive means and not from popular support. Most of the regimes came into power through military coups and this made them dependent on religion – Islam as a source of legitimacy. They easily manipulated this source to perpetuate their otherwise illegitimate authority. Whether it was the fragile early parliamentary system; authoritarian rule of Ayub Khan; Bhutto’s socialism-oriented democracy; Zia’s dictatorship; or the chaotic democratic era of 1990s, Islamic ideology was used by all rulers with varying degrees and emphases to seek legitimacy for their power. While the early chaotic regime used and promoted a ‘liberal moderate Islam’, Ayub Khan used the idea of a ‘developmentalist Islam’, General Yahya Khan a ‘nationalist Islam’ in the context of East Pakistan, Bhutto used the slogan of a ‘socialist Islam’ and Zia resorted to the idea of a ‘revivalist Islam’ to legitimize and strengthen his grip on political authority.

2.9.3 Religion and the Politics of Protest

The above account suggests that rulers in Pakistan have used Islam as an instrument of legitimizing and consolidating their rule. However, this instrumental use of Islam is not

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limited to the rulers only. There are many examples in the Muslim world where the Islamic forces and groups have challenged and threatened the incumbent political authorities of their respective regimes. The case of Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 is a classic example in this connection where the Islamist forces overthrew a powerful monarch through Islam as a vehicle of political and social protest. In Pakistan the opposition to Bhutto’s rule by Tehreek-i-Nizam-i-Mustafa in 1977 is a major example in this regard. The alliance of religious parties caused the end of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s regime. This movement infused an unprecedented religious zeal among the Muslims during and after the 1977 general elections. The opposition by using the Islamic slogans mobilized the society and challenged the autocratic rule of Bhutto.

Although Bhutto, in an attempt to pacify the Nizam-i-Mustafa movement and save his rule, resorted to take certain measures to exhibit his loyalty and sincerity with the Islamic ideology, but his attempt could not thrive. On the other hand Nizam-i-Mustafa movement did well in accomplishing its objectives which suggests that only using religion for political purpose is not sufficient; it is also important that how effectively one uses the religion as a tool for political mobilization. The opposition with the used this tool more effectively than Bhutto did.

2.9.4 Islam as a Source of National Integration

Pakistan is multicultural and heterogeneous society marred by linguistic, cultural and ethnic differences. The only common feature that an overwhelming majority shares in common is the religion – Islam. Since Pakistan was created in the name of religion and not any other consideration, Islam became a major source of national integration after independence. The policy makers believed that Islamic pronouncement by the state officially and basing the public policy on the Islamic values in various fields including education, culture, and media would help integrating the diverse people of the country and weaken the parochial sense of nationalism based on linguistic or ethnic considerations. This emphasis on Islam as a major source of national integration increased remarkably in the late 1960s when the separatist forces on the basis of ethnicity

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101 Ibid., 55.
and regionalism came to the surface. The emergence of such fissiparous tendencies further led to the promotion of Islam as a basis of national integration.

The secession of East Pakistan in 1971 was a high time for the policy makers to review the policy of promoting Islamic ideology as the only basis for national solidarity and integration. The apparent failure of the policy led many to think that religion alone was not sufficient to keep the socially and economically diversified people, groups and region integrated.\(^{103}\) And the state had to give equal importance to the socio-economic development and equitable distribution of national wealth and resources among the people so as to remove in them the sense of deprivation and sense of alienation. This, however, does not cause a major change in the official policy of relying on Islam to promote national integration. Before the secession of East Pakistan the state used Islam because of the fear of disintegration which failed as a policy. However, after the breakup in 1971 the faith in the utility of Islam as a source of unity for the remaining Pakistan has grown even stronger.\(^{104}\) The Islamic measures taken by Bhutto, and later the Islamization process by Zia can be described in this context. The separation of East Pakistan was seen as not a failure of Islam but rather an effect of un-Islamic policies of the successive governments. This unfortunate event led the policy makers to return to Islamic ideology as a remedy to prevent any similar development elsewhere in the country and to promote a new sense of Islamic reconstruction of identity.

### 2.9.5 Islam as, Politics and Social Harmony

The Islamization policies introduced by Zia-ul-Haq were praised and welcomed by Jamat-i-Islami and ulama in the country. They perceived the Islamization process as a means to achieve the ultimate goal of a true Islamic state. The measures taken by the military government in this regard were seen as important for the greater social cohesion in the Pakistani society. Although they were skeptical about the commitment of bureaucracy and the administrative apparatus of the country in this regard, however, they were convinced about the sincerity of Zia’s personal loyalty and dedication to the cause of Islamic state. On the other hand critics of Zia saw these policies as a source of exploiting the poor, uneducated masses and a means to perpetuate the illegal rule of a

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\(^{104}\) Ibid., 170.
military dictator. However, in spite of this criticism, the Islamization process in its earlier phase evoked remarkable zeal and interest among the people. And the process was seen a cementing force for a class-oriented Pakistani society.

Nevertheless, this enthusiasm and optimism about the growing role of Islam in social life could not last long. The so called Islamic economic policies initiated by the military regime failed to devise a mechanism for just distribution of wealth. Zakat, Ushr and other economic policies introduced by the Zia did not result in any commendable change in the system of economic and social exploitation. Corruption and financial mismanagement increased many fold during the and after Zia regime. Crimes and other social evils multiplied in the society ever since the introduction of so called Islamic laws during 1980s. The Islamization process is also associated with the wave of sectarianism and tensions among various doctrinal schools in the country. The question as to which version of shariah should constitute the basis of public policy has remained a major source of conflict between two major sects of Muslims in the country. Pakhtun society, particularly ‘Kurram Agency’, also suffered from the wave of sectarianism triggered by the political role of Islam.

The military regime of Zia exploited the religious sentiments of the people and tried to justify everything he did in the name of Islam and thus identified Islam with the measures that were basically intended for prolonging his own rule. In short, this can be argued that, instead of unifying various social strata in the country, emphasis on Islam in legalistic terms both by the Islamist forces in the country and by the state itself has resulted in further dissensions, contentions, and controversies among various socio-economic classes and religious groups within the country. Instead of this, emphasis on social justice, political inclusiveness and economic equality would have definitely resulted in bringing social integration and national harmony in the country.

2.9.6 Islam and the Structural/Institutional Crises

It is important to note that the actual introduction and revival of fundamentalist Islamic ideology in Pakistan by the state occurred at a very crucial time. The rhetoric and policies

106 Kurram agency is of the seven tribal agencies of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Unlike other agencies, the majority of the population of Kurram agency is Shii Muslim.
107 Hussain Haqqani, Pakistan, 107.
of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had created a political environment which was favorable for strong demands for increased mass participation in the political process, more regional and provincial autonomy, and socio-economic justice in the country. This political environment and subsequent demands challenged the position of privileged civil and military bureaucracy. Moreover, Bhutto also helped introducing political activism and radicalism among masses, in the political process of the country which further threatened the status civil-military bureaucracy.

After the Bhutto era, the military regime used the Islamic rhetoric and measures as an instrument to counter the political activism of the groups mobilized during Bhutto regime. It also helped the military dictator to reconsolidate the political authority in the colossal structure of the state and bringing institutional changes through religious validation. The ruling alliance of military and Islamists also attempted to delegitimize the political objectives of the non-ruling radical groups on the basis of their alleged un-Islamic inclination. The military establishment adopted the fundamentalist ideology to mobilize support from certain political groups, lower middle class, and ulama which could counter the anti-military regime radical forces and groups by supporting the power and policies of the government. This was a response to the structural crisis created by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s attempt to reform the orbit of power in the post colonial society. In the broader structural context military regimes of Ayub and Zia were the same with a slight change in the method of articulating power economic growth to Islamic ideology.108

2.10 CONCLUSION

The case of Pakistani society in terms of relationship between religion and politics is unique and interesting one. This relationship existed even before the creation of Pakistan in its foundations which played the central role in the partition of India in 1947. It is, therefore, important to note that the rise of political Islam in Pakistan resulted from a concord between the state and Islamist forces and not from any conflict between them. Furthermore, unlike many other Islamic states of the Middle East, in Pakistan the boundary between ‘the establishment Islam’ and ‘the popular Islam’ is not well demarcated. Hence, despite the sectarian differences and controversies within the Islamic groups, the two facets of Islam look the same. It is also interesting to note that the actual

rise of political Islam in Pakistan in 1980s was a result of a military takeover and not any socio-political revolution. 109

The conscious and calculated measures taken by respective regimes in the name of Islam helped to ensure the constancy and stability of the existing institutional and structural arrangements in the distribution of political authority. The state often introduced Islamic measures mainly to change the institutional and legal course relating certain selected aspects of social life. Moreover, the Islamization of the politics and society by the state was an attempt to avert any demands of socio-economic nature by the people. It is also worth mentioning that moderate and liberal section of the society did not resist considerably, the conservative resurgence of social life as an effect of Islamization policies by the state.

The external factors, along with internal dynamics, equally played a vital role in promoting political Islam in Pakistan in general and among Pakhtuns in particular. Tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, with latter’s having irredentist claims over the north-western part of Pakistan; and the cold war politics in the wake of soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 were the main external factors which led to the promotion of Islamic ideology as a source of identity and radicalization of Pakistani society particularly the Pakhtun region, given the fact that the Pakhtun region was neighboring Afghanistan and shared the ethnic and cultural similarities with Afghan Pakhtuns.

A historical analysis of the political culture of Pakistan suggests that subsequent civil and military regimes have introduced the Islamic policies and measures in the legal, political and constitutional discourses on the demand and to win the support of the religious groups and religio-political parties in the country. However, quite interestingly, these religio-political parties always had a limited electoral influence. None of the religio-political parties ever came into power except the general elections of 1970 when JUI emerged as a single largest party in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP) and Baluchistan provincial assemblies; and in 2002 MMA formed governments in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP) and Baluchistan. On both occasions the religious parties influenced the Pakhtun voters only.

109 Ibid., 8.
CHAPERT – 3

ISLAM, PAKHTUNWALI AND PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURE IN PAKHTUN SOCIETY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Pakhtuns, a majority ethnic group in Afghanistan and a minority ethnic group in Pakistan, are known by different names i.e. Pashtuns, Pakhtuns, Pathans, etc. Although the term ‘Afghan’ in its juridical connotation refers to the citizen of Afghanistan, yet this term is also used interchangeably with Pakhtun. In general, Pakhtuns are very much mindful of their ethnic identity and often identify themselves as ‘Afghans’ proudly. During the colonial rule they also started being called ‘Pathans’, however, this term is mostly used for them by non-Pakhtuns in the subcontinent; and this term of usage is on decline, particularly in scholarly works and studies conducted on Pakhtuns recently.

Pakhtuns are the second largest group after Punjabis and the largest minority group in Pakistan which makes about nearly 20 percent of the total 180 million citizens of Pakistan.1 Majority of these Pakhtuns live primarily in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (formerly known as NWFP) and Federally administered Tribal Areas (FATA), they are the second largest ethnic group in the Baluchistan (especially northern Baluchistan) province, and as many as about four million Pakhtuns live in the southern Pakistan’s port city Karachi of the Sindh province. Pakhtuns presence in Karachi is the result of economic migration within the country.

The overwhelmingly Pakhtun majority province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the tribal area, called FATA, stretch over the area of 100,000 sq km in the north-west of Pakistan.2 This region runs along the River Indus and Pakhtun communities spill over into the Punjab districts of Mianwali and Attock. However, most Pakhtun communities occupy the area from northern mountainous Kohistan region to the plains of Dera Ismail Khan, the southern district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa presents a beautiful scenery including the alpine Swat which is compared with Switzerland, and the plains of Laki Marwat and Karak which give the look of a desert like Gobi.

2 Ibid.
History suggests that Pakhtun region has been witnessing war, foray and widespread violence for the last six centuries. Pakhtun warrior poet Khushal Khan Khattak, who fought against Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, is one of the notable examples in this regard. This history of common violence and invasion proves the fact that Pakhtun identity is tough and resilient. They have survived over the centuries to constitute a nation in the classic sense. However, they have never been completely united and integrated into one state or empire, though they have formed various political systems and empires of their own. Before the Soviet-Afghan War, Afghanistan was mainly a Pakhtun dominated country where the state sought to promote Pakhtun identity and culture.

Much more than a mere ‘ethnic group solidarity’, there is a strong sense of nationalism growing among the Pakhtuns of Pakistan. Many Pakhtun political leaders, literary figures and intellectuals perceive Pakhtuns as the most maligned community of the recent times. This perception is mainly the result of conflict in the Pakhtun region of Pakistan and Afghanistan which has been going on since the cold war era. Many Pakhtun leaders view that their land has been transformed into the battle ground by the conflicting world powers and their political interest. This state of affairs, according to nationalist political leaders, led to the violent Islamic fundamentalism including rise of Taliban (both in Pakistan and Afghanistan) and the rise of religio-political parties in Pakhtun region of Pakistan.

3.2 RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION AMONG PAKHTUNS

The origin of Pakhtuns is cloaked in ambiguity and mystery. Many scholars and historians have come up with various theories regarding the origin of Pakhtuns. According to one theory about the origin of Pakhtuns, they belong to the Aryans who existed even 1500 B.C. and promoted their advanced and rich culture. These migrated from Central Asia to and settled in Afghanistan and lived in the shape of different tribes. Later on some tribes left Afghanistan while some remained there. The remaining Aryans who are called central Aryans are, according this theory, the ancestors of Pakhtuns. They

4 Abubakar Siddique, The Pashtuns, 23.
5 Ibid., 24.
were settled in different areas e.g. Gandhara, Herat and Kabul, etc. Kabul and Herat are in present day Afghanistan while Gandhara which literally means ‘perfumed’ was name of a kingdom in the north-western part of present day Pakistan and its main cities were Peshawar and Taxila.

Niamatullah’s narration in *Makhzan-i-Afghani* is one of the most quoted theories about the origin of Pakhtuns. According to it, Pakhtuns are the descendants of the Prophet Yaqub (AS). This notion suggests that Pakhtuns are of Jewish origin. The theory further explains that Pakhtuns accepted Islam collectively during the life time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) on the invitation of a general – Khalid bin Walid (RA). The supporters of this theory hold that Khalid bin Walid was a descendant of those Bani Israelites who migrated from Babul to Medina. This theory also leads some to argue that Pakhtuns are the descendants of Khalid bin Walid in this way.7

As far as the Bani Israelite theory is concerned, the religious history of Pakhtuns is clear, straightforward and beyond any doubt or ambiguity. It clearly mentioned that Pakhtuns were Jews and then embraced Islam when some tribal elders under the leadership of Qais visited Medina and met with Holy Prophet (SAW).8 However, the Aryan theory fails to describe and explain the religious transformation of Pakhtuns which took place among them over the centuries, though it attempts to explains the geographic and cultural aspects of the Pakhtun history in a systematic manner. The fact is that inhabitants of the subcontinent have been subject to the process of transformation from one religion to another. These various religions and belief-systems include the ancient Vedic society, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Islam among many.

Prior to their conversion to Islam, Pakhtun society went through a frequent process of religious transformation and conversion. The early Pakhtuns saw the pinnacle of various great religions such as Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Hinduism before their conversion to Islam. This frequent conversion and transformation of religion among Pakhtuns was subject to more than one reason. The position and status of the Brahmans, the upper strata, in Hinduism was challenged by Aryans – the ancestors of Pakhtuns. This trend

resulted in the progress of Buddhism which was based on equality, service of mankind
and philosophy of peace. Buddhism spread rapidly among them. Sometimes the spread
and development of a particular faith in the Pakhtun society was the result of official
backing from a strong ruling dynasty for example Archaemenians and Sassanians gave
the official patronage to Zoroastrianism while Khushans and Mauryans promoted
Buddhism in the Pakhtun society.  

As far as Islam is concerned, it is a fact that it spread throughout the subcontinent
including Pakhtun society as a result of the Arab conquests and adventures in Central
Asia and adjacent regions. The new converts in this part of the world had remarkable
enthusiasm and energy which gave an unprecedented boost to Islam in the region. One of
the reasons of popularity of Islam among Pakhtuns was the tribal character of the Pakhtun
society which to some extent resembled the tribal features of the early Arab tribal
society. This is the reason that Islam found a very smooth drive in the Pakhtun region. It
would be right to say that they followed their cultural traditions while adopting some
tenets of Islam. However, this is also a fact that in case of any clash between the two,
usually culture and social traditions win over the religion. Pakhtuns fought against
various local non-Muslim rulers of different areas and subjugated them. Islam as social
system stood for equality, unity, rule of law, justice and economic prosperity which
attracted the Pakhtun tribesmen and hence it [Islam] flourished among them.

Considering the systematic articulation of facts and arguments of the Aryans theory,
many historians hold that it is more authentic than the Bani Israelite theory, while latter
lacks the systematic organization and coherence in arguments. It is also a fact that the
collective acceptance of Islam by Pakhtuns is not proved historically and the individual
conversion to Islam in Pakhtun society seems more relevant and logical. Nevertheless,
despite all this controversy and disagreement on the origin of and religious transformation
among Pakhtuns, this is a reality that today almost all Pakhtuns are Muslims. A
predominant majority of Pakhtuns belong to the Sunni sect of Islam and follow the Hanafi

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11 Ibid.
school of thought, however, there are some Shii Pakhtuns too living mainly in the Hangu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Kurram agency of FATA in Pakistan.

The common perception among Pakhtuns about their origin and religious transformation is, however, different from many scholarly researched works in this regard. All the Pakhtuns perceive themselves as members of the greater Muslim *Ummah*. Despite the loopholes in the Bani Israelite theory, majority of them believe in the oral traditions and consider Qais Abdul Rashid their predecessor and ancestor who according to the Bani Israelite theory was the first Pakhtun who accepted Islam. Seventeen out of my twenty uneducated interviewees believed that the Bani Israelite theory was authentic, while twelve out of my twenty educated interviewees also gave preference to the Bani Israelite theory over the Aryans theory.

### 3.3 ISLAM AND PAKHTUN SOCIETY

After having discussed the religious transformation among Pakhtuns and common perceptions among them in this regard, now I will turn to briefly discuss the role of Islam in the Pakhtun society and culture. In doing so I am referring to the religious appearance in the Pakhtun society and not necessarily the inner belief system which exists in the minds of people. Here I am taking into consideration the social-anthropological works of Akbar S. Ahmad\(^\text{12}\) and Fredrik Barth\(^\text{13}\). In the sociological sense Islam is often regarded as the synonym of Pakhtun society.\(^\text{14}\)

The everyday practice and reappearance of Islamic symbols in the Pakhtun society shows the social significance of the religion in sociopolitical sphere. These Islamic symbols and practices are partly the result of religious groups’ efforts to ensure and enhance their prestige and leverage in the society. For example it’s a common phenomenon that a *mullah* (a term commonly used for the man leads the prayer in mosque) would constantly emphasize the significance of growing beard among men. The repeated and over the time propagation of beard as a religious phenomenon by the clerics has led the common

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Pakhtuns to believe that beard is related to Islam. Nadeem was one of educated interviewees living in Khyber Agency. Although he is not a practicing Muslim otherwise, he has grown beard. On my question of why he has grown the beard, he responded that *alhamdolillah musalman yam* (Thanks to God I am Muslim).\(^{15}\) Another interviewee (an elderly uneducated) Bakht Zada responded to the same question as *sa kafir kho na yam* (I am a believer).\(^{16}\) Most of Pakhtuns consider keeping beard as *Sunnah* (the tradition of Holy Prophet SAW). However, some others referred to the beard as a symbol of masculinity. The issue of masculinity and patrilineal or patriarchal structure of Pakhtun society has been discussed in the latter section of this chapter.

Another interesting concept which involves the integration of culture and religion is a common phrase used by Pakhtuns – *hujra jumaat*. Although *hujra* (a meeting place in the village) and *jumaat* (mosque) are cultural and religious institutions respectively, yet the phrase *hujra jumaat* shows that how Pakhtuns intermix culture and religion – Islam. Bakht Zada, one of my interviewees, said, *da hujra jumaat sa pejani*\(^{17}\) (what he knows about *hujra* and mosque?) while referring to an allegedly unsocial person in his opinion. During the interviews, I came across a number of people who used this term in different context many times. Akbar S. Ahmad has rightly pointed out that *hujra* and *jumaat* are the focus of life in every Pakhtun village.\(^{18}\) One cannot think of a Pakhtun village without a *hujra* and a mosque.

The main pillars of Islam such as prayers, fasting, etc. are observed in a Pakhtun society with a cultural backing and motivation. Most of Pakhtuns do perform their *munz* (prayers) five times a day regularly. Not saying prayers is seen as a bad habit and is culturally unwanted act in a Pakhtun society. The cultural significance of the *munz* (prayers) is evident by the fact that people would perform it regularly even if they are involved in other social crimes/sins. Inam, one of my educated interviewees in Khyber Agency, said *ka smuggler vi o ka sud khor vi munz ba kawi* (even smugglers and interest-loan providers would offer prayers).\(^{19}\) Smuggling is a crime while taking interest on loans is prohibited in Islam. This notion suggests that in Pakhtun society the religious rituals are mixed with

\(^{15}\) Personal Interview from Nadeem Khan, 02 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Nadeem, 02 October 2015.

\(^{16}\) Personal Interview from Bakht Zada, 17 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Bakht, 17 October 2015.

\(^{17}\) Ibid.


\(^{19}\) Personal Interview from Inam Ullah, 05 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Inam, 05 October 2015.
the cultural traditions to a great extent. The observance of prayers, as a pillar of Islam, is
greater in the rural and tribal Pakhtun areas as compared to the urban settled areas.
Similarly the ratio of middle aged and older people is higher than the young people. 20
An interesting response I received from Tariq, one of my uneducated interviewees, was che
munz o na kam nu dase khakari che sa ra na ruk shawe de (if I don’t say prayers some
day, I feel as if I have lost something). 21 This shows that offering prayers has become a
cultural norm or habit for many. However, majority of interviewees’ response was that
offering prayers is farz (mandatory) in Islam that’s why they cannot skip it.

Besides prayers, fasting is another pillar of Islam. Like prayers, fasting is also strictly
observed in Pakhtun society. Almost every adult Pakhtun, both male and female, would
fast in the month of Ramadan. It is interesting to note that the ratio of observance of roja
(fasting) is much higher than the munz (prayers). In this case no distinction can be made
between tribal and settled areas or rural and urban areas. Almost all the adults, younger or
older, would fast in Ramadan except in case health related or medical issues. Even people
do not tend to break the fast in extreme hot weather. 22 And those who on medical grounds
cannot fast, they keep it secret and don’t eat or drink in public. This is how they show
their respect for the holy momnth. Tilawat, one of my uneducated interviewees, told me
that he never skipped a fast even while travelling ma kho kala pa safar k hum roja na de
prekhe, 23 though, there is relaxation in Islam with regard to fasting if one is travelling a
long journey. This shows that Pakhtun society has acculturated this Islamic ritual. A
funny and interesting phrase which quoted by majority of my interviewees was that
ramzan janay tay pathan janay (Ramadan and fasting is related to Pakhtuns only),
Punjabis (a term Pakhtuns generally use for all non-Pakhtuns in Pakistan) were least
interested in fasting, they perceived.

Apart from prayers and fasting, another important pillar of Islam is pilgrimage to Kaaba
in Saudi Arabia. Hajj (pilgrimage) holds great signifcance in the Pakhtun society.
Although it depends upon the financial condition of people, they really desire to perform
hajj (pilgrimage) once in a life time which is made farz (mandatory) by Islam contingent
upon the economic affordability of the people. Besides a religious duty, hajj also entails

21 Personal Interview from Tariq Khan, 18 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Tariq, 18 October 2015.
23 Personal Interview from Tilawat Khan, 16 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Tilawat 16 October 2015.
enormous social significance. The man who performs hajj bears the title hajji and the woman who performs hajj is given the title hajjiane. A hajji occupies a respected and distinguished position in the Pakhtun society. He is highly appreciated and respected; besides he is formally visited and congratulated by his friends, relatives and acquaintances on his return from hajj. The social significance of this ritual is proved by the fact that the term hajji sab (Mr. Hajji) is sometimes used for a person just as a gesture of respect and honor, even if he has not performed hajj. Usually elderly people are called hajji sab or hajjiane by strangers as a gesture of respect. This shows how Pakhtuns have combined religion with their social life.

Various other traditions and practices are attached to the pilgrimage. In Pakhtun society immense reverence and respect is attached to the various things associated with the two holy cities of Saudi Arabia: Mecca and Medina. When hajjis return from hajj, they bring certain gifts for their family and friends e.g. aab-i-zamzam (the holy water from the aquifer believed to be used by the Holy Prophet SAW), kajuray (dates) and prayer-mats, etc. Even the soil of these two holy cities is brought by hajjis and kept as an object of adoration and admiration. These gifts are distributed among friends and family. People drink the aab-i-zamzam as well as store it safely to spray over the dead bodies as a ritual. Kajuray (dates) are also considered a holy fruit. It’s a common practice that kajuray (dates) would be a necessary part of iftaar (ending the fast at the sunset).

Another ritual that has become a cultural norm in Pakhtun society is to make and distribute churi (made of sugar, flour and cooking oil) and kheer (rice pudding) in Safar – the second month in the Islamic calendar. The wives of the Holy Prophet (SAW), when he was sick, are reported to have cooked and distributed these dishes in this month. So, in the Pakhtun culture it’s considered as a pious act to repeat this tradition. My interviewees both from tribal and settled areas were equally aware of the background and origin of this tradition.

Although Jihad (holy war) is not considered a part of the main pillars of Islam generally, Pakhtuns give immense value to Jihad. This love for Jihad, on the one hand shows their enthusiasm for Islam and Islamic cause, and on the hand it also exhibits the martial tribal

feature of a Pakhtun society. Pakhtuns feel proud to identify themselves as a martial race. Many old aged tribal Pakhtuns still remember the Kashmir Jihad of 1948 with immense pride and fervor. Tribal Pakhtuns had participated in that war against India. Pakhtuns often quote this historical fact to emphasize their loyalty to the state and love for the Islamic cause. It implies that here they consider the Islamic cause and political affairs one and the same. Traditional mullahs in Pakhtun society, particularly in tribal areas, emphasize upon the importance of Jihad in their speeches. One of my uneducated interviewees glorified Jihad in Kashmir and held that it was our duty to liberate Kashmir from Hindus. This enthusiasm of the common Pakhtuns and the glorification of Jihad by the traditional religious clerics provided an ideal environment, in the Pakhtun tribal areas, for the state sponsored Jihad during Soviet-Afghan War of 1980s.

Another notable example of Islamic symbolism in the Pakhtun society is fact that names of days in the week and months in the year are associated with some religious traditions. For example Thursday and Friday have special place among other days. These are considered holy days. Thursday is called Ziarat in Pakhto language. Usually alms and charity is given on Thursday. Moreover, a new project such as building a house or cultivating the land is started on Thursday. Similarly Friday occupies an important position. This day is reserved for the prayers and usually treated as a holyday, though, the official holiday is Sunday.

Aside from the days, the months in the year also contain religious symbolism in Pakhtun society. For example the first month of the Islamic calendar, Moharram, is associated with the incident of Karbala (when the grandson of the Holy Prophet SAW and his family members were martyred). Special rituals are performed in this month; food and drinks are distributed among people. Marriages and other such events are not celebrated in this month, as it is considered the month of sorrow and grief. Safar, the second month in the Islamic calendar, also has religious significance in Pakhtun society as discussed above. The Prophet (SAW) is reported to have recovered from illness in this month. Rabi-ul-Awal, the third month in the Islamic Calendar, is the month of Holy Prophet’s birth and

27 Akbar S. Ahmed, Religion and Politics in Muslim Society, 98.
28 Abubakar Siddique, The Pashtuns, 41.
death. Hence, it also occupies a distinctive status among others. Twelfth day (the date of birth and death of the Holy Prophet SAW) of this month is celebrated with religious reverence. Ramadan, the ninth month in the Islamic calendar, is the month of mandatory fasting for Muslims. Pakhtuns call this month *da Rojay miasht* (month of fasting) generally. And this is strictly observed in settled and tribal areas of Pakhtun society alike as discussed above.

During my field work in Khyber Agency and Peshawar I observed another interesting example of Islamic symbolism in Pakhtun society. Most of the decoration pieces on the tables or in the shelves in guestrooms or *hujras* contained religious symbolism. The miniatures of *Kaaba* and *Masjid-i-Nabawi* (the holy mosque of Medina) made of different materials such as glass and wood, were found in many places including guestrooms, offices, etc. Similarly, the paintings on the walls contained either pictures of *Kaaba* and *Masjid-i-Nabawi* or the Islamic calligraphy. Different verses and chapters of the Qur’an were decorated on the walls. Moreover, the wall calendars also contained the similar pictures. Shams, one of my educated interviewees, had a small table-clock on the table in his office containing the words ‘Allah’ and ‘Muhammad (SAW)’. Javed, one of my uneducated interviewees, had a small painting on the wall of his shop containing a Qur’anic verse. On my inquiry he said that it was for *barakat* (blessing of God). He also mentioned an interesting fact about that painting that it was gifted to him by someone on his wedding.30

Furthermore, I also observed that some of my respondents were using Islamic symbolism in the modern technological equipment and gadgets e.g. computers, laptops and mobile phones. I heard the *Azan* (call for prayers) as a ringtone of one of my interviewees’ mobile phone. Similarly, in the random observation during the field work, I came across such like ringtones on the phones in Peshawar such as Azan (call for prayers) and *Bismillah* (first verse of the Holy Qur’an), etc. Imran, one of educated interviewees, had ninety-nine names of God as a desktop background image on his computer. He also told me that he has the same image as his ‘display picture’ on his ‘facebook’ page.31 During my travel in the local bus in Peshawar I have noticed many times that the driver switches the tape-recorder or radio in the bus off when there is time of Azan (call for prayers). And

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30 Personal Interview from Javed Hussain, 20 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Javed, 20 October 2015.
31 Personal Interview from Imran Khan, 19 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Imran, 19 October 2015
if he doesn’t do himself, the passengers remind him that *baang dy ustaji* (driver it’s call for prayers time). This is a way of showing respect to the *Azan* (call for prayers) or *munz* (prayers).

Another common observation that I made is that Pakhtuns frequently use various religious terms and sentences in their conversation. For example *Khuday ma ka* (God forbid) is a commonly used phrase in conversation. Similarly another common sentence in the conservation is *Khuday me de na ghalatai* (God helps me). This is an expression at the time when one is trying to recall something. Another notable phrase is *Khuday ta ogora* (remember the God), this is used as an expression if one is amazed by words, action or deed of another. Similarly, *masha’llah* (all praise for God), *insha’llah* (if God wills) and *alhamdo’lillah* (by the grace of God) are some other phrases which are commonly and frequently used in conversations. Another interesting and funny sentence in laymen conversation is *ta dasay da pir baba nuwasay ye* (as if you are the son of a saint).

Among various reasons for the religion as a defining factor in the Pakhtun society, one important reason is the common perception among Pakhtuns that their ancestor *Qais* was converted to Islam by the Holy Prophet (SAW) himself.32 This gives a sense of pride to Pakhtuns. Pakhtunness is generally considered as the inner circle of Islam. Then there are few other inner circles within Pakhtunness as an ethnic identity. For example, after being a Muslim and Pakhtun, one belongs to a particular tribe such as *Afridi, Yousafzai*, etc. Then the tribe is further divided into sub tribes such as *Sipah* or *Qambar Khel* within *Afridi* tribe and finally a clan or an extended family. All Pakhtuns, in general, and tribal Pakhtuns, in particular, carry the blueprint of this identity in their minds.33 This classification implies that religion – Islam is the ultimate feature of identity of all Pakhtuns, for a Pakhtun would necessarily be a Muslim. This sense of identity stems from the collective ego and places Pakhtuns in this world.

The religious presence and symbolism in the Pakhtun society is partly the result of the role played by various religious groups and sections in the Pakhtun society. They disseminate, popularize and interpret this religious symbolism. There are different types

33 Ibid.
of religious groups such as Sayyids, Mians and Mullahs, etc.\textsuperscript{34} The Sayyids are supposedly the descendants of the Holy Prophet (SAW), hence, occupy the upper most position and social status among the religious groups. Mians occupy the second highest rank among these religious groups after Sayyids. Mian, unlike Sayyid, is an acquired religious status. The third important religious group is the Mullas. A \textit{mullah} generally a person who leads the prayers in the mosque and performs various other religious rites e.g. leading the \textit{janaza munz} (funeral prayers), or solemnizing the \textit{nikkah} (marriage). \textit{Mullahs} occupy a lower status than both sayyids and mians, as a religious group\textsuperscript{35}, however, they play the most important and effective role in disseminating religious symbolism in the Pakhtun society. Apart from activating religious symbolism in Pakhtun culture and traditions, mullahs have also affected the political behavior of Pakhtuns in a significant way. There role in the rise of religious politics in Pakhtun region has been discussed in the later part of this thesis.

\textbf{3.4 COALESCING OF RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC IDENTITY AMONG PAKHTUNS}

As mentioned above almost all Pakhtuns are Muslims too at the same time. An overwhelming majority of Pakhtuns belongs to the Sunni sect and they are followers of the \textit{Hanafi} School of Law.\textsuperscript{36} However, a small minority living in Kurram agency and Hangu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa belongs to the \textit{Athna Ashariyya Shii} sect\textsuperscript{37} and follow the \textit{Ja’fari} School of Thought.\textsuperscript{38} As I have mentioned above, there is no documented historical proof of how and when Pakhtuns became Muslims, majority of notable scholars support the Bani Israelite theory and the argument that the ancestor of Pakhtuns, Qais Abdul Rashid visited Arabia and was converted to Islam by the Holy prophet himself. This theory further states that Qais then married the daughter of a renowned military commander of Muslim army – Khalid bin Walid.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{34} For a detailed study see Shah Jehan Khan, \textit{The Religious Leadership of Pashtuns}, (2001), unpublished Ph. D Thesis at University of Hawaii, Manoa.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{36} Hanafi is one of the four main Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence. It is named after the renowned scholar of Islam Imam Abu Hanifa. The other major schools of Islamic law in Sunni tradition are Hanbali, Maliki and Shafi’i.
\textsuperscript{37} Athna Ashariyya or twelver is the largest branch of Shii Islam.
\textsuperscript{38} Ja’fari is the religious school of thought followed by majority of the Shii Muslims. it is named after the renowned scholar of Islam Imam Ja’far Sadiq.
Taking into account this theory and the common perception among Pakhtuns that they collectively accepted Islam, it is a fact that a Pakhtun is always a Muslim at the same time, just as he is a Pakhtun by birth. The Pakhtun as an ethnic identity is thus interchangeable with Muslim identity: Pakhtun means Muslim. Many of my interviewees held the opinion that only a good Muslim can be a good Pakhtun. They perceived both Pukhtunness and Muslimness as two sides of the same coin. Sultan, one of my uneducated interviewees, made an interesting comparison in a statement Pakhtun yam, kafir na yam (I am a Pakhtun, not a non-believer). He knowingly mixed the religious and ethnic identities to convey that a Pakhtun must be a Muslim. He further said that in his opinion a true Pakhtun would always follow Islam. Another interviewee Bakht Zada said, sahi Pakhtun ba deen daara wi (a true Pakhtun would be a true believer). Inam, one of my educated interviewees, said that a Pakhtun would always act according to Islam. Another interviewee Bilal expressed the similar opinion that a perfect Pakhtun would always according to the Islamic law – shariah.

There is no ambiguity or doubt over the fact that Pakhtuns are Muslims, however, we cannot ignore the fact that they also have a peculiar cultural and social code of life in the form of Pakhtunwali. Although Pakhtuns are practicing Muslims, but they at the same time intermix their religion with their cultural traditions. In other words their Islam is colored with Pakhtunwali, while the latter is perceived to be identical with the former. Majority of my uneducated interviewees, twelve out of twenty, considered the Pakhtunwali and Islam one and the same thing. Sultan, one of my uneducated interviewees, held that Pakhtunwali required a Pakhtun to be a good Muslim. Upon my question of which is more important than the other, he responded that both (Pakhtunwali and Islam) were equally important and must be followed.

This perception about the unity of Pakhtunness and Muslimness is generally based on some moral values and traditions which are commonly shared between Islam and the Pakhtun

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41 Personal Interview from Sultan Khan, 04 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Sultan 04 October 2015.
42 Interview Bakht, 17 October 2015.
43 Interview Inam, 05 October 2015.
44 Personal Interview from Bilal Khan, 16 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Bilal 16 October 2015.
46 Interview Sultan, 04 October 2015.
culture. For example Islam emphasizes upon giving respect to elders. There are a number of verses in the Holy Qur’an with regard to obeying the parents.\textsuperscript{47} Similarly the highness of parents as well as dignity of elders is highlighted in various sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Islam in general emphasizes on showing respect to the elders. This Islamic moral value is found in Pakhtun culture both in theory and practice. Javed, one of my uneducated interviewees, said \textit{Pukhtana da mashar kashar lihaz kai} (Pakhtuns acknowledge and respect elders), he further equated this value with Islamic teachings.\textsuperscript{48} I personally observed several times younger people offering their seats to the elders in public transport in Peshawar, a practice which I didn’t witness in non-Pakhtun culture in Pakistan.

Another commonality between Islamic values and Pakhtun cultural values, according to my interviewees, is the views of Islam and Pakhtun culture regarding women. Tariq, one of my uneducated interviewees, said that both Islam and Pakhtun culture emphasize upon purdah\textsuperscript{49} by women. It’s a social as well as religious practice in the Pakhtun society. Islam denounces vulgarity and indecency, so does the Pakhtun culture. A common perception among Pakhtuns is that Islam calls for the physical segregation of both the sexes, hence, it resembles the Pakhtun norms and traditions. Majority of my interviewees held that the women’s mixing and interaction with stranger men is discouraged by both Islam and Pakhtun culture. Similarly women are not allowed to go outside the home without the permission of male head of the family in Islam and Pakhtun culture. Similarly women are treated with great respect in both Islam and Pakhtun culture. One cannot think of a male doing argument with a stranger woman in Pakhtun culture. Women would always be treated with respect and honor in the Pakhtun society which is also emphasized by Islam, said by Tariq.\textsuperscript{50}

Another interesting argument put forward by my interviewees regarding the similarity between Islam and Pakhtun culture, was that Islam calls for tolerance and forgiveness while Pakhtun culture also encourages forgiveness. They gave the example of \textit{Nanawati} (asking for protection) – an important feature of the Pakhtun code of life – \textit{Pakhtunwali}.

\textsuperscript{47} Qur’an, 17:23-24.  
\textsuperscript{48} Interview Javed, 20 October 2015.  
\textsuperscript{49} Purdah is a social and religious practice of female seclusion. It generally has two aspects: physical segregation of two genders, and concealing the body and face with veil.  
\textsuperscript{50} Interview Tariq, 18 October 2015.
According to the Pakhtun culture and tradition one has to forgive his enemy if the latter seeks pardon and surrenders. Mumtaz, one of my uneducated respondents said, no matter how big wrong has been done to you by him, you will forgive and give protection to your enemy if he surrenders. He further elaborated that this is how Pakhtun culture promotes tolerance and forgiveness which is emphasized by Islam. On my counter question regarding the concept of Badal (revenge) he responded that Badal (revenge) was also in accord with the Islamic principles. Islam allows Qisas (retaliation or revenge), therefore, the concept of Badal in the Pakhtun tradition is equal to Qisas in Islam, he argued.\textsuperscript{51}

Majority of the respondents held the opinion that both Islam and Pakhtun culture denounce suppression, unfairness, injustice, profanity, bigotry and racial discrimination. Both encourage acts of benevolence, respecting the elders and women and showing kindness to children, etc. Hence, they argued, that Islamic and Pakhtun cultural values are the same. They held that a true Pakhtun would always be a true Muslim. They equated Pakhunness with Muslimness.

\textbf{3.5 DIVERGENCE BETWEEN RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC IDENTITY}

Although there are various superficial similarities between Islam and Pakhtunwali, as pointed out by majority of my respondents, yet the two contradict each other as well in certain ways. In a first appearance the Pakhtun culture seems to be closely articulated with Islamic traditions, and generally Islam and Pakhtunwali seem to support each other in a specific way. However, it is also a fact that Islam and Pakhtunwali disagree on certain points\textsuperscript{52}, and some of my respondents were well aware of this reality. They endorsed the viewpoint that there are some notable contradiction between Islam and Pakhtunwali. Islam in certain cases gives way to Pakhtunwali, and this disagreement between the two affects certain social relationships in the society particularly in gender perspective.\textsuperscript{53}

Eight out of twenty uneducated while ten out of twenty educated interviewees were of the opinion that there are basic differences between Islamic laws and Pakhtun culture. They

\textsuperscript{51} Personal Interview from Mumtaz Khan 21 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Mumtaz, 21 October 2015.


\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
further held that Pakhtuns usually give preference to their culture over religion when there is a clash between the two. Khalid, one of my educated interviewees, said that all Pakhtuns love Islam and Islamic law based on shariah but in actual practice very few act according to shariah and Islamic values.\textsuperscript{54} Another educated interviewee, Tahir said that all Muslims are brother and Islam forbids us to cut our relations with other Muslims and it demands that we should not stop interacting with or talking to other Muslims, however, Pakhtuns usually have decades-long enmities which travel from one to the other generations.\textsuperscript{55}

Shahzad, another educated respondent held a very critical opinion that \textit{deen pakay la cha rawastay de} (who cares about the religion). He pointed out the illegal economic and social practices many Pakhtuns were involved in e.g. smuggling, kidnapping, claiming over others’ land and property, etc.\textsuperscript{56} Gulbat, an uneducated respondent from Khyber Agency, pointed out that \textit{pukhtana zad kai} (Pakhtuns usually happen to be adamant or rigid people). He elaborated that even if they know that a certain act is against the Islamic teachings, they would still be stick to that. He also cited a famous Pakhto couplet in a sarcastic sense \textit{wa’ai aghyaar che dozakh jaba da, za ba jannat ta da pakhto sara zam…} (No matter people call it the language of the hell; I will enter the paradise with my Pakhto and Pakhtunwali).\textsuperscript{57}

Some of my interviewees held the opinion that Pakhtuns, nowadays, neither practice their religion – Islam nor do they act according to the principles of Pakhtunwali. Suleman, one of my uneducated respondents, seemed quite unhappy over this particular attitude of Pakhtuns. He, while referring to the common malpractices in the society, said that we have become senseless community; we are least bothered about Islam or Pakhtunwali in our daily routine life and business. He held that we just hear the Islamic teachings from one ear and throw out from the other. Ho continued saying that everybody does know what is good and what is bad, what is just and what is unjust, but still we do not care. The milkman adds water in the milk, the shopkeeper sells things on high rates, everyone is

\textsuperscript{54} Personal Interview from Muhammad Khalid, 02 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Khalid, 02 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{55} Personal Interview from Tahir Ali, 27 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Tahir, 27 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{56} Personal Interview from Shahzad Zeb, 22 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shahzad, 22 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{57} Personal Interview from Gulbat, 03 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Gulbat 03 October 2015.
involved in un-Islamic and illegal activities, he added.\textsuperscript{58} I could notice his ears and cheeks turning red while talking in an emotional way.

Ayaz, an uneducated respondent, held quite bold and straight views regarding the relationship between Islam and \textit{Pakhtunwali}. He went on to say that there was no agreement between the two and both go in opposite directions. He said that we can prosper in this world and be successful in the hereafter by following Qur’an and \textit{Sunnah}, however, we are believers by name only and never practice the religion.\textsuperscript{59} Nadar, one of my uneducated interviewees, said \textit{dalta da har cha khpal Islam de} (everybody interprets Islam in his own way). Nobody follows the true Islam, he argued.\textsuperscript{60} Shahzad an educated respondent mentioned that most of our actions against the Islamic value and we often give preference to \textit{Pakhto} over Islam.\textsuperscript{61}

Some of the respondents made a distinction between the tribal and settled Pakhtun areas in this regard. They were of the opinion that as far as the socio-economic and cultural practices of Pakhtuns are concerned, there is difference between a tribal and settled environment. Tribal societies are more rigid and stick to the features of \textit{Pakhtunwali}, while the Pakhtuns living in settled areas are more flexible in practicing \textit{Pakhtunwali}. According to them religion has a greater impact on Pakhtuns living the settled areas as compared to those who live in a tribal society. They held that tribal Pakhtuns have acculturated Islam and hence they seldom make any distinction between the two.\textsuperscript{62}

Zahoor, one of my educated respondents, who originally belongs to Khyber Agency but presently has settled in Peshawar along with his family pointed out that it’s very difficult to deviate from the principles of \textit{Pakhtunwali} while living in the tribal society. People can think of ignoring religion but not \textit{Pakhtunwali}, he added. He further mentioned that in the tribal society one can do an un-Islamic act if it is justified by the Pakhtun culture. However, in the settled areas the situation is different, and one cannot ignore Islamic laws.

\textsuperscript{58} Personal Interview from Suleman, 03 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Suleman, 03 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{59} Personal Interview from Ayaz, 16, October 2015, henceforth, Interview Ayaz, 16 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{60} Personal Interview from Nadar, 28 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Nadar, 28 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{61} Interview Shahzad, 22 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{62} For a detailed study see, for example Akbar S. Ahmed, “Religious Presence and Symbolism in Pakhtun Society”, in Akbar S. Ahmed and David M. Hart (eds.) \textit{Islam in Tribal Societies: From Atlas to the Indus}, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 310-330. Ahmad argues that Islam in Pakhtun tribal society exist in sociological form and not in psychological or ideological form. According to him religion has become a cultural system and both Islam and Pakhtunwali have been intermixed. He suggests that Islam does not exist in doctrinal form rather it has transformed into mere symbolism in the tribal societies.
straight away, he added. His argument sounded logical to me especially in the context of practical inapplicability of state’s laws and constitution in tribal areas. Considering the Islamic character of the constitution and laws in general, Pakhtuns in settled areas tend to be more affected by and exposed to the religion, as compared to the Pakhtuns of tribal areas.

Another interesting opinion shared by Tahir, one of my educated respondents, was that despite some contradictions between Islam and Pakhtunwali, Pakhtuns of the rural areas practice both to some extent. He further elaborated his point that people in the urban areas are more materialist hence they are less interested in either religion or culture as compared to the rural people who are more exposed to the cultural traditions and are, at the same time, under the influence of religious clerics – mullahs.

3.6 PATRIARCHAL FAMILY STRUCTURE AND IDEAL MASCULINITY IN PAKHTUN SOCIETY

Pakhtun society is generally perceived to be based on patrilineal structure. It has a particular gender relationship which is dominated by male. This patriarchal structure is derived from the Pakhtun code of life – Pakhtunwali. There are various symbols of honor, dignity, and status in the Pakhtun society e.g. topak (gun) which is considered the man’s ornament, hujra (a meeting place or a guesthouse for men exclusively), nang (sense of commitment), namus (sense of pride especially related to land and woman), malatar (showing unity and solidarity), badal (the concept of revenge), jirga (a local conflict resolution body) which is composed of the male elders, and olase yze (upholding dominance in the public realm). All these symbols and features of the Pakhtun culture are associated with the male members exclusively. It is rightly assumed by various scholars that Pakhtun society is a man’s world in which masculinity and vigor are glorified constantly.

In the following paragraphs I have tried to describe the idealized form of machismo in Pakhtun culture, and have tried to analyze how my interviewees perceived the concepts

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63 Personal Interview from Zahoor Khan, 05 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Zahoor, 05 October 2015.
64 Interview Tahir, 27 October 2015.
66 Akbar S. Ahmed, Pakhtun Economy and Society, 89.
discussed in the previous paragraph. In doing so I would also highlight the hierarchies found in the patriarchal structure, for it is not a monolithic phenomenon in the Pakhtun culture.\textsuperscript{68} Although most of the writers in the west do not relate the concept of masculinity to ethnicity, but in Pakhtun culture masculinity is closely related to the ethnicity.\textsuperscript{69} Therefore, as it’s the main argument of my thesis, I will try to elucidate the relationship between patriarchy/masculinity and the rise of religious phenomenon in Pakhtun society. Rise of fundamentalism and religious political parties in the contemporary socio-political environment is to a great extent linked with the notions of patriarchy and masculinity in Pakhtun society.

3.6.1 Masculinity and Pakhtunwali

The concept of masculinity is deeply rooted in the Pakhtun code of life – Pakhtunwali. Majority of my respondents held that an ideal Pakhtun is a person who always abides by and follows Pakhtunwali. According to them Pakhtunwali is central to the social, economic and political behavior of Pakhtuns. Although it is not a codified law, nor is it precisely defined, but still it is rarely far from the minds of Pakhtuns. According to Akbar S. Ahmad it is partly fiction and partly a reality like most codes.\textsuperscript{70} Pakhtunwali over the time has interacted with religion, however, the gender relationship and articulation of masculinity remained intact and anchored in Pakhtunwali until the recent effects of modernity and formal legal structure of the state. This assumption is strongly supported by the response of my interviewees which I have discussed in another section later in this chapter.

Pakhtuns have acculturated Islam. Therefore, in the Pakhtun society Islam gives way to and endorses Pakhtunwali as perceived by majority of my respondents. Unlike many other ethnic groups in Pakistan, Pakhtuns are very particular and conscious about their ethnic identity\textsuperscript{71} and Pakhtunness and for that matter of others. However, a small number of my respondents held that Pakhtunness is a state of mind and is not specific to any particular ethnic group. They were of the opinion that Pakhto or Pakhtunness means

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{68} Muhammad Saeed, \textit{Pakhtun Men’s Perceptions of the Conditions Promoting Domestic Violence in their Culture} (2012), unpublished Ph. D. Thesis at University of York, UK, 93.
\item \textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{70} Akbar S. Ahmed, \textit{Pakhtun Economy and Society}, 90.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
having some specific qualities and practicing a particular set of rules. Considering the complexities in determining what Pakhtunnes is, I have tried to define it in the following lines. I have also tried to highlight the relationship between Pakhtunness and patriarchy/masculinity.

**Who is a Pakhtun**

The word Pakhtun is composed of five different words in the Pakhto language:\textsuperscript{72} ‘Pa’ (پ) is used for promise or ghairat (honor), ‘kh’ (خ) stands for Khegara (benevolence), ‘t’ (ت) stands for thura (sword) or torzan (brave and courageous), ‘u’ (우) means wafa (sincerity), and ‘n’ (و) stands for nang and namus (pride and commitment). This literal meaning of ‘Pakhtun’ shows how important and central is the concept of ‘masculinity’ in the Pakhtun society. Imran, one of my educated respondents, defined the term Pakhtun in similar words and told me that he was taught this by his school teacher when he was in fifth grade in a public sector school in Peshawar.\textsuperscript{73}

Imran further elaborated that these five parts of the name ‘Pakhtun’ actually describe the characteristics of a true Pakhtun. A person without these features cannot be a real Pakhtun, he added. According to Imran, Pakhtun is person who always stands by morality, embraces honor and dignity, believes in benevolence, is courageous and brave, revengeful and loyal to his traditions.\textsuperscript{74} Majority of my respondents came up with similar qualities to be found in a true Pakhtun. However, most of them also held the opinion that in the contemporary Pakhtun society one can hardly see all these features combined in Pakhtuns. Inam, one of my educated respondents, said *os hagha pukhtana charta di* (today’s Pakhtuns are not like their forefathers). It is difficult to find a Pakhtun having all these features, he argued.\textsuperscript{75}

Although the features mentioned above exhibit the patriarchal character of the Pakhtun society, but they at the same apply to the women as well in a different context with the social roles specified for and assigned to women.\textsuperscript{76} For example, if the concept of ghairat (honor) for a Pakhtun man is to have control over his women and land, etc.; for a woman

\textsuperscript{73} Interview Imran, 19 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} Interview Inam, 05 October 2015.
ghairat means observing purdah, demonstrating tolerance, submission and subjugation to the male head of the family either husband, father, brother, etc. The concept of Khegara (doing good to others) means showing hospitality to the friends and strangers, helping neighbors and others in time of need, joining relatives and others in gham aw khadi (sorrows and joys). Majority of my interviewees expressed the similar views in different words. The practice of these features of Pakhtunness leads to construction of gendered behaviors which ensure the superiority of men and inferiority of women in the Pakhtun society.

Taking into account the abovementioned qualities, it can be concluded that the literal meaning of the ‘Pakhtun’ is not sufficient to define the term comprehensively, because these qualities can be found in people from other societies. Common (Pakhtun) people usually rely on these qualities as a criterion to determine the Pakhto or ghairat (honor) of a person. They also use the word ‘Pukhtun-Punjabi’ for a non-Pakhtun possessing these qualities. After having established the link between Pakhtunness and masculinity now I will try to explain the term Pakhtun in the historical context in the coming lines. This will also prove the patrilineal system of Pakhtun society.

3.6.2 Patrilineal Structure of Pakhtun Society

In order to properly comprehend the gender relations and social structure of Pakhtun society it is imperative to analyze the historical and genealogical aspects of Pakhtun culture and traditions. Pakhtun society is primarily based on the patrilineal lineage system. As mentioned above, Pakhtuns trace their ancestry back to Qais Abdur Rashid of Ghor, Afghanistan. The only woman who has been indicated in the presumed genealogy of Pakhtuns is the daughter of Khalid bin Walid, a military commander at the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW), whom Qais had married supposedly. Except the daughter of Khalid bin Walid (RA) there is no mention of any other woman in the presumed oral history of Pakhtun genealogy. This particular fact implies how men have dominated the Pakhtun culture and tradition while women have been ignored both in history and culture.

77 Akbar S. Ahmed, Sorrows and Joy among Muslim Women, 50.
78 Olaf Caroe, The Pathans, 3-42.
Women do not possess any substantial rights in a Pakhtun society, therefore, they cannot transfer any right to their children. Her status in this regard is the same both in her natal and marital homes. Financially too, women do not control any significant resources. Women would rarely head a family in the Pakhtun society. It can be easily concluded that Pakhtun society is basically a patriarchal society in which male members dominate. All the authority relating decision-making and executing is vested in men. Men are the privileged while women’s role and status is subjugated to men. Male members of the family have control and authority over female members in all circumstances and situations. In other words Pakhtun culture legitimizes male dominance and hegemony. 

Much of the genealogical account of Pakhtun culture and society is based on the oral history and tradition thus can hardly be verified. However, as compare to other ethnic groups in Pakistan, Pakhtuns give enormous importance to their culture and heritage. They often try to glorify their heritage by pointing out the fact that some non-Pakhtuns also practice Pakhtun traditions. Tariq, one of my uneducated respondents, said that nowadays many non-Pakhtuns e.g. Kohistanis, Chitralis and Kharayan (a term used for the urban Hindko speaking community living in Peshawar) also speak Pakhto and follow our culture. But it does not mean that they have become Pakhtuns by just speaking and practicing Pakhto, he added. He further elaborated that we (Pakhtuns) have our own distinctive shajra (pedigree or ancestry), we have our own way of life based on our culture and customs and beliefs which is totally different from Punjabis (a term he used for all non-Pakhtun ethnic groups in Pakistan).

Fayaz, one of my educated respondents, said that Pakhtuns were originally Jews. He also tried to support his viewpoint by giving the argument that Jews’ and Pakhtuns’ behavior and mindset are the same. He said that historically we were part of a Jew tribe. He further said that both Pakhtuns and Jews happen to be conservative and rigid people. This view of linking Pakhtuns with Jews was shared by four out of my total forty interviewees. One educated respondent Imran also expressed an interesting and apparently weird opinion and linked Pakhtuns with Germans. He said:

82 Interview Tariq, 18 October 2015.
83 Personal interview from Fayaz Ahmad 04 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Fayaz, 04 October 2015.
“Hmmm… we both (Pakhtuns and Germans) belong to martial race and our behavioral traits are also similar. Germans are also tough, conservative and straight-forward people like us…”\textsuperscript{84}

Considering various theories given by scholars and perceptions of the common Pakhtuns with regard to their ancestry, it is difficult exactly trace the origin of Pakhtuns. However, my aim here is to describe and explain the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society and not merely describing their historical evolution. I am trying to focus on the element of masculinity in the Pakhtun culture and society. This patriarchal structure has been derived from the code of life – \textit{Pakhtunwali}. Lineage creates social stratification, and this sense of social division leads to a pronounced sense of ‘us’ and ‘them’.\textsuperscript{85}

3.6.3 Land and its Relevance with Machismo in Pakhtun Society

After having discussed the element of patriarchy and masculinity in the meaning of Pakhtun and the lineage system in Pakhtun society, now I will focus an important aspect of Pakhtun culture which entails the concept of masculinity. Land apparently seems to be a matter of resources and economic power, however, in Pakhtun society it is more an issue of ghairat (honor) and thus related to masculinity. Land is one of the main sources of rivalry among Pakhtuns. Some of my interviewees linked the Pakhtun identity with the holding of land.

Bilal, one of my educated respondents, whose forefathers are from Buner district, shared his views about the issue of land ownership in his native village and other surrounding areas. He said in our areas those people who own more land especially the cultivated land are called the real or pure Pakhtuns, while those people who own no or less land they are considered lower Pakhtuns. He further said they [lower Pakhtuns] are often discriminated and treated in a degrading manner. They are often called by their profession or caste e.g. \textit{Chamyar} (leatherworker) \textit{Qasab} (butcher), \textit{Kochwan} (muleteer), \textit{Jola} (weaver) and \textit{Inger} (blacksmith), etc., he added.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{84} Interview Imran, 19 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{85} Muhammad Saeed, Pakhtun Men’s Perceptions, 97.
\textsuperscript{86} Interview Bilal, 16 October 2015.
Majority of Pakhtuns living in the greenbelt of area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa i.e. Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Charsadda and also those in Swat, Buner and Dir, etc. belong to the Yousafzai tribe. According to Barth they migrated from Kabul, Afghanistan during sixteenth century. They came and captured these agricultural lands and subdued the local population as laborers and tenants. Land was achieved through violence. It remained a source of contention among Pakhtuns and it still remains so. This is how the social hierarchization took place in Pakhtun society. Land is considered the symbol of honor and socio-economic status. Land also determines the ghairat (honor) and Pakhto of Pakhtuns. And landlessness can dispossess a person of Pakhtun status in some areas of Pakistan.

It can be concluded from the above discussion that Pakhtun is a person who has Pakhtun lineage and who lives his life according to the code of Pakhtunwali. Those who have a Pakhtun lineage but they do not practice Pakhto or Pakhtunwali are considered as Pakhtuns of lower standing. Similarly those who do not belong to Pakhtuns genealogically but have mixed with Pakhtuns through marital ties and other assimilation processes and also speak Pakhto language and practice Pakhtunwali (for example some religious groups i.e. Sayyids, Mians or occupational groups i.e. butcher, barber, etc.) are called Pakhtuns but generally they are not perceived as pure Pakhtuns.

This has always been a popular subject of debate among Pakhtuns because they are infatuated with establishing purity of their Pakhtunness and questioning of those who loosely practice Pakhto. Imran, one of my educated respondents, referred to a person from an occupational group in sarcastic and derogatory tone hagha dam saray de (he is a damn musician). Pakhtun is defined through different criteria such as lineage, possessing certain qualities; ownership of land; some behavioral traits; practicing Pakhtunwali, etc. However, one thing is common in all these criteria: all of these criteria relate to and are aspects of Pakhtun masculinity.

87 Fredrik Barth, Political Leadership, 38.
89 Fredrik Barth, Political Leadership, 40.
91 Interview Imran, 19 October 2015.
3.7 PAKHTUN MASCULINITY AND COMMON PERCEPTIONS AMONG PAKHTUNS

My respondents described Pakhtun masculinity with different names and terms e.g. *nar, narina, sare* (manly, male, man), etc. Moreover, as mentioned above, they also applied the terms *ghairat*, (honor) *naritob* (manliness), etc. for women as well but in a different context with a different meaning and with assigning them a particular social role. Suleman, one of my uneducated interviewees, said:

“I think that the men’s *naritob* (manliness) and *ghairat* (honor) are different from women’s *ghairat* (honor) and *naritob* (manliness). Men are not supposed to adopt the qualities of women and similarly women are not supposed to behave in a mannish way”. 92

He referred to masculinity and men as not only different from women and femininity but also as in opposition to each other. According to him masculinity included decency, forcefulness, power, stiffness, fierceness, liberty, leading and convincing roles, earning the livelihood and other necessities for the family, taking revenge and defending the dignity of the family and his community. Suleman viewed the Pakhtun masculinity in this particular way. According to him this personified a specific conception of Pakhtun *naritob* (manliness) which is expressed in certain tangible ways. 93

One of these tangible ways is the Pakhtun perception of the moustache. Nadar, one of my uneducated respondents, said that moustache is the symbol of *narintob* (manhood). He further said that men are not supposed to shave their moustache and those who do it they will be punished by God on the judgment day and will be raised with women for doing this unwanted act. He continued saying that now the situation has changed a lot and people are shaving the moustache while it was unimaginable in the old times. He said that previously people used to taunt those who shaved moustache with the words like *khazo pa shan ye makh jor kay de* (has got a feminine look), etc. 94

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92 Interview Suleman, 03 October 2015.
93 Ibid.
94 Interview Nadar, 28 October 2015.
Shams, one of my educated respondents, explained that a man with a big and thick moustache is feared and he is generally thought to be an aggressive, violent and assertive person, because with this particular look he is supposed to act like a pure brave Pakhtun. He is expected by others to do so. He said that moustache is the symbol of masculinity and a Pakhtun should act in accordance with Pakhto or Pakhtunwali. He should behave fearlessly and must not show fearfulness. Shams further said that a soldier with big moustache in army or in police service is given special allowance because he terrorizes the enemies and criminals with his look and is expected to be exceptionally valiant. Shams’s views represented the inherent features of patriarchy, masculinity and aggressiveness in the Pakhtun society.

On the other hand some other respondents attached enormous importance with the concept of hospitality. Mumtaz, one of my uneducated respondents, said that a true Pakhtun is known for his melmastya (hospitality). He explained that a perfect Pakhtun is the one who always shows hospitality to his guests and friends. In this regard no distinction is made between friends and strangers and both are treated alike, he added. He said melma da khuday rahmat wi (a guest is a blessing from God). He also mentioned about his hujra (guestroom or a meeting place) that how it is open for the guests and strangers all the time, despite the fact that he is settled in an urban area of Peshawar.

Some other interviewees were of the opinion that an ideal Pakhtun is the one who gives respect to others especially to the elders and women, and has the spirit of selflessness. Tariq, one of my uneducated respondents, said that a genuine Pakhtun gives respect to and in response receives respect and admiration from others. He further pointed out that if a Pakhtun is respected by his own relatives, he will be respected by the community in general.

Some other respondents also mentioned the qualities of uprightness, justice and clemency along with hospitality. Asif, one of my uneducated respondents, said that a true Pakhtun is person who has a huge hujra (guestroom or a meeting place) and welcomes the guests.

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95 Personal Interview from Shams ul Haq, 21 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shams, 21 October 2015.
96 The concept of hujra is central to the Pakhtun society, however, it is a common feature of the tribal and rural Pakhtun areas. In urban Pakhtun areas big hujras are rarely found, instead there are small guestrooms called Betak which is different from hujra in many respects including size, usage, ownership, etc.
97 Interview Mumtaz, 21 October 2015.
98 Interview Tariq, 18 October 2015.
Pakhtun will always forgive his enemy if he comes to his *hujra* or home, he added. He explained that a true Pakhtun will always show mercy for those who admit their wrong and seek pardon. Asif further argued that a genuine Pakhtun will always help and assist the poor and needy people, relatives, and neighbors. He said *pakhtun ba hamesha da haq khabara kai* (a Pakhtun will always speak the truth and will stand by it). He further said *pakhtun da jabe na na awrhi* (a Pakhtun always keeps his promises).  

As far as fulfilling the promise is concerned, some other respondents also came up with the same kind of viewpoints. Most of them echoed that a real Pakhtun fulfils his promises in all circumstances. Imran, one of my educated respondents, said *che pakhtun jaba warki nu sar ba o beli kho jabe na na awri* (if a Pakhtun makes a promise, he fulfils it even at the cost of his life). He further elaborated that Pakhtun keeps his words and fulfils promises in all situations such as the promise of helping someone in need, the promise of assisting someone economically, the promise of giving support help in a conflict, etc. Support in conflict seems to be more important than other types of promises because most of my respondents talked about this phenomenon repeatedly. 

This shows that how common the conflict is in the everyday life in the Pakhtun society. Like many other interviewees, Nadar and Mumtaz pointed out that a Pakhtun always tries to pacify the contending parties and reconcile their differences. They also mentioned that Pakhtun never connive and tempt others into conflict and squabble. Nadar said the Pakhtuns admire peace and strive for it; he gave the examples of the institution of *Jirga* and also the tradition of *nanawatay* in Pakhtun culture. Although their emphasis was on the point that how peace is achieved and maintained in the Pakhtun culture, it implied the focus on the theme of conflict in Pakhtun culture. Since the conflicts in Pakhtun society are supposed to be dealt by men, it indicates the significance of masculinity and patriarchal nature of Pakhtun society.

*Ghairat* (honor) and *badal* (revenge) are two distinct and interconnected characteristics of the Pakhtun code of life – *Pakhtunwali*. These two are associated with the male identity in the Pakhtun culture and imply that women assume a subordinate role to play the social life. It also describes how Pakhtuns perceive the management of women by men.

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100 Interview Imran, 19 October 2015.
101 Interview Nadar, 28 October 2015.
Majority of my interviewees held that an ideal and pure Pakhtun must exhibit pakhto and ghairat (honor) especially in the domestic issues and ‘women’ matters. Bakht Zada, one of my uneducated respondents said that Pakhtuns are conscious about the purdah and dignity of women. Arif, another uneducated respondent said that Pakhtun never compromises on the matters of ghairat (honor) and even prefers the death over such compromise. Women related ghairat (honor) is defended by badal (revenge), he added. In Pakhtun culture a man enjoys impunity in case of killing his wife, mother, sister, daughter, etc. if found or reported having an affair. This is how the man preserves or restores the honor and dignity of his family. This indicates how deeply deep-rooted is the concept of ghairat (honor) in the Pakhtun culture which is associated with masculinity.

At the same time the concepts of ghairat (honor) highlights the importance and centrality of family in Pakhtun culture. Relating the family matters, an important aspect was pointed out by some of my interviewees i.e. tarboorwali (disputes within family especially between cousins). In the joint family system (a common feature of the Pakhtun society), there is a hierarchized structure of authority among men. And this particular structure leads to the rivalries among family members for example over the issues of women or distribution of land and resources. Inam, one of my educated respondents, mentioned that Pakhtuns always feel jealousy from and are in competition with their tarboor (cousins). Family rivalries and jealousies thus are a source of conflict among Pakhtuns which entails the issue of masculinity and patriarchy.

After having discussed the perceptions among Pakhtuns regarding masculinity, now I turn to highlight some important concept involving patriarchal masculinity in the Pakhtun society and culture:

### 3.7.1 The Concept of Ghairat (honor)

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102 Interview Bakht, 17 October 2015.
103 Personal Interview from Arif, 23 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Arif 23 October 2015.
107 Interview Inam, 05 October 2015.
It is a commonly observed and indicated fact that Pakhtuns (men) are highly mindful and careful about their nang (gallantry), namus (women related honor) and ghairat (honor) in every situation and seek to preserve them at all costs. A man who fails to preserve and maintain his honor is taunted and called beghairat (pusillanimous or cowardly).\(^{108}\) Fayaz, an educated respondent, mentioned that if a Pakhtun is not hospitable to the guests, does not keep his words, does not care about his commitments, does not show respect to the parents and elders and does not have power over his women, he is perceived to be as effeminate and unmanly.\(^{109}\) This view was echoed by a number of my respondents.

There are three main objects in the Pakhtun society which involve ghairat (honor): zan (woman), zar (literally gold, or wealth in general), and zamin (land).\(^{110}\) These three issues usually generate disputes or conflicts in the Pakhtun society. A large number of my interviewees indicated that ghairat (honor) involves one’s control over his women. Shams, one of my literate respondents, said:

“One must show manhood and masculinity to his women, else other people in the family and society would consider and tag him as da khazay nokar (wife’s servant) or daus (unmanly or womanish), which puts at risk our ghairat (honor).”\(^{111}\)

Aggression and hostility in Pakhtun society are demonstrated to show the ‘manhood’. This aggression in the name ghairat (honor) includes domestic violence, individual rivalries, disputes between cousins and the rivalry and conflicts between families and tribes. In a Pakhtun society if men breach this set pattern of ghairat, they are taunted and ridiculed by other people in the family, village or tribe. In other words this so called ghairat (honor) is demonstrated just to show other people that one is a real Pakhtun. For example in case of domestic violence a Pakhtun man commits aggression just in order to

\(^{108}\) Muhammad Saeed, Pakhtun Men’s Perceptions, 104.
\(^{109}\) Interview Fayaz, 04 October 2015.
\(^{111}\) Interview Shams, 21 October 2015.
show his power over the woman and to prove his ghairat (honor) to the community. 112
One of my male interviewees admitted that sometimes he commits violence and aggression against her wife just to show his family (mother, brothers, etc.) that he is a nar (manly) and ghairatee (man of honor). He further elaborated that he then apologizes his wife later and his wife understands his situation. He said that ghairat (honor), in a Pakhtun culture, is to have control over women.

This shows that masculinity and male dominance is a part of the joint family structure of the Pakhtun society. A man shows his ghairat (honor) because of the social pressures in the form of joint family structure, etc. Since the Pakhtun society is socially more cohesive, a Pakhtun (man) has to act in a specific manner peculiar for men. Sometimes this patriarchal masculinity also assumes the shape of sexism in the intimate relationships i.e. the ideology of male dominance.113 Disobedience on the part of women is seen as challenging the ghairat (honor) of a Pakhtun man which unwanted and unacceptable social norm in the Pakhtun culture. This ideal of heroic machismo, sometimes, even leads to aggressive regulation of female sexuality by men114 in order to prove ghairat (honor) and nari to b (manhood).

A few respondents also interpreted ghairat (honor) in a different way. For example Adil, one of my educated interviewees, said:

“Ghairat, in my opinion, is telling the truth and to act in the righteously and honestly as well as showing due respect to the people and acknowledging their status. We should get rid of the old and outdated concept of ghairat (honor) associated with male chauvinism in our society because it is useless and worthless a custom and habit, for example it is not ghairat (honor) to kill women or beating them for petty issues or to disallow girls from going to school or college, and not giving them their right in the inheritance. This is

112 Muhammad Saeed, Pakhtun Men’s Perceptions, 109.
not ghairat (honor) instead this is jehalat (ignorance) and zuhm (suppression or injustice).”

Adil’s exposure to the foreign countries (USA and UK) brought a visible and noticeable change in his views regarding the ‘outdated’ concept of ‘naritob’, etc. and he openly criticized and challenged the conventional connotation of ghairat (honor). Some other respondents also shared the similar views regarding the concept of ghairat (honor) in the Pakhtun culture and society. Most of them were educated and represented the liberal segment of the society. Another common feature among them was their urban origin and middle class background. I have discussed this aspect of the issue in a considerable detail in the next chapter regarding transformation in the culture of patriarchal masculinity and male dominance.

3.7.2 The Concept of Badal

**Badal** means taking revenge. In Pakhtun society if someone is wronged, he has to take revenge according to the Pakhtun code of conduct – Pakhtunwali. It may also be termed as a reaction or an act of retaliation against an insult caused to a Pakhtun. Causing insult to a Pakhtun sets him on fire and this fire can be quenched only when he takes badal (revenge). In a sense this is also linked to the concept of ghairat (honor) and naritob (manhood). As mentioned above, three things are inviolable in Pakhtun society i.e. *zan* (woman), *zar* (gold or wealth) and *zamin* (land). The molestation of these leads to rivalry, dispute, violence, enmity, and even murders in the Pakhtun culture. This enmity, sometimes, continues from generation to generation. This is particularly the case with tribal and rural Pakhtun societies.

*Pakhtunwali* requires that the offender and wrongdoer should not go unpunished. This is the matter of ghairat (honor) and self-esteem for a Pakhtun to take revenge at any cost, and is associated with the issue of patriarchal masculinity in Pakhtun society. Interestingly, this is also a fact that Pakhtuns do not exceed in badal (revenge) from the

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115 Personal Interview from Adil Khan, 28 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Adil, 28 October 2015.
116 Badal or revenge is a coercive means of settlement of disputes in a Pakhtun society. There are several other coercive and peaceful means of the settlement of disputes including swara (taking women in compensation), taking money in compensation, nanawatay (surrender or seeking padon) or any other means decided by jirga (a council of elders).
exact wrong done to them. In other words Pakhtun do not tend to torture their enemy because again it is against the idea of ghairat (honor) and righteousness. The set rule for revenge in Pakhtun culture is ‘an eye for an eye and an ear for an ear’. And if a Pakhtun crosses this limit and, in retaliation, goes beyond than what actual wrong was done to him then he loses the general standing in and empathy of the community.\textsuperscript{118}

\textit{Badal} (revenge) is usually a male specific phenomenon in the Pakhtun society. Son or brother (male member of the family) is usually expected to take revenge for the insult and wrong done to his family, and if there is no mature or adult male member in the family to take revenge then sometimes a professional killer is hired for this purpose by paying huge amount of money.\textsuperscript{119} Revenge often leads to the destruction of the whole family. The rivalry among Pakhtuns assumes various levels e.g. man to man or individual level, inter-family feuds, and sometimes inter-tribal rivalries.

\textit{Badal} (revenge) is linked to the Pakhtun mindset that a Pakhtun will always react and take revenge and would not pardon his enemy unless in the case of nanawaty (begging for pardon) by the enemy. Tariq, one of my uneducated respondents said that a Pakhtun is justified by taking revenge and killing his enemy if he is wronged. He further pointed out that Pakhtuns cannot tolerate any insult and humiliation and take \textit{badal} (revenge) at any cost.\textsuperscript{120} If a Pakhtun fails to do so it becomes a challenge to his ghairat (honor).

Murder or any humiliation and misconduct done to women in Pakhtun society are unpardonable offences. Any abuse to women causes insult and insolence to the aggrieved party and then the only option the aggrieved party is left with is the \textit{badal} (revenge), said by Mumtaz, one of my uneducated respondents. He further elaborated that if the affected party fails to take revenge by killing the offender or take swara (taking women in their nikkah as compensation), etc. then it causes defamation of the family and the dignity of Pakhtun is challenged and even his ghairat (honor) is questioned.\textsuperscript{121}

Gulbat, one of my uneducated interviewees, expressed the similar views in these words:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{118} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Interview Tariq, 18 October 2015.
\item \textsuperscript{121} Interview Mumtaz, 21 October 2015.
\end{itemize}
“A sahi (pure) and ghairatee (honorable) Pakhtun is the one who never lets his enemy go unpunished, he takes badal (revenge) at all costs. Pakhtuns always retaliate because it is the matter of ghairat (honor) and Pakhto (Pakhtunness). If we don’t, we are considered and taunted as beghairat (pusillanimous) which is no less then death to us”.122

Being vengeful is considered the proof of being a ‘real man’ in the Pakhtun culture and society. Showing retaliation of the same level and getting compensation are two main facets and forms of revenge in Pakhtun society. As far as the rationale and justification of revenge are concerned, it serves two purposes: on the one hand it ensures or attempts to demonstrate social justice in an anarchic society, while on the other hand it establishes and preserves the hegemonic machismo in a society which is highly patriarchal both in appearance and in essence. In other words a Pakhtun attempts to restore his ghairat (honor) and status in the society by taking badal (revenge).123

This particular attitude of taking revenge and preserving ghairat (honor) also has another effect with regard to masculinity and patrilineal system in Pakhtun society: usually sons are preferred over daughters. Pakhtuns celebrate the birth of a male child with great joy and ecstasy. Male children are perceived to be the custodians of ghairat (honor) and also the symbol of economic power.124 Mumtaz, one of my uneducated respondents, said zaman da plar mati wi (sons are the source of strength).125 Majority of my respondents expressed the similar views. Bakht Zada, one of my uneducated respondents, told me that he has five sons and this makes him powerful and influential in the family as well as in the tribe.126

The social desirability of male children in the Pakhtun society is the outcome of social, cultural and economic factors. Sons carry the family name and legacy. They are considered responsible to support the family and parents financially because there is no welfare state concept. They also guard the honor of the family and tribe through taking

122 Interview Gulbat, 03 October 2015.
124 Ibid.
125 Interview Mumtaz, 21 October 2015.
126 Interview Bakht, 17 October 2015.
badal (revenge). A man can extend his influence in the society through his male children because they have access to the society and not the daughters. Male children are considered handy and helpful in ways that female children are not.\textsuperscript{127}

3.7.3 Aggression as an Indicator of Machismo

The concepts of ghairat (honor), nang (pride), badal (revenge) and naritob (manliness), etc. are the symbols of masculinity in a Pakhtun society.\textsuperscript{128} Moreover, these phenomena, in one way or the other, are linked with the aggression and violence in the Pakhtun culture. Some of my respondents were of the opinion that hegemonic and aggressive masculinity is fundamental to the Pakhtun culture and tradition. For example, Shahid, one of my educated interviewees, said:

“In my opinion Pakhtuns are genetically aggressive and forceful. They are real picture of manhood. Pakhtuns are naturally vengeful, rushed and highly expressive and emotional people. I think this is true about both educated and uneducated Pakhtuns. Although I am an educated person and have the exposure of visiting foreign countries including USA and UK but still at times I become aggressive and forceful especially in the honor related matters. However, I admit that it is not a desirable habit. Even Pakhtun soldiers and players are more aggressive than the non-Pakhtun ones, because Pakhtuns are genetically aggressive and male chauvinists”.\textsuperscript{129}

Shahid clearly indicated that male dominance and violent attitude on the part of men in Pakhtun society are inbuilt phenomena, hence they cannot be easily modified. The way he easily admitted the fact he himself was a short-tempered and aggressive person who even sometimes resort to violence, shows that how normal are the ideas of aggression and masculinity in the Pakhtun culture even though he accepted that it was an undesirable habit. This leads one to assume that male chauvinism, hegemonic masculinity, machismo


\textsuperscript{128} Muhammad Saeed, Pakhtun Men’s Perceptions, 112.

\textsuperscript{129} Personal Interview from Shahid Ullah, 26 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shahid 26 October 2015.
and patriarchal structure are the common features of Pakistani society in general and Pakhtun society in particular.¹³⁰

Like *ghairat* (honor) and *badal* (revenge), aggression or violence too is the indicator of patriarchal masculinity in the Pakhtun society. This aggression assumes the shape of both general violence and domestic violence against women.¹³¹ In Pakhtun society family gender relations are always male dominated and male members of the family feel entitled to exercise authority over female members.¹³² Moreover, the ideals of *ghairat* (honor) and *badal* (revenge) ultimately lead to violence as a natural way to resolve the conflict.

Most of the literature on the subject of masculinity and male violence indicates that this is the outcome of social and cultural setting of a society and is not determined biologically.¹³³ The perception of intrinsic aggression is misleading and it accentuates the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society. The history of Pakhtuns is full of wars and conflicts, and because of this fact the notions of masculinity, aggression and violence are so common and sometimes wrongly presumed as innate features of Pakhtun men.¹³⁴ The militarized societies often lead to the aggressive machismo as a natural outcome.¹³⁵ This is true about the Pakhtun culture and society.

Considering the siege mentality because of the inter-tribal and intra-tribal feuds in the Pakhtun society, it can be said that Pakhtun men are encouraged to be aggressive and exhibit valor and masculinity in their conduct, otherwise their very survival in such kind of society is endangered. Aggression in Pakhtun society is closely related to the idea of *naritob* (manhood). It is through aggression that men reclaim their position and esteem in the society.¹³⁶ Halim, one of my educated respondents, said:

¹³⁴ Fredrik Barth, *Political Leadership*, 43.
“Politeness, civility and toleration are associated with weakness and spinelessness in our culture. You can gain and maintain your honor, respect and self-esteem only if you can show aggression and frighten other people. If you have more power, more money and, most importantly, more manpower in the form of male members in your family then you are more respected and more feared person in the community. On the other hand if you lack such qualities, you stand nowhere.”  

In an environment where there is no effective system of security, where government is inefficient and where judicial system is weak and ineffective, it becomes imperative that one has to rely on his own power. This is the case with Pakhtun culture and society where you feel secure and safe only when you have more men and power. Perhaps it is because of this factor that Pakhtuns also tend to be polygamous in order to have more sons. In this way they try to become more powerful and influential in society. The higher position and rank in the hierarchy power is thus maintained through the demonstration of more aggression and show of strength through maximum number of male members in the society. However, some of my respondents viewed the notions of aggression, violence, naritob (manhood) among Pakhtuns as the result of ignorance and illiteracy in the society. For example, Inam, one of my educated interviewees, said:

“Many of the Pakhtuns are either completely illiterate or less educated and majority of them are poor people. That is why they are so violent, traditional and ignorant in their social attitude. This has earned a bad name for Pakhtuns all over the world. We are considered fundamentalists because we are not diplomatic in our approach and hence our land has become a battlefield for the interests of unseen powers. Punjabis are more educated and economically well off than us that is why they are living a relatively peaceful life. I

137 Personal Interview from Halim Gul, 07 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Halim, 07 October 2015.
138 Raewyn W. Connell, Masculinities, 115.
think we should get rid of the false sense of pride and the attitudes of violence and vengeful nature. We must focus on education. Only then we [Pakhtuns] can prosper because these are the main factors for our miseries and for the conflict in society”.140

Similar views were expressed by some other respondents as well. They considered the lack of education, unemployment and economic backwardness as the main causes of ignorance, conservativeness and inflexibility in the Pakhtun society. According to them if a person is financially self-sufficient and does not undergo economic stress, he tends to be far less violent than the others. Similarly if a person is educated and open-minded, he does not relate ghairat (honor), power and respect to badal (revenge) and masculinity. Twenty-five out forty respondents were of the opinion that patriarchal masculinity and aggression in Pakhtun culture are linked with their economic conditions.

The available literature on the violence, aggression and male dominance also indicates that these notions have strong links with economic backwardness and unrelenting poverty.141 Aggression and social violence are associated with socio-economic destitution especially in a society where resources are not distributed equally because of hierarchical structure and situation. All these socio-economic conditions can be found in the Pakhtun society, that is why we often come across the notions of aggressiveness and masculinity in the Pakhtun culture.142

3.7.4 The Concept of Paighor (taunt)

*Paighor* (taunt) is one of the main features of Pakhtun culture and society which also plays an important role in the promotion of the ideology of patriarchal masculinity in the Pakhtun society.143 Some commissions or omissions of conduct result in the *paighor* (taunt) in Pakhtun culture. For example if a man fails to take revenge of the murder of his father or brother, etc., it becomes a slander and a matter of *paighor* (taunt) for him. Similarly an elopement of a girl becomes a taunt for the male members of her family. That’s why a son will always be looking for an opportunity and chance to take the

140 Interview Inam, 05 October 2015.
143 Fredrik Barth, “Pathan Identity and its Maintenance”, 123.
revenge from his father’s murderer and so on. Unless he does so, he will be taunted with words like: der da naritob khabare ma kawa, da plar badal wakhla ya ghalay kena 144(don’t show off about your manhood and courage; take revenge of your father’s murder or keep hushed).

These or other similar words are considered paighor (taunt) in Pakhtun culture and set a Pakhtun on fire and he, without thinking of the consequences, goes and attempts to kill the person who became cause of the taunt. Considering its effects and dire consequences, all Pakhtuns always pray to God to protect them from taunt and its severe consequences. Taking revenge is the only way a Pakhtun can survive with respect and pride in the community, otherwise he becomes he prey of paighor (taunt). 145 And there is Pakhto saying: paighor ghund kali wran kral (paighor has destroyed many houses).

The public or community pressure in the form of paighor (taunt) is one of factors why Pakhtuns adhere to the code of Pakhtunwali. The paighor (taunt) hurts the ghairat (honor) and self-esteem of the Pakhtun and then he must resort to aggression and show his naritob (manliness). If we analyze deeply, most of the acts of proving one’s manhood are paighor (taunt) oriented. 146 In order to avoid the paighor (taunt) and being labeled as beghairat (coward) Pakhtuns comply with the expected form of conduct i.e. Pakhtunwali. Arif, one of my uneducated respondents, repeated a famous Pakhto saying da kali uza kho da narkha ma uza (you can leave the village but cannot ignore the traditions). 147

Pakhtuns tend to follow the traditional code of Pakhtunwali and ghairat (honor) in order to avoid public scolding and to gain respect and esteem in the community. Imran, one of my educated interviewees, said:

“In our [Pakhtun] society, our actions are keenly observed and monitored by our extended family and the community in general. That’s why we [Pakhtuns] often give preference to the Interest of community over our self-interest. Sometimes people don’t send their daughters or sisters to

144 S. Iftikhar Hussain, Some Major Pakhtoon Tribes, 24.
145 Ibid.
146 Muhammad Saeed, Pakhtun Men’s Perceptions, 116.
147 Interview Arif, 23 October 2015.
schools and colleges simply to avoid paighor (taunt), otherwise they might wish to do so.”

The rural and tribal environment of Pakhtun areas lead to a cohesive, integrated and close social structure. This integrated and closed societal structure makes it difficult for Pakhtuns to think out of the box. That’s why they often give priority and preference to their social and cultural values and do not consider the legal formal patterns to regulate their lives. Tilawat, one of my uneducated respondents, said:

“We cannot escape from our traditions because we cannot run away from our community. Our gham aw khadi (sorrow and joy) are combined and shared, our relatives and family members support us in a conflict with other family, and our tribe gives us assistance and help and stands by us in a conflict with a person of the other tribe. Our marriages and funerals are incomplete and meaningless without the presence of our community. We cannot withstand the socio-economic challenges without the support and backing of the community. We all support each other and that is how our system functions. This is the part of the system that we must abide by our traditional code of conduct. How can we ignore our traditions including badal (revenge), etc… These are the symbols of our ghairat (honor) and naritoob (manliness). If we deviate then we cannot survive with respect and honor. Deviation also causes paighor (taunt) and taunt is a living death for us (paighor juwande marg de)”.150

As mentioned above, lack of a welfare state system and absence of good governance result in an environment where people heavily rely on each other for support and assistance. Social exclusion or boycott is a serious issue in Pakhtun society. In order to

148 Interview Imran, 19 October 2015.
150 Interview Tilawat, 16 October 2015.
avoid such social exclusion, people have to abide by the code of Pakhtunwali which involves the features like ghairat (honor), badal (revenge), aggression and paighor (taunt) and naritob (manhood), etc.

However, several other respondents had different views regarding paighor (taunt), naritob (manhood) and ghairat (honor), etc. Compliance and defiance from regarding these traditions and customs go side by side in the Pakhtun society. In fact, in reality, the situation with regard to Pakhtunwali and related patriarchal masculinity has changed much and is changing constantly. I have discussed this changing environment with detail in the next chapter.

3.8 CONCLUSION

Pakhtuns in Pakistan, who primarily live in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, FATA and some parts of Baluchistan, are the second largest ethnic group in the country after Punjabis. Pakhtuns have a strong sense of group solidarity. This idea of group solidarity among Pakhtuns is even older than the modern concept of nationalism and we can find the glimpse of Pakhtun nationalism in the poems of the seventeenth century’s warrior poet Khushal Khan Khattak. Therefore, it can be said that Pakhtuns perceive themselves not only an ethnic group but a separate nation. This sense of nationalism is partly based on the fact that Pakhtuns have their own code of life which is called Pakhtunwali.

As far as the origin and religious transformation of Pakhtuns is concerned two major theories address this issue i.e. Aryans theory and Bani Israelite theory. Although there is difference of opinion among historians and scholars regarding the origin and religious transformation of Pakhtuns, but it is fact that today almost all Pakhtuns are Muslims. There is ambiguity that whether Pakhtuns converted to Islam collectively or individually in phases and what were the causes of their conversion, however, it is clear that before conversion to Islam they practiced various religions e.g. Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Hinduism, etc. in South Asia.

Since Pakhtuns historically lived in a tribal society, and since Islam also came from a tribal society i.e. Arabia, Pakhtuns after accepting and converting to Islam acculturated it

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151 Bruce L. Benson and Zafar R. Siddiqui, “Pashtunwali”.
152 Muhammad Saeed, Pakhtun Men’s Perceptions, 118.
with their code of life – *Pakhtunwali*. A layman Pakhtun even presumes Islam and *Pakhtunwali* as two sides of the same coin. The reason of this perception is that Pakhtun society has adopted certain Islamic symbols in such a way that they have become part and parcel of their culture. For example it is difficult to determine in a Pakhtun tribal society that whether men grow beard as a cultural effect or as a religious symbolism. Similarly there are numerous other examples of religious presence in the Pakhtun society and culture, as mentioned above.

Among various features of the Pakhtun society and culture, one important aspect is the patriarchal masculinity. The Pakhtun society is based on the patrilineal structure. The existing literature on the Pakhtun society and culture clearly indicates that men have a superior status to women in almost all the fields of social life. Moreover, many of my respondents also indicated the similar facts about Pakhtun society. Men are the main decision makers and executors in the family and society. Many important institutions such as *Jirga* (a council of elders) are primarily male dominated ones.

The Pakhtun code of conduct – *Pakhtunwali* entails various concepts and values which lead one to conclude that it’s a male dominated society where the role of men is glorified and the machismo is basic to the cultural values. The concepts of *ghairat* (honor), *badal* (revenge), *naritob* (manhood), aggression, *paighor* (taunt), etc. are the examples of how patriarchal masculinity is romanticized in the Pakhtun culture and traditions. However, sometimes this machismo and patriarchal structure are associated with the religion as well.

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CHAPTER – 4

TRANSFORMING PAKHTUN IDEALS OF MASCULINITY AND PATRIARCHY AND THE RISE OF RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The classic literature available on Pakhtun culture and society shows that the Pakhtun society is based on the patriarchal structure where man heads the family and takes all the important decisions;¹ patrilineal system is basic to the Pakhtun norms and traditions.² Moreover, masculinity is regarded as an ideal in the Pakhtun code of conduct – Pakhtunwali. The male dominance in the Pakhtun society is similar to the concepts of ‘patriarchal masculinity’ and ‘hegemonic masculinity’.³ The concepts of ghairat (honor), badal (revenge), naritob (manhood), paighor (taunt), etc., as discussed in the previous chapter, are the symbols of ideal masculinity in Pakhtunwali. Many of respondents considered these ideals as the Pakhtun identity. They held that a real and true Pakhtun is the one who follows these norms and traditions and exhibits naritob (manhood) in his deeds and actions. Some respondents related the Pakhtun code of life – Pakhtunwali with Islam and tried to overemphasize the similarities between the two. Some other, however, seemed to be against this perception and regarded Pakhtunwali and Islam two different and opposite entities.

However, there were many other respondents who viewed the relevancy of Pakhtunwali, patriarchal structure in Pakhtun society, masculinity, and the role of religion in social and political affairs in a different way. They held that there is a great difference between theory and practice. They disagreed with the perception that the ideals of patriarchy and masculinity are still relevant and followed in the Pakhtun society in the same manner as they were followed in the past. In other words they highlighted the fact that a process of change and transformation has already started in the Pakhtun society. This process of

change has threatened and to some extent altered the traditional patterns of patriarchy and masculinity in the Pakhtun society.

In this chapter, first of all, I will discuss the current changing behavior and patterns of masculinity and patriarchy in Pakhtun society, through the perceptions of my respondents. In this regard I have divided the respondents into three groups: male, female and religious clerics. I will discuss their views and perceptions about the current situation regarding the ideals of masculinity and patriarchy in Pakhtun society and also the role of religion in this regard. Many of the interviewees held that change is occurring in the existing Pakhtun society and the process of modernization has had a significant impact on the centuries old ideals of *Pakhtunwali* and Pakhtun masculinity. Some other regarded these notions as outdated and irrelevant, and considered them wrong and unjust.

Taking into account the views of these respondents (that are discussed below in this chapter) it becomes clear that *Pakhtunwali* in general and ideals of masculinity and patriarchy in particular are on decline in Pakhtun society and the greater process of social change has affected the culture and social norms to a great extent. In the second section of this chapter I will turn to the factors responsible for this transformation of the patriarchal structure in Pakhtun society. My interviewees have also mentioned the causes of change in the traditional outlook of the Pakhtun society and the patterns of patriarchy and masculinity. They pointed out several factors which affected the Pakhtun culture over the years and still are affecting it either positively and negatively in their opinion.

The transformation and decline in the patriarchal system of Pakhtun society, in its turn, has also caused significant change in the socio-political environment and culture of Pakhtun areas of Pakistan. The growing religious extremism and the rise of religious political parties in Pakistan in general and in Pakhtun region in particular have some links with the changing socio-cultural environment. In other words there is a link between socio-cultural values and political settings of a society. I will try to connect the growing role of religion in politics with the vulnerable patriarchy and masculinity in Pakhtun society and culture. In the third section of this chapter I will turn to the increased interplay of religion and politics in Pakhtun society and will relate it to the dynamics of change in the socio-cultural patterns of Pakhtun region.
In doing so I will take into consideration the views and perceptions of my respondents/interviewees as some of my respondents have linked the rise of fundamentalism and religious politics in their society with the decline in the social and cultural values of Pakhtuns. I have already discussed the link between cultural and religious spheres (Pakhtunwali and Islam) in the previous chapter. In this chapter I will try to explain how the change in one (patriarchy in Pakhtunwali) has affected the role of the other (rise of religion in politics). The current wave of modernization has, to a great extent, affected the Pakhtun cultural norms and values including the notion of patriarchal masculinity. The traditional gender relations in Pakhtun society have been challenged and threatened due to various factors including the growing awareness, responsiveness and openness among Pakhtuns of Pakistan. This in turn has resulted in the rise of fundamentalism and growing role of religion in politics.

Moreover, my basic assumption and hypothesis here is based on the theory of Martin Riesebrodt regarding the sociology of religion, as mentioned in the introductory chapter of this dissertation. I have applied here Riesebrodt’s theory in which he argues that any threat to the patriarchy in a society leads to religious fundamentalism and rise of religious forces and pattern in the society and politics. So, in the last section I will refer to the ongoing extremism in the Pakhtun society and growing influence of religion in politics as a reaction of the process of social change which has been affecting the traditional gender roles and relationship in Pakhtun culture and society.

4.2 CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF PAKHTUN MEN ABOUT PATRIARCHAL MASCULINITY

If on the one hand some respondents idealized the notions of ghairat (honor), badal (revenge) and naritob (manhood), on the other hand many others equated these with jihalat (ignorance) and considered them as outdated concepts. This approach clearly indicates a change in the perceptions of Pakhtun men about the concept of masculinity and patriarchy. Nadeem, one of my educated respondents, expressed his views regarding the reality of Pakhtun conception of masculinity. He said:

“I think Pakhtuns are completely different from other people and ethnic groups because they have a particular

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mindset and behavioral traits. They [Pakhtuns] are very casual in their approach and never do any proper planning in performing different functions. They can very easily be deceived by others because they don’t investigate any matter properly and simply believe on what is said to them. The proverb *spy darna ghwag yorho* (your ear has been taken by the dog) fits the Pakhtuns, because they will not check their ear but will run after the dog. We [Pakhtuns] have been indoctrinated that we are brave, *nar* (manly) that’s why we resort to violence, aggression and revenge in our behavior. And we are labeled as barbarous, cruel and brutal people. This is nothing but *jihalat* (ignorance). Taking law into one’s hands is not bravery but an illegal act. This is our misfortune that even many educated Pakhtuns become *jahil* (ignorant)”.⁵

Majority of interviewees (especially educated) held the similar views like Nadeem. The concepts of *ghairat* (honor) and *naritob* (manhood) were considered as *jihalat* (ignorance) and *zad* (adamancy) by many of my respondents. It showed that they viewed these concepts as outdated and disregarded the inappropriate emotional attachment with these archaic traditions. One aspect of *Pakhto kawal* (doing Pakhto) or practicing Pakhtun code is nothing but ignorance and the one who is stick to that is ignorant and *zadi* (stubborn or adamant).⁶ The one, who practices it, is actually the prey of a false sense of *naritob* (manhood) and *ghairat* (honor) which leads him to commit aggression towards others. Adil, one of my educated respondents, said:

“In my opinion *Pakhto* is a sort of *jihalat* (ignorance). We often think that if show flexibility and compromise in our attitude and do not show bullheadedness, we will lose our respect and status in the community, which is a wrong thinking. I think flexibility, compromise and soft attitude

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⁵ Personal Interview from Nadeem Khan, 02 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Nadeem, 02 October 2015.
earns you more respect and esteem in the community and society”.

Adil’s views regarding Pakhto, ghairat (honor), and naritob (manliness), etc. represent the mindset of the majority of young educated Pakhtun men. Many young and educated Pakhtun men hold the similar views. However, their analysis in this regard is a bit tricky as they do not relate these notions with true and real Pakhtunwali. They hold that the real Pakhto and Pakhtunwali do not teach us false sense of masculinity and so called naritob (manhood), instead it teaches us love and affection. Habib Ullah, one of my educated respondents, mentioned that today people do not practice true Pakhtunwali for it is based on love and kindness and it promotes humanity and benevolence in the society. He said:

“In the old times people used to be satisfied, content and happy because they used to live in joint family system where they were integrated and used to help each other. It was true Pakhtunwali because it promoted rorwali (brotherhood) compassion. But now the society has become materialistic and people are no more interested in real Pakhtunwali i.e. rorwali (brotherhood). This is reason of moral decline and lack of love and affection in the society. Pakhtunwali demands us to be loving and caring for others including our women. We should not unnecessarily believe in the outdated notions of naritob (manhood), badal (revenge), etc”.

The data I received from my respondents show that there are different forms of doing Pakhto or showing naritob (manhood) or masculinity. Some people equate it with aggression, revenge, honor, and a rigid attitude on the part of men, on the other hand, some regard it as equivalent of sacrifice, love, sympathy and compassion. Mostly the educated and urban based Pakhtun men shared the latter view in common. Nadeem, one of my educated respondents, said that actually in the Pakhtun tribal society the flexible and tolerant behavior is not appreciated much. From a very young age men are taught to

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7 Personal Interview from Adil Khan, 28 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Adil, 28 October 2015.
8 Personal Interview from Habib Ullah, 07 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Habib, 07 October 2015.
be aggressive and rigid in their attitude that’s why they act in accordance with the cultural and societal norms, else everybody knows in his heart that what is good and what is bad. Running away from one’s traditions is not easy, he added. Adil, one of my educated interviewees, stated that stereotypes about Pakhtuns should be vanished now because there is a visible change occurring in the Pakhtun society regarding the notions of badal (revenge), naritob (manhood), etc. Many people have started realizing false sense of machismo, masculinity and patriarchy are not actually the source of respect, instead goodness, peace and harmony are the real symbols of Pakhto and Pakhtunwali, he added.

Majority of the educated respondents regarded the notions of ghairat (honor), badal (revenge) and naritob (manhood), etc. as outdated which clearly shows that the concept of patriarchal masculinity and machismo in the recent times in Pakhtun society is at least challenged if not completely wiped out. Moreover, this changing concept of machismo and masculinity is not limited only to the educated strata of the society, but many illiterate and uneducated people also regard the concept of patriarchy and masculinity as outdated and not ideal. For instance Arif, one of my uneducated interviewees, said that Pakhtuns sometimes commit injustice to others especially their women in the name of ghairat (honor) and naritob (manhood). He admitted that he also used to be an aggressive man who believed in masculinity and naritob (manhood), however, now he is a changed person and believes in affection, tolerance and equality. “Previously I used to beat my wife just to show my naritob (manhood) but now I have realized I was wrong”, he added.

4.3 PAKHTUN WOMEN’S PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PATRIARCHY

There are two main theories which explain the historical evolution of patriarchy in the human society: Marxist and Feminist. The Marxist theory links the patriarchy with economic reasons and states that at the time of feudalism and agricultural society in the social evolution, the patriarchy emerged to enslave women for more agricultural production and the production of more slaves at the same time. Similarly after that with
the industrial revolution this gender relationship continued and women were seen as a source of cheap labor. Although the roles changed but the basic gender relationship of male dominance remained intact and strengthened further. The theory further argues that the inheritance system and the concept of private property completely transformed the women’s role from an equal partner to a subordinate wife. In short the Marxist interpretation leads one to assume that economy and economic factors are at the basis of social relationships including the patriarchal structure.\textsuperscript{13}

My female interviewees also indicated the economic reasons for the subordinate female role in the Pakhtun culture and society, though in a different manner. Women are usually considered economically dependent on male members of the family. Traditionally they are not allowed to work and earn their livelihood which makes them vulnerable to male dominance in the family and society at large. Particularly the Pakhtun tribal society puts bars and limitations on the women’s role as a working force and thus sanctions the dependency of women on men as a social and cultural value. Shahnaz, one of my educated female interviewees, stated that economic dependence is the main cause for male dominance and patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society. She said:

“How a woman can be equal to man in our society if she is not allowed to work and become economically dependent. Our society is male dominated and accepts the women only in certain specified roles. Until and unless women become economically independent, they cannot become socially equal to men”\textsuperscript{14}.

Although this is a common perception that women are economically dependent on men hence cannot be equal to them, but this perception is somehow changing as the actual situation is somewhat different than the perceived scenario. Shahnaz further argued that there is a visible difference between a rural and urban environment. She went on to say that in the urban towns now women are working in various sectors and becoming economically independent that’s how the traditional patterns of male dominance and patriarchal masculinity are transforming. She said:

\textsuperscript{14} Personal Interview from Shahnaz, 19 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shahnaz, 19 October 2015.
“I am educated and live in the urban area and also teaching. Neither my parents had any objection on my job nor does my husband (after my marriage) have any issue with my work. I am economically independent. Not only I am independent, but also sharing the house expenditure with my husband. My husband is very cooperative and does not believe in male superiority. He often supports me in my job and daily drops me to the school where I am teaching”.  

Shahnaz seemed quite satisfied with her life in particular and with the educated and urban based women in general. She argued that women’s status in the society is improving gradually and the urban Pakhtun society. Her argument suggested that the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society is being challenged and a social change is occurring in this regard. However, at the same time, she was quite apprehensive concerned about the women status in rural and tribal Pakhtun society. She admitted the fact that only a small segment of Pakhtun society i.e. urban, educated middle and upper middle class is going through the process of change with regard to patriarchy and masculinity. She stated that still an overwhelming majority of the Pakhtun population follows the traditional pattern of patriarchy. In tribal or rural society even economic independence of women could not end the patriarchy and male dominance, she argued.

The argument that even the economic independence is failing to end the patriarchy in the society leads one to revisit the other theory which explains the patriarchy – Feminist theory. According to feminist theory the patriarchal relations are the result of women and men’s relation to the nature. Men use the tools such as arrow, javelin, machete and mallet, etc. which are used for killing, however, women use the tools such as hoe, etc. which is used for cultivation and digging the land and to gather the plants.

The natural role assigned to women is purely human, the theory explains. The patriarchal relationship is the historical phenomenon. The patriarchy emerged and developed when a woman gave birth to a child and fed her/him which was purely social, natural and human activity. This was the natural role of women based on humanity. On the other, historical

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15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale*, 18.
account suggests that men dominated women with their coercive weapons and their job was to breed, feed and train male issues for their family. Women were regarded as cattle. Aside from the social and cultural factors, the religion also strengthened the patriarchy in order to promote the family interest which exploited women socially and politically. In other words, the Feminist theory suggests that certain social and political settings exploited the peaceful and gentle nature of women and thus the social relations of patriarchy emerged historically. ¹⁸

Some of my respondents expressed the similar views about patriarchy and masculinity in the Pakhtun society. Nasreen, one of my female educated respondents, said:

“We [women] are naturally conformist and avoid conflict. This is how and why we are exploited and dominated by men. Men are naturally aggressive and tend to be violent that is the main reason of male dominance in our society. We [women] even spend our lives in the enemy’s house as a swara to end and resolve conflicts” ¹⁹

Nasreen argued that the unnecessary compromise and conformism result in exploitation and mistreatment of women in our society. She further stated that now the situation is improving somewhat and women are becoming aware of their legal and moral rights. The traditional social norms of male dominance are seen as negative, she added. She said:

“This is a positive and encouraging sign that now the issue of male dominance and masculinity is discussed publically and discouraged by not only women but also by many reasonable men. We need to educate women and make them aware of their rights in the society. I think our [Pakhtun] society is going in that direction now” ²⁰

All of my female interviewees (six out of six) expressed the similar views. They affirmed that despite the socio-cultural and economic problems and the adverse women’s rights situation in the society, there are hopes for change in the society. They agreed to the

¹⁸ Ibid., 20.
¹⁹ Personal Interview from Nasreen, 19 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Nasreen, 19 October 2015.
²⁰ Ibid.
perception that traditional patterns of patriarchy and masculinity have weakened recently and male dominance in the society is being challenged on various forums. Women are becoming aware of their rights and thus challenging the centuries old cultural values and dogmas relating gender discrimination, they argued.

Pakhtun women’s perception (primarily educated women) about patriarchy and male dominance remind us the concept of ‘patriarchal bargain’ presented by Deniz Kandiyoti. Kandiyoti mentions about the systematic process of transformation in the patriarchal systems. This transformation is mainly the result of women’s resistance. Women strategize, negotiate and thus affect the various types and potentialities of patriarchy in the society.

4.4 CLERICS’ PERCEPTION ABOUT PATRIARCHY AND PAKHTUN CULTURE

The religious segment of the Pakhtun society seems confirming and validating the patriarchal masculinity and male dominance in general. Their view in this regard seems understandable because religions generally endorse the patriarchal structure in the society. The relationship between Adam and Eve is the symbol of how various religions view the status of women. God, in almost all religions of the world, is declared male and similarly Adam (Man) was created by Him in His likeness. Moreover, Eve (Woman) is perceived as the symbol of enticement and sin. The consequence of this particular relationship is that women are considered as less likely candidates for deliverance and an enduring life in the paradise as compare to men.

Some scholars are of the view that the concept of patriarchy and male dominance is even greater in Islam than in other religions. In doing so, they even quote various Sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and verses from Qur’an. They view women in a Muslim society as subservient, subjugated and backward. Qur’an upholds men’s superiority over women and authorizes the latter’s domination by the former. It is considered the duty and as well

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22 Ibid., 283.
24 Ibid., 176.
as a right of men to keep their women under their control and protection. Although some quotes and examples from the Qur’an and Hadith are used by these scholars, but primarily their perception is based on the actual practices in Muslim societies and some [mis]interpretations regarding gender relations by some uneducated religious clerics. The actual practices in Muslim societies and interpretations and views of a few uneducated religious clerics might not represent the original Islam.

I, in order to know the perceptions of religious group in the Pakhtun society, interviewed two imams of local mosques in Peshawar. Khizar Hayat, one of these clerics, stated that Islam gives special privileges to men in the society. He argued that despite some superficial similarities between them, men and women cannot be equal. God has designed them in two different ways, he added. He said:

“Men are to command and women are to carry out the command. This is the law of nature and law of God. Islam never goes against nature. Men are superior to women both physically and intellectually; women cannot compete with men in many fields. This is why not a single prophet happened to be woman.”

Khizar Hayat stressed on the alleged natural inferiority of women to men. However, he argued that despite the so called proven inequality between man and woman, Islam emphasizes upon giving respect and honor to women in the family and society. He quoted the Hadith, “Paradise lies under the feet of mother”. He stated that Islam gives due respect and rights to women, however, women need to be protected and commanded by their men as they [women] are naturally weak and less capable of commanding themselves. On a question related to gender relations in Pakhtun culture he replied that Pakhtun culture and traditions regarding women role and status are similar to what Islam teaches. He seemed convinced about the unity of Pakhtunwali and Islam regarding

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26 Personal Interview from Khizar Hayat, 06 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Khizar, 06 October 2015.
patriarchal patterns in the society. He particularly referred to the observance of *purdah* in Pakhtun society and termed it as an Islamic symbol.27

However, he seemed not happy with the existing actual situation in the Pakhtun society regarding *purdah* and other such related issues involving gender relations and patriarchy. He clearly demarcated between real Islamic society and existing Pakhtun society. He admitted the fact that the gender relations are transforming and the male dominance is weakening gradually, particularly in the urban areas. He viewed this changing scenario as against both the teachings of Islam and *Pakhtunwali*. He said:

“Nowadays, nobody practices true Islam and real *Pakhtunwali*. Pakhtuns have become corrupt; they are involved in various illegal and immoral activities such as kidnapping, smuggling and murder. Pakhtuns are involved in *sud* (interest) based business. They [Pakhtuns] seem to be indifferent with the both Islam and *Pakhtunwali*. Pakhtuns are not commanding their women the way they are suppose to do. Women have become westernized and forgotten the teachings of Islam. They are inviting the wrath of God. They [women] have forgotten their real duties and have indulged in sinful activities by neglecting *purdah*.  

It is obvious from his views that the notions of *ghairat* (honor), *naritob* (manhood), etc. are losing ground in the Pakhtun society, and the traditional patriarchal structure is weakening. He considered this declining concept of male dominance as a menace and threat to the very existence of the society. He was generally representing the views of most of the religious minded people in the society. He, interestingly, mentioned the term *maghribiati* (westernization) in his discussion which indicates that he had some interest in the political discussion and debate.29

Similarly, the other religious cleric (my respondent), Ihsanullah, held almost the similar views. Ihsanullah, apart from a graduate from traditional *madrassah*, was holding

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27 Ibid.  
28 Ibid.  
29 Ibid.
Bachelors degree from Peshawar University with the subjects of Islamic Studies and Pakhto. However, his opinion was not much different from Khizar Hayat who only graduated from the traditional Islamic madrassah. Ihsanullah viewed the relation between man and woman purely from sexual context. He considered woman as an active sexual power, therefore, it was imperative to limit women’s sexual power over men, he argued. This is how he sought to justify the physical segregation in the society and isolating men and women completely. Purdah, he argued, is meant to hide woman’s sexuality. He emphasized that the segregation must be maintained and women’s looks must not expose her sexual force because otherwise men would be overpowered by their weakness and indulge in immoral and un-Islamic acts.30

Ihsanullah further attempted to justify the patriarchal masculinity in Pakhtun society. He held the opinion that man is not only different from woman but also superior to her in many respects. He mentioned the inheritance law in Islam which gives women half the share of that available to men. He continued arguing that the two female witnesses in Islam are equal to one male witness which clearly suggests that men are superior to women. Once their superiority is proven, men have the natural and religious right to control women, he added. However, like Khizar Hayat, he also affirmed that recently the traditional gender relations have been transforming, and he seemed to be frustrated with this scenario when he said that sok tapos wala nishta (nobody seems to care). He further said:

“Pakhtuns [men] are deviating from their culture and religion by giving undue (had na sewaa) freedom to their women. Women are behaving like men, and men have adopted women’s qualities. Behayayi (obscenity) is becoming common and men seem to have forgotten their ghairat (honor)”.31

Ihsanullah was quite convinced that the existing Pakhtun society is ignoring the traditional patterns of patriarchy and masculinity. He also indicated that the real and only solution to the social evils including so called obscenity in the society is the

30 Personal Interview from Ihsanullah, 20 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Ihsanullah, 20 October 2015.
31 Ibid.
implementation of Islamic law – *shariah*. He was dissatisfied with the government’s policies which, in his opinion, promoted were un-Islamic. He said that *Islam rashi nu har sa ba tik shi* (Islam will cure everything).\(^{32}\)

### 4.5 FACTORS OF CHANGING PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURE OF PAKHTUN SOCIETY

The discussion with my respondents clearly indicated that not only the traditional patterns of patriarchy and masculinity have been transforming but also a particular group of the male members of the society perceive the patriarchy, machismo and masculinity as outdated and obsolete concepts and seemed to believe rather in equality between men and women. This change in the behavior of society and the perceptions of its members did not happen overnight. Any process of change in the customs, norms, values and patterns of the society takes decades to occur. Although it is wrong to conclude, from the above account, that the patterns of patriarchy and masculinity have withered away from the Pakhtun society, nor can we say that all the Pakhtun men perceive patriarchy and male dominance as archaic and outdated concepts; yet it is evident that at least a segment of society has started perceiving the male dominance and machismo as unjust and outmoded concepts. In other words there is an obvious challenge to the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society. My respondents in the discussion pointed various reasons and factors due to which the change is taking place with regard to gender relations, male dominance, patriarchy and masculinity. I will now turn to describe those factors:

#### 4.5.1 EDUCATION

The measures taken by successive governments have notably improved the literacy rate in both Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA. A recent survey shows that literacy rate in FATA has increased from 20% to 37% for boys and from 3% to 11% for girls over the last 8 to 10 years.\(^{33}\) Although the figures are not very impressive, but still these are encouraging in a sense that female literacy has increased remarkably over the last few years. Boys and girls from FATA are not only getting primary education but they are also in good number

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\(^{32}\) Ibid.

\(^{33}\) “FATA sees Modest Increase in Literacy”, *Dawn*, 01 April 2014.
in colleges and universities. Similarly the literacy rate in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has increased from 40% to 57% in the last 10 years.\textsuperscript{34}

My argument that education has caused the change in Pakhtuns’ perception about patriarchy and male dominance is based not only on these statistics but also the views of my respondents. A number of my respondents, who affirmed a change in the social settings of the Pakhtun society with regard to male dominance and patriarchy, stated that growing education is the key factor for the change in the traditional patterns of gender relations in Pakhtun society. Majority of the interviewees held the opinion that both quantity and quality of education in the Pakhtun society is improving and it is affecting the society and culture tremendously.

Inam, one of my educated interviewees, stated that only education and awareness can bring change in the society. He also pointed out that education ratio is on rise in both Pakhtun tribal and settled areas. Education changes the ideas and new ideas bring material change in the society, he added. He held that we should focus on education instead of getting involved in the outdated concepts of masculinity and machismo. He said:

\begin{quote}
“Our real ornament is education and not guns (zmung zewar taleem de topak na). We [Pakhtuns] should get rid of the false sense of pride in masculinity and should focus on education which only can bring prosperity in our society. By the grace of God (Alhamdolillah) the situation is improving and people are becoming aware of the importance of education. Government should also take steps to bring prosperity in our society by opening more schools and colleges. Only then we can ensure gender equality in our society”\textsuperscript{35}.
\end{quote}

Inam’s views represented the majority opinion of the society. Usually people agree that education brings positive changes in the society and improves the living standard of the people. Moreover, it’s a reality that education has also challenged the concept of


\textsuperscript{35} Personal Interview from Inam Ullah, 05 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Inam, 05 October 2015.
patriarchy and masculinity in the Pakhtun society. This view is authenticated by the fact that there was a clear difference in the opinion of my educated and uneducated respondents with regard to the concepts of ghairat (honor), badal (revenge) and naritob (manhood). Majority of the educated respondents viewed these notions as outdated and aspired change in the social and cultural norms which are causing violence and gender discrimination in the society. However, many of the uneducated respondents admired the notions of masculinity and machismo.

Zahoor, one of educated interviewees, also expressed similar views. Zahoor originally belongs to Khyber agency but has recently settled in Peshawar. He stated that education has brought a visible change in Pakhtun society regarding gender equality and overall social change. He mentioned that he holds a different point of view regarding masculinity and patriarchy than the majority of Pakhtuns because he is highly educated and belongs to an educated family. He said that he was brought up in an educated environment that’s why his views are more enlightened and moderate than those who are illiterate or less educated.36

Tahir, another educated respondent, pointed out that the notions of ghairat (honor), naritob (manhood) and badal (revenge), etc are more popular and socially admired in the rural areas as compare to urban Pakhtun areas. He further argued that this difference between the socio-cultural environments of the rural and urban areas is because of education. He said:

“I think rural people are less educated that’s why they are more conservative and don’t want to accept change. Urban people are highly educated and have liberal ideas, they are least bothered about Pakhto, ghairat (honor) and naritob (manhood). I am the first person in my family who studied in the university and I want to bring positive change in my village, I wish that every child of my village goes to school”.37

36 Personal Interview from Zahoor Khan, 05 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Zahoor, 05 October 2015.
37 Personal Interview from Tahir Ali, 27 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Tahir, 27 October 2015.
Tahir’s argument regarding the rural-urban disparity seems logical and the same can be said about the difference between tribal and settled areas. Literacy rate in settled areas is higher than in the tribal areas. This is why the socio-cultural patterns of patriarchy and masculinity are more admired and followed in the tribal areas as compared to the settled Pakhtun areas. In short, we can say that education is one of key factors which has caused change in the perceptions of Pakhtuns regarding patriarchy and machismo, and which has also affected the actual situation of gender relation in the society. In other words, the growing literacy rate and improving quality of educated is a threat and challenge to the ideology of patriarchy and masculinity.

### 4.5.2 Urbanization

Another important factor causing change in the patriarchal structure that I found in the discussion with my respondents was the process of urbanization. There is an obvious difference between the socio-cultural norms and patterns of a rural and urban living. The rural social settings demand a close family system and a strong patriarchal structure, however, the urban living environment has its own peculiar features that are in significant ways different from the rural environment. The growing trend of urbanization causes change in the cultural traits and habits of the people. The process of diffusion and adaptation of the values takes place which ultimately results in the greater process of acculturation.

Although Tahir, one of my educated respondents, referred to the rural urban division in the context of literacy, yet his argument can also be analyzed in the context of urbanization and change in the socio-cultural norms. During my fieldwork and interviews I observed that the tone and attitude of the urban respondents regarding patriarchy was different than the attitude of rural people. It is understandable urban environment has its own socio-economic imperatives which may come in conflict with the traditional patterns of masculinity and patriarchy. Although it’s difficult to say whether socio-economic imperatives overpower the traditions and customs or the vice versa, but the phenomenon of the conflict, between the two, itself suggests the existence of challenge and threat to the set traditional patterns including the patterns patriarchy and masculinity.

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The overall urban population in Pakistan has increased from 17% in 1951 to 37% in 2013. An overwhelming majority of Pakhtuns in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA live in a rural setting, though, it is also a fact that the process of urbanization is taking place recently with a much greater pace than ever in the past. This urbanization has two main aspects: the availability of modern civic facilities to the rural areas by the government and the growing trend of migration from villages to major towns. The population of Peshawar, capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has exploded in the past three decades. Moreover, around three to four million Pakhtuns are living in the metropolitan city of Pakistan – Karachi.

It is not difficult to understand that the growing trend of urbanization has affected the socio-cultural patterns of Pakhtuns to a considerable extent. These patterns, among others, include the family structure and gender relations. Many of my interviewees indicated the fact that with growing trend of urbanization, the concepts of ghairat (honor), naritob (manhood), badal (revenge), etc are losing their significance which are considered the symbols of masculinity and patriarchy. Similarly the gender relations are also transforming due to the change in social settings with urbanization. Shahnaz, one of my educated female respondents, said:

“In my opinion now Pakhtuns are changing because they are no more the old Pakhtuns who were not exposed to the modern way of life. Today we can see Pakhtuns living in every major city of the country. They [Pakhtuns] are well educated and transformed now. They are ready to adopt all the positive changes. The outdated concept of male dominance will perish because the time has changed and we [Pakhtuns] are living in the different world (nawi daur) than before”.

Shahnaz explained what she meant by nawi daur (new or different world). She said that today women are not limited and confined to the house, today women are working in

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41 Interview Shahnaz, 19 October 2015.
various sectors and this is because of the urban environment. She seemed quite hopeful regarding the status of women in the Pakhtun society. She said that our society is transforming in a positive manner and one day we will be able to get rid of the male dominance and will achieve equal status in the society.\textsuperscript{42} Shahnaz’s optimism reflected the views of majority of the educated respondents.

Adil, one of my educated respondents, stated that his behavior with his wife was different when he was living in his village. However, since he is living now in a major urban city due to his job, his relationship has assumed a different shape now. Adil was referring to the difference between the way of life and living environment of a village and a town. In a village in Pakhtun area, one must abide by the cultural values and traditional patterns; however, the urban living offers a much more relaxed environment in which one can adopt change conveniently. Adil said:

“Well… when I was living in the village I never allowed my wife to go alone to the market or anywhere because it is not a desirable way of life in village, but today my wife does all the grocery for home herself, she goes to pick our son from school, and she goes for shopping too. Since we are now living in a different environment, our way of life and values have also changed. This is the natural effect of the urban life”.\textsuperscript{43}

Adil’s views clearly indicated that the concept of ghairat (honor) and naritob (manhood) are time and space bound. With the changing space and time, the traditional concept of patriarchy has also been challenged if not completely transformed. Adil pointed out the two difference mindsets i.e. rural and urban. He also referred to the division of Pakhtun tribal and settled areas in the same context. He stated that tribal areas are a rural and underdeveloped area that’s why the socio-cultural norms including naritob (manhood) and ghairat (honor) are seen in a different context than the settled areas which are more prone to urbanization.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} Interview Adil, 28 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
The urbanization not only brings material change and change in the physical settings of the society but it also causes the change of ideas, perceptions and sensitivities of people. Urbanization assigns new roles to both men and women which in turn invokes new reactions and responses in the society. In short we can say that urbanization is a multifaceted and complex phenomenon which brings with itself a set of new ideas and challenges. It is one of main factors that are posing challenge to the patriarchal masculinity and the male dominance in Pakhtun society.

4.5.3 Media

Although it is sometimes neglected, media plays a significant role in forming our values and behavior. Among various other issues that media deals with is the issue of gender relations, patriarchy and masculinity in our society. Media is a combination of resources and space. It provides people with resources which are used to think about the gender related issue in our society. For instance about what it means to be man or woman, about the roles specified for men and women in private and public spheres, about sexuality, about male dominance, about parenthood, about what we consider as desirable, normal and usual relating gender relations, etc. Media also provides space to debate over these issues both in news and entertainment sectors. This is the media which determines whether or not the issues of patriarchy, masculinity or the gender relations are important and legitimate social issues in a given society.

Over the last two decades there occurred significant change in the content and behavior of media. This change may be partly positive and partly negative. Among the positive influences that media has made on the society is the awareness, consciousness, and understanding of various issues in the society. Media has been trying to highlight the issues related to gender discrimination, gender violence, domestic violence, male dominance, gender inequality and other such issues of our society in the news and fiction. This in a way challenges the patrilineal and patriarchal structure of our society. Being fundamentally a patriarchal and male dominated society, Pakhtuns are being influenced by the new media.

45 Jonah Blank, Christopher Clary, Brian Nichiporuk, Drivers of Long Term Insecurity, 42.
Gender equality seems to be promoted in and through the media. By the end 90s and start of 2000s media progressed rapidly. Dozens of private news and entertainment channels were given licenses and the whole media industry got revolutionized.\(^{47}\) This revolution in media has also affected and is affecting the socio-cultural norms and traditions of the people including Pakhtuns. The effect might be both positive and negative for that matter. However, one thing is certain that it has influenced the thinking and perceptions of people.

Nisar, one of my uneducated respondents, stated that the new electronic media has brought many changes in the Pakhtun society with regard to masculinity and patriarchy. Previously Pakhtuns were reluctant to send their daughters to schools and colleges but now the trend has changed to great extent, he added. Nisar seemed to be satisfied with the role of media towards promoting gender equality in the society. He gave his own example and said:

“I have four daughters and no son, but I am satisfied and happy. If I were living twenty or thirty years back, my attitude would have been completely different because thirty years back media was not that advanced and people were not that aware. My daughters go to the school and I will send them to the college as well if God wills (inshallah)”.\(^{48}\)

Nisar’s views reflected that media is playing an important role in shaping the ideas, perceptions and behavior of the people regarding issues of patriarchy masculinity, etc. People are becoming aware of the gender related issues at least in the urban areas. Nisar also pointed that media has also some negative impacts on the society. He referred to the foreign cultural invasion through media as a social menace which needs to be dealt with seriously and sincerely. However, overall media plays positive role in fixing the social evils, he added.\(^{49}\)


\(^{48}\) Personal Interview from Nisar, 24 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Nisar, 24 October 2015.

\(^{49}\) Ibid.
Rukhsana, one my uneducated female respondents, mentioned that T.V. has brought a big change in the society and the family environment in the Pakhtun society is now much different than it was some time back. She stated that her husband treats her with equality and also takes interest in the domestic/house matters. She said that when she was a child her home environment was totally different. “My mother never dared to oppose my father’s any decision. But now I can talk to my husband freely, I can disagree with him on various issues, and he respects my opinion”, she said. She further pointed out that both she and her husband are illiterate but still they think like educated people because of the awareness education that media has imparted to them.50

If on the hand, some respondents credited media with a positive role in promoting gender equality and women rights, on the other hand some respondents criticized media for doing the same. Some interviewees held the opinion that media, especially electronic media, is spreading obscenity and vulgarity in the society in the name of gender equality. They pointed out the names of some T.V. shows anchors and actors who allegedly promoting profanity and indecency in the name of women rights and equality. Bakht Zada, one of my uneducated interviewees, stated that what media is showing us is neither our culture nor our religion. He said:

“This is an international conspiracy (da hinduano aw yahudiano mansuba da) against us, our international enemies want to destroy our culture and religion. They want us to become pusillanimous (beghairat) and coward (daus). They are corrupting the minds of our youth by their ideology (nazarayat) and culture (riwaaj) on the media. A true Pakhtun cannot tolerate obscenity (behayai) and cowardice (beghirati)”.51

Similar views were expressed by some other respondents including the religious clerics. They seemed quite angry and dissatisfied over the alleged negative role of media towards promoting obscenity and vulgarity. Ihsanullah, one of the religious clerics I interviewed, held that electronic media is propagating against the Pakhtun culture and Islam (zmung

50 Personal Interview from Rukhsana, 20 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Rukhsana, 20 October 2015.
51 Personal Interview from Bakht Zada, 17 October 2015, Interview Bakht, 17 October 2015.
mazhab aw riwaj). He stated that youth’s minds are being polluted with fahashi (vulgarity) on the media. He was quite convinced that all this was a foreign agenda to deviate Pakhtuns and Muslims from their path. He said:

“The West is insulting our culture and religion in the name of ‘freedom of expression’. Our media is equally responsible for it because it is the agent of the foreign forces (maghrabi taqatuna). Media is promoting obscenity in the name of equality”.52

Ihsanullah further pointed out that it is an acute social and political evil which is destroying the religious, cultural and political base of our society. He stated that the only solution to get rid of this menace is to implement Islamic law – shariah in the true sense. He criticized the secular policies of the state and support of the media for it.53

4.5.4 Social Media

Apart from the main traditional media which creates a public sphere with some senders and many receivers, now the social media boom in the 21st century has created a public sphere with as many senders as receivers of the information. The entire world, including developing countries, is experiencing a social media explosion with an easy access to the internet. Although majority of the Pakhtun population lives in rural areas and may not have easy access to the social media, yet the effects of this new form of media are not limited to the urban areas. A great deal of contribution has been made by the internet based media in bringing awareness and responsiveness among people of both urban and rural areas.

Various individuals, groups and organizations in Pakistan have been propagating their respective viewpoints through Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Google, etc.54 Among various other issues that are part of the social media debates, women’s rights; gender equality and such like issues are discussed and debated on the social media. This debate

52 Interview Ihsanullah, 20 October 2015.
53 Ibid.
itself verifies that the traditional patterns of patriarchy and male dominance have been challenged by the rising voices of activists on social media. The social media has been providing the virtual space for discussion on the issues and matters which cannot be discussed in a physical space due to certain social limitations and restrictions.

All of my educated respondents (twenty out of twenty) were using social media. Almost all of them had a ‘facebook’ account. Majority (twelve out of twenty) of them was also having ‘twitter’ account and they actively used it. Since it is easily possible to disseminate one’s opinion without disclosing his/her real identity, on social media it is very easy to say what one likes to say. And on the other hand, one is exposed to abundant information and diverse views of the other people. This exchange of information, ideas, views and perceptions give way to the process of social change to take place in a given society. The same is the case with Pakhtun society and the culture of patriarchy and masculinity. A number of my respondents indicated in the discussion that social media is successfully affecting the socio-cultural pattern of Pakhtun society including Patriarchy and masculinity. Nasreen, one of my educated female interviewees said:

“Ever since the access to internet has become easier, more and more people are expressing their views easily. I use internet, facebook, and email, and it has made me very confident in my family as well as in the society. I am well aware of my rights and duties. My vision has broadened with the interacting my internet friends”.

Nasreen’s views indicate that the social media is performing more effective role than formal education and traditional media. Sometimes expressing one’s ideas and opinion makes him/her confident which is required to challenge the existing societal stereotypes. In the existing Pakhtun society in Pakistan the trend of using social media is increasing day by day. This growing trend has made the old patterns and norms of the society vulnerable to inevitable change. Fayaz, one of my educated respondents, expressed the similar views:

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55 Interview Nareen, 19 October 2015.
“I think the internet has done a lot to educate us [Pakhtuns] about our social rights and responsibilities. I am a staunch supporter of women’s rights and I propagate my views on facebook. I am against the outmoded (da zaray zamane) concept of manhood (naritob), and I believe in equality”.\textsuperscript{56}

Apart from the individuals, many groups and social organizations are also using social media to promote gender equality, women’s rights, etc. which is an undeniable threat to the existence of patriarchal masculinity and male dominance in the Pakhtun society. For instance there is a women’s rights organization with the name of Blue Veins which is based in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. This organization believes that modern technology of social media is a vital and innovative tool in the Pakhtun women’s rights movements. This organization, for example, has used social media tools of ‘facebook’ and ‘twitter’, etc. to motivate and mobilize women to cast their vote in the elections.\textsuperscript{57} Similarly there are a number of other organizations and groups which are working to transform the traditional social patterns of the society.

However, this promotion of a particular mindset and viewpoint is not one-sided. There are individuals, groups and organizations that have emerged as a reaction to the liberal and modern version of gender equality and women’s rights. They propagate the teachings of Islam regarding women’s real status and role in the family and society. In other words, they are generating a counter narrative to that of the liberal moderates. Social media has become a favored tool of the dispersed and emerging religious elites across the Pakhtun society and Pakistan in general, from ordinary individuals to the colloquial preachers.\textsuperscript{58} If on the one hand social media is being used to challenge the traditional patterns of patriarchy and masculinity in Pakhtun society, on the other hand, the religious groups and organizations also using it to elevate the role of religion in social and political affairs.

\textsuperscript{56} Personal Interview from Fayaz Ahmad, 04 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Fayaz, 04 October 2015.


\textsuperscript{58} John W. Anderson, “New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere”, Knowledge and Technology, 39. Available at http://faculty.cua.edu/anderson/Pages%20from%20newsl_5.pdf, accessed on 29 July 2015.
4.5.5 Socio-economic Transformation

One of main factors of the male dominance and patriarchy in the Pakhtun society is a particular form of socio-economic system which enables men to control and regulate the resources while makes women completely dependent on men. In a traditional Pakhtun society women are rarely allowed to go out of the homes and take part in the economic activity of the society. Women’s role is, traditionally, confined to the house chores and bearing and rearing children. Man is supposed to be the guardian and provider of the basic necessities of life to his family. Women and female children are generally at the receiving end. Consequently women’s role and social status has been marginalized to the extent of discrimination and structured inequality between men and women.\(^{59}\)

However, over the past two decades a visible change has occurred in the socio-economic environment of many developing societies. The growing population and increasing ratio of female populace in comparison of men has caused significant change in the economic outlook of the society. Moreover, the growing and changing economic needs and trends respectively, have shattered the traditional economic patterns and modes of livelihood. The private sector has grown rapidly during the past two decades and it created new avenues and opportunities of work and employment. Since the needs and economic necessities also rapidly grew with the passage of time, the new private sector attracted a big chunk of the population. This ultimately led to the growing trend of women working in various sectors of economy including industry, management, services, etc.\(^{60}\) Pakhtun society is not an exception in this regard.

Old traditional mode of economy (male dominated) in the Pakhtun society became insufficient and unable to satisfy the mounting needs and requirements. The logical outcome of this situation is nonetheless the inclusion of women in the economic sector. Today we can see Pakhtun women working in various sectors and contributing towards the economic uplift of the society in general and their families in particular. Service sector especially has given a huge space to the women. Female teachers, lawyers, doctors, nurses, etc. are now a common phenomenon in the Pakhtun society. Similarly women are


also working in the industrial sector and earning their livelihood to support their families.

The changing economic needs have transformed the traditional cultural patterns to a great extent.

At a more psychological level this changing socio-economic environment has also had effects on the confidence of women. Their self-confidence has increased due to growing tendency of self-reliance. They have started consciously or unconsciously questioning the male dominance in the society. Although, there is a long way to go for achieving gender equality in the Pakhtun society, yet this self-reliance on the part of women has become a crucial factor in this regard. A number of my respondents indicated towards the economic change as a factor of changing social status of women in the society. Inam, one of my educated respondents, said:

“My wife is a doctor; she also takes care of the house chores. She is the real educator of our children. I have great respect for her. Not only men but women also maintain the honor of the family. We should admit the role of our women in maintaining our pride (nang) and honor (ghairat)”.

Inam’s views reflected the changing perceptions about masculinity and machismo in our society. Moreover, his views indicated the fact that social status of women is transforming in the Pakhtun society and economic independence of women remains one of the key factors for the changing perceptions and ideas. The only factor that the concepts of nang (pride) and ghairat (honor) are now discussed in various contexts and parameters, is the evidence of an indispensable change in the traditional socio-cultural patterns of the society. Although this process of change is still in the initial stages, yet it is noteworthy and cannot be neglected.

The increasing trend of female literacy and subsequent role of women in the economy and economic sector has for a major part has challenged the patriarchal notions in the Pakhtuns society. Education has brought awareness and responsiveness in both men and

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61 Interview Inam, 05 October 2015.
women,\textsuperscript{62} while the transforming socio-economic fabric of the Pakhtun society has uplifted the women to the status of economic independence to some extent. Although this new economic trend has not completely reshaped the gender roles and structures in the society, however, it has considerably caused a transformation and change in the perceptions and ideas regarding patriarchy, masculinity, naritob (manhood), etc.

Shandana, one of my educated female respondents, stated that man and woman (husband and wife) are like two wheels of the bicycle (da gaadi dwa paayey). She meant to say that a family runs smoothly only if man and woman cooperate with each other and share the responsibilities and burden.\textsuperscript{63} Shahnaz, another educated respondent said nowadays only man (husband) cannot manage to run the household, he needs to be supported by the woman (wife). Women should work to support their families, she added.\textsuperscript{64} Shahnaz herself is a working woman in the education sector.

However, there is a segment of the society which still holds that women’s role and functions are and must be confined to discharge of house chores only. According to Tilawat, one of my uneducated respondents, women are not supposed to go out of the homes and work in a mixed environment. ‘This is not Pakhto’, he said. Tilawat seemed apprehensive over the growing trend of women doing jobs and becoming economically independent. He thought that this trend would lead to the destruction of social norms and religious values. He said the women attain grace and honor only at home and not outside the home (da khazay ezat aw maqam pa kor k vi).\textsuperscript{65}

4.5.6 ‘Conspiracy and Western Propaganda’

On the one hand, many of my respondents regarded various processes e.g. education, urbanization, media, and socio-economic development as the main factors of the ongoing transformation in the patriarchal structure of the society, on the other hand there were a number of other respondents, who primarily regarded this process of transformation as the negative and held the foreign/western forces responsible for it. The basic view of such


\textsuperscript{63} Personal Interview from Shandana, 20 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shandana, 20 October 2015.

\textsuperscript{64} Interview Shahnaz, 19 October 2015.

\textsuperscript{65} Personal Interview from Tilawat, 16 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Tilawat, 16 October 2015.
respondents was that our [Pakhtun’s) basic identity is their culture and religion. Any attempt to alter the culture or disturbing the religious values is an ill-intentioned act to obliterate Pakhtun cultural and religious norms.

Javed, one of my uneducated respondents, seemed pretty sure that some unseen forces wanted to defame Pakhtuns in the world for their love for ghairat (honor) and nang (pride), etc. He held the opinion that the cultural values such as badal (revenge), ghairat (honor), etc, were not negative values instead the West has portrayed them in way that Pakhtuns are thought to be lawless and barbaric people. He also upheld the Pakhtun machismo and nariotob (manhood) as the real features of true Pakhtuns and thought that these values and cultural patterns are vanishing with the passage of time due to negative propaganda by the anti-Pakhtun lobbies, though he was unable to exactly identify those forces. He said:

“I think there is a grand conspiracy going on against us [Pakhtuns]. Various forces are working against us wipe out completely that is why there is a continuous war going on our [Pakhtun] land which has destroyed us( mung ye tabah kru). We are proud of our values and norms; this is our identity. Honor and manhood (ghairat aw nariotob) are our pride”.

Javed seemed to be defending the patriarchal pattern of the Pakhtun society and regarded any attempt to malign or vanish it as an attempt to destroy the whole Pakhtun culture. His views clearly showed how a particular segment of the Pakhtun society perceives the transformation in the patrilineal system of the Pakhtun society. He was not alone who held such opinion regarding the masculinity and machismo. Similar views were expressed by some other interviewees as well.

Nadar, one of my uneducated interviewees, held the opinion that Pakhtuns are known for their bravery, nariotob (manhood) and masculinity. A Pakhtun without these qualities is not a real Pakhtun, he added. However, he admitted the fact that recently there is a gradual decline in the Pakhtun traditions and customs especially with regard to ghairat

66 Personal Interview from Javed Hussain, 20 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Javed, 20 October 2015.
(honor) and badal (revenge), etc. He viewed such decline as a negative development and said that it is being caused by the so-called modernization and development. Nadar, wished to preserve the real ‘Pakhtun identity’ (i.e. masculinity and patriarchy) at any cost by any means. He said:

“Well I know that many people would think us [Pakhtuns] ignorant people (jahil khalak) but I don’t give a damn to such people (ze ye hado parwa na kum). We should save our culture and pride even if it takes our lives. If you want to uphold the honor and pride, you should not hesitate to even sacrifice your life (che Pakhto gatay nu sar ba bai’lay)”. 67

Nadar’s views reflected a typical mindset which prevails in the Pakhtun society. This particular segment of the society, unlike many others, does not seem apologetic over the notion of male dominance in Pakhtun society rather it wants to uphold the traditional patterns and values for they consider it important for the existence and survival of a particular community. 68 Nadar’s views were not surprising for me because his views were shared by some other respondents as well which shows that there is an active resistance, in the Pakhtun society, to the changing traditional patterns of patriarchy and machismo.

Shahid, one of my educated respondents, stated that there was a massive propaganda going on against Islam and Pakhtuns. He said that Pakistan was the fortress of Islam and particularly Pakhtuns were upholding the cause of Islam in the world. He likened the Pakhtun culture with Islam and said that both were identical. To malign Pakhtuns was to malign Islam, he added. Like some other respondents, he also criticized the alleged negative role of media to deteriorate and slander Pakhtun culture and Islamic values. He thought that the criticism on Pakhtun socio-cultural values was all an anti-Islam and anti-Pakhtun agenda. He said:

“In my opinion our cultural values of ghairat (honor), badal (revenge) and naritob (manhood) are very much Islamic in

67 Personal Interview from Nadar, 28 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Nadar, 28 October 2015.
nature and there is nothing bad or negative about it. We [Pakhtuns] are not ignorant (jahil) nor are we extremists. We simply practice our culture and religion which is the best of all”.

The fact that Shahid was an educated man authenticates the view that we cannot differentiate between literate and illiterate people while considering the notions of patriarchy and masculinity in Pakhtun society, however, the percentage of uneducated Pakhtuns defending patriarchy and male dominance is higher than the educated Pakhtuns. Fifteen out of twenty uneducated respondents regarded the transformation in patriarchal structure of the society as negative, while four out of twenty educated respondents also viewed such development as negative. Rest of the respondents held that these are outdated and archaic traditions that need to be completely wiped out.

Both of the religious clerics I interviewed were seemed to be sure that some international conspiracy was going on against Islam and Pakhtuns. Khizar Hayat, an imam in the mosque, stated that there are countless NGO’s (Non Governmental Organizations) working in Pakistan in general and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular. He held that with the help of these NGO’s, foreign powers were promoting un-Islamic culture in the society. He particularly referred to the organizations which were working for women’s rights. He alleged such organizations, without naming any single, with promoting obscenity (behayai) and un-Islamic values in the Pakhtun society. Moreover, he defended the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society by saying that it is natural and Islamic law that men command women. If Pakhtuns do so, they simply follow the natural and Islamic law, he believed.

4.6 RISE OF RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AND RELIGIOUS POLITICS IN PAKHTUN REGION OF PAKISTAN

The above account shows that the ideology of patriarchy and male dominance got affected adversely in the Pakhtun region over the past couple of decades. However, the beginning of such trend dates back to the 1960s and 1970s. During that period the state took certain steps and adopted such policies that started affecting the male dominated

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69 Personal Interview from Shahid Ullah, 26 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shahid, 26 October 2015.
70 Interview Khizar, 06 October 2015.
society of Pakistan\textsuperscript{71} in general and Pakhtun society in particular. One of the main reasons of the rise of religious fundamentalism in Pakistan during 1980s was such liberal and gender-equality based policies adopted by the state, which was a vital factor in the transformation of patriarchal structure of Pakhtun society.

General Ayub Khan was the first head of the state in Pakistan who practically took measures to improve the status of women and promote gender equality in Pakistan. Although a commission was set up in 1955 to recommend laws for family and marriages, etc., yet it was Ayub Khan’s era that for the first Family Laws Ordinance was issued in 1961. The Family Laws Ordinance included the regulation of marriages and divorce e.g. polygamy was restricted for the first time in Pakistan. This ordinance provided women with more equal treatment under the law than they had before. The ordinance was strongly supported by the women organizations in Pakistan. Women activists were so happy over this legislation that they showered Ayub Khan’s car with rose petals.\textsuperscript{72}

It was the first time in Pakistan that women’s rights were protected and guaranteed through legally codified safeguards. Similarly family planning law was also passed during that period. Although the religious groups and ulama were vehemently opposed to such laws, yet it was a military regime and there was no freedom of expression. That’s how the law was promulgated smoothly and successfully. It is wrong to say that the legal measures towards women empowerment seriously transformed the patriarchal structure, however, it was the beginning of such trend in Pakistan.\textsuperscript{73}

Similarly during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s regime more measures were taken to advance women’s rights and promote gender equality. The promulgation of the constitution of 1973 was first such step in that direction. The constitution, in fundamental rights section, provides for the commitment on the part of state to eliminate exploitation. Moreover, article 25 of the constitution says that “all citizens are equal under the law and are entitled to equal protection of law”. Article 25 (b) states that “there shall be no discrimination on


\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
the basis of ‘sex’

Furthermore, article 34 in principles of policy states that “steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all the spheres of national life”.

The democratic era of Bhutto had liberal and moderate attitude towards women. Bhutto attempted to ensure and protect women’s rights in the constitution which was commended by the human rights and women’s rights organizations in Pakistan. Bhutto also opened all the government services to women which had been denied to them earlier. Moreover, about 10% seats were reserved for women in the national assembly. Besides that 5% seats were reserved for them in the provincial assemblies too. And there was no restriction on contesting for the general seats as well.

The policies adopted during Ayub and Bhutto’s era challenged the patriarchal structure of the Pakistani society in general and Pakhtun society in particular. This trend of transformation of the traditional culture and patterns paved the way for the rise of religious and conservative forces to the mainstream politics in Pakistan. It was the first time in political history of Pakistan that a religious political party i.e. Jamiat-i-Ulama Islam (JUI) formed a coalition government in the Pakhtun province of Pakistan – NWFP (now called Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) in 1972. However, it was soon dismissed by Bhutto.

The opposition faced by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto during his last days was mainly from the religious political parties that ultimately resulted in the downfall of Bhutto and imposition of the third military rule in Pakistan.

The religious parties and group, after the imposition of martial law in 1977, gave full support to the new military ruler General Zia-ul-Haq. In return Zia started the process of ‘Islamization’ in Pakistan in order to retain the political and moral support of the religious and conservative groups in the country. The two forces (military and religious parties) were in need of each other; hence they entered the marriage of convenience. The religious forces continued supporting Zia throughout while the latter introduced such policies and legal measures which appeased the religious political parties and conservative political

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76 For details see chapter 2 of this thesis.
77 Ibid.
forces in the country.\textsuperscript{78} This was the first time in the history that religious political parties were actively playing their role in the governmental affairs at the national level. In other words the Zia era was the era of full bloom for the religious politics or Political Islam in Pakistan in general and in Pakhtun region in particular.

Because of the pressure and influence of such religious forces, Zia adopted certain policies which severely affected the women’s rights situation negatively. This trend was an attempt to revive and strengthen the traditional patriarchal structure of the society and to appease the conservative and religious groups. The most debated measure of Zia was the promulgation of ‘\textit{Hudood Laws}’.\textsuperscript{79} This ordinance was the precursor of the new system of General Zia. A new penal code was introduced through this ordinance. The most heated and debated controversy regarding the ‘\textit{Hudood Laws}’ was about the discrimination against women. The ordinance legally made no distinction between adultery and rape. It was clear that the structure of enforcement discriminated against women. Moreover, Zia introduced Law of Evidence in 1983 which further affected the status of women negatively. This new law barred women from testifying in certain cases at all while made their testimony irrelevant, in some other cases, unless another woman substantiated it.\textsuperscript{80}

After General Zia-ul-Haq’s death in a plane crash in August 1988, general elections were held and democracy was restored in the country. From 1988 to 1999 Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif remained prime ministers each for two times. Benazir Bhutto promised to the people during election campaign that she would work for improving the women status in the country which was seriously hit by Zia’s policies during 1980s. Although she could not repeal any single one of the ‘\textit{Hudood Laws}’ as they were protected by the virtue of eighth amendment, yet she took certain other measures which aimed at empowering women in social and economic spheres.\textsuperscript{81}

Benazir Bhutto set up women polices stations for the first time in country’s history which was appreciated by the human rights activists and women’s rights organizations in the


\textsuperscript{79} For details see chapter 2 of this thesis.


\textsuperscript{81} Anita M. Weiss, “Moving Forward with the Legal Empowerment of Women in Pakistan”, 6.
country. Moreover, she also took measures towards the economic uplift of the women. She initiated reforms in banking sector and opened the First Women Bank in Pakistan. These two measures are seen as milestones towards the achievement of gender equality in the country. Moreover, she also took steps in the health sector and created basic health centers for women throughout the country and recruited Lady Health Visitors (LHV). At the same time these measures were affecting the traditional patriarchal patterns of the society which was an alarming situation for the conservative and religious groups of the society. Pakhtun society, being fundamentally patriarchal one, also witnessed the conflict between religious and liberal forces. The role and influence of religious political parties continued increasing during 1990s particularly in Pakhtun region.82

Benazir Bhutto was the first woman prime minister not only in Pakistan but in the entire Muslim world. It was a sign of changing socio-cultural and political environment in Pakistan. The growing trend of women’s participation the political process of the country threatened the decades old male dominance in the politics of Pakistan. Religious groups and parties also raised objections and questions over the woman becoming the head of the government. Some ulama issued fatwas (religious decrees) that according to shariah, woman cannot become the head of state or government. Although the religious forces were struggling for power in the whole country, but their real existence and influence could be seen in the Pakhtun region which was more conservative and socially more patriarchal than the other parts of the country.

The notions of patriarchy and male dominance were consistently under attack during 1990s especially during the two terms of Benazir Bhutto as prime minister. Government’s focus on the women’s status was partly the result of the international pressure and influence. And government’s actions in this regard were also aimed at the external audience to some extent. Pakistan signed Vienna Convention in 1993 recognizing women’s rights as human rights.83 Pakistan also became a state party to the 1994 Cairo Population and Development Conference’s Program of Action.

In 1994 Senate of Pakistan appointed a commissioned which reviewed the state’s laws. This measure taken by the Senate was regarded as a step towards the end of gross

82 Ibid.
abominations against women. The commission highly criticized and condemned the conditions that existed that time for women in its report. The report stated that many discriminatory laws and customs in the country were unfortunately justified in the name of religion. These customs and laws were introduced in the name of Islam as Islamic laws. However, these laws were actually the retrospective traditions and customs, or the misinterpretations which had no relation with the Islamic law – shariah, the report mentioned. The commission recommended to clarify the ambiguity between outdated customs and the divine law, in order to eliminate the sense of insecurity among women which was creating a bad image abroad. The commission’s report was clearly a sign of encouragement for the liberal segment of the society while a challenge for the patriarchy and patrilineal system in the country. It further caused the boost in the political activities of the religious and conservative elements of the society. 84

By the end of 1990s General Pervaiz Musharraf took over the democratic government of Nawaz Sharif and imposed another military rule in the country on 12 October 1999. Ideologically Pervaiz Musharraf was inclined towards General Ayub Khan and was apparently totally different from General Zia-ul-Haq. He started revising the laws and policies of Zia while empowering the women in Pakistan. He introduced the philosophy of ‘Enlightened Moderation’ in Pakistan which was aimed at transforming the outdated cultural patterns of the society and establishing a more liberal and enlightened society where the elements of toleration, human rights and gender equality could prevail smoothly.85

Due to the vision and policies of Musharraf, the patriarchal patterns of the society started weakening and women’s social status went on rise though with a slow pace. The literacy rate of women improved remarkably; greater number of women was driving cars; women entered the workforce; and contested in local government elections. Musharraf established an autonomous ‘National Commission for Women’ which would work for the protection of women’s rights in the country. He also reserved 180 seats for women in the national and provincial assemblies. Musharraf announced three months amnesty for the

women prisoners who were in jails for minor crimes. This amnesty also affected a large number of women who were imprisoned under the ‘Hudood Laws’ for the charges of adultery. These measures were aimed at removing gender bias and gender inequality and to improve the socio-economic and political status of women in the country.

Musharraf’s policies clearly indicated that he was to transform the patriarchal system of the society and introduce a more egalitarian and broad based social system in the country. The conservative and religious forces in the country were simultaneously working to counter the anti-patriarchal policies the government during 1990s and Musharraf’s era. This gave rise to the religious fundamentalism and once again, like 1980s, paved the way for growing influence of religious political parties in the country’s political process. In the general elections of Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) rose to the political power particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, the two major provinces with Pakhtun population.

4.7 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PATRIARCHY AND RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM

The discussion in the previous chapter (chapter 3) shows that Pakhtunwali and the Pakhtun society are based on the patriarchal patterns. The concepts of ghairat (honor), badal (revenge), paighor (taunt) and naritob (manliness), etc. are the symbols of masculinity and patriarchy in Pakhtun culture and society. In other words Pakhtunwali and patriarchy are identical with each other in a specific context. One cannot think of a Pakhtun being coward or overpowered by a woman and yet be called a true Pakhtun. The Pakhtun culture and traditions do not recognize and authenticate a matrilineal system.

88 The Rise of MMA to political power in Pakhtun region has been discussed in the next chapter.
Therefore, it will be right to say that an attempt to weaken the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society would be considered to weaken the code of Pakhtunwali or vice versa for both are related to each other directly.

In this chapter earlier I have discussed how the perceptions of the Pakhtuns are changing about the concept of masculinity and ideology of patriarchy. Many Pakhtun men and women tend to see the patriarchal structure of the society from a different perspective than they used to see it in the past. The process of modernization and urbanization has, to a great extent, changed the outlook and perceptions of people in the Pakhtun society. Many (especially educated) see this changing trend as a positive development towards a more democratic and egalitarian culture based on equality of opportunities to both men and women. Similarly, apart from the perceptions, the actual socio-cultural norms have also transformed in the due course of time regarding the patterns of patriarchy and masculinity to some extent. Keeping in view the identical character of Pakhtunwali and patriarchy, one can assume that the transformation in the patriarchal structure represents the transformation in the Pakhtun culture or Pakhtunwali in general.

Now I turn back to the discussion on how many Pakhtuns view Pakhtunwali and Islam similar to each other. A common perception of many Pakhtuns is that Islam and Pakhtunwali are one and same. Various arguments and examples were put forward by my respondents to prove the oneness of the two, e.g. the culture of purdah in Pakhtun society and Islamic injunctions about it; and growing beard, etc. In other words one can say that Pakhtuns have acculturated Islam and one can find the Islamic symbols and presence in the Pakhtun culture and traditions.\footnote{89} This particular mindset of relating Pakhtun culture with Islam is more common in the rural and tribal areas as compare to the urban settled areas of Pakhtun region.

The rise of Taliban in Afghanistan during 1990s also suggests how Pakhtuns have melded the Pakhtun tribal law – Pakhtunwali with the Islamic religious law that the two are often viewed as inseparable and mutually accommodating.\footnote{90} Many religious policies of the Taliban were obscured in the Pakhtun customs and traditions. Many Islamic religious
interpretations and laws were eccentric and tended to guise the local traditions in the name of religion. All such trends and policies are the examples of how religion and culture influence each other which I have discussed earlier.

After having discussed the relationship between *Pakhtunwali* and patriarchy and *Pakhtunwali* and Islam, now I turn specifically to the rise of religious fundamentalism and growing role of religion in the politics while linking it with the notion of patriarchy. There is basic and fundamental relationship between the contemporary religious fundamentalism and the structures and ideology of patriarchy. Religious fundamentalism represents a form of patriarchal traditionalism that becomes reflexive as a result of the process of modernization and urbanization, and the state’s policy of secularization. Many of my uneducated interviewees and the religious clerics viewed the decline or transformation in the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society as a negative development and anti-Pakhtun and anti-Islam conspiracy.

The attempted transformation in the patriarchal patterns of the society is perceived as a moral crisis within the wider culture which threatens the capacity of the traditionalists to pass on their value orientations to the next generation. This sense of crisis and moral chaos corresponds with the structural change which in turn depersonalizes political, social and economic institutions and also transforms the specific gender relations within the family. In response to such structural changes traditional elements and religious forces including intellectuals, activists and religious parties advocate and demand for a legal-rational and book-centered religious system that would revive the patriarchal patterns and controls of men over women and would restore paternalistic authority over political and economic processes. Thus the religious fundamentalism rises and politics witnesses an increased role of religion.

In the earlier section I have discussed how a particular segment of the Pakhtun society perceives the contemporary transforming patriarchal patterns as a threat to the overall Pakhtun culture and relate it to the international conspiracy against Islam and Pakhtun

society. Some (my respondents) held that with the changing gender relations, the actual Pakhtun culture and traditions are on decline as the Pakhtunwali is primarily based on masculinity and patrilineal structure. Some other related the Pakhtun traditions with Islam and recommended that only an Islamic legal system – shariah can resolve the ongoing moral and social chaos. This substantiates my hypothesis and clearly indicates that the growing influence of religion in politics has much to do with the declining or threatened pattern of patriarchy in the Pakhtun society.

4.8 CONCLUSION

The discussion in this chapter leads one to conclude that various segments of the Pakhtun society now view the gender relations from a different perspective than they used to do in the past. Both Pakhtun men and women (especially educated) hold the opinion that a society can progress only when there is greater equality of opportunities to both the genders. There is a sense of responsibility growing among Pakhtun men regarding their role as a family head which ultimately affects the social relationships including gender relations in a more positive manner. The overwhelming majority of my educated respondents and some of the illiterate respondents validated this point.

Pakhtun women’s status in the society to a great extent depends upon their socio-economic conditions, educational outlook and geographical area. It has been observed that women from the upper class enjoy more freedom and equality than the women from the lower socio-economic class. Similarly women from the middle class are having a career life; they are employed which gives them the status of economic independence, however, they at the same time they are dependent on the male members of their family socially and emotionally. Similarly the educated women are considered to be more independent and of a high social status than the illiterate ones, because education and exposure to the technology and media make people aware of their rights and responsibilities and motivate them for playing a positive role towards the betterment of their family and society alike.

In a more modernized and urbanized environment, today, women are getting education and are working in various fields in a male dominated society and they are becoming able to break silence for their rights. Women are becoming able to establish various platforms
and groups promote their issues and press for their cause and interest. Today we can see a number of Pakhtun women playing their social role in various sectors including medical, business, education and politics, etc. On the other hand Pakhtun men (especially educated from the urban areas) are also recognizing the new roles of women in the society and regard it important for the socio-economic and political development of the Pakhtun people.

The changing socio-economic and political role of the women in the Pakhtun society represents a process of transformation in the traditional Pakhtun culture in the wider context. The traditional symbols of masculinity e.g. ghairat (honor) and nari tob (manhood) are being viewed in a different context and people’s perceptions have seemingly changed in this regard to a great extent. The transforming gender relations and increasing voices for gender equality have a notable effect on the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society. In other words the traditional patterns of patriarchy and masculinity in Pakhtun society have started transforming and are giving way to the new culture based on modern liberal and secular values. It will be right to say that the culture of patriarchy in Pakhtun society is threatened and challenged by the growing awareness and socio-economic change in the region.

If on the one hand many view this changing culture and social values as a positive and desirable development which is deemed necessary for the socio-economic and political uplift of the society, on the other hand there is a segment of the society comprising the conservatives and traditionalists who view this transforming culture as a negative development and describe it as a moral decline in the society which leads to moral and political chaos. Since the traditionalists regard the Pakhtun culture and religion as mutually inclusive, they strongly oppose the changing role women in the society and sometimes equate it with un-Islamic and unethical practices.

This conflict of ideas and perceptions with regard to the transformation in the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society has led to the rise of religious forces in the political sphere. State’s modernizing interventions marginalized the traditionalists in the society which ultimately generated a radical fundamentalist response. The religious

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fundamentalism as well as the growing influence of traditional religious parties in the politics is directed against the disbanding of the personalistic and patriarchal notions of the social system and social relations and their replacement by depersonalized notions and principles caused by the process of modernization and urbanization. The new ideology of radicalized patriarchy reviews the conflicting class and gender interest of the existing society from a standpoint that emphasizes the “ideal of religiously and morally integrated society”. 97

In short it is concluded that the state’s modernizing policies as well as the social processes of urbanization and growing influence of media and education in the society have affected the traditional gender relations in the Pakhtun society and the patriarchal structure has been threatened consequently. The new changing trends thus affected the interest of the traditionalists which ultimately generated a radical response from the conservative and religious groups and resulted in the increased role of religion in the politics of Pakhtun society.

97 Martin Riesebrodt, Pious Passion, 272.
CHAPTER – 5

ISLAMISTS’ RISE TO POLITICAL POWER IN PAKHTUN REGION OF PAKISTAN (POST 2000)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters I have discussed how Pakhtun code of life – Pakhtunwali is related to Islam in a certain way especially in the context of gender relations and notions of patriarchy and masculinity. The contemporary challenge to the ideology of patriarchy in Pakhtun society in the form of urbanization and modernization is one of the domestic, social factors which caused the rise of religious forces and Political Islam in the Pakhtun region. The anti-patriarchal state policies during the democratic era of 1990s and then the early two years of the military rule of Pervaiz Musharraf antagonized the traditional conservative forces and in response religious fundamentalism emerged in an attempt to restore and preserve the traditional patterns of patriarchy. Although the policies of the successive governments during 90s and then Musharraf’s early years were on the national scale, yet the effects of such policies, in the form of emerging reactionary religious fundamentalism, were more visible in the Pakhtun region proving that Pakhtun society was fundamentally patriarchal and based on patrilineal system.

The religious fundamentalism emerged in the Pakhtun society during 2000s have two main aspects: the first aspect is the rise of extremism and radicalism in the society, and the second aspect is the rise of religious political parties to the actual political power and the mainstream politics. The Pakhtun society has been suffering due to of intolerance, fundamentalism and terrorism. Thousands of people have died in the ongoing wave of extremism and resultant terrorism. Similarly the traditional and fundamental forces found their way in the mainstream politics too and emerged as one of the major political forces in this period. These religious parties occupied the position of a powerful opposition in the national assembly in the general elections of 2002. Moreover, they formed government the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (then NWFP), and also came into power
as a coalition partner in the Baluchistan province by winning the majority seats of the Pakhtun areas of the province.¹

In this chapter I will discuss the above mentioned two aspects of the religious fundamentalism in the Pakhtun society i.e. rise of extremism and rise of religious political parties in the Pakhtun society during 2000s. My analysis in this regard is based on two main sources: the existing available literature on the issue at hand and the data I received from my respondents in the interviews. A number of contemporary scholars have written extensively on the emergence of terrorism and religious politics in Pakistan², however, my focus will be on the Pakhtun society and region.

The first section of the chapter deals with the first aspect of the current religious fundamentalism i.e. the rise of extremism and terrorism. In this regard I will discuss various aspects and dimensions of the ongoing religious extremism and using the name of religion for terrorism. Many of respondents expressed their views about the current wave of terrorism and extremism in the Pakhtun society. I will highlight their opinion especially in the context religion-culture relationship. The cultural dimension of the terrorism is of great significance, yet under-estimated in the existing available literature. Furthermore, I will also discuss the causes and factors of this radicalism and terrorism as stated by my respondents.

After discussing the first aspect of religious fundamentalism, I will turn to the second and more important aspect of the religious fundamentalism i.e. the growing influence of religious political parties in the mainstream politics with a focus on the Pakhtun region and society. In this regard I will discuss the rise of religious political groups and parties during the 2000s by focusing on the formation of Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) and its victory in the Pakhtun province in the general elections of 2002. Although the religious political parties could not perform well in the general elections of 2008, yet it will be wrong to assume that they have lost their influence and presence in the Pakhtun province; instead they are still a potential political power having the ability to stun political analysts and spectators. The presence of Jamat-i-Islami (JI) in the current

² See for example Hassan Abbas, Pakistan’s Drift into Extremism: Allah, Army, and America’s War on Terror, (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2005).
coalition government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) is an example in this connection.

My analysis of the religious forces’ rise to the political power includes various dimensions. First, I will discuss the conditions and environment under which their rise became a reality and they could form a common platform in the shape of MMA in 2002. I will attempt to answer the question of what were the factors of the rise of religious politics during 2000s and how it related to the Pakhtun society. I will discuss the available literature in the light of my participants’ views and comments. In doing so I will also highlight the gender dimension of this issue and will try to find the link between Pakhtun culture religious politics.

After analyzing the conditions and factors due to which the religious forces emerged on the mainstream political spectrum, I will highlight the policies of the MMA government in the next section. The religious political parties, after assuming power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2002, adopted certain expected policy measures. These policy measures were directed towards the Islamization of the society. The policy of Islamization was first initiated during 1980s by General Zia-ul-Haq in order to attain and retain the support of the same religious political parties which were marginalized by the liberal and anti-patriarchal policies of Ayub Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. After forming their exclusive government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP) in 2002, MMA came up with the similar policies and administrative measures.

While discussing these policies and administrative measures I will also touch upon the gender aspect and the issue of patriarchy and masculinity. Nevertheless, my basic hypothesis in this study revolves around the “notion of patriarchy and religious fundamentalism” with focus of Pakhtuns of Pakistan. In doing so, I will analyze the Islamization measures of the MMA government in the light of my respondents’ discussion. I will discuss how those policies attempted to counter the transforming patterns of patriarchy and masculinity in the Pakhtun society.

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3 For details see chapter 2 of this thesis.
5.2 RISE OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AND RADICAL ISLAM AMONG PAKHTUNS

The first aspect of the religious fundamentalism is the extremism and terrorism. The emergence of political Islam in the Pak-Afghan borderland dates back to the Soviet-Afghan war during 1980s, however, the September 11, 2001 incident became the point of revival and resurgence of such trend. This time the effects of radicalism and extremism became more visible and severe on both sides of the border. In Pakistan, the wave of religious extremism primarily affected the Pakhtuns. The Pakhtun Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa underwent an unprecedented era of terrorism and destruction.\(^5\) Thousands of Pakhtuns have died and hundreds of thousand other displaced and injured since 2001.

Pakistan military has conducted three major operations to counter terrorism: first was conducted in 2004 in South Waziristan Agency by General Pervaiz Musharraf,\(^6\) the second was conducted during the democratic period in 2009 in the settled Pakhtun district Swat\(^7\) and third was started in 2014 in North Waziristan agency,\(^8\) which is still on. Besides, a number of small scale military operations were conducted in various agencies of FATA during this period. The security situation in the Pakhtun region of Pakistan has not been normal since 2001. This era has witnessed the increase in the influence of radical Islamist movements particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA.

The rise of radical Islam in the Pakhtun region is partly because of the international and regional political dynamics i.e. historical events occurred in the neighboring country Afghanistan including the Soviet-Afghan war, influx of Afghan refugees and Pakistan’s support and assistance to the *Mujahideen* in that war. The traditional Islamic *madrassas*, mainly funded by Saudi Arabia, proliferated during this period all over the Pakhtun

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\(^8\) “North Waziristan Operation”, *Dawn*, 16 June 2014.
region. Since the Afghan refugees lacked other opportunities, they along with poor Pakistani Pakhtuns joined these madrassas.9

Moreover, the military rule of General Zia-ul-Haq added fuel to the fire. The military dictator who was thought to be a staunch Muslim not only supported the ‘Islamic Jihad’ in Afghanistan but at the same time initiated the process of Islamization of the economic, political and legal system in the country. His policies allegedly increased the sectarian rifts within Muslims by patronizing a particular brand of Islam. His era also saw the growing influence of mullahs of mosques in the society. Apart from that the actual rise of religious political parties also occurred in this period such as Jamat-i-Islami (JI).10

Many political analysts are of the opinion that after the downfall of Taliban regime in Afghanistan, many Taliban fled to the adjacent tribal areas of Pakistan.11 They also took refuge in some settled Pakhtun areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan. Taliban along with other extremist groups such as al-Qaeda, Haqqani Network and Hizb-i-Islami have attempted to establish themselves and their radical fundamentalist ideology in the Pakhtun region of Pakistan. This ultimately resulted in the subsequent acts of violence and extremism in Pakistan particularly the Pakhtun region.12

The above account suggests that Pakhtun society has undergone substantial transformations over the last more than three decades. This is one of the reasons that the degree and intensity of radicalism among them exceed that of any other ethnic group in Pakistan. This also partly reflects the Pakhtuns’ involvement on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border in the Soviet-Afghan war and then in the War on Terror. Moreover, this is also a fact that besides being an organization with radical Islamic ideology and beliefs, Taliban comprise mainly ethnic Pakhtuns. This particular fact of being religiously conservative and ethnically Pakhtuns has increased the radicalization in the Pakhtun

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10 Ibid.
12 Robert Kemp, “Religious Extremism and Militancy in the Pashtun Areas”. 

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society. In other words, apart from the international and regional political factors, the cultural factor also played an important role in the radicalization of the Pakhtun society.

5.2.1 Pakhtun Features of Bravery and Honor

Many of my respondents, while asked about the factors of extremism and radicalism among Pakhtuns, pointed out that Pakhtuns are basically people of honor, dignity and valor (nangyalay aw jangyalay). Israr, one of my uneducated respondents, stated that Pakhtuns are brave and nar (manly) and can’t tolerate any injustice to them. Israr seemed defensive of the radical and extreme behavior of some Pakhtuns who, in his opinion, are on the right path. They are following the true spirit of Islam and Pakhtunwali, he added. He said:

“Look! Pakhto is the other name of ghairat (honor) and nari (manly). We [Pakhtuns] are fearless people. We don’t care of the consequences and just do the righteous deeds. Allah likes the brave people. Pakhtuns are true Muslims and will always fight to uphold morality and justice. If anyone hurts our ego and dignity, we cannot ignore it. This is why we are labeled as intolerant people. In fact, we [Pakhtuns] are the righteous ones”.

Israr’s views suggest that many Pakhtuns see the radical and extreme behavior of many Pakhtuns as a symbol of masculinity and bravery. And if a Pakhtun does not react to an alleged unjust act in an extreme and radical way, he does not follow the code of Pakhtunwali. Moreover, he also likened the feature of bravery or nari (manhood) with Islam by saying that God likes brave people. His views, in a way, exhibit that the extreme and radical behavior is actually necessary to uphold machismo and patriarchy – the basic features of Pakhtun society. Similar views were expressed by some other participants as well.

As far as the aggressive attitude and behavior of Pakhtuns is concerned, majority of respondents attributed it as the symbol of bravery and the masculine and patriarchal

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13 Ibid.
14 Personal Interview from Israr, 27 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Israr, 27 October 2015.
character of Pakhtun society. However, when it comes to the causes of ongoing militancy and religious radicalism, the opinion of my respondents was different from each other. I came across a number of factors of the religious extremism in the Pakhtun society as pointed out by my interviewees. In the following lines I will turn to highlight the views of my respondents in this regard.

5.2.2 Socio-economic Underdevelopment

One of the major causes of religious extremism as pointed out by the participants is the poverty and economic underdevelopment of the Pakhtun region. Ten out of my twenty educated respondents were of the opinion that Pakhtun region including FATA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan is more underdeveloped as compared to the other provinces and this led to the disappointment and frustration among Pakhtuns. The living standard of majority Pakhtuns especially those in FATA and the rural areas is much below the poverty line. The economic deprivation results in irresponsible attitude of the people and resultanty they turn as extremists and radical.

Shams, one of my educated interviewees, stated that he knows many people who took guns in their hands and became extremists just because of economic injustice. There is discrimination and unfairness going on with Pakhtuns, he added. He told me about his personal experience of knowing a person who joined a militant group because he got disappointed and disenchanted by the extreme poverty he was living in. Shams viewed that the religious extremism could be eradicated only when economic injustices in the society were removed. He said:

“In my opinion if a person has nothing to eat, he will harm and even kill other people. This is natural effect of the unjust economic system. If the economic system is just and fair then there will be no extremism in the society. The government should address this problem [economic injustice] properly and sincerely. I am sure that if it is done, there will be a positive change in our [Pakhtun] society”.

16 Personal Interview from Shams ul Haq, 21 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shams, 21 October 2015.
Shams’s views clearly indicated that there is growing sense of deprivation among Pakhtuns which plays an important role towards the radicalism and religious extremism in the society. Nine other respondents also expressed the similar views in different words. Gul Faraz, one my educated interviewees, said that there should be an Islamic economic system which guaranties complete equality and justice in the society. *Islam nizam pakar de dalta* (we need an Islamic system), he said.\(^{17}\) In other words he was trying to justify the extreme and violent behavior on the part of some Pakhtuns because they were wronged economically.

Nadeem, another educated respondent, stated that majority of Pakhtuns are living below the poverty line and there was no hope for any change in their fate. He further elaborated that all the successive government have so far failed to improve the economic conditions of the people in general and of Pakhtuns in particular. He continued on saying that the state has failed to ensure the speedy justice, equal employment opportunities, better health facilities and infrastructure. All these are the indicators of a failed governing system, he added. He recommended the true Islamic reforms to ensure economic justice.\(^{18}\)

### 5.2.3 Ignorance

Imran, one of my educated interviewees, pointed that the majority of Pakhtuns is illiterate, and their ignorance is the cause of ongoing unrest in the society. He stated that people living in FATA don’t have sufficient educational facilities such as schools, colleges and universities, therefore, a large number of Pakhtuns in the tribal areas remain uneducated and hence can easily be exploited by militant groups and forces. If they were educated and enlightened, they could not have been manipulated by the extremist organizations, he added. Imran viewed Pakhtuns as simple and straight forward people who love their traditions and religion, and can do anything in the name of Pakhto and Islam. This is the reason that some people with their vested interest have misguided them and used the name of religion to get Pakhtuns radicalized, he elaborated. Imran said:

> “We [Pakhtuns] are very emotional people and love our culture and religion. Our straight forwardness is our

\(^{17}\) Personal Interview from Gul Faraz, 04 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Faraz, 04 October 2015.

\(^{18}\) Personal Interview from Nadeem Khan, 02 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Nadeem, 02 October 2015.
weakness (zmung sadgi zmunga kamzori da). People befool us easily in the name of Pakhto and Islam. We [Pakhtuns] are not smart (mung hokhyar na yu), we are not properly educated that’s why we don’t understand the true Islam and are easily exploited”.19

5.2.4 Inconsistent Democratic Process

Another notable factor of religious extremism pointed out by my respondents is the military’s constant and continuous involvement in the politics and its alliance with the religious forces in the country. It is a fact that in Pakistan various state institution particularly the military and intelligence service institutions have always played an important role in making the national identity of the state on the religious basis since the inception of Pakistan in 1947.20 The national security institutions, therefore, have promoted the religious elements in the national politics.21 Pakhtun society, being a traditional patriarchal society, remained an easy field for the promotion of such radical ideology.

Fayaz, one of my educated interviewees, stated that Pakistan’s security establishment has never accepted the superiority of the civilian institutions and political leadership. Due to this mindset of the military elite, the democratic institutions never flourished and the country witnessed a number of military takeovers, he added. Fayaz further elaborated that during these military governments, especially during General Zia-ul-Haq’s rule the religious elements got strengthened. These religious elements expanded their voice and influence in the politics as well as in the societal affairs, he mentioned. According to Fayaz, this trend led the Pakhtun society to get radicalized and earn a bad name for itself in the world.22

5.2.5 State’s Failure and Incompetence

Five out of twenty educated respondents, and eleven out of twenty uneducated respondents pointed out the factors which, one way or the other, were related to political

19 Personal Interview from Imran Khan, 19 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Imran, 19 October 2015.
20 Hassan Abbas, Pakistan’s Drift into Extremism, 100.
22 Personal Interview from Fayaz, 04 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Fayaz, 04 October 2015.
ruling and state’s policies. They directly or indirectly held the ruling elites responsible for the ongoing religious extremism and militancy in the Pakhtun region. They were of the opinion that Pakhtuns are the most neglected and exploited ethnic group in Pakistan. The political elites have always given preference to their vested interests at the cost of Pakhtuns. Zahoor, one of my educated interviewees, held that the state has been ignoring the development and security of the Pakhtun region since the independence of the country. He said:

“The state has been doing injustice to Pakhtuns either of FATA or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan. Pakhtuns are patriotic Pakistanis and have liberated the [present day] Azad Kashmir, but state, instead of appreciating us [Pakhtuns], treats us as if we are aliens (che mung da de mulk khalaq na yu). We [Pakhtuns] are labeled as terrorists and traitors. This is discrimination (da zulam de), and we [Pakhtuns] will resist it (da mung bardasht na shu kawalay)”. 23

Zahoor’s views represent a very strong opinion present in the Pakhtun society especially the Pakhtun nationalist elements. It is commonly believed by the Pakhtun nationalist forces that there is a specific lobby and group which dominates the state affairs and keeps the Pakhtuns out of the decision-making and policy-making processes deliberately. These nationalist forces hold the civil and military ruling elites equally responsible for the miseries and bad image of Pakhtuns in Pakistan due to militancy and extremism. They generally regard it as a conspiracy to degrade and malign Pakhtuns of Pakistan and Afghanistan and to deprive them of their socio-economic and political rights. 24

5.2.6 Sense of Alienation

Similar views were expressed by some other respondents as well. Salma, one of my female educated interviewees, accused the state for all what was happening in the Pakhtun region with regard to security situation. She stated that it is the state’s failure and incompetence in promoting education and other basic facilities in Pakhtun region which

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23 Personal Interview from Zahoor Khan, 05 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Zahoor, 05 October 2015.
resulted in a sense of deprivation among Pakhtuns. She further elaborated that the state has failed to establish its writ in the Pakhtun tribal areas of Pakistan due to lack of sincerity, which led Pakhtuns to carry guns get radicalized. She said:

“Who stops the state to integrate the FATA in the mainstream political set up? Who resists the abolishment of FCR? Why don’t they [the state] abolish the FCR and implement the constitution in FATA? The state does not want to give political and economic rights to Pakhtuns, that’s why there is unrest and chaos in the region”.25

On my counter question regarding specifying the state, Salma said that by state she basically means the bureaucracy both military and civil. She said that bureaucracy has a vested interest in the current political and social unrest particularly in FATA. If the FCR is abolished and constitution is extended to the tribal areas, the status and position of the bureaucracy in FATA will get weakened, she added. She said that political agent in the tribal agencies is just like a king who has unlimited administrative and financial powers.26

State’s failure to integrate Pakhtuns in the national politics, as a cause of current wave of militancy and extremism, is a rising voice in the Pakhtun region. The alleged failure or even reluctance of the ruling elites to absorb and integrate Pakhtuns into the state structures and to include them into the political and economic fabric is the major cause of the militancy and extremism in Pakhtun society because these dynamics have resulted in the sense of alienation among Pakhtuns. This represents the failure of the process of nation and state building in Pakistan. These failures are a major factor of religious extremism in Pakhtun society. The ruling elites are equally responsible for these failures and resultant militancy and radicalism.27

5.2.7 The Pakhtun Identity of Taliban

The major and one of the most notable impacts of the twentieth century’s Soviet and twenty-first century’s American invasion of Afghanistan is the Islamization or Islamification of the Pak-Afghan borderland. As the Pakhtuns represent the majority of

25 Personal Interview from Salma, 10 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Salma, 10 October 2015.
26 Ibid.
Taliban, the Taliban are a more reckless and willing to sacrifice their lives for the ‘greater cause of Islam’. Pakhtuns have a history of courage and bravery, and their role in the militancy and Taliban movement is of fearless warriors who fight with pride and never surrender.

It is a bitter reality and commonly accepted that an overwhelming majority of the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban is of the Pakhtun ethnicity. Although Taliban vow to uphold the cause of Islam and morality, yet they sometimes pretend to represent the interest of Pakhtuns too. This dual identity of the Taliban has caused confusion among many Pakhtuns which, to some extent, has resulted in their sympathy for Taliban. Although not all Pakhtuns are the supporters of Taliban, yet there is still a strong base of Pakhtuns who support the Taliban movement in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Moreover, the militants and extremists – Taliban display the qualities such as fearlessness, honor, bravery and loyalty, etc. which attracts the Pakhtuns because Pakhtuns, for centuries, are known for their valor, bravery and love of honor. 

In other words the masculine and patriarchic character of the Pakhtuns led them to get attracted by the slogans and mottos of the militants, the end result of which is that many Pakhtuns have turned extremists. The Pakhtun identity of Taliban is one of the main factors of the ongoing militancy and religious extremism in the Pakhtun society. It will not be wrong to state that the militants have very smartly and successfully used and exploited the Pakhtun symbolism by portraying themselves as brave, courageous, manly and masculine. This, to some degree, created an identity crisis and many Pakhtuns got radicalized.

5.3 RISE OF RELIGIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES IN PAKHTUN REGION

Apart from the rise of militancy and religious extremism in the Pakhtun society, the second and more important aspect of the religious fundamentalism emerged in Pakhtun region is the rise of Islamists in the mainstream political process. The religious political parties in Pakistan have been part of the national political process since the very beginning, however, it was 1970’s general elections in which for the first time an Islamist party (JUI) succeeded in forming a coalition government in the then NWFP – a Pakhtun

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province. The provincial coalition government could not stay in power for long and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto dismissed the elected government. After that, for a long time, no religious political party could gain success in the general election until 2002. In the 2002 general elections once again religious political parties succeeded in making government in the Pakhtun province – then NWFP. This time the scale of their success was much higher than ever before. In this section I will discuss different aspects of the MMA’s government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP).

Although the religious parties could not perform well in the general elections of 2008 and 2013, but discourse and narrative set by the MMA government after 2002 elections is still relevant in the existing context of militancy and religious extremism in Pakhtun region. It is a fact that the Islamist political parties are no longer commanding the influence which they were doing in the last decade; however, their significance cannot be denied or underestimated. Jamat-i-Islami’s presence in the current provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a coalition partner is the evidence of the significance of religious politics in the province.

Moreover, the relationship between the religious political parties and the militant insurgents in the Pakhtun region is an important dynamic to comprehend the nature of Political Islam in the Pakhtun society. The demands and rhetoric of the militant groups such as Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) or Tehreek-i-Nifaz-i-Shariat-i-Muhammadi (TNSM) were not very different from those of the MMA, though the tactics, method and organizational behavior of the two was completely different for sure. However, the similarities and continuities can also be not ignored. Without the context of the MMA government in the province, one cannot understand the rise of extremism in the Pakhtun region.

Furthermore, the MMA government of 2002 in the Pakhtun province is significant because it provides a valuable case study of the political Islam in practical governance.

29 For detail see chapter 2 of this thesis.
32 Ibid.
There are very few examples in the South Asia where the religious political forces have moved from the politics of agitation and opposition to the politics of actual governance and administration. MMA government is one of these instances. The analysis of this shift can enable one to understand how the Islamist political leaders change and how they interact with the domestic, regional and international interlocutors when they are compelled to do so.\textsuperscript{34} This may be useful in comprehending the abilities and limits of the democratic political process in controlling the more challenging aspect of Islamism especially in the Pakhtun context.

Having stated the significance of the analysis of democratic Islamism, now I turn to discuss the rise of MMA in the Pakhtun province of Pakistan. In doing so first, I will attempt to elaborate the background and factors of its rise to power in the Pakhtun region. After that I will also highlight some important aspects of its policies and governance. In the following lines I have tried to explain the regional and domestic context in which MMA rose to power in 2002 in Pakhtun region.

5.3.1 US Invasion of Afghanistan 2001

The rise of religious political parties cannot be comprehended apart from the regional context of US-led NATO attack on the neighboring Afghanistan in 2001. This invasion became the immediate cause of the rise of the Islamic political parties in the Pakhtun region.\textsuperscript{35} The Islamist political leadership was mainly Pakhtun. Qazi Hussain Ahmad (late) of JI, Fazl-ur-Rehman of JUI-F and Sami-ul-Haq of JUI-S were Pakhtuns who successfully used the religious sentiment in the wake of US military action against the Pakhtun Taliban in Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{36}

It was obvious and natural that these Pakhtun-Islamist leaders and their political parties would strongly oppose the US attack on Afghanistan. Before that the Islamic political parties had never made such kind of political and electoral alliance. The Pak-Afghan Defense Council (PADC) engineered by the former ISI chief Hamid Gul in October 2001 became the foundation of the MMA as a political and electoral alliance in 2002.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid. 38.
\textsuperscript{35} Joshua T. White, Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier, 48.
\textsuperscript{36} Khalid Ahmad, “Three angry Pashtuns”, Friday Times, 16 August 2002.
PADC provided a common platform to 26 parties to oppose the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. However, following the fall of Taliban government in Afghanistan, the Council lost its relevance and six religious political parties formed an alliance – MMA in January 2002 to contest the upcoming general elections.\(^{38}\) The six parties included JUI-F, JUI-S, Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), Jamiat-i-Ahl-Hadees (JAD), Jamiat-i-Ulama Pakistan (JUP) and the Islami Tehreek-i-Pakistan (ITP) which is formerly known as Tehreek-i-Jafriya Pakistan. These religious parties represented the major schools of Islamic thought including Deobandi, Barelvi, Wahabi and Shia, etc. The formation of this political and electoral alliance served the interest of the military government of that time by fostering the impression to the international community that Political Islam was on the rise in the Pakhtun region and only a powerful military government in Pakistan could check this growing threat.\(^{39}\)

5.3.2 The Domestic Political Situation

Usually, in Pakistan, the political situation has not been in favor of the religious forces, and the secular political forces have generally remained dominant throughout the history. However, after the military takeover in 1999 and the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the domestic political conditions turned in favor of the Islamists particularly in the Pakhtun region. The major secular political parties in the province were weakened due to their poor performance and bad governance during the democratic era of 1990s. Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) and Awami National Party (ANP) were to main secular political forces in the province which were demoralized and diluted during general elections of 2002.\(^{40}\)

The Awami National Party (ANP) and other nationalist political forces had supported the US military action against Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the government’s shift in the Taliban policy. This anti-Taliban and pro-US stance of the ANP, the main political force in Pakhtun province, damaged its political strength in the province. Given the anti-American sentiment in the region, it was easy for the MMA to dent the credibility of the secular and nationalist parties. The MMA exploited the situation in its favor which

\(^{38}\) Ibid.


\(^{40}\) Joshua T. White, *Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier*, 49.
resulted in the decrease of ANP’s vote bank and increase of MMA’s vote bank in the Pakhtun region. There was an evident and visible change in the political behavior of Pakhtuns, and the change was in favor of the religious political parties.

The military government of Musharraf was also giving tacit support to the religious political parties – MMA. Musharraf’s main political rivals in the national politics were PML-N, PPP and ANP.\(^{41}\) In order to counter these anti-Musharraf and anti-martial law political forces, Musharraf sought the support of Islamists.\(^{42}\) Musharraf knew that the religious political parties could serve his interest as useful proxy against his opponents in the Pakhtun region including PPP, ANP and PML-N. On the one hand Musharraf’s own PML-Q had chances of success in the Hazara division of the province (primarily non-Pakhtun) and the southern district Lakki Marwat, while on the other hand MMA was set to defeat the anti-Musharraf forces in the elections. Therefore, the state threw their weight in favor of the religious parties to completely neutralize its political rivals in the province.\(^{43}\)

Another possible reason of the state’s tacit support to the Islamists was that Musharraf wanted to show to the foreign powers especially US that the Islamists are an emerging threat in the region and a strong military government was indispensible to deal with it. The intelligence and security agencies also played an important role in this regard. Their role in the 2002 general elections is seen as disputed and partisan. Some scholars and political analysts suggested that the MMA’s victory in the general elections was entirely contrived by the intelligence agencies. The security agencies significantly manipulated the Islamists’ victory though in a subtle way. The agencies did not engage in the large scale electoral manipulation or rigging, instead they strangle the major political parties in the province and gave a free hand to the religious political parties to capitalize on the anti-US sentiment in the province.\(^{44}\)

There was very little time given by the government to the political parties to organize and properly run election campaign. The mainstream secular and nationalist political parties suffered because of lack of enough time to launch an effective campaign. However, on

\(^{43}\) Ibid., 46.
the other hand, the religious political parties benefited from this situation. The religious political parties had the opportunity to run their campaign in mosques and religious seminaries even months before the actual campaign started. Since imams of the mosque hold a distinctive and influential position in the Pakhtun society especially the rural areas, they played a crucial role in winning the Pakhtuns’ support for the religious political parties – MMA. While on the other hand, the nationalist and secular political parties in the region had no platform or opportunity to counter the rhetoric of the Islamists.45

Another important factor of the success of MMA was that the election commission assigned to it the official electoral sign of the book. The MMA’s leadership successfully manipulated and played up the Islamic significance of the assigned symbol. They claimed the symbol of book to be Qur’an and presented and projected the alliance as an unquestionable party of learning.46 The Pakhtuns are traditionally practicing Muslims and there is a vital significance of the religious symbolism in the Pakhtun society.47 Therefore, the MMA had a smooth drive in manipulating the religious character of the Pakhtuns for its political interest.

Moreover, according to the electoral statutes, the candidate had to have some educational qualification particularly a bachelor degree to contest the election, while most of the MMA candidates in the Pakhtun region did not have a degree from university. The federal government interpreted in a way that holding a madrassah certificate was also acceptable. This support of the government in the form of favoring interpretation gave boost to the MMA candidates particularly JUI-F candidates in the then NWFP. It is also said that some MMA candidates were supported by the government by silent withdrawal of criminal cases against them prior to the official scrutiny of their nomination papers. This process was reported and documented in the Pakhtun areas of Baluchistan. Therefore, there is a strong reason to assume that the same happened in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP).48

In short, the state supported the MMA in an indirect way. Unlike the other provinces e.g. Sindh and Punjab, the Pakhtun politics in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is unequivocally more

46 Mohammad Waseem and Mariam Mufti, “Religion, Politics and Governance in Pakistan”, 40
47 See chapter 3 of this thesis.
egalitarian, and historically it has been difficult for the agencies to stage a large-scale vote-buying and intimidation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa than in other provinces. The direct manipulation was not easy in the Pakhtun province. Hence, the security and intelligence agencies and the ruling elites in Islamabad supported the MMA in an indirect manner mentioned above. The tacit support of the military regime and the international political context of US invasion of Afghanistan resulted in an unprecedented victory of the religious political parties in NWFP and the Pakhtun areas of Baluchistan.

5.3.3 The Promises and Electoral Campaign

As mentioned above, the immediate factor of the formation of MMA alliance was the US invasion of Afghanistan 2001. In other words the international or foreign factor was instrumental in bringing the religious political parties together on one platform and to devise a common strategy for the future course of action. However, when the actual campaign for the 2002 general elections started, the MMA adopted a more vigorous and multifaceted agenda. The election campaign was not limited only to the speeches and rhetoric against the US military action against Taliban, but a forceful, multifaceted domestic program and agenda was also communicated to the people.

The electoral strategy of the MMA was quite different from the other mainstream political parties. Other major political parties like PPP and PML-N were personality based parties and always relied on the charismatic leadership to win the support of the masses. On the other hand the nationalist political parties like ANP always relied on the ethnically-charged historical rhetoric and grievances. However, the MMA’s political and electoral line of attack was unconventional and different from the other parties. Two main parties in MMA i.e. JUI and JI brought two complementary methods of mass mobilization to the alliance’s electoral approach. The JUI heavily relied on the religious seminaries – madrassahs for the mobilization, while JI used its promising network of disciplined Pakhtun political workers. It will be right to say that the MMA began as a movement against the US and NATO presence in the region and gradually over the course of campaign converted into a forceful electoral alliance. The alliance came up with

49 Joshua T. White, *Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier*, 50.
51 Ibid., 129.
an agenda which was considered as most strong agenda for change, while other political forces seemed to favor status quo.

The MMA adopted an aggressive and challenging change agenda. The promises made by the alliance leadership during campaign suggested that the movement was reactionary as well as a provocative. The alliance promised a true Islamic system in the province. The political, administrative and judicial institutions were supposedly to be made according to Islamic law. The alliance vowed to introduce and implement Islamic banking and enforce an Islamic economic system. MMA also promised to covert the provincial assembly into an Islamic jirga. In other words the Pakhtun and culture and Islamic symbolism were combined in the promises and stated programs.

An important pledge during the campaign was to eliminate the alleged obscenity from the society. The alliance announced to prohibit the so called obscene material on the electronic media particularly on television and cable. This particular pledge had its roots in the patriarchic character of the Pakhtun society. Many Pakhtun viewed the anti-patriarchal values and norms as unacceptable and equated them with obscenity and vulgarity. The MMA alliance too projected and propagated the changing gender relations in the Pakhtun society and likened it with obscenity and vulgarity. A number of my respondents talked about this particular aspect of the rise of MMA in the Pakhtun province.

Bakht Zada, one of my uneducated interviewees, was of the opinion that the obscenity in Pakhtun society was becoming prominent and the state was promoting vulgarity in the name of women rights, that’s why an Islamic government was needed so that to eliminate the unwanted and undesirable practices from the society. He stated that he voted for the ‘book’ (MMA’s electoral symbol) in the 2002 elections because he wanted that the government should take serious notice of and action against the so called ‘obscenity’. He said:

“Well I always voted for Islam because Islam is the solution to all the problems of our country. The main evil in our

54 See chapter 4 of this thesis.
society is the obscenity (*behayai*) and this is the agenda of the enemies of Islam. The enemies want to destroy our society by corrupting our morals and values. Only an Islamic system can rectify the social evils of our society”.55

Bakht Zada’s views clearly indicated that his sympathy for the religious political parties in general and MMA in 2002 in particular was because of the changing gender relations and threat to the traditional patriarchal character of the Pakhtun society. Similar views were expressed by some other respondents as well. Javed, one of my uneducated respondents, seemed quite disturbed with the growing trend of women’s role in the social affairs. He held the opinion that Pakhtuns are deviating from their culture as well as religion by turning a blind eye to the growing debauchery in the society. While asked about the his voting behavior particularly during the 2002 general elections, Javed replied that it was his first time to cast a vote and he cast in favor of MMA because it promised to eradicate the obscenity from the Pakhtun society.56

Apart from the above mentioned promise and pledges during the election campaign, MMA pledged some other pledges which were more unclear and vague, for instance restricting the un-Islamic work by NGOs and western elements. This particular pledge, though a vague one, suggested that alliance was pointing out to the national and international women rights organizations in the province. By curtailing the work of such organizations, MMA meant the attempt to revive the traditional patriarchal structure with effectiveness. The alliance constantly propagated during the campaign against the local and foreign NGOs, said by a female educated respondent Shahnaz. The MMA accused the NGOs of promoting western values in the society, she added.57

Moreover, the MMA made some other promises which also directly or indirectly involved the gender issues and patriarchy in Pakhtun society. The alliance vowed to enforce Islamic *Shariah* into the provincial structure of law and the imposition of Islamic justice. Its pledges were a kind of echo of the Mufti Mahmood’s government in the province in 197258 and General Zia-ul-Haq’s Islamization in 1980s.59 The pledges

55 Personal Interview from Bakht Zada, 17 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Bakht 17 October 2015.
56 Personal Interview from Javed Hussain, 20 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Javed, 20 October 2015.
57 Personal Interview from Shahnaz, 19 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shahnaz, 19 October 2015.
included the promotion of policies designed to ensure the purdah for women. Shahnaz stated that by Islamic system the MMA actually meant an anti-women agenda. They were not sincere with Islam, she added. She elaborated that Islam is a system of socio-economic justice while the MMA had limited it to the patriarchal and anti-women policies.\(^6^0\)

### 5.4 MMA’S SUCCESS IN THE ELECTIONS

The alliance made a remarkable victory in the 2002 elections in the Pakhtun province – NWFP. It was predicted before the elections by the analysts that JUI-F would sweep in the southern districts along the border of Afghanistan. The JI’s solid victory in the Dir district was also expected and predicted by most analysts. However, the surprising factor was the outstanding performance of the alliance in the Malakand division and Peshawar valley including Mardan,Charsadda and Swabi districts. Traditionally these areas were strongholds of the non-religious secular (PPP) or nationalist parties (ANP).\(^6^1\) MMA even performed well in the Hazara region where traditionally PML-N had held control. The religious parties won 48 out of 99 provincial assembly seats and 29 out of 35 national assembly seats from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP). Apart from this MMA won 6 out of 14 national assembly seats from Baluchistan mainly from the Pakhtun districts (in total MMA won 53 general seats of the national assembly).\(^6^2\) This was an outstanding victory for the religious political parties which changed and redesigned the political map of the Pakhtun region.

As mentioned above the foreign factor of US invasion of Afghanistan and the state’s tacit support with the MMA played an instrumental role in the alliance’s unprecedented performance in the elections. However, these two factors alone were not sufficient for the kind of victory MMA achieved in the elections. If the state manipulation was enough for a party to gain success then the PML-Q would have shown much more strength in the elections. And if the US-Afghanistan factor was a decisive one then the MMA would not

\(^{59}\) See chapter 2 of this thesis.

\(^{60}\) Interview Shahnaz, 19 October 2015.


have lost seats in the Tank district which is adjacent to the North Waziristan agency and where there was sympathy for the Taliban.\textsuperscript{63}

The US-Afghanistan factor and the support from the security establishment helped to capitalize on the religious symbolism in Pakhtun society and the patriarchal character of the Pakhtun culture which was challenged by the changing gender relations due to various factors discussed in the previous chapter (chapter 4). Moreover, an acute pro-change agenda and anti-establishment feelings were important drivers of the shift in the voting behavior of Pakhtuns. MMA had a populist rhetoric to implement a new kind of politics oriented around religious politics and Islamic patterns. All these factors combined explain the rise of political Islam in the Pakhtun society.

5.5  THE POLICIES AND ISLAMIZATION PROGRAM OF MMA IN PAKHTUN PROVINCE

The MMA during the election campaign, as its main agenda, promised to implement Islamic law – shariah. It was expected and predicted by the political analysts that MMA would attempt to introduce certain reforms and changes in the administrative, legal and judicial systems in the province. The MMA had also sympathies with Taliban and it was feared that it would initiate a process of ‘Talibanization’ in the name of Islamization and change. Human rights organizations, women’s rights activists and the mainstream secular and nationalist political parties along with the international observers raised voices and concerns about the dawn of an Islamist government in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP).\textsuperscript{64}

On the other hand MMA made attempts to alleviate the fears particularly of the religious minorities in the province, however, it failed to dispel concerns of various groups and forces in the first year of its rule in the province. Nonetheless, a complete analysis of the entire five-year’ tenure of the MMA government suggests that it introduced various socio-political trends coating with Islamization, but it was unable to bring about an extensive change in the Pakhtun region.\textsuperscript{65} It did not demonstrate the method or the will to carry out more than a shallow program of Islamization. I will now turn to some policies and measures adopted by the MMA government in the Pakhtun province.

\textsuperscript{63} Joshua T. White, \textit{Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier}, 51.
\textsuperscript{64} “Talibanization of NWFP”, \textit{Daily Times}, 25 May 2005.
\textsuperscript{65} Mohammad Waseem and Mariam Mufti, “Religion, Politics and Governance in Pakistan”, 50.
5.5.1 The Initial Days in Government

Pakhtuns, who provided an opportunity to the religious political parties to rule in the province, were expecting a rapid change in the socio-economic policies and the transparency and competence in the governance system. They expected the MMA to show quick results and performance relating Islamization, social welfare and good governance in the province. The government was under extreme pressure because previously most governments had not completed their tenures mainly because of incompetence and non-performance. The MMA government wanted to exploit this opportunity completely and maximize their influence in the politics of Pakhtun society. However, the initial year of the MMA in the government proved turbulent and chaotic, as various interest groups within MMA’s ranks including MPAs, workers, etc. started taking actions and measures on their own in support of the alliance’s mandate.

The outcome of such confused start was the unbridled ad-hocism illustrated by the outbreak of various symbolic actions e.g. opening with the azaan (call for prayers) in the assembly; banning the liquor even to the non-Muslim foreigners; barring the playing of music in the public transport; announcing a crackdown on the night-clubs and gambling places (interestingly there were no night-clubs in the province), etc. Apart from these official measures and policies, there was a rise in the unofficial vigilante-style activism on the part of MMA’s workers and officials against the so-called obscenity and vulgarity in the major cities including Peshawar. Most of these vigilantes belonged to the youth organizations of the religious parties particularly JI. The government hardly took any concrete action against them.

Hundreds of JI activists in Peshawar took to the city roads and destroyed the billboards carrying images of female models. These processions were also led by the local JI leadership including MNAs and MPAs. This vigilante-style activism particularly revolved around the issue of patriarchy, masculinity and male dominance in the disguise of actions

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70 Iqbal Khattak, “Police Warns MMA against taking Law in Own Hands”, *Daily Times*, 29 December 2003.
against so-called ‘obscenity’. The religious fundamentalism in the form of MMA government was directed towards restoring the patriarchal structure in the Pakhtun society which was threatened or challenged by the social process and the previous governments’ policies. The initial days of the MMA government were full of this kind of adventures. My interviewees still remember those days when such activities were taking place. Fayaz, one of my educated respondents, stated that the religious government of the MMA had become intolerable because of such events. He said:

“Well I remember the day when I was riding on my bike near Gulbahar [a place in Peshawar] and suddenly I saw some 200 to 300 people mostly the young boys, between 15 to 25 years of age taking sticks in their hands chanting various religious slogans, were destroying the ‘PEPSI’ billboards because they were carrying pictures of women. When I crossed them and approached towards university, on the university road I saw that such kind of boards were already broken. I was really disappointed by this act of the government backed activists”.

Fayaz seemed quite unhappy over the anti-women or male chauvinist policies and measures of the MMA government. He did not support the harsh and confused policies of the provincial government. Some other respondents also recalled the same events though with varying responses and opinion. Ihsanullah, one of the religious clerics, mentioned that the most obvious social evil in the society is the obscenity and vulgarity. He stated that the current governments are least interested and serious in dealing with this social menace. Ihsanullah recalled the days when back in 2003 the student wings of the religious parties showed the activism in removing so-called obscenity from the society. The social evils can be removed only when there is a true Islamic government, he added. He held the opinion that Pakhtuns are becoming socially and religiously unsound; therefore, there is a need of the Islamic law to be implemented so that the morals and social norms and values of the Pakhtun society can be restored properly.

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72 Interview Fayaz, 04 October 2015.
73 Personal Interview from Ihsanullah, 20 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Ihsanullah, 20 October 2015.
Ihsanullah’s views were quite understandable as he was an imam of a mosque and had special sympathy with the former MMA government. However, some other respondents especially the uneducated ones also seemed supporting and endorsing the patriarchal policies and measures of the MMA government in the initial days. They were of the opinion that Pakhtunwali and fahashi (obscenity) cannot go together. Any attempt to remove so-called obscenity from the society was considered as a step towards establishing a pure Pakhtun society. These respondents viewed the patriarchal policies of the government as pro-Islam and pro-Pakhtun culture. The religious clerics and the majority of uneducated respondents supported such policies of the government.

On the other hand there were some respondents, like Fayaz, who criticized the anti-women and gender biased policies of the provincial government. Most of the educated interviewees blamed the MMA government for promoting intolerance and aggression in the society in the name of religion and shariah. The same kind of opinion was held especially by my female respondents. Five out of my six female respondents were of the opinion that the religious parties’ government of MMA was discriminatory against women. Shandana, one of my female respondents, stated that most of MMA’s policies were based on the phenomenon of male dominance in the society. She criticized such policies by citing the same example of destroying billboards with female images. She said:

“I think women are the most disadvantaged (mehroom) segment of our society. One of the major hurdles in the way of our [women] progress is the narrow mindedness of our religious parties. They [religious parties] cannot tolerate us [women] working in offices or elsewhere. We are more than half of the country’s population and if we are forced to stay at homes and not to work then how will our country and society progress? They [religious parties] cannot even tolerate our [faces] on the billboards. This is ridiculous”.

Shandana, who is a professional lawyer as well, seemed quite disturbed with the social and cultural values which force women to stick to the inside of house and don’t allow

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74 Personal Interview from Shandana, 20 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shandana, 20 October 2015.
them to play their due role in the betterment of the society and country. According to her the religious parties don’t have anything to sell in their pocket except rhetoric of obscenity and vulgarity which is actually directed towards the suppression of women and strengthening male dominance in the Pakhtun society. The female interviewees generally held the similar views and opinion.

On the one hand the religious government seemed to be proactive in establishing a conservative society; however, despite all the activism and vigilantism, the MMA government was facing difficulties in implementing its program and so-called Islamic agenda. The main hurdle in this regard was the bureaucracy. The provincial bureaucracy viewed the acts and policies of the MMA government as often unrealistic, beyond the authority of provincial administration or contrary to the existing set of laws. The MMA had set up a semi-governmental recommendatory body ‘Nifaz-i-Shariat Council’ which was to give proposals and recommendations to the government in connection with the implementation of shariah.75

The Nifaz-i-Shariat Council during the first year of MMA government put forward various proposals and recommendations which could be materialized because the provincial bureaucracy saw many loopholes in the suggested policy measures. The Council, for example, recommended to establish a ‘vice-and-virtue ministry’76 and recommended the white dupatta (scarf) to be worn by the schoolgirls.77 The Council’s recommendations were announced in the press and media with great enthusiasm; however, they were soon ignored by the government. The bureaucracy was not the only factor due to which the government had to soften its stance and moderate its policies regarding religion and culture. The central government in Islamabad also threatened to impose governor’s rule in the province following initial chaos and confusion in the province. Similarly international donors also threatened to stop giving aid and support to the province.78

Although the initial year was very chaotic and full of confusion, the MMA government soon realized that in order to retain the power and stay in the government it had to

75 Joshua T. White, Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier, 52.
compromise over various ideological issues and had to soften its stance regarding so-called Islamization. The MMA remembered the tenure of Mufti Mahmood as chief minister who lasted for only ten months. Understandably the MMA government wanted to avoid such situation as overthrowing its government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as happened in the past during Bhutto regime. Sensing the complexities of the situation MMA government soon started discouraging the vigilantes’ activities and moved towards a more pragmatic and legalistic course of action regarding Islamization.\textsuperscript{79}

5.5.2 The Attempted Legislation Regarding Islamization

In 2003 the MMA government passed a symbolic ‘Shariah Act’ which for most part had no practical implication. However, in order to make it more practical and effective the government introduced the controversial Hasba (accountability) Bill on 14 July 2005.\textsuperscript{80} The Bill included the main themes as Justice and accountability. There were some positive and less controversial aspects of the Bill e.g. discouraging the beggary; discouraging the child labor or employment of under-age children; discouraging injustices against women in inheritance; and the ban on honor killings, etc. However, most of these points were unnecessary as there was already enough legislation regarding these issues at the provincial and federal levels. On the other hand, the most controversial aspect of the Bill was the introduction of an office of the ‘Muhtasib’ who would be necessarily a religious scholar. He would serve as the ombudsman and people could refer to it the complaints regarding the so-called un-Islamic practices and behavior in the province.\textsuperscript{81}

The two main religious parties in the alliance JI and JUI-F liked the legislation for two different reasons. The JI liked the idea of the ombudsman because they could see an opportunity by which the religious forces could permanently get involved in the workings of legal and judicial system. The JUI-F favored the office of the \textit{muhtasib} because it would ensure to employ hundreds of scholars of the madrassahs throughout the province that represented a clever job-creation scheme by the party for its workers.\textsuperscript{82} In this way the party could mobilize support in its constituencies for the future elections as well.

\textsuperscript{79} Joshua T. White, \textit{Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier}, 52.
\textsuperscript{81} Mohammad Waseem and Mariam Mufti, “Religion, Politics and Governance in Pakistan”, 45.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 46.
Habib Ullah, one of my educated respondents, held that this office was created by the MMA government just to give jobs and privileges to its nearer and dearer people. The main purpose was to implement the ‘Shariah Act’ completely and successfully. From a layman perspective the alliance leadership wanted to introduce a Taliban-style government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The government propagated that the new law would be beneficial for the common people and would provide them speedy justice. One of my respondents (Shams an educated interviewee) reminded the Hasba Bill episode and stated that the true Islamic government means that it makes Islamic laws, *Qanoon sirf da Khudad* (the only law is of God), he said.

However, on the other hand, majority of my respondents especially the educated were highly critical of the attempted legislation by the MMA government. Sixteen out of my twenty educated respondents were of the opinion that the Islamic legislation by the MMA government was just a political drama to distract the people’s attention from real socio-economic issues. They held that such kind of policies destroyed the Afghan culture and society during Taliban regime; and the MMA government was following their footsteps which would have destroyed the Pakhtun culture and society. Shahzad, one of my educated interviewees, stated that neither the Taliban government was acceptable to their people and the international community, nor the Taliban-style MMA government was acceptable to us. He said that we cannot tolerate ignorant rule in the name of Islam (*Islam pa sar stargo kho jihalat na manu*).

On the other hand the TTP was carrying on its activities in the South Waziristan agency and the introduction of the *Hasba* bill gave them a moral boost. The opposition parties mainly PPP and PPP severely criticized the proposed legislation and labeled it as the ‘Martial law of Mullahs’. The civil society and human rights organization also put their weight against the *Hasba* bill. The Human rights activists held that the MMA government wanted to impose and dictate their own orthodox, pedant, social and cultural values and

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83 Personal Interview from Habib Ullah, 07 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Habib, 07 October 2015.
85 Interview Shams, 21 October 2015.
86 Personal Interview from Shahzad Zeb, 22 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Shahzad, 22 October 2015.
88 Ibid.
norms on the society by introducing such legislation. The international community was also skeptical about the legislation. The MMA leadership was caught in a dilemma of propagating the importance of Islamic legislation to its electorate on the one hand, while downplaying to the opposition and international community the effects of the legislation, on the other hand.\footnote{Ismail Khan, “Force will be Raised to Prevent ‘Vice’: NWFP Cabinet Approves Draft Hisba Act”, Dawn, 23 May 2003.}

The bill was also criticized by the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII). It was passed by the provincial assembly twice and each time it was challenged in the Supreme Court. The apex court later declared it unconstitutional on 4 August 2005\footnote{Jamshed Khan, “The Rise of Political Islam in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa”, 307.} on the grounds that it was ambiguous, overbroad, irrational, based on unnecessary delegation of jurisdiction, denying the right of access to justice the people and attempt to set up a parallel legal system.\footnote{Muhammad Kamran, “SC Declares Key Hasba Sections Unconstitutional”, \textit{Daily Times}, 5 August 2005.} Both the provincial and federal governments took political advantage of the Hasba bill controversy. The provincial government of MMA’s succeeded in keeping alive its claim and rhetoric that the true Islamic law was just around the corner; while on the other hand the federal government especially President Musharraf continued propagating that his government of ‘enlightened moderation’ was the only safeguard against an forthcoming Islamists’ offensive.

5.5.3 Promoting and Patronizing Religious Seminaries

Another notable and expected policy of the religious parties’ government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was to give patronage and boost to the religious seminaries – madrassahs. There are a number of religious seminaries in the Pakhtun region including settled and tribal which are providing Islamic education to the children free of cost. The special attention to the madrassahs by the MMA government was observed very closely even by the international community because the religious seminaries in Pakhtun areas of Pakistan have always been a matter of concern for the West since the time of Soviet-Afghan war. The number of these madrassahs rapidly multiplied during that period.

Although an overwhelming majority of these madrassahs offers only religious education, teaching, and memorizing Qur’an by heart, yet these institutions are seen with apprehension because of very few militant elements that exploit the name of religion and
recruit manpower from these institutions into their militant and sectarian organizations. By and large the religious seminaries provide a commendable social and educational service to the poor families of Pakhtun areas. Khizar Hayat, one of the religious clerics I interviewed, stated that he by himself remained a student in one of the madrassahs where he received religious as well as worldly education free of cost.  

The MMA, particularly JUI-F, after coming into power paid special attention to these religious seminaries. JUI-F represented the Deobandi school of thought in the alliance, and the religious seminaries in Pakhtun areas including settled and tribal areas also belonged to the Deobandi school of thought. In this way the JUI-F saw an opportunity to concentrate on its constituencies in the form of madrassahs which were the major source of vote bank for the party. The leadership categorically stated that the madrassahs were their top priority.

The government provided enormous resources to the religious institutions considering their social service in providing education, food and shelter to the poor students. Asif, one of my uneducated respondents, shared his observation that during the MMA tenure the whole attention and focus of the government was on the promotion of a particular segment of the society i.e. the students of madrassahs. He elaborated his point that the government always facilitated the madrassahs officially through financial and administrative means and created employment opportunities for them. On the other hand proper attention was not given to the mainstream educational institutions, he added.

The government increased the funds, grants and resources for these religious organizations under the official program of the ‘Auqaf’ (endowments) department. The JUI leadership also chose to utilize the development channels and other discretionary grants to give benefits to these madrassahs. The discretionary funds received by the JUI MNAs and MPAs were mostly directed towards these religious institutions. However, these funds and grants tended to be one-time concessions or temporary arrangements because the JUI leadership feared the state interference in madrassahs through regular and permanent financial assistance. Khizar Hayat mentioned that the madrassahs are

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92 Personal Interview from Khizar Hayat, 06 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Khizar, 06 October 2015.
96 Joshua T. White, Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier, 57.
independent institutions and should remain independent.\textsuperscript{97} The JUI leadership knew that independence of madrassahs would be compromised and threatened if the state extends its influence in the form of financial assistance.\textsuperscript{98} However, there was a diversity of opinion within the MMA leadership regarding the financial assistance from the state, for example the JUI-S leadership has traditionally been more willing to accept the zakat funds.\textsuperscript{99}

An analysis of the record of the provincial development funds shows that various discretionary pools of funds were tapped to give benefits to the religious seminaries. The District Development Fund (DDF), the Chief Minister’s Special Package and the ‘Tameer-i-Sarhad’ (Building NWFP) Program all show the repeated financial assistance to madrassahs.\textsuperscript{100} Most of the grants were given to the madrassahs located in the southern districts of the province which were the stronghold areas of the JUI-F. Moreover, the madrassahs in Swat and Dir were also patronized through the grants received by the JI members of the assembly.\textsuperscript{101} The grants to madrassahs were often made without public notifications and were sanctioned through the discretion of the chief minister.\textsuperscript{102}

However, the provision of resources and facilities to the madrassahs was not a primary concern for the common people. The main point of concern regarding these religious institutions mentioned by my respondents was that some of these institutions had links with the militant organizations. Later on these militant organizations fought against the state in Swat and the Pakhtun tribal areas. The negligence of the provincial government towards the emerging militancy and extremism caused an irreparable loss and damage to the Pakhtun society. Some of my respondents blamed the MMA government for their indifference regarding these elements during its tenure.

Tahir, one of my educated interviewees, stated that it was the MMA government’s indifferent attitude towards the growing militancy and extremism in the Pakhtun region

\textsuperscript{97} Interview Khizar, 06 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{100} “PHC Seeks NWFP Govt Reply over MPA’s Writ”, Dawn, 13 September 2007.
\textsuperscript{101} Joshua T. White, Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier, 57.
\textsuperscript{102} See for example Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), State of Democracy in Pakistan: Report for the Year 2006, January 2007.
that led to the destruction of the Pakhtun society and culture. He further said that had the MMA government not turned a blind eye to the emerging threat of terrorism in the region, the law and order situation would have been completely different today. Tahir seemed quite skeptical about the interplay of religion and politics. He elaborated that the religious political parties are neither sincere with religion nor with politics. The Islamist parties only used the name the religion for their political benefit and did not serve either religion or the community, he added. He stated that integrating the religion and politics by the religious parties has rather spoiled the both. Similar views were expressed by majority of my respondents. Twenty-eight out of my forty respondents (twenty educated and twenty illiterate) were of the opinion that the interplay of religion and politics has negatively affected the law and order situation in the region and has made the Pakhtun region a battlefield for the world powers. They further argued that such trend has destroyed the Pakhtun culture and values.

5.5.4 The Gender Policy and Protecting Patriarchy

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the rise of religious fundamentalism is often the result of challenge and threat to the patriarchal pattern of a traditional society. The religious fundamentalism, both in the form of militancy and rise of religious groups in the mainstream political process, attempts to restore and preserve the patriarchal structure of the society. Similarly the rise of religious fundamentalism in the form of extremism and rise of religious parties in the Pakhtun society was partly the result of emerging challenges to the patriarchy and patrilineal system in the Pakhtun culture and society as discussed in the previous chapters (chapter 3 and 4). The MMA government after coming into power adopted such policies relating gender issues that could preserve and strengthen the patriarchal structure of the society.

It was generally expected by the common people as well intelligentsia that the MMA government would impose strict gender values and norms in the province. The main parties of the alliance i.e. JI and JUI attempted to get the support of the conservative segment of the Pakhtun society by unveiling their gender agenda. The religious parties mixed up the Pakhtun cultural norms with the Islamic trends and the appeal to

103 Personal Interview from Tahir Ali, 27 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Tahir, 27 October 2015.
Pakhtunwali was often framed in the religious terms.\textsuperscript{105} Although the religious parties’ leadership knew that there were some deep difference between the Pakhtun culture and Islamic values, yet they would hardly oppose an un-Islamic trend relating gender issue for the fear of losing support of the conservative Pakhtun segment of the society. For example they knew that Islam condones the remarriage of a widow but they could not support it because of the Pakhtun culture.\textsuperscript{106} Similarly their opposition to the notorious practices like swara was also rhetorical and they did little to enforce the law in this regard.\textsuperscript{107}

The MMA tenure witnessed a visible change in the outlook of the society regarding women and gender issues. The use of purdah and hijab increased rapidly during that period. One could witness that in the local markets more women were observed purdah. The government announced the mandatory head covering for school girls. Similarly there was a sudden increase in the ratio of face covering in the co-education institutions of the province. Shahnaz, one of my female respondents, recalled her days as student in the university and said that at that time (before MMA government) very few girls used to cover their faces in the university while after the MMA coming into power the number and ratio of such female students raised rapidly. The revival of the conservative norms and values was at the basis of the MMA policies, she added.\textsuperscript{108} Another respondent (Shehzad an educated interviewee) held that such trend was actually the result of overall religious fundamentalism in the province and not only the MMA policies.\textsuperscript{109}

The MMA government’s gender policies received criticism on two different fronts. Firstly, there was a growing perception that the religious parties were interrupting the women-oriented projects and programs, for example the religious parties campaigned against some women’s rights organizations which according to them were advancing the Western notions.\textsuperscript{110} Secondly, the religious parties were constantly opposing the legal

\textsuperscript{105} Jamshed Khan, “The Rise of Political Islam in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa”, 305.
\textsuperscript{108} Interview Shahnaz, 19 October 2015.
\textsuperscript{109} Interview Shahzad, 22 October 2015.
reforms, relating issues which affected women, in the federal and provincial legislatures. The Islamist parties resisted any change in the infamous ‘Hudood laws’ in 2004, and also opposed the Women’s Protection Bill in 2006. They adopted the strategy to label any attempt to change the status-quo as a western agenda and un-Islamic.

Ihsanullah, one of the religious clerics I interviewed, stated that Islam did not give a free role to women in the society; this was un-Islamic. That’s why the MMA government in its tenure adopted this particular approach regarding gender issues, he added. Ihsanullah endorsed the gender policies of the religious parties and said that this was they were given votes for: to implement true Islamic system.111 Although many of the activities of the Taliban and TNSM in the northern districts of the province were not favored by the MMA government for example closing the girls schools,112 yet the provincial government did not take any concrete steps against such element at the same time which indirectly encouraged the militants to carry out their anti-women activities in the province.

Nasreen, one of my educated female respondents, did not agree with the view that the MMA government attempted to implement true Islam in the province. She viewed the religious parties same as other political parties which contest for the political power. Nasreen stated that adopting anti-women policies was not Islamic and the MMA was not serving Islam this way. She further elaborated that since it was a Pakhtun society, the MMA had to adopt a conservative approach regarding gender issues in order to retain the support of the majority. Islam gave equal rights to men and women and did not discriminate on the basis of gender, she added. She made an interesting comment: “whenever the state and mosque are combined, women suffer”. She seemed against the interplay of religion and politics due to its adverse effects on the status of women.113

Despite the preconceived patriarchal approach and peculiar gender agenda, the MMA leadership was caught in a dilemma to choose between its own commitment to the traditional and conservative gender norms and the political realities and expediencies. For example in the rural areas the religious parties faced an opposition to the women’s participation in politics, however, at the same time they desired to fill the seats reserved for women. On the one hand the religious parties gave tickets to the women to contest for

111 Interview Ihsanullah, 20 October 2015.
113 Personal Interview from Nasreen, 19 October 2015, henceforth, Interview Nasreen, 19 October 2015.
seats at district and tehsil levels, while on the other hand in some areas they made arrangements with other political parties to exclude women from voting. These kinds of arrangements were often made orally and not written; and also in a way that would give an impression that the senior-level party leadership was not part of the arrangement.  

From destroying the billboards with images of women and announcing the mandatory head-covering for female school children to the crackdown against women’s rights organizations and excluding women from voting, all shows that the religious political parties (MMA) had a particular gender agenda to implement in the Pakhtun region. In this way the Islamists made an attempt to protect and preserve the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The rise of religious fundamentalism in the form of radicalism and growing influence of religious political parties in Pakistan started after the imposition of military rule by General Zia-ul-Haq in 1977. General Zia, in order to appease the anti-Bhutto Islamist forces, initiated the process of Islamization in the country which sooner became the integral part of the political process of the state. Moreover, the war in the neighboring Afghanistan during 1980s added to the trend of integrating religion and politics. The international forces (mainly Saudi Arabia and US) assisted the Zia administration logistically and financially to recruit and train so-called Mujahideen to fight against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

Apart from the political factors (domestic and international) some social factors also played an important role in the rise of religious fundamentalism in the region especially the Pakhtun society. The Pakhtun society is fundamentally patriarchal and patrilineal. The notions of patriarchy and masculinity are basic to the Pakhtun culture and traditions. Due to the liberal and secular policies of the Ayub Khan’s and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s eras, the patriarchal patterns of the Pakhtun society were threatened and challenged. There was a trend of transformation in the culture of machismo and male dominance due to the social processes of urbanization and modernization. This particular environment led to the

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114 Joshua T. White, *Pakistan’s Islamic Frontier*, 58.
115 For detail see chapter 2 of this thesis.
rise religious fundamentalism during Bhutto’s rule. The religious forces emerged to counter the liberal policies of the state. For the first time in Pakistan’s history, a religious political party (JUI) formed a coalition government\textsuperscript{117} in 1972 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (then NWFP).

The second resurgence of the religious political parties in Pakistan in general and in Pakhtun region in particular happened in the 2002 general elections. The liberal and anti-patriarchal policies of the democratic governments during 1990s and the early two years of Perwaiz Musharraf provided an opportunity to the conservative religious forces in the Pakhtun region to reinvigorate and influence the political process of the country. The emergence of the Islamists during 2000s had two main aspects. First, the radicalism and militancy especially in the Pakhtun region (tribal and settled) of the country; and second the rise of religious political parties in the form of MMA and its coming at the helm of affairs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Like in 1980s, the international factor played a vital role in the rise of religious fundamentalism in 2000s too. The US invasion of Afghanistan and military action against the Taliban regime was one of the main factors in the rise of MMA in the Pakistani politics. However, the cultural and social factors cannot be overlooked in this regard. MMA rose to power basically in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Pakhtun areas of Baluchistan. This factor suggests that the religious parties have presented the Pakhtun norms and traditions in Islamic terms. The conservativeness of the Pakhtun culture and society was manipulated in such a way that people anticipated the preservation of the conservative Pakhtun norms (especially the patriarchal norms) in the revival of Islamic parties.

Due to the process of urbanization, growth in the literacy rate and the revolution in media and means of communication, the traditional norms and values of patriarchy and masculinity started being affected.\textsuperscript{118} The culture of male dominance, slowly but gradually, started declining in the Pakhtun society. Human rights and women’s rights organization became more active in promoting liberal and egalitarian social values. This trend was an alarming situation for the conservative segment of the society; therefore, an

\textsuperscript{117} For detail see chapter 2 of this thesis. 
\textsuperscript{118} For detail see chapter 4 of this thesis.
anti-thesis emerged in the form of religious fundamentalism in the region. This anti-thesis assumed two primary shapes: the militancy and rise of Islamist political parties. This anti-thesis attempted to preserve the culture of patriarchy and masculinity in the Pakhtun society.

The religious political parties rose to the position of a powerful opposition in national assembly in the 2002 general elections. Moreover, they formed a coalition government in Baluchistan province and assumed full control of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The MMA after coming into power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2002 started the process of Islamization in the province. After Zia’s Islamization, this was the second instance that the government adopted various legal, administrative and judicial policies in this regard. Common people and the political analysts expected certain policy measures from the MMA government regarding Islamization in the province.

The MMA tried its best to sustain and retain the support of the conservative Pakhtun population of the province by preserving the conservative Pakhtun traditions. Its opposition to some anti-Islamic traditions e.g. swara was just rhetorical and nominal. It also upheld the culture of patriarchy and masculinity in the province by adopting a particular approach towards gender relations in the society. The Pakhtun culture and traditions were often presented in Islamic terms. In other words, the MMA government tried to represent the Islamic values and Pakhtun culture at the same time. However, according to majority of my respondents, the alliance neither implemented true Islam nor preserved the Pakhtun culture; instead they mixed up religion with politics at the cost of women’s rights.

The gender policies of the MMA government clearly indicated that it had a particular agenda of promoting and preserving the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society and to strengthen the culture of male dominance in the province. Whether it was the vigilante-activism of the religious parties’ workers or the government’s official legal, educational, judicial and administrative policies, all entailed the gender aspect.
CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

As a student of political science and as a Pakistani citizen I have always been thinking on the role of religion in Pakistani politics which generated several questions in my mind regarding the relationship between the two and the relevance of the issue in Pakistan’s political system. This curiosity about the nature of religion-politics relationship and contemporary rise of political Islam developed my interest in the research on this phenomenon. One of the most striking observations I made over the years was that the rise of Islamic politics and the religious fundamentalism were more visible in the Pakhtun areas of Pakistan as compared to the non-Pakhtun areas. This particular aspect of the issue compelled me to study the Pakhtun culture and society and explore the nature of relationship between Pakhtun society and the religious fundamentalism. I, in my study, have used the term religious fundamentalism broadly for two related phenomena: religious extremism and radicalism; and religious politics. Among various major themes of this study were the phenomena such as politics, religion, Islam, culture and Pakhtun ethnicity. After analyzing different aspects and dynamics of these phenomena I have come to some points of conclusion which are partly my findings regarding these concepts and partly the predictions and recommendations for the future research on the subject.

The interplay of religion and politics has been one of the most debated and critical themes of the ancient, medieval and modern political theory. In the first chapter (chapter 1) of this dissertation I have tried to explain the nature of their mutual relationship. A thorough and detailed analysis of the available literature on the subject and the practical day-to-day politics of the developed and developing countries leads one to conclude that both religion and politics have an undeniable and unavoidable mutual relationship. This relationship is a two-way process in which both affect and influence one another in certain atmosphere and environment.

A general perception about the role of religion in politics is that it is on decline and the world is moving fast towards secularization. Although it sounds correct especially in the context of western democracies which are purely based on materialism and discourage any spirituality and in the course of politics and political process of the state; however, in reality, the process of secularization could not detach the religion from politics and vice
versa completely in all forms. The process of removing the religious beliefs from political
process and society has the tendency to revive their mutual relationship ultimately.\(^1\) A
complete divorce between the two is not possible practically. Both always continue to
influence each other, however, the nature of their relationship keep on changing.

Another finding I drew from the first chapter is about the relationship between Islam and
politics. There is no unanimity of views among Islamic thinkers regarding the role of
Islam in politics and vice versa. I have analyzed and compared the views of early,
medieval and contemporary Islamic thinkers. Some of them support and endorse the
active role of Islam in determining the political discourse of the country while some are
apprehensive of this role and favor separation between the two. Even the main and central
institution of Islamic polity, Caliphate, has been subject to debate and controversy. The
reason for this disagreement and confusion is the absence of any clear injunction
regarding polity in the basic scripture – Qur’an. There is no mention of even ‘Islamic
state’ in Qur’an. However, the ground reality is different from the theoretical debate on
the issue. In actual practice Islam is playing a significant role determining the political
discourse in most of the Muslim countries in the world.

After analyzing the relationship between religion and politics in general and Islam and
politics in particular, I moved to discuss the process of political and institutional
development in Pakistan with regard to the role of religion – Islam. In the second chapter
(chapter 2) I attempted to briefly highlight the background and factor of an increased role
of Islam in Pakistan’s polity. In doing so I presented various internal/domestic and
external factors which influenced the country’s political and constitutional spheres over
the last seven decades.

An interesting point about the relationship between Islam and Pakistan is that Islam has
been playing a role in the political and social spheres of the country even before its
creation. This unique relationship played a major role in the partition of India and
creation of Pakistan in 1947. The subsequent governments and regimes continued to use
the force of religion as an instrument to spurn any internal and external threats to the
existence of their rule or to the state in general. The deliberate and intended policy

\(^1\) Jeffery K. Hadden and Anson Shupe, *Prophetic Religions and Politics: Religion and Political Order*,
measures taken by respective regimes in the name of Islam helped to ensure the firmness and stability of the existing institutional and structural arrangements in the distribution of power. The state often introduced Islamic measures mainly to change the institutional and legal course relating certain selected aspects of the social life. Moreover, sometimes, the state attempted to avert any demands of socio-economic nature by initiating Islamization of society and politics.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the latter’s historical claims over the Pakhtun region of Pakistan are two important external factors which compelled the state to Islamize society and politics. Pakhtuns constitute the majority in neighboring Afghanistan; therefore, the state in Pakistan never afforded to let the sense of ethnic nationalism grow in the north-western part of the country, and always attempted to assimilate all the ethnic groups in the country through a common identity – Islam. It is also important to note that moderate and liberal segment of the society in Pakistan did not resist significantly the conservative and radical resurgence of social life as an effect of Islamization policies by the state. The majority of the moderate elements have remained silent spectators.

The most important finding of the second chapter (chapter 2) is that the interplay of religion and politics in Pakistan is the result of mutual understanding and concord between the state and the religious forces and groups, and not any conflict between them. The civil and military regimes on various occasions used the religious slogans and sought the support of the religious forces to avert and avoid any perceived threat to the survival of the government or the state alike. This is the reason why the two facets of Islam, ‘establishment Islam’ and ‘popular Islam’ look the same and the boundary between the two is not clearly demarcated. However, it is interesting to note that despite the state’s active role in promoting Islamic ideology and supporting the religious forces, the religio-political parties always had a limited electoral influence in the national politics.

After analyzing the relationship between religion and politics, in general, and Islam in politics, in particular, I have tried to study the Pakhtun culture and society and explore the link between Islam and Pakhtun culture and traditions. In the third chapter (chapter 3) I attempted to understand Pakhtunwali and explain the relationship between Islam and

My analysis in this chapter was based primarily on the interviews with Pakhtuns in Peshawar and Khyber Agency. Moreover, I also consulted the available literature on this subject. During the analysis of the data regarding the nature of Pakhtunwali and relationship between Islam and Pakhtunwali I came across some important findings.

The first and foremost finding of the third chapter is that almost all the Pakhtuns are Muslims. Although there is disagreement over the history of Pakhtuns as how and when they converted to Islam, yet it is a fact that presently nearly all Pakhtuns happen to be Muslims. Majority of them belong to the Sunni sect in Islam. Based on this fact another major finding of the third chapter is that majority of Pakhtuns consider Islam and Pakhtunwali one and same. Most of the respondents hold the opinion that Islam and Pakhtunwali are two sides of the same coin. However, some of the respondents also believed that two are completely different from each other.

Another important fact, in this regard, is that Pakhtuns have acculturated Islam. Islam has become part and parcel of the Pakhtun society. Majority of respondents held the opinion that Pakhtuns treat religion as part of their culture. Religious presence and symbolism in Pakhtun society is also discussed by some other scholars. I found, during my fieldwork, that most of the times religious and cultural practices are so intermixed in the Pakhtun society that one cannot be sure whether these are religious or cultural. For example, munz (prayers) is one of the basic pillars of Islam. Although majority of my respondents said that they say prayers because it is farz (mandatory), yet some other also pointed out that it has become an important feature of the Pakhtun society. Not offering praying is a socially unwarranted act, they said.

Similarly another major finding is that observance of religion – Islam is more common in the rural and tribal areas as compared to the urban settled areas. Majority of the respondents indicated that rural and tribal people are more traditionalists and conservative and under the influence of mullah, therefore, Islam is more practiced in these areas. An important point here is that the people of rural and tribal areas not only practice religion more in comparison to people of urban settled areas, but also they follow Pakhtunwali

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and Pakhtun culture and traditions more as compared to the urban population. In simple words rural and tribal people are more conservative and follow Pakhtunwali and practice Islam as compared to the people of urban and settled areas.

Another major finding of the third chapter is that Pakhtuns attach enormous importance to the masculinity and machismo. Majority of my respondents held the opinion that an ideal Pakhtun is the one who follows the Pakhtun code of conduct – Pakhtunwali. Interestingly, the Pakhtunwali, in many respects, is related to patriarchy and masculinity which I have discussed in the third chapter in detail. My respondents defined Pakhtun through various criteria e.g. possessing certain qualities; owning land; some behavioral traits; and practicing Pakhtunwali, etc. However, all these criteria, in one way or the other, were related to masculinity and patriarchy.

Another interesting finding is that majority of Pakhtuns are very much conscious about their ethnic identity and have developed a sense of ethnic nationalism among themselves. They consider themselves not only different from the other ethnic groups in the country but also consider themselves superior to others because of their culture and also genealogy. However, there are some others who hold the opinion that Pakhto is a state of mind and not limited to the ethnicity or genealogy. They hold that Pakhto means to possess certain noble qualities; and if an ethnically non-Pakhtun possesses these qualities he is, sometimes, called ‘Pakhtun-Punjabi’. While on the other hand if an ethnic Pakhtun does not possess certain noble qualities such as melmestiya (hospitality), etc., he is not considered as ideal or true Pakhtun and called as daus and beghairat.

After discussing the Pakhtun socio-cultural and political environment and the relationship between Islam and Pakhtunwali, I turned to analyze the changing socio-cultural patterns of the Pakhtun society in recent times and the rise of religious politics and religious extremism in the contemporary Pakhtun society in Pakistan. These two trends have been discussed in considerable detail in the fourth chapter (chapter 4) of this dissertation. Now I move on to share some of the important findings regarding these two trends in the Pakhtun society in Pakistan.

The first major finding in the fourth chapter is that the culture of patriarchy and male dominance is transforming in the Pakhtun society. Majority of the educated Pakhtun men view the concepts of ghairat (honor), narrtob (manhood), etc. as examples of jihalat
(ignorance). They do not consider the notions of male dominance and machismo as the features of true Pakhtunwali. They hold the opinion that women should be given equal rights in our society and the culture of male dominance should be abandoned. They also assume that recently, with the process of modernization and urbanization, the women’s rights situation in Pakhtun society has changed to some extent and now women also enjoy equal rights especially in the urban areas of Pakhtun society.

An important observation in this regard is that there is a clear difference between the views of educated urban Pakhtuns and uneducated rural Pakhtuns. Majority of the educated and urban based Pakhtuns think that the culture of patriarchy and male dominance is outdated and should be changed altogether. They hold that the Pakhtun society can progress only when the half of the population (women) is given just and equal status in the society. On the other hand the majority of the uneducated respondents held a different viewpoint. They tried to justify the male superiority over women through culture and religion. Similarly many of the respondents from rural and tribal areas also seemed frustrated and unhappy over the transforming culture of patriarchal masculinity in the Pakhtun society.

As far as the opinion of female respondents is concerned, all of the female respondents (six out of six) were convinced that a positive change is occurring in the Pakhtun society regarding women’s social status. There was no difference between the views of educated and uneducated female respondents regarding the changing patrilineal system of the Pakhtun society. They seemed quite hopeful that the process of modernization and the policies of the state will bring further improvement in the situation. They agreed to the perception that the culture of male dominance and patriarchy is now transforming.

However, the third focused group, the religious clerics, was critical of the changing socio-cultural trends in the Pakhtun society. They endorsed the culture of patriarchy and male dominance among Pakhtuns and tried to validate it through religion – Islam as well. They justified the male superiority over women and likened the Pakhtun culture with Islam in this particular context. The religious clerics also admitted the fact that now the socio-cultural patterns are changing with the passage of time. They highly criticized this trend and opposed any attempted change and transformation in this regard. They linked it with the so-called ‘anti-Islam’ agenda of the West.
Whether taking it as positive or negative, one thing is clear, that all the respondents confirmed that the culture of patriarchy and male dominance in Pakhtun society is transforming either with slow or fast pace. According to majority of the respondents the processes of modernization and urbanization are main factors of the change in the patrilineal system. However, some other believed that the policies adopted by successive government played a vital role in the transformation of patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society.

Another major finding of the fourth chapter is that the moderate, liberal and pro-women’s rights policies and measures adopted by the governments in 1960s and 1970s gave rise to the religious political forces during 1970s and 1980s. Similarly the democratic era of 1990s and the early years General Musharraf also witnessed some institutional, administrative and legal reforms affecting women’s rights situation positively. This transforming socio-cultural environment, along with some external factors, gave rise to the religious political particularly in Pakhtun region and they formed government in the Pakhtun province.

An important finding of the fourth chapter is that the religious clerics, majority of the uneducated respondents and a few educated respondents viewed the perceived transformation in the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society as anti-Islam and anti-
Pakhtunwali. Hence a resistance to the changing patterns in the Pakhtun society is natural and understandable. Since the majority of them (uneducated respondents and clerics) viewed the Pakhtunwali (particularly patriarchal masculinity) and Islam identical, this resistance and reaction assumed the shape of the growing religious extremism and rise of the religious political forces.

After evaluating various aspects of the Pakhtun culture including the patterns of patriarchy and masculinity and relating it to the rise of Political Islam in Pakhtun region, I discussed the actual political and social scenario of the Pakhtun society emerged during 2000s. In the fifth chapter (chapter 5) of this dissertation I attempted to examine the causes of religious fundamentalism in Pakhtun region including extremism and rise of

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4 For detail see chapter 4 of this thesis.
5 Ibid.
religious politics. Moreover, I also brought into discussion the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal’s (MMA) era and its policies.

In the fifth chapter I analyzed the views of my respondents as well as the existing available literature on the subject. One of the major findings regarding the extreme and aggressive behavior of Pakhtuns is that majority of Pakhtuns perceive that they are brave and courageous people that’s why they also behave aggressively sometimes. However, when it comes to the causes of contemporary religious fundamentalism and extremism in the Pakhtun society, my respondents’ differed from one-another. Although the majority respondents admitted the fact that Pakhtuns happen to be aggressive naturally, yet they insisted that current extremism in the society was not because of this behavioral trait of Pakhtuns rather there were other political and social factors responsible for the social and political chaos.

Majority of the uneducated respondents are of the view that the state itself is responsible for the growing religious extremism in the society. They accused the state for not providing justice and basic facilities of life to the people and failed to protect the lives of people that’s why people got frustrated and turned extremists. Majority of uneducated respondents tried to justify the rise of religious fundamentalism as the only way to ensure the socio-economic and legal justice. There was a clear difference and gap between the views of educated and uneducated respondents regarding the religious fundamentalism in the Pakhtun region.

Another important point that I come across after analyzing the data is that majority of Taliban and other militant groups in Pakistan are Pakhtuns that’s why they succeeded in gaining enormous support in the Pakhtun areas. These religious forces have often presented their policies in the guise of local traditions in the name of religion so that people could easily accept and endorse their authority. In other words the Pakhtun identity of the religious forces has played an important role in their rise. Similarly the main leadership of the MMA during 2000s was also Pakhtun and successfully attracted and got the support of Pakhtuns of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan in the general elections of 2002. The religious parties presented the Pakhtun traditions in the Islamic terms. Many Pakhtuns, on the other hand, thought that their cultural traditions and values can be preserved only through Islamic governance. My finding in this regard is that the
Pakhtun identity of the Taliban and the MMA leadership was one of the major factors of their rise in Pakhtun region.

Another major finding of the fifth chapter is that the gender relations and patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society also played a vital role in the rise of religious politics in Pakhtun region. Majority of my respondents were of the opinion that the patriarchal pattern of the Pakhtun society was declining slowly and gradually. The majority of uneducated respondents viewed the liberal policies of the previous governments and the changing socio-cultural environment as the expression of so-called ‘obscenity’. The rising voices of women’s rights and gender equality were termed as anti-Pakhtunwali and anti-Islam. The MMA was viewed as the force which would protect and strengthen the culture of patriarchy and male dominance. This perception led to the rise of religious political forces in the Pakhtun areas of Pakistan.

The subsequent policies of the MMA government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also proved that the religious parties were to preserve and protect the patriarchal structure of the Pakhtun society. Majority of the educated respondents were of the opinion that the MMA policies were anti-women. Majority of them (sixteen out of twenty) held that the Islamization measures of the MMA government was a political drama and their policies were actually directed against women. Almost all the female respondents were of the view that the so-called Islamic policies of the MMA government were aimed at depriving women of their rights and strengthening the already male dominant structure of Pakhtun society.

As a conclusion I would reiterate that the rise of religious fundamentalism including extremism and religious politics in the Pakhtun society is basically the antithesis of and reaction to the transformation in the patterns of patriarchy and masculinity in Pakhatun society. The gender roles and relations in general and male dominance in particular are transforming due to various socio-economic and political factors. This has alarmed the traditionalists and conservatives who would attempt to defend and conserve the patrilineal system; the result is the growing trend of the interplay between religion and politics among Pakhtuns.

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6 For detail see chapter 4 of this thesis.
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SPECIAL MENTION

Qur’an
Sahih Bukhari
## APPENDICES

### Appendix – I

**Participants’ Profile**

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**Religious Clerics**
Appendix – II

INTERVIEW GUIDE

RESPONDENT’S PROFILE

Name: _______________________
Age: _______________________
Location: ____________________
Education: ___________________

A. Perceptions about Nature of Pakhtunwali
   1. How do you define a Pakhtun?
   2. What are the features of an ideal Pakhtun?
   3. What is Pakhtunwali or Pakhto?
   4. What are the features of Pakhtunwali?
   5. What do you know about the history/origin of Pakhtuns?

B. Perceptions about Relationship between Islam and Pakhtunwali
   1. How often do you perform the Islamic rituals prayers, fast, etc.? 
   2. Are Islam and Pakhtunwali interrelated?
   3. What are the similarities between the two?
   4. What are the differences between the two?
   5. Can a bad Muslim be a good Pakhtun?
   6. Can a bad Pakhtun be a good Muslim?

C. Perceptions about the Concept of Patriarchy and Masculinity in Pakhtun Culture
   1. What is the status of men and women in Pakhtun society and culture?
   2. How would you explain the concept of ghairat in Pakhtunwali?
   3. How would you explain the concept of naritob in Pakhtunwali?
   4. How do you perceive the concept of badal in Pakhtunwali?
   5. What is your opinion about women’s role in society?
   6. What is your opinion about women’s rights?
7. Do you think that Pakhtun society is a male dominant society?
8. If yes, what are the reasons?

D. Perceptions about the Transformation in Patriarchal Structure
1. Are contemporary Pakhtuns really following Pakhtunwali?
2. Do you think that male dominance is desirable?
3. Do you agree that in the contemporary Pakhtun society women’s actual role and status is changing?
4. Is male dominance declining?
5. If yes, what are the reasons?
6. How do you see this development?

E. Perceptions about Religious Fundamentalism among Pakhtuns
1. Do you think that Pakhtuns are good Muslims?
2. Do you agree that Pakhtuns care about Islam more than others do?
3. Do you think that Pakhtuns are emotional people?
4. Do you agree that Pakhtuns tend to be aggressive?
5. If yes, why?
6. Do you agree that Pakhtuns follow religion in their socio-political behavior?
7. Do you agree that Pakhtun society is an extremist and radical one?
8. If yes, why?

F. Perceptions about MMA government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2002
1. Did you cast your vote in the 2002 general elections?
2. What were the reasons of MMA’s victory?
3. Did you like its Islamic legislation?
4. Did you like its gender related policies?
5. Were its policies really Islamic?
6. Were its policies in accord with Pakhtunwali?
7. How do you evaluate religion’s role in politics?