

Dynamism of Pakistan's Civil Society: Religious-Secular Rivalry and its Resources

Abdur Rehman

Graduate Student (PhD Program)
Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation
Hiroshima University
1-5-1 Kagamiyama, Higashi Hiroshima, 739-8529, Japan
E-mail: rehman@hiroshima-u.ac.jp
abdurrehman_ch@hotmail.com

Abstract

Pakistan's is often described as weak polity because of its poor democratic credentials. Civil society in Pakistan is divided along modern-secular and traditional-religious lines. The conflict between the two segments of civil society manifests itself in many shapes and directions because of their opposing ideologies, campaigns and world-views. This conflict is deeply rooted in socio-political history of Pakistan and continues to grow multifold. This study is an attempt to root-out the origins and causes of this conflict and to show the dynamism of Pakistan's civil society as it evolved. State has increased its power at the expense of civil society and the non-representative power centers control the reins of society and politics. Conditions required to create and sustain a Western kind of civil society are either missing or very different in Pakistan's case, therefore the Western expectations of creation of democracy, pluralism and openness remain unfulfilled. I propose in this study that local conditions, regional and international scenario and the struggle between the traditional power centers and the new power contenders define and shape the civil society in Pakistan and create a dynamic scenario.

1. Introduction

When General Pervez Musharraf came to power in 1999, he declared, in one of his early interviews, the Turkish secular model as his ideal. His cabinet consisted of many secular, well educated NGO professionals who energized the secular segments of civil society to some extent. Outlining the priorities of his rule, Musharraf vowed to deal with the problem of sectarian violence and religious extremism in his seven point agenda of reforming the political culture and economy of Pakistan. He tried to reform the education and the legal system by revising the Islamic laws and reducing the religious content in the national identification documents¹ and text books. Many of his proposed actions aimed at reforming the state and society had to be withdrawn after resistance from religious segments of society. In the wake of 9/11, he gave a u-turn to Pakistan's Afghan policy and decided to side with America in its war on terrorism. In 2002, he also changed Pakistan's Kashmir policy to a more conciliatory one. Such changes came

hard on religious allies of the state who had enjoyed state's support and patronage for almost two decades for waging *jihād* in Kashmir and Afghanistan.

Although Pakistan's role in war against terrorism was appreciated by the Western nations, the role of country's religious organizations and *madrassas* (religious schools) was under criticism and tough scrutiny. From time to time, domestic and international media and think-tanks have questioned the sincerity of Musharraf's regime in hunting down *Al-Qaida* suspects and eradicating the root causes of religious extremism in Pakistan. On the one hand, Musharraf has been pursuing progressive and secular agenda and introducing concepts like 'Enlightened Moderation'. On the other, he was supported by the religious political parties for getting the two-third majority in the parliament in order to provide constitutional legitimacy for his concurrent holding of Presidency and the post of Chief of Army Staff (COAS).

Such political developments are a mere reflection of the socio-political dynamics of Pakistani society which has been divided along secular-religious lines since long. The conflict between the two is deeply rooted in the political and social history of Pakistan. This conflict manifests itself in many forms and shapes from time to time, and the role of state in breeding and rearing this conflict remains questionable. Qadeer (1997) argues that Pakistan's civil society has been operating on two tracks. One is the modern secular track and the other is traditional ideological track. Although political development of modern society has been blocked by successive military regimes and state's ideological tendencies, the development and efficacy of modern track is observable in the form of its political activism and initiatives regarding community development and volunteer work. The traditional track is the one in which primordial ties and traditional base of religious civil society protect it from state's intrusion. These two forces were not able to reconcile with each other and join hands for creating a more liberal and democratic society. Civil society in Pakistan in its present form draws a vibrant, multidimensional and dynamic but fragmented picture where the divisions are too deep to establish and promote democratic structures and secular attributes.

However, given the secular nature of the modern state and the Western preference and assistance to the secular track of civil society, Qadeer's picture of two-track civil society in Pakistan raises more questions than answers. To put it in simple terms, how can the religious track keep the balance with its modern-secular rivals in the ever-modernized society of globalized age? This paper is an attempt to answer this question by shedding light on the role of state in secular-religious rivalry and latter's share in the fragmented picture of civil society in Pakistan.

Pakistan's politics is a complex phenomenon where many actors play their roles and exercise power and authority. Democracy has remained alien to Pakistan for long. Military, bureaucracy and feudal elite are the traditional power contenders in Pakistan. Even the political parties have to bargain with these forces for governing the country during the democratic years. The political dynamics in Pakistan has played a crucial role in making and shaping the contours of its civil society. Sayeed (1980), Waseem (1989) and Rizvi (2000) give a detailed analysis of the actors of power in Pakistan's politics and their relationship with each other and with the society. However, the scope of this study is not to focus on the relationship between these actors but to locate the development of civil society and secular-religious rivalry in Pakistan by reviewing the existing literature on political history of the country.

This paper is divided into 6 parts. This introductory part will be followed by some general definitional issues and the picture of Pakistan's civil society explored in previous works. The third section of this paper is the review of history of evolution of civil society in Pakistan from the perspective of conflict.

The fourth section deals with the time frame (1977-2005), the era of mushroom growth of NGO activities and excessive use of religious idiom in Pakistan which intensified the conflict between the religious and the secular segments of civil society. The fifth section has been spared to discuss the manifestations of this conflict and the resources of both segments of civil society. And the final section is the conclusion of the argument.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definitions of Civil Society (Normative and structural underpinnings)

The concept and the term 'civil society' has a long political and intellectual history and the scholars of political science have extensively discussed the issues regarding the emergence and role of civil society in several historical and political contexts. However, as Qadeer (1997) argues in his discussion about the formulations of civil society in non-Western countries, current definitions of civil society reflect the state of nature already achieved in the Western societies and thus assume a secular society and industrial/postindustrial modes of production. Therefore, when argument deals with non-Western societies, those definitions function as the model to be followed by the non-Western societies.

The Western definitions are premised on prevalence of contractual transactions, interest-based social relations, and the separation of state and religion. Many scholars argue that the religious organizations are deemed not to have the same sort of pro-democratic potential as other forms of civic associations possess. Robert Putnam (1993), for instance, discusses in his famous study of why democracy 'works' in Northern but not Southern Italy that the social capital gets nurtured in secular, horizontal associations, but not in affiliates of the Catholic Church. Thus a question is raised for the Western civil society activists who want to assist the non-Westerners to strengthen their own civil societies, whether to help creating the structures corresponding to Western civic institutions or to focus on indigenous organizations and institutions performing relevant functions.

Ernest Gellner (1994, 22) argues that Islamic societies cannot support a civil society at all. Such societies are too clientelistic and supranational in orientation (since more focused on the Islamic *Ummah* than on the nation-state) to be conducive to development of a civil society and the people judge their rulers "by applying the religious norms of sacred law, rather than the secular principles of a civil Society." A commonly stated view of many Western and Muslim scholars of Islam is that Islam is not only a religion but also a blueprint for social order and therefore encompasses all domains of life including law and the state [Maudoodi (1960), Lewis (1993), Rahman (1982), (Watt) 1988, Esposito (1992), Gellner (1981)]. This view is reinforced by the fact that Islam does not have a church institution like the one developed in Europe after the Reformation by the Christianity that created its own sphere separated from the secular zone. Though Islam does have the institutions of *ulama* (religious scholars) who act as the guardians of the interpretations of the sacred texts, and *imam masjid* (leaders of the mosques) who lead the mandatory daily prayers in Muslim mosques, they have remained securely integrated in the society. Western societies, with their separation of church and state, of civil and religious laws, are said to have promoted an autonomous domain for secular culture and civil society, which together form the basis of modernity. In Islamic societies, it is argued, the lack of differentiation between the secular and the sacred has inhibited such development.

Relationship between the state, society and religion are, in fact, an important issue in contemporary Muslim countries. Lapidus (1996) classifies institutional configurations of Islamic societies into two

types: a) differentiated social formations (i.e., societies in which religion and state occupy different space), and b) undifferentiated social formations (i.e., societies in which religion and state are integrated). Though there have persisted a small number of Muslim majority countries that can be classified as “undifferentiated social formations,” most of Muslim countries including Pakistan have fallen and still fall in “differentiated social formations”. They are products of the process of decolonization in the last century, where nationalist movements were spearheaded by relatively secular leaders. Thus they are to be classified as differentiated social formations or ‘non-Islamic states’ as categorized by Lapidus. These new states have defined their identities in nationalist terms and in many cases have preserved the secular, legal, educational and political institutions inherited from the colonial era.

It is true that, even in those differentiated states, the traditional religious elements of society now dream and sometimes fight to theocratize the state. Islamic revival movements have emerged in many Muslim countries, and in general they denounce the trend toward secularization, calling for the return to a state that represents and embodies Islam and enforces an Islamic way of life, based on the *shariah*³ law and primacy of religious institutions. Haynes (1997, 142-144) says that “to Islamists, liberal democracy is fatally flawed and compromised and morally deficient” because that it is only relevant to the secular. Islamists wish to see the creation of Islamic society. Creating the Islamic government at home is not their only goal; they also wish to establish a *Khalafah*⁴, a global Islamic state.

However, another truth is probably such that even those Islamists have to fight for their causes within the secular set-ups of the historically modern nationalist states. Qadeer’s argument of two-track civil society in Pakistan should be revoked in this context. Both the religious and secular segments of civil society are contesting to attract more people for their respective sides and neither of them can rely on the purely traditional institutions like local indigenous communities. Return to Islam may be shouted not to revive the theocratic society but to unite the people in the modern context just like some Americans revoked the Christianity for the strong and resurgent America. In other words, revived religious identities are the products of modern age whether with or without Reformation. If it is the case, we should not be misled by the political argument of either secular or religious claims for the ideal societies. Rather, we must focus on the political process of their activities in order to find the actual situation of the making of civil society in Muslim majority countries. The development of Pakistan’s civil society along two divergent tracks should be understood in the same context.

2.2 Civil society in Pakistan

Although multiple sources of academic literature on different aspects of civil society exist; like definitions, its relations to democracy and globalization, connection with free market economy and so on so forth, case studies on Pakistan are really scarce. Malik’s (1997) work on Pakistan’s civil society spared one chapter on Muslim elite formation in Indian Subcontinent titled as “Muslim Elite Formation: Politics of Ideology and Cooption”. His work deals extensively with political, ethnic and ideological problems of Pakistan. In his view, Pakistan’s civil society presents a distorted picture and this dilemma has been created by disregard for constitutionalism and emphasis on authoritarianism and praetorianism⁵. Politics and administration revolves around personalities, so called strong men who by virtue of being non-representative and simply authoritarian refurbished governmental control over the country. Military and bureaucracy emerged as the strongest institutions of the state which co-opt with feudal elite to deny the country to have sustainable democratic culture and ethnic pluralism and therefore, created an imbalance between the state and society and sidelined the imperatives for the establish-

ment of civil society. The imbalance between the two has accentuated ideological manipulation, dissent and ethnic backlashes, since the forces of authority have been neglecting, bulldozing or simply exploiting the ideological and pluralist forces (Malik, 1997, 4). The state has used Islamic ideology to deny the rights of ethnic minorities in the name of national integration and homogeneity.

Academically Malik's work explains the problems of Pakistan from the perspective of strong state and weak society and the role of elites in it. His picture of Pakistan's civil society is dismal and somewhat disappointing. Despite mentioning the ideological split between the religious elite and the modern segments of society, he falls short of rooting out the role of existing fissures between the religious campaigners and the secular intelligentsia about the political, economic and social system in Pakistan. In Malik's categorization, state and its institutions are the driving force behind all societal relations. Despite giving many definitions of civil society he has not identified the actors or campaigners of Pakistan's civil society very clearly. Rather, his focus of attention is on the normative aspects of the civil society literature. True, that Pakistan has a hyper extended state which inhibits the growth of democratic culture and legitimate civil society, but how can the role of age-old conflict between the secular and the religious be neglected in the process of explaining the civil society of Pakistan?

Shah (2004) has described the reasons of the weakness of Pakistan's civil society. In his view the role of military in politics of Pakistan has contributed to the poor societal development in Pakistan. State's security policies vis-a-vis India and Afghanistan resulted in sectarian extremism and strengthened the religious segments of society in Pakistan. His views about Pakistan's civil society are as pessimistic as that of Malik's. He identifies three broad categories of civil society organizations in Pakistan. These are (1) development NGO's, capacity building and community based organizations and service delivery, (2) the groups that seek to reform public policy, push for civil and political rights, and pursue political liberalization. These include human rights and media watchdogs, bar associations, the private media and policy research institutes, (3) somewhere between the two above mentioned categories there are grass root groups, voluntary associations, philanthropic trusts, community-based organizations, *panchayats* (councils of elders), *madrassas* (religious schools) and Islamic charities (Shah, 2004, 366-367).

It is clear from his categorization that the growth of political consciousness for the secular direction is regarded by Shah as the most important element for a civil society to exist. He also points out the frustration of secular NGO's because of state-religious nexus and provides examples of two leading secular NGO's who decided to support the dictatorship of General Pervez Musharraf to balance power game vis-a-vis religious segments of civil society. However, if the co-option to the state by the secular segments of civil society should be understood as their desperate and inevitable attempt to nurture and strengthen the civil society in Pakistan, the state-religious nexus should be also treated in the same vein. In his opinion, civil society in Pakistan will be established only when most of the people in Pakistan think secularly, which is unthinkable at least in the foreseeable future.

Qadeer's (1997) paper presented in Annual General Meeting of Pakistan Institute of Developing Economics is an excellent review of the history of the evolution of civil society from the perspective of emerging middle class and the role of state in shaping the civil society of Pakistan. He states that "Pakistan's civil society is observable in modern institutions, such as political parties, labour unions, media and press, citizen clubs and community organizations, as well as in traditional structures such as clans, village and neighbourhood organizations, traders associations, ethnic communities, religious orders and social networks. These are mediating structures that regulate, balance and influence the state, as well as organize collective action in public affairs" (Qadeer, 1997, 5). He identifies the visibility of

Pakistan's civil society on two divergent tracks. First, urban-modern track visible in conferences, seminars, meetings of NGO's, bar councils, professional associations and literary clubs, espousing modern liberal values. The second track is traditional, ethnic, denominational and clan organizations which espouse traditional religious values (Qadeer, 1997, 18). His account of civil society in Pakistan mentions the state's favouritism for the religious segments of civil society and finds its reason in the repeated military takeovers and global and regional factors. He has successfully tried to identify the societal foundations and dynamism of Pakistan's civil society by including the religious segment of society in his definition. But he could not do justice to the problem of secular-religious rivalry in his study because his main focus was on the role of many factors such as the role of state, institutions, elite and middle classes in the evolution of civil society of Pakistan.

Since the presentation of his study, the world has changed considerably. In the wake of 9/11 attacks on USA, Musharraf's regime sided with the United States in its war against terrorism and therefore had to change Pakistan's regional security policies. This change forced a domestic policy change as well and the religious forces came under pressure for the first time after the creation of Pakistan. The growing international interest in Pakistan, expected fear of Talibanization of a nuclear weapon state and the role of religious organization in breeding domestic and international extremism make it necessary to study Pakistan's society from a new perspective. Reviewing Pakistan's history from the perspective of secular-religious rivalry will add a new insight into the problem and therefore the author intends to further Qadeer's argument from a new dimension. In addition to examining the evolution of civil society in Pakistan, it is necessary to review it from the perspective of ever-evolving and deepening conflict between the two tracks mentioned by Qadeer.

Almost all the studies on Pakistan's civil society tend to find the root cause of 'weakness'/fragmentation of Pakistan's civil society either by focusing on the overweening influence of the state and its institutions such as military and bureaucracy or the power configurations of society. However, some reports on the civil society⁶ just present the descriptive picture without any political meaning while others deal with organizational and legal aspects and problems faced by civil society organizations. The existence of modern-secular and traditional-religious segments of civil society and their rivalry has been mentioned in these studies repeatedly as a curse induced by some external element like the state, military, bureaucracy or international relations etc., ignoring the possibility that the rivalry could itself be responsible for the weakness of civil society.

Keeping in mind the Western conception of civil society and its attributes like democracy and pluralism and reviewing the history of civil society in Pakistan, a very dynamic scenario emerges. This is a scenario of clash of ideas, strategies, agendas and the absence of debate and dialogue. In the centre of this scene is the state of Pakistan, constructed along modern secular lines but achieved through an overt Islamic appeal, leaving the people in dilemma about the nature and function of the state and the role of religion in it. Religious elites struggle for establishing an Islamic state which may or may not be democratic in character. On the other hand the secular segments of society struggle for winning a state which is separated from religion, democratic and plural in character and provides spaces of interaction for all segments of society. This scenario makes Pakistan a unique case study for civil society literature.

It is proposed in this study that the dynamism of Pakistan's civil society can not be explained properly in terms of Western normative expectations. State's alliance with the religious segment of civil society for the purpose of gaining legitimacy and extending the security interests complicates the situation. The modern-secular track of civil society is observable in the form of various kinds of NGO's. Foreign-fund-

ed projects and support from global civil society is the back-bone of this track of civil society. People themselves keep on oscillating between the religious and secular extremes. They neither want to be driven by the secular forces nor do they like to be dictated by the religious forces. The existing literature falls short of the comprehensive understanding of the intricate nature of Pakistan's civil society and thus I intend to explore a more innovative and dynamic way to define and explain Pakistan's civil society.

3. Historical Overview of Civil Society in Pakistan

Structurally Pakistan's civil society is visible and active in different domains of social and political functioning. The Western expectations of creating democratic space, pluralism and tolerance within Pakistan's civil society seems to be not very realistic from the viewpoint of existing socio-political structures of Pakistan. Secular and religious segments of civil society occupy distinct spheres in Pakistan both having conflictual/opposing ideological underpinnings, worldviews, societal constituencies and international support base.

In early colonial period, Muslim elite in the subcontinent was split into two opposing camps. On the one side, there were those who wanted the Muslims to remain isolated and immune from modern education and politics. They were of the view that Muslims lost their political power because their negligence of religion and thus decided to focus on religious education. On the other side were the people who were modern in approach and stressed the need for modern education and participation in politics. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan spearheaded the modernist and secular Muslims and established institutions of modern and secular learning which later became distinguished academic centers in India. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was harshly criticized by the orthodox Muslim *ulama* for motivating the Muslims to study English and learn the manners of modern era. A religious decree to declare him 'infidel' was also issued by the religious *ulama* of that era⁷.

Thus, the rivalry between the secular and the religious elements of society started with the entrance of the modern and Western elements to India. In other words, the religious appeal against the modernization was a way for them to adapt the modern and secular trends of society, and, therefore, essentially modern in historical terms. But under the colonial rule both sides could not control the situation and it is in the period of nationalist movement when they emerged as somewhat independent political forces.

3.1 Pakistan Movement and the Dynamics of Secular-Religious Conflict

In the early 20th century the Indian leadership began to agitate for greater autonomy from the British rule. The Indian National Congress (INC) and All India Muslim League (AIML) were the mainstream parties vowing to get independence from the British rule. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Allama Mohammad Iqbal and their companions, who came primarily from the secular and educated class of people, constituted the AIML's leadership. Initially they had been together with the INC in their struggle for independence but later realized that the rights of Muslims could not be protected in united India and therefore demanded a separate Muslim state consisting of Muslim majority provinces. The two parties could not agree on a formula that would ensure the protection of Muslim religious, political and economic rights. For Iqbal, Islam was means of social action to mobilize and unite people. He feared that Muslim cultural identity would be at stake in an undivided India and creating a Muslim majority state was the need of the hour. For Jinnah Islam was a solidifying and activating force, which gave an identity to the community whose only alternative was to accept the position of a permanent minority. In his view, after the cre-

ation of Pakistan “an integrated Pakistani nationhood was vital.” Nationhood in opposition to the communal, sectarian and provincial prejudices was his dream (Malik, 1997, 47).

Muslim clergy in subcontinent was divided along sectarian and ideological lines. Mainstream *Deobandi ulama* of *Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind* (JUH) and *Jamaat-e-Islami* (JI) of Maulana Maudoodi was opposed to idea of an independent Muslim state. JUH was involved in religio-military activism and was strongly anti-colonial. But its leadership was close to INC and opposed the division of India on the basis of religion. The leadership of JUH thought that division of India would result in the division of Muslims and believed that getting independence from the colonial empire should be the first priority. Many other *ulama* with similar religious outlook established their own parties like the *Tehrik-e-Khaksar* and *Majlis-e-Ahrar* with strong anti-colonial, anti-league creeds. Maulana Maudoodi and his party considered nationalism to be a conspiracy to divide Muslim *ummah* (global community of Muslims) and therefore opposed the idea of a separate Muslim state (Malik, 1997, 45-46). *Brelvi ulama* and *pirs* were local or regional influentials, lacking country-wide programme. All India Muslim League (AIML) had to make special efforts to solicit their support. *Deobandi* group of *ulama* who did not agree to the policy of JUH formed *Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam* (JUI) and sided with Jinnah in his struggle for Pakistan. Nasr (2000) writes that the leading *Deobandi ulama* (*Madni Group*⁸) remained in JUH and continued to oppose the idea of Pakistan while the second tier of *Deobandi* leadership ‘(*Thanvi Group*)’⁹ who were not active in JUH formed JUI in 1945 and joined hands in Jinnah’s struggle for an independent Muslim state (Nasr, 2000, 169).

For achieving the goal of a separate nation-state for Muslims, the AIML’s leadership projected two-nation theory. It was said that Hindus and Muslims were two different entities and thus there should be two different states for them. Islam was used as mobilizing and solidifying force to achieve the goal of a separate nation-state. The most popular slogan during the final years of independence movement was *Pakistan ka Matlab Kya: La Ilaha Illallah* (Pakistan means God is one). Although the religious elite opposed the idea of Pakistan, the religious appeal for the creation of Pakistan is commonly believed to be the most important factor behind the creation of a separate Muslim state.

Two-nation theory is the most common tool to explain the partition of India along religious lines. Jalal (1985) points out various theories about partition¹⁰ of India and problems relating to them. In her opinion, the demand for the state of Pakistan, as a physical entity, was not well conceived and the idea of Pakistan had different meanings in Muslim minority and majority provinces of India. The pre-partition dynamics and the views of the founders of Pakistan about its political system are often debated and contested by the scholars of Pakistan Studies. However, they are beyond the scope of this study and I was inclined to use the most common argument known as ‘two-nation theory’ to support my understanding of conflicting relationship between the two segments of civil society in Pakistan.

3.2 Post-Independence Development

3.2.1. Dynamics of Civil Society 1947-1968

It is a great paradox that the very creation of Muslim state of Pakistan in 1947 alienated the religious elite of JUH and JI who had completely failed to read the nationalist aspirations and wishes of Indian Muslims. Therefore, they lost legitimacy and influence in the 'nation-state' because of their opposition to its very creation. In the new state of Pakistan, *ulama*’s first challenge was to restore their political influence and legitimacy, subsequently leading to the Islamization of the state. Secular minded elite, on the other hand, felt triumphed and occupied the seats of the government. However, they did not command

the support of the people either, as most of those secular elite moved in to the new territory of Pakistan from the parts becoming the Indian dominion and were new to the local population and conditions.

In the absence of popular political support-base neither Islamic nor secular elite attempted to mobilize the people directly for their side. Instead, both found them competing with each other for the leadership of the new state immediately after the independence as an easy way to establish their position in the new society. In other words, both tried to exercise their influence over the Pakistani state to shape the society according to their own wishes.

According to Nasr (2000) who discusses the rise of *Sunni* militancy in Pakistan, the anti-Pakistan *Deobandi* leadership, which gradually became active in JUI, adopted a two-tier strategy to regain their influence in society: to create a space in political arena in which they could become active, and then to dominate the Islamic discourse as well as Islamic institutions and structures of authority in Pakistan. This group chose not to become directly involved in the debate over constitution making which could have put its own record of opposing the creation of Pakistan on trial. Instead, they shifted their focus on the possibly negative role of religious minorities in Pakistan, turning it into a wedge issue that would gain entry for them into political arena. By shifting their focus from their own political legacy to the Islamicity of the state and its leaders, this group was hoping to alter the balance of relations between Pakistani nationalists and those *Deobandis* who had opposed Pakistan. The concern for the Islamic purity of the state would rehabilitate this group. And thus they started opposing the minorities; *Ahmediya* (and later Shiites) (Nasr, 2000, 173-174).

Although Nasr does not further his argument in terms of civil society in Pakistan, he provides a deep insight and an important analytical perspective for the author to gauge the orientations and strategies of religious elite to shape the civil society of Pakistan along religious lines. The path adopted by *Deobandi ulama* (*Madni* Group) did not only rehabilitate their credibility but also helped them to become a visible force driving the agenda of Islamization. The other *Sunni* factions like *Brelvis*, *Ahl-Hadith* and *Thanvi* Group of *Deobandis* had no option but to remain silent on such sensitive religious issues. Intentionally or un-intentionally, they were strengthening the basis of sectarian divide and extremism in the country and therefore, all the religious elite can be regarded as equal culprits for laying the foundation of extremism and sectarian violence in Pakistan.

After independence, during the process of rehabilitation of the migrants and socio-economic stabilization of the country, the people were determined to facilitate millions of migrants and make Pakistan a viable state. Pakistan inherited a segment of society made up of ethnic, denominational and clan organizations that espoused socio-cultural and religious values (Qadeer, 1997). The secular-nationalist organizations along with religious trusts and seminaries contributed to the rehabilitation of migrants. Women Voluntary Services established by Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan, wife of Liaquat Ali Khan (First Prime Minister of Pakistan) provided food, shelter, first aid and health care to the migrants. It served as the foundation stone for the creation of All Pakistan Women Association (APWA). Fatima Jinnah, younger sister of Mohammad Ali Jinnah (father of nation), herself and many other campaigners of women wing of AIML were very active in refugee rehabilitation work who subsequently established many welfare organizations. Similarly Family Planning Association of Pakistan (FPAP) was established in 1953 by a group of citizens to promote reproductive health services. In 1950's APWA initiated advocacy work for women rights. The credit of establishing such progressive and secular looking organizations goes to the secular nationalist minded men and women who had actively supported and struggled for the idea of Pakistan. In 1958, the National Council for Social Welfare was formed at governmental level to provide

technical and financial assistance to non-profit organizations (Iqbal et al., 2004 18-24).

During the first martial-law era (1958-1969), the voluntary associations were somewhat encouraged to play a supplementary role in the provision of social services but at the same time the political activities of such organizations were severely contained. To control the activities of voluntary organizations “Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies Registration and Control Ordinance” was introduced by the government in 1961. The government also took over important *sufi* shrines and the department of *Auqaf* (endowment and trusts related to shrines) was created. The state was starting to subdue both the secular civic institutions and religious segments of society because of their very potential to nurture the legitimate and active civil society which could question the policies and practices of the state.

3.2.2 Political Dynamics 1947-1968

Political process for the formation of new constitution generated a competition for economic and political power among provincial and clan groups. Provincial leaders demanded a fair share of political power in the proposed constitution while the ruling elite which Waseem (2002) calls ‘migrant elite’ tried to dominate politics and authority by co-opting with bureaucracy at the expense of regional elite. In the first decade there were six different prime ministers. Civil servants and army generals dominated the weak political institutions and the citizens were alienated from political decision-making. The first constitution could not be agreed till 1956 and there were no elections by that time. This constitution became the victim of first coup by Field Martial Ayub Khan in 1958.

During these years the civic institutions were starting to get shape. In urban centers this activity was centered on the groups of lawyers, journalists, professionals and prominent families. Student associations also gained popularity by occasionally agitating against the unpopular policies of the governments. In the villages and tribal areas, clans led by rich landlords and hereditary chieftains were the leaders of civic movement. Public meetings and processions were the most effective means of mobilizing the masses. Urdu press also played a role in making public opinion and arousing the public passion. The literary-clubs, bar councils and college unions were representative of urban intelligentsia. However the military government highly constrained the public opinion by restricting the right of speech and gagging the voices of opposition.

Because of industrialization and change in the socio-economic structure of the Pakistani society under the military government, migration to the cities increased. A new consciousness about social and economic rights began to emerge. Ayub’s controversial victory in the presidential election in 1965 against the people’s favourite Fatima Jinnah resulted in anti-Ayub marches, strikes and public processions. Because of changing socio-economic structure new interest groups and social classes also emerged including industrial labour, traders, industrial bourgeoisie and urban professionals. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Foreign Minister under Ayub’s regime, founded Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in 1967 and raised the slogans of Islamic Socialism. He had a charisma and an appeal for the deprived masses and marginalized sectors of the society.

Ayub Khan viewed the masses to be politically immature and wanted a system to suit the genius people of Pakistan through a system of guided democracy. He introduced a political system based on indirect elections for higher political institutions (Qadeer, 1997, 8). Under the leadership of Ayub Khan, state tried to shape the politics and society along clan based traditional lines. In Malik’s opinion, Ayub recreated a dependency relationship with the landlords through his system of Basic Democracies. The local leadership was crafted under the system of Basic Democracies in 1962 to reinforce the traditional

civil society, strengthen the hands of Ayub Khan and elect him for another presidential term. They were handpicked by bureaucracy and military in order to legitimize the dictatorship and did not survive long enough to provide the foundation for new political culture.

The secular segments of society were off course unhappy with Ayub's policies and his high-handedness in dealing with the liberal forces of the society. Religious elite was also unhappy with him because of his steps like creating the department of *Auqaf* and introducing matrimonial laws. At first, religious and secular segments of society opposed Ayub in the presidential election and supported Fatima Jinnah. Later, all segments of civic movement started a large scale resistance movement against Ayub resulting in his resignation and promulgation of the second martial law. The mass agitation against Ayub Khan spread all over the country and brought down his regime along with his system of Basic Democracies. Anti-Ayub movement staged demonstrations, public meetings, processions and mass actions as instruments of articulating and mobilizing public concerns. Agitation by doctors, engineers, accountants and other technocrats in public bureaucracy against the overwhelming power of Civil Service of Pakistan and parity with the bureaucrats was a striking development in the political history of Pakistan. Because of overwhelming power and prestige of the bureaucracy, the other services in the government of Pakistan were frustrated and thus they started demanding the equal power sharing and authority. The society splintered along, ideological, ethnic and traditional versus modern lines, which could be mobilized for concerted action in short bursts to confront a discredited government, but had little capacity to act autonomously because of overwhelming power of traditional power centers. During this era secular elite and religious elite were trying to shape Pakistani society according to their own interests and ideologies contrary to the interests of powerful circles of society and the fetus of civil society was maturing gradually.

3.3 Dynamics of Civil Society 1969-1977

The anti-Ayub mass movement of 1969 ended up in military intervention in politics and Yahya Khan became the martial law administrator. He decided to hold the elections in both East and West Pakistan. After elections the political crisis could not be solved and East Pakistan emerged as Bangladesh on the world map. During the military operation in East Pakistan the religious parties specially JI supported the military action and declared Yahya Khan the 'Champion of Islam'. Religious parties considered the Bengali nationalist movement as anathema to the cause of unity of *ummah* and therefore created organizations like *Al-Badr*, *Al-Shams* and *Razakar* (Volunteer) force to oppose the Bengali nationalist movement. *Jamat-e-Islami* and other religious organizations supported the military action against separatist movement in East Pakistan in their quest for political power. After the creation of Bangladesh, the new Pakistan was much smaller and demoralized because of defeat at the hands of Indian forces and secession of the state. Bhutto assumed the leadership as the President and then as Prime Minister. In this complex political scenario Bhutto tried to build his legitimacy and morale of the nation on the basis of Socialism and Islam.

Bhutto expanded the role of state in economic, educational and cultural spheres through nationalization of industries, schools, and colleges. By taking over all aspects of societal relations, the state denied the society of its civic autonomy and independence. Professors, writers, and opinion leaders were turned into public servants as private schools and colleges and cultural associations were nationalized. Similarly the nationalization of industrial complexes brought labour unions and professional associations under the state control. These policies reduced the autonomy of civic institutions, particularly pro-

fessional associations, students, labour unions and press. The modern-secular segments of society and organizations who felt energized in the early Bhutto era ended up in frustration because of nationalization of private educational and health institutions set up and run by voluntary organizations, trusts, foundations, and community organizations. However, some organizations did not give up and established new institutions. For example twelve schools of *Anjuman Himayat-e-Islam* were nationalized but it established eighteen new schools in the following years. Many advocacy organizations also emerged because of increased social and political awareness (Ghous-Pasha and Iqbal, 2003, 5-6).

Mosques and *madrassas* remained free of governmental control and the nationalization campaign. Thus landlords, traders, workshop owners and preachers gained influence. Bhutto's manifesto of Islam and Socialism strengthened two divergent classes. Students, workers and peasants were attracted to his socialist thoughts and policies of nationalization while the religious *mullah* (the religious leaders), bazaar factions and landlords favoured his Islamic appeal. The emphasis on regional dresses and languages made folk leaders and party workers feel at home in portals of power and authority as well as legitimized leadership of Islamists (*mullahs*) and small town merchants¹¹.

The 1977 mass protests against rigging in elections and the sweeping victory of PPP were primarily conducted by bazaar sector and mosques who demanded for *Nizam-e-Mustafa* (Prophet's Order) in the country. The public agitation and protests resulted in another military coup led by General Zia-ul-Haq. The people again showed their capacity to bring down an overextended state, yet not able to reform it to become democratic (Qadeer, 1997, 13).

Qadeer sees the civil society divided and the state becoming ideological during Bhutto's regime and discusses the Bhutto's and Zia's eras jointly in the same section as the years when such tendencies became predominant. In terms of evolution of civil society in Pakistan, however, Bhutto's era is the most sensitive. Bhutto's rhetoric and actions need to be analyzed more deeply. Coming from a feudal background, raising the slogans of socialism and Islam for organizing a new people-oriented political party and then coming to power and bargaining with the traditional power circles, this scenario itself is problematic. He attempted to mobilize the people for his own political ambition. It would have inevitably led to organizing and developing the popular institutions beyond the elitist groupings for the first time in Pakistan's history. His charisma and socialist appeal strengthened and energized the poor, the leftists, the secular and many more. Becoming Prime Minister after the dismemberment of the country necessitated the need to return to Islamic ideology and use it as solidifying and stabilizing force which attracted the religious forces.

Compulsions of being in power forced him to co-opt with the powerful elite (bureaucracy, military and feudal) and stop the people's revolution midway, which he himself initiated. He had too much to do, too many obstacles to cross, a grand political chess-board to master and too short life to live. All these conditions surrounding him brought two divergent segments of civil society in Pakistan under his political maneuvering. Religious and secular elite had been trying to shape the civil society in Pakistan in their own way since its creation, but Bhutto energized and strengthened both of them which resulted in the formation of two opposing forces of civil society in Pakistan. Thus, a separate and closer look at the civil society development in the Bhutto's era was, in this author's opinion, essential. And that is the reason behind dealing Bhutto's era separately in this section.

4. Polarization of civil society in Pakistan: 1977-2005

4.1. Islamization of State and Society (1977-1988)

The evolution of civil society in Pakistan did not end with the crashing down of democracy. General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq promulgated Martial law in July 1977 in the wake of mass protests against rigging in elections and demand for *Nizam-e-Mustafa* (Prophet's Order). Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) steered anti-Bhutto protests and provided Zia with a chance to capture power. PNA drew its support from small towns, the bazaar sector, mosques and other religious segments of society. PNA emerged out of two forces of civil society developed under Bhutto's regime to represent the conservative segments of various social classes as opposed to the secular and modern ones. Opposition against military regime was constituted by PPP (Pakistan Peoples Party), women groups, liberal intellectuals and other secular people who had been energized by the Socialism, Bhutto claimed. The military regime spared no resources to suppress those dissents and protests from such people. As a recipe to calm down the pro-Bhutto angry masses over his hanging and breaking the promise of holding elections within 90 days, Zia used the force of state machinery administratively and opted to use Islam politically. This strategy, he believed, would strengthen his power base and legitimize his unconstitutional rule. Mosques, seminaries and Islamic press were encouraged in Zia's regime. He introduced various religious laws and established many institutions such as *shariat* Bill, *shariat* courts, blasphemy law, separate electorate for minorities, *chadar* and *char devari's* Concept (women within the walls of the house), *nizam-e-salat* (making daily prayers compulsory for all the citizen) and *hudood* ordinance (Islamic set of punishments for crime), to Islamize the society and theocratize the state. He also introduced the state controlled system of collecting *Zakat*¹² and *Ushr*¹³.

Labour and student unions and different human rights organizations were considered as Bhutto's natural constituency and potential protesters against his hanging, and were banned. Press and independent secular thinkers, writers and poets were subject to political prosecution. On the contrary, the student unions with Islamic affiliation, such as student wing of JI, *Islami Jamiat-e-Talba* (IJT), were left without state's restrictions. As a result, the Islamic factions in the society gained influence at the expense of liberal, secular and modern sectors. Secular opinion makers and writers quote Zia's era as a dark age for liberal arts, drama, music, dance and performing arts¹⁴. The tradition of local fairs and other forms of entertainment also became the victims of Islamization policies of Zia. These policies were executed by the state and joyously celebrated by religious zealots. The baton groups of JI and its student wing IJT used to target the societal parties and New Year celebrations. People felt suffocated in such circumstances and many young men got frustrated. They had to find new ways out from this. Some picked guns and went for Afghan *jihad* and others joined the powerful religious organizations and enjoy the strong status in society which could not be otherwise expected. Those who did not surrender but resisted were either publicly lashed or put into jails. Secular and liberal forces in society were permanently harassed by both the state agencies and the much energized militant Islamists.

Islamization agenda of Zia got more thrusts because of regional and global situation. During the 1980's, Pakistan became the focal point of both the wars against communism and against Iranian revolution that were being fought simultaneously. Washington and other capitals of the Western world hailed *mujahideen* (sacred fighters) in their armed struggles against the Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Iranian revolution and possibility of its expansion to the neighbouring countries including Pakistan did not just exacerbate the American fears of losing influence and leverage over the oil-rich region, but also created

a feeling of insecurity for regimes in *Sunni* Arab states like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and United Arab Emirates (UAE). Many actors in the region felt threatened by Khomeini's Shiite ideology and the spill over effects of Iranian Revolution. Therefore, they started funding the *Sunni* elements in Pakistan for consolidating their own community. With all those external funds, the *madrassas*¹⁵ (religious schools) grew rapidly, and became the training and indoctrinating ground for the Islamic youth who emerged as new powerful fighters on the street as well as for *jihad* against the Soviets in Afghanistan. It should be noted that the curriculum for these religious schools was formulated hundreds of years ago and no modern-secular subjects are taught¹⁶ there even in the 21st century.

State, for its own security and strategic reasons, deliberately ignored the mushroom growth of these religious schools and the quality of education in these *madrassas*. The untamed and unreformed institutions of *madrassas* not only strengthened the hands of military dictatorship, but also supported religious segments of civil society in their quest for political and street power. It was fortunate for the religious segments of society but counter-productive for the secular ones. The religious elite manipulated the situation to their maximum benefit and strengthened their own constituency in the masses.

Because of increasing refugees from Afghanistan, many international relief and emergency oriented donors and NGO's started operating in Pakistan. Additionally, the public trust in the government's capacity to provide basic social services to the people of Pakistan was diminishing. This enhanced interest in Pakistani conditions on the part of the Western donors. Small, intermediate and large non-profit organizations started working in almost every sphere of Pakistani life because of the availability of abundant foreign resources. Advocacy organizations especially women and human rights organizations like Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILAR), Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), *Aurat Foundation* and Women Action Forum became much stronger and visible (Khan, 2001, 276). Despite high-handedness of military regime, such organizations actively campaigned against the poor human rights record of the military regime. Their campaigns against the blasphemy law, *hudood* ordinance and separate electorate for the minorities met with severe counterattacks not only by the government but also by the Islamic organizations.

The polarization between the secular and religious civil society segments had entered into an unending and protracted stage. The Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) of the opposition parties became a base camp of the secular forces demanding the return of democracy and for showing their anti-government expression and passion. Party-less election held in 1985 further contributed in the polarization of civil society and strengthening of the traditional segments. The conflict between the religious and the secular remained largely manageable because of Martial Law and the increased focus of the Islamists, being on Afghan *jihad*.

The military rule of General Zia-Ul-Haq and his policies under compelling domestic, regional and international circumstances left an indelible mark on the civil society of Pakistan. Many domestic and international factors favoured the religious segment of civil society without doubt, which weakened the secular forces of civil society to a great extent. However, a parallel international development of establishment of NGO's and their transnational linkages saved the secular segment of civil society from complete collapse. Starting with relief and rehabilitation work of Afghan refugees and small domestic development programmes, these organizations were laying the foundations of a sustainable secular civil society. A segment of society which would ensure in future, that Pakistan's civil society wouldn't be classified into only the religious category; and resist the state and the religious right-wing on every front.

During the Zia's period, both segments of civil society were growing and strengthening in different

directions and were becoming increasingly dependent on domestic and international resources. The nature and extent of these resources varied considerably but a clear tendency to obtain foreign funds and support was observable. However the balance was clearly tilted towards the religious segments of civil society because of state's support and global political dynamics. The growth and sustainability of both segments of civil society was dependent on either state's patronage or on external support. Therefore, the civil society lacked the attributes of autonomous and independent entity.

4.2 Era of Dependence and Rivalry (1988-2005)

Although, the press remained quite free during the democratic years (1988-1999), labour unions, student associations and chambers of commerce remained divided into ethnic, ideological and political factions. Ethnic and sectarian violence hampered the path of sustainable political and economic development. The civil society suffered fragmentation as a result of ascendancy of sectarian, ethnic and clan based organizations at local and regional levels. The politics of confrontation, combined with PPP's and PML's (Pakistan Muslim League's) need to form parliamentary coalitions with the religious political parties strengthened the religious segments of civil society. Fiscal crisis, mounting public debt, increasing budget deficit, inflation, deteriorating law and order situation and corruption reduced people's trust on state and its institutions (Qadeer, 1997, 15-20).

Given the failure of existing civil society institutions the NGO's became the torch-bearer of the people's demands in terms of political, economic and cultural rights. Their spectrum of activity was wide open. NGOs discussed and campaigned for the issues of political rights, human rights, women rights, administrative inefficiency, environment, health, education, infrastructure building, corruption, openness and participation in governmental decision making, peace with India, nuclear technology and construction of nuclear power plants, governmental policies regarding harboring the Islamic elements for its proxy wars in Afghanistan and Kashmir, minority rights, repealing of controversial constitutional decrees, role of secret agencies, accountability in military and other governmental spending, transparency, issues of controversial development projects and extension of democracy to the grass root levels.

Islamic segments of civil society from time to time campaigned for the introduction of *Shariah* Law in the country. These organizations and institutions were in the good books of the successive democratic government because of latter's policies vis-a-vis Afghanistan and Kashmir. They played an important role in training, equipping and transporting the youth for the cause of *jihad* in Kashmir and Afghanistan. Religious segments of civil society continued to enjoy state's patronage and thus continued pushing forward their Islamization agenda without any significant trouble or opposition. State was in alliance with the religious civil society while the global civil society was energizing the secular segments of civil society. The conflict between two segments of civil society in the country was worsening along with the political and economic turmoil. The civil society of Pakistan was in a to and fro motion where the state and its institutions were favouring the religious segment of civil society and the global civil society and the West was supporting the secular ones.

The military regime of General Musharraf (1999-Present) opted to co-opt with the forces of secular civil society for political reasons. Many leading professionals from development NGO's were selected as federal and provincial ministers. In a euphoric pro-democracy international situation, where the military rule was no longer acceptable for the Western democracies, this was an attempt to seek international legitimacy. The connections of secular NGO's with Western nations could help Musharraf get his military rule recognized at international level.

Before the elections of 2002, the forces of secular civil society working with Musharraf's administration were successful in advancing their agenda to some extent. Women were given the right of thirty three percent (33%) representation at local, provincial and federal level for the first time in history of Pakistan. Separate electorate for the minorities was abolished and the minorities could vote in a joint electoral system.¹⁷

During the early Musharraf years, the state continued to support Taliban regime in Afghanistan harbor the religious forces in the country for its dispute with India over Kashmir. The attacks of 9/11 on World Trade Center and Pentagon by *Alqaida* put Musharraf's regime in a dilemma. Growing American pressure forced the government to take a u-turn in its policy of supporting the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. In the American War on terrorism Musharraf chose to become an ally of America despite domestic unrest and opposition from religious political parties and militant groups. Complete change in Afghan policy came hard on the religious organizations. Many such organizations were banned, their assets were confiscated, offices were sealed and workers were arrested.

Indian Parliament was attacked in 2002 by *mujahideen* (holy warriors) suspected to be linked to a militant Pakistani organization called *Lashkar-e-Tayyeba*. This resulted in a military stand-off between the two countries. Two countries were on the verge of another war and Pak-India relations were at the all time low during this time. International pressure, regional compulsions and global trends to discourage Islamic *jihadis* (Warriors) forced Musharraf to change the un-declared governmental policy of sponsoring the independence movement in Kashmir by training and exporting the youth to Indian held disputed region of Kashmir. India successfully exploited its diplomatic resources by using the global anti-terrorism hysteria to muster international support for pressurizing Pakistan to stop exporting the terrorists (*jihadis*) to Kashmir. Consequently, India was assured by Pakistan that no intruders cross the line of control from Pakistani side to fight the Indian troops in Kashmir. In this scenario the Islamic segment of civil society felt betrayed and there was lot of hue and cry against the policies of Musharraf in the country. The Islamists accused him of selling out national interests. In December 2003 he survived three assassination attempts¹⁸, which were presumably conducted by religious extremists connected with *Alqaida*. These targeted attempts at Musharraf's life show the frustration and anger of religious extremists because of his hard policies and actions regarding 'War on Terrorism'.

5. Religious- Secular Rivalry and its Resources

5.1. Dynamism of Religious-Secular Conflict

Dynamism between the two segments of civil society in Pakistan can be best understood by focusing on their ideologies, agendas and campaigns which are essentially conflictual in nature. The seculars stand and struggle for democracy, pluralism, human rights, accountability of the state, freedom of expression and speech and modernization etc. The religious forces focus on entirely different issues such as introduction of religious laws and implementation of religious order in the society, eradication of injustices faced by Muslims in the different regions of the world and unification of *ummah*. Given the fact that their constituencies are quite different, the conflict between them remains manageable most of the times but not always. The religious segments of society use the mosques, *madrassas* and their street power to manipulate the masses and the state for achieving their goals while the secular segments are connected with the people through media debates, journalistic writings, academic/research institutions, advocacy campaigns and modern means of communication. This section is a brief description of the

activities of the religious segments in Pakistan which are condemned, opposed and contested by the secular forces.

The element of extremism, intolerance and violence entered the Pakistani theatre during Zia's regime. In the wake of Afghan war, there was a proliferation of small weapons in society. Religious schools and in some instances, even the institutions of modern learning became the breeding ground for the holy warriors. Ethnic, sectarian and minority killings continued even after the end of war in Afghanistan. Religious parties intensified their activism for further Islamization of the state and society and continued to demand the introduction of Islamic legal, economic and social system. Religious parties remain very keen to preserve the already achieved levels of Islamization in the state and society of Pakistan.

The religious political parties and organizations resisted the demands of secular civil society to make changes in *Hudood Laws*, Blasphemy Law, and separate electorate system for minorities. Removal of anti-Indian content and *jihad* related verses of Quran from the school text books¹⁹, column of religion from passport and observance of weekly holiday on Sunday instead of Friday was also resisted in media and public meetings.

During the later half of 2004 and early 2005, an all-out campaign against the establishment of Agha Khan Foundation's Education Board was launched. This organization is considered to be liberal, secular and forward looking and has worked in Northern areas of Pakistan. The religious parties claim that such efforts by government are an attempt to Westernize the society and to please the American administration. Anti-American idiom has continuously been used by the religious organizations in Pakistan. Whenever the government tried to reform *madrassa* education by introducing modern subjects like English, computer, mathematics and basic sciences, it faced extreme resistance from *ulama* and so far all such attempts have failed. After London bombings of July 7, 2005, and the possible connection of suicide bombers to the religious schools of Pakistan, the international community again pressurized Pakistan to deal with the issue of religious education system. Since then, the government has taken many steps to get the *madrassas* registered with the government and reform their education system. Additionally all the international students have been asked to go back to their countries.

The provincial government of MMA (*Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal*)²⁰ in NWFP passed the *Hasba Act*²¹ (set of religious laws), which was challenged in Supreme Court of Pakistan. The court opined that some of its clauses were against the basic human rights already ensured through the constitution of Pakistan. MMA government vows to go ahead with its plans to enforce this law in NWFP and Baluchistan after revision in the light of Supreme Court's opinion. NWFP government also made it compulsory for the students in schools to wear traditional dress (*Shalwar Qameez*) and banned the use of Western dress in governmental schools. Some religious minded people damaged the advertising hoardings of multinational and national companies showing the pictures of model girls. Such acts were sharply criticized by General Musharraf (The News, July 8, 2003). During the first week of April, 2005 a mob of people belonging to Islamic parties attacked the participant women of a marathon race in the city of Gujranwala. The religious leadership vowed to stop all such marathon races planned for different cities of Punjab. The idea of such races was initiated by Musharraf to show a more liberal, tolerant and moderate face of Pakistan to the world.

During the 1990's multiple *jihadi* organizations were visible in society because of their fund-raising campaigns, religious slogans and recruitment programmes. At societal level, the religious minded groups resort to violence and threats occasionally. Attack on the office of a secular and modern NGO (Agha Khan Foundation in Gilgit), establishment of baton groups to disrupt the new-year parties and

*Basant*²² festival, opposition to joint education system for boys and girls are the few examples of the line of action of religious parties and groups. Similarly some leading human rights activists were reported in the press to have been threatened by extremists for raising their voices against the patriarchal and traditional structures of society. Two leading physicists and civil society campaigners A.H. Nayyer and Pervez A. Hoodbhoy indicated to the author in their interviews on different aspects of Pakistani civil society that they sometimes faced threats for their work. Both have been very active anti-nuclear campaigners and have also worked on other social issues like education reforms in Pakistan.²³

5.2 Resources of Religious-Secular Rivalry

The credit of establishment of two opposing elements of civil society in Pakistan goes to many domestic and international factors. Role of the state and its institutions, traditional power centers in the society and regional-international politics has been discussed in detail in the previous sections. Pakistan's civil society appears to be alive and quite dynamic. The rivalries between the two opposing segments of civil society make it a unique case study which in author's opinion can not be properly explained in the light of existing civil society definitions. Pakistan has different historical and political experience and therefore its civil society is to be determined in terms of its own conditions and resources.

From societal perspective, the underprivileged poor sections of society are the natural recruitment ground for the religious elements of civil society. These are supported by the *bazaar* and other relatively conservative sections of society. Their local financial resource base is very strong and has long historical tradition. Although they have been sponsored by Arab governments, migrant Pakistanis and Iran, still the main source of their funding is local donations and skins of animals, slaughtered at the time of *Eid-Al-Adha* (yearly religious festival of slaughtering animals). The religious elements are connected to the masses through the institution of mosques and *madrassas* which is the primary reason for it being very strong street power. However, people in general tend to dislike their confrontational policies, sectarian violence and intolerance of difference of opinion. Writer Khursheed Ahmad Nadeem²⁴ said in an interview with the author "religious civil society has catered the everyday religious and social needs of Muslims to a degree of satisfaction. However, this segment of civil society had neither the intellectual base nor the motivation and commitment to address the issues faced by Pakistani society". On the contrary, well educated, sometimes Western trained intelligentsia is the driving workforce of secular segment of civil society. Financial resources primarily come from the Western donor agencies and international non-governmental organizations and are often unpredictable, depending greatly on global political situation. For instance, after the nuclear tests in 1998, the foreign donations shrank considerably and many NGOs either stopped working or reduced their activities because of scarcity of resources. Connection of the secular elements with the people of the country is through the development projects and awareness campaigns about political, economic and human rights. Recently the secular forces in civil society have also started using media and internet to connect to wider sections of the general masses. Secular segments of civil society lack mobilizing power because of limited contact with the people and thus have limited street power.

Politically speaking, the religious segment of civil society started its organization in Pakistan with the capital of Islamic ideology or religious rhetoric for the creation of Pakistan. Religious elite overcame the problem of public legitimacy, which it lost because of opposition to the idea of Pakistan, by demanding the Islamization of the state. Secular segment of civil society, despite flourishing in early history of

Pakistan, suffered severe set-backs because of absence of democracy, constitutionalism and ever growing power and influence of extra-parliamentary forces. It has to look towards the West for political and ideological capital. However, it has established good credentials in society because of its volunteer work and the campaigns for basic rights of the people. Democracy, the basic requirement for the creation of a meaningful civil society (in Western conception), remains alien to Pakistani lands and therefore has strengthened the religious right wing at the expense of the secular one.

On one hand, state and religious segments of civil society have enjoyed long honey-moon relationship and thus undermined the growth of an independent civil society. Security issues such as Afghanistan and lingering Kashmir dispute with India has been instrumental in strengthening the religious segment of civil society in Pakistan. Only recently the balance of power is slightly shifting away from the religious segments of civil society because of changed domestic, international and regional scenario. On the other hand, the secular segment of civil society has evolved, strengthened and balanced its power position with international support.

International context has played a crucial and definitive role in the establishment of two divergent and conflicting segments of civil society in Pakistan. The final battles of Cold War were executed through the religious force of Pakistan and Afghanistan leaving an indelible mark of extremism and religiosity on Pakistani society. Iranian revolution and Arab nervousness about it added fuel to fire. The unfair treatment of the problems of Muslims in the world by USA and its allies sometimes frustrate the masses and thus serve as the breeding ground of hatred and religious extremism. With 9/11 and recently 7/7, the international context has changed considerably and necessitated the revision of long held positions by the state of Pakistan and it may be hoped that balance of power will be achieved between the two segments of civil society of Pakistan because of changed character of the state.

Because of entirely different ideologies, world-views and agendas, the relationship between the two segments of civil society are marked by hostility and antagonism. In addition to state's partiality, competing interests, mutual suspicion and lack of confidence between the two segments has been instrumental in widening the gap between them. However, with the relative freedom of media and emergence of private television channels during last few years, the spaces for debate and dialogue between them are expanding.

6. Conclusion

The definitions of civil society given by Diamond (1994), Alagappa (2004), Kumar (1993) Malik (1997), Qadeer, (1997) share a basic understanding about its role and character, that, it should be independent from the state, be organized on voluntary basis, be the mediating organizations between the state and the society, be pluralistic and marked by competing interests, and don't struggle for assuming state power. Kaldor (2003) says that "for western establishment thinkers, civil society remains the *telos* (end goal) of human development but this *telos* already exists in the West" (Kaldor, 2003, 27). The definitions given by these scholars presume a state of affairs which has already been achieved in the Western states because of historical and political developments. However, in Pakistan's case, the validity of definitions given by various scholars remains questionable.

On the one hand, religious segment of civil society in Pakistan fulfills the organizational aspects of the definitions but when it comes to the functional aspects of civil society, a very different picture emerges. Religious segment of civil society for gaining political power, and the state for either getting

legitimacy or forwarding the security agenda have collaborated with each other at the expense of secular segment of civil society. The balance of power between the secular and the religious is clearly tilted in favour of the latter. On the other, the secular civil society's main resource base is Western and global NGOs and therefore create a credibility and legitimacy problem for them in the masses. It is therefore argued by the author that the fragmentation of Pakistan's civil society is the by-product of interactions between various actors and forces like the state and its institutions, regional actors and global politics. The dependence of civil society institutions on domestic and international allies hampered its emergence and evolution as an independent and autonomous entity.

Constant struggles between the actors of civil society for establishing constituency and legitimacy make Pakistan's civil society multidimensional, vibrant and dynamic. Such dynamism, activism and conflict between the two segments of civil society make Pakistan an interesting case study. In final analysis, it can be argued that the conflict between the religious and secular is deeply rooted in socio-political history of Pakistan. Both occupy entirely different societal constituencies with opposing ideologies and world-views. Civil society in Pakistan in its present form presents a multidimensional, fragmented but dynamic picture because of the existing divisions and conflict between the secular and the religious.

The performance of religious political parties in elections throughout the history of Pakistan remained poor. However, failure of mainstream political parties in revitalizing politics, economics and society and hopes of establishing Islamic order and a system of justice and equality attracted some people to the religious forces. Recently, people are increasingly becoming wary of sectarian violence, confrontational politics, intolerant attitudes and militant tendencies of religious segments of society. Secular civil society suffered many set-backs because of weak democratic and political institutions and state's alliance with its religious rivals. However, it was successful in re-organizing itself under the influence of Western and global civil society. This segment has organizational base and necessary skills to guide the society towards a more progressive and democratic one but its financial resource base primarily depends on the global donor agencies. It always looks abroad for intellectual and financial capital which makes it vulnerable in terms of global political scenario and public legitimacy. It needs to be connected with the people of Pakistan and indigenize itself keeping in mind the ideological and social formations of society.

The dependence of Pakistan's civil society on external allies creates the problems of public-legitimacy and sustainability. With a slight change in political realities at domestic, regional and international level, the alliances get vaporized. Neither state nor international allies proved to be reliable for Pakistan's civil society. Therefore, the forces of civil society in Pakistan need to strengthen their own roots in the society. The civil society in Pakistan is evolving and progressing and the outcome will be determined by the future political course of the nation and international politics. For the time being, it seems that the two tracks of Pakistan's civil society are running parallel with no meeting point. Their differences and conflict are likely to continue in the foreseeable future. The religious-secular divide can be used as a new tool to judge the credentials of Pakistan's civil society and the weakness of its political system.

Notes

¹ National identity card and passport in Pakistan have columns of religion. Musharraf tried to remove such columns but had to retreat because of pressure and agitation from religious political parties

² Musharraf means by Enlightened Moderation a two-pronged strategy. One part to be delivered by the Muslim World is to shun militancy, extremism and adopting the path of socio-economic uplift. The other part is to be delivered by the West and the U.S. in particular. West and U.S. must aim to resolve all political disputes with justice, and also assist in the socio-economic uplift of the deprived Muslim World. For detailed views of Musharraf see <http://www.presidentofpakistan.gov.pk/EnlightenedModeration.aspx>

³ During the Islamization campaign of General Zia-ul-Haq *Shariah* and *Hudood* laws were introduced to punish the criminals. But the police authorities had the power to charge the criminals either with Islamic punishments or in accordance with Pakistan Penal code which is based on the British system of justice. The religious parties have continuously demanded that there should be only the Islamic laws to punish the criminals while the secular forces oppose that

⁴ *Khalafah* is the system of governance observed in early history of Islam during the rule of first four caliphs after the demise of Holy Prophet Mohammad

⁵ Praetorianism means the control of society by force or fraud especially when exercised through titular officials and by a powerful minority

⁶ A report by NGO Resource Centre (NGORC) defines civil society in Pakistan as “non-state and non-market citizen organisations and initiatives, networks and alliances operating in a broad spectrum of social, economic and cultural fields. These include formal institutions such as political parties, non-governmental organisations, trade unions, professional associations, philanthropies, academia, independent and quasi-independent pressure groups, think tanks, and traditional, informal formations such as faith-based organizations, shrines, seminaries, neighbourhood associations, burial societies, *jirgas* (councils of elders) and savings groups. Pakistan's civil society is characterized by hybrid forms, multiple inheritances and the unresolved struggle between the practices and values of pre-capitalist society and new modes of social life, between authoritarian legacies and democratic aspirations” (Sattar and Baig, 2001, 1)

⁷ *Fatwa* (religious decree) declaring his apostasy was issued because of his modern interpretations of Islam. For details on Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's life and ideas please see (Iqbal, 2003, 153-198)

⁸ *Madni* Group was anti Jinnah, anti-Pakistan and was led by Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni of JUH

⁹ *Thanvi* Group and their political party JUI supported the idea of Pakistan. It is named after Ashraf Ali Thanvi (a leading religious scholar)

¹⁰ Ayesha Jalal identifies several theories regarding the partition of India. One is the separate identity of Muslims (two-nation theory) resulting in creation of Pakistan. The second is related to the role of imperialism in dividing Hindu-Muslim communities. Another is related to communalism. And finally, her own thesis about the creation of Pakistan which doubts the credibility of all these theories

¹¹ For details about Bhutto's actions to Islamize the state and society see (Abbas, 2005, p.81-82)

¹² *Zakat* is the religious tax on wealth, silver and gold stocked by Muslims. Two and half percent has to be given to the poor and needy every year on certain amount of possessed wealth. During all Islamic history it remained voluntary. Zia implemented the forceful deduction of this tax from the saving bank accounts of the people. It is believed that state used substantial amounts from this money to sponsor the religious organizations

¹³ *Ushr* is another kind of religious tax on the agricultural produce. It is charged at the rate of ten percent and five percent depending on the type of agricultural land

¹⁴ Urdu Service of BBC broadcasted a series of programmes titled as *Mojiza-e-fun* and interviewed many leading performers and artists about the status of performing arts in Pakistan. Beena Jawad and Madeeha Gohar in their interviews gave such opinion. This opinion is shared by many writers, journalists and scholars. For urdu text of her interview please see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/urdu/entertainment/story/2005/05/050518-mojizai-fun3-si.shtml>

¹⁵ The number of *madrassas* grew rapidly during the 80's and 90's. At independence in 1947, there were only 137 *madrassas* in Pakistan. According to a 1956 survey, there were 244 *madrassas* in all of West Pakistan. Since then, even by official accounts, their number has doubled every ten years. A significant number remain unregistered. Nobody is sure how many *madrassas* actually exist. Pakistan's former minister of religious affairs, Dr. Mahmood Ahmed Ghazi, puts the figure at 10,000, though he acknowledged the problem of definition and suspected it could be higher, with as many as one million to 1.7 million students (International Crisis Group, 2002, 2)

¹⁶ Dr. A.H. Nayyar titled one of his academic works as "*Madrasah Education: Frozen in Time*" which itself is self-explanatory. He writes: "the failure of Pakistani state to provide adequate opportunities for education to all is the principle cause of rapid rise in *madrassah* system. If the state wishes to avoid a situation of civil war in future, it must exercise control on the content of *madrassah* education, against the resistance of *ulama* if necessary," (Nayyar, 1998, 214)

¹⁷ The description of Musharraf's era in section 4.2 is the byproduct of author's extensive scanning of print and electronic media, interviews and discussions with politicians and opinion-makers while working as a research associate of Professor Mohammad Waseem, Chairman, International Relations Department of Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad, for the two books on electoral reforms in Pakistan and election 2002 in Pakistan"

¹⁸ For details on the internal dynamics of militant organizations and their possible connections with assassination attempts on Musharraf please see (Rana, 2004, 5-29)

¹⁹ Government tried to remove the religious content from different books which was related to the philosophy of *jihad*. Former Federal Minister for Education Zubaida Jalal was severely criticized for promoting American agenda and later on removed from her office in a cabinet reshuffle. Presently, a Senator and former chief of ISI heads the Education Ministry

²⁰ MMA is the electoral alliance of six religious parties which contested the 2002 elections in Pakistan and succeeded in formulating independent government in the NWFP (North West Frontier Province) and a coalition government in the province of Baluchistan. The alliance holds the post of leader of opposition in the National Assembly of Pakistan. The 2002 performance of the religious political parties is 'so far' best in the electoral history of Pakistan

²¹ *Hasba* Act intends the implementation of Islamic way of life around *Amer-Bil-Marooif* and *Nahi-Anil-Munkir* (forbidding that what is not proper and practicing that what is good) by creating a new institution of accountability to be headed by a cleric called *Mohtasib* (one who holds others accountable) whose main function would be to protect/watch the Islamic values and etiquettes at the provincial level. The decisions of *Mohtasib* can not be challenged in any court of Law. Complete text of *Hasba* Act can be seen at <http://www.dawn.com/2005/07/16/nat18.htm>

²² *Basant* is a kite flying festival in Lahore and other cities of Punjab held in spring. From last few years it has become an international festival attracting tourists from all over the world

²³ Dr. A.H. Nayyar and Dr. Pervez A. Hoodbhoy are two renowned scholars of physics in Pakistan and are famous for their oppositional stance on the nuclear weapons programme and nuclear energy programme of the government. They have also been extensively involved in other social-welfare and advocacy projects of leading research institutions of Pakistan. The author interviewed both of them in March 2005 to have their opinion on different aspects of Pakistan's civil society

²⁴ Khurshid Ahmad Nadeem is a renowned Columnist of Daily Urdu Newspaper Jang, a research fellow at Islamic Research Institute Islamabad and runs a research organization. He has extensively written about role of *Ulama* and Islamization process in Pakistan

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