State and Society of Pakistan – Divergence and Harmony between the Two

Bashir Ahmad[*]

Abstract

States and societies are complementary politico - social entities. Whereas the state structure is based on society, it is the state machinery which provides a system to the society to live in peace and stability. Seen in this context, the state and society of Pakistan seems to be in a disequilibrium.

We have wasted lot of time in experimenting different systems and in the process failed to understand that whatever system we may intend to follow, nothing can succeed without willing participation of the society. Therefore bottom line in all our policies should be the respect of public opinion and consensus development on national decision making process.

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Introduction

As commonly understood society is a group of people living together with common values, believes and interests. The state is a political entity comprising people within specific recognised geographical boundaries and has sovereignty of formulating and implementing rules. States function smoothly provided they take into account 'will' of the societies. If aspirations of the society are not reflected in the state's policies, there is a danger of disharmony which can obstruct progress of the state and shake its foundations resulting in chaos and unrest. We can say that state's governance mechanism is like a mirror of the society, it reflects and projects the picture which the people aspire at. If the mirror gets out of focus, the society finds itself in a flux, and the outside world can not comprehend the strength of public support behind state policies. This leads to a situation where, despite having same origin and sharing similar views, the society develops divergence in its perception from the functioning of the state.

The same analogy can be applied to Pakistan. Its creation manifested collective will of the people to live in accordance with their social norms, beliefs and ethics; however, lack of proper vision and

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[*]   Dr. Bashir Ahmad, Principal, Gwadar Institute of Technology, Gawadar, Balochistan.

policy formulation created gulf between the society and state. The ever worsening situation of divergence between the two, warrants a critical analysis of the system of our governance and functioning structure to draw relevant conclusions with a view to put in place workable and viable solutions. The ultimate objective is to attain sustainable harmony between state and society in Pakistan. The sooner, we find a solution and implement corrective methodology is better for internal stability as well as attaining credibility outside. Therefore analysis of society and state of Pakistan and way forward for their harmony is the very purpose of this study.

Defining society and state
The society and state are two distinct entities which complement each others' existence. Society is prerequisite to the emergence of state. The state provides means of facilitating the society to live in peace through a system of institutions and governance. For this purpose, the state creates and maintains necessary infrastructure. Thereafter, the governments formulate national policies and function according to the will of the majority of the people. The purpose of developing state's institutions is to let all the citizens of the state live under the environment of social justice. Therefore before embarking upon the critical analysis of society and state of Pakistan, it is imperative to understand the distinction between these two entities as well as their mutual relationship.

Society
The word 'society' has its origin in the Latin 'societas' which means friendly association with others. In essence it refers to companionship, comradeship and partnership.[1] In political science, the term 'society' is used to mean the totality of human relationship, group of people that form a semi-closed social system and interact.[2] As a subject of social sciences, 'society' is an 'association' with one's fellows, especially in a friendly or intimate manner and enjoyment of companionship of others. For this purpose, it inculcates a system of customs adopted by a body of individuals for harmonious and interactive coexistence and mutual

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[1]   Douglas Harper, *Etymology Dictionary*, Historian [Updated 26 February 2007; cited 15 January 2009]. Available from http://www.org/wiki/society.
[2]   Lecture notes on defining 'Society' from East Carolina University, retrieved from http://www.org.society, p.3.

benefit. The aggregate of people living together in a more or less ordered community would have a common aim, interest and beliefs.[3]

A society is also described as population of humans characterized by patterns of relationships between individuals that share a distinctive culture and institutions.[4] Therefore the 'society' entails an economic, social and industrial infrastructure in which a varied multitude of people cooperate and live. Members of a society may be from different ethnic groups. A society can therefore be a group of particular people, such as the Saxons, a nation state, such as Bhutan, or a broader cultural group, such as a western society.

Going through the pages of history one finds that the human society came into existence with the creation of mankind on the earth surface as one of its fundamental social requirements. The development of culture from simple to complex constituted natural tendencies of human beings. Historians seek the existence of various primitive societies and speculate development of mankind in stages. In the late 19th century, sociologists like Edward Burnett and Julian Steward discovered evolution of society from bands and tribes to chiefdoms and further to primitive states.[5] However historically, fundamental unit of the society has been family which also played the role of an institution in the development of mankind including social norms, comradeship and essence of relationship. It also defined the role and responsibilities of the family head, the system of food and water security, arrangement and importance of shelter and art of influencing other living beings.[6] Subsequently the families expanded to form tribes and tribes developed community culture for collective survival against threats.[7]

With the expansion of tribes and communities in numbers, their requirements of food, water, shelter and security also increased, which gave birth to the development of more land and natural resources. Consequently new groupings of tribes, communities and heterogeneous communities came into existence. The development of collective living places was dictated by the terrain and weather conditions. For the

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[3] Carsten Wieland, 'Nation State by Accident', cited in *Fundamentals of Statecraft*, Vol. I (Islamabad: National Defence University, 2009), p.33.

[4] Douglas Harper, *op.cit.*, pp.3-6.

[5] The *Free Encyclopaedia Site, Evolution of Societies,* pp.2-3. [Updated 11 November 2008; cited 20 December 2008] Available from http://en.org/wiki/Sociocultural_evolution.

[6] I.H. Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan*, Book Two (Karachi: University of Karachi, 1961), pp.26-45.

[7] The *Free Encyclopaedia Site, op.cit.,* pp.2-3.

purpose of social and economic needs, the human beings also developed instruments and tools to shape the environment conducive for their living and survival. The application of tools and instruments for better living conditions encouraged innovations. This formed the basis of discoveries and development of new techniques and technologies.[8] In history we find that in the development of human society, all kinds of knowledge and innovations revolved around the fulfilment of human needs - making it more and more comfortable. Technological developments refined the products for human consumption, and contributed in shaping outlook of various societies towards life as well as nature and system of resource management. Transformation of humans from primitive to developmental societies and states has, therefore, been according to knowledge and its application.

The societies accordingly laid foundations of the states and formed complex associations such as economic, educational, religious, political and cultural. Therefore we can say that society is prior to and wider than the state. In order to realize their common purpose, the associated men and women, making a society, develop institutions. These institutions orchestrate various aspects of social life and create much needed socio – political environment. All these elements combined together, make the social structure of a society.

State

The word 'state' has its origin in Latin 'Statas' meaning 'condition' or 'status'.[9] In Roman law, the word 'state' was used to refer to the legal standing of persons, particularly the special status of king. Subsequently the word was also associated with Roman ideas about the 'state rei public' which meant condition of the republic. However later, it lost its reference to special status of particular social groups and became associated with the legal order of the entire society and apparatus of its enforcement.[10] *Oxford Dictionary* defines the word 'state' as a political organization or management which forms the supreme civil rule and government of a country / nation or a community of people occupying a

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8   *Ibid.,* pp.3-9. [Updated 11 November 2008; cited 20 February 2009], Available from http://en.org/wiki/Sociocultural_evolution.

9   *Ibid.,* pp.6-9. [Updated 26 February 2007; cited 15 February 2009], Available from http://www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/state.

10   T. Ball, J. Farr and R.L. Hanson, (eds.), *The State in Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (Cambridge: University Press, 1989), retrieved from http://en.org/wiki/State.p.10.

defined area and organized under one government.[11] The meaning also encompasses the sphere of supreme political administration.

It has also been claimed that the word 'state' originates from the medieval 'stat' or 'regal chair' upon which the head of state, usually a monarch would sit.[12] By the process of metonymy, the word became used to refer to both 'head of the state' and power entity, he represented. In order to elaborate it further, reference to two quotations is attributed to King Louis XIV of France where he said 'I am the state' and 'I am going away, but the state will always remain'.[13] A similar association of terms is used even now a days, referring to capital cities or government buildings having authority, like White House, Islamabad, Moscow etc.

Max Weber defines the state as an organization that claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.[14] The physical force may include the armed forces, state bureaucracy, courts and police. This entails that a state is constituted of people and territory which has defined boundaries. However the group of people living within defined geographical boundaries require an authoritative system to resolve socio – economic problems and take decisions, thereby adding a third dimension 'the sovereignty' to the meaning of state. This is so because the authoritative system can make resolute decisions only when it has sovereignty and autonomy.

F.S. Northedge in his book '*The International Political System*' refers the 'state' as 'law – making machinery' for controlling the social behaviour of people within certain recognized national frontiers. He also refers it as the hereditary territorial organization consisting of people organized by a single focus of authority.[15] In the light of these arguments, it is now easy to understand that state is a political system which comprises of people residing within defined territory, has a government to make sovereign and independent decisions and recognised as such in the comity of nations.

The state and society – separate yet related entities
Having understood the essence of society and state, it is necessary to

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[11]   A.S Hornby, A.P Cowie, A.C Gimsom, *Oxford Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p.843.

[12]   Douglas Harper, *op.cit.,* p.3.

[13]   *Ibid.*

[14]   Max Weber, *The Profession and Vocation of Politics* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1994), retrieved from http://en.org/wiki/state, p.8.

[15]   F.S. Northedge, *The International Political System* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1976), p.134.

assimilate that despite being separate entities, they have very much common to each other. The association of mankind to society is instinctive, which is the basic arrangement of voluntary community functioning under moral and social obligations. As the communities expanded, there came in clash of interests, conflicts and wars. The situation demanded formal system of making rules and their enforcement. This gave rise to body of individual to be placed above and supreme to regulate the human behaviour. The necessity of regulating the human behaviour under a code of conduct manifested authority to use force. Ultimately the system of state and governance emerged as social requirement. Since the state came into existence to fulfil the needs of society, its rules transcended from within the society itself.[16]

Whereas society is natural and instinctive, the state is creation of will and reason. The society is not necessarily to be organized, however, the state is required to be organized. The state is territorial organization, while the society accepts no territorial limitations. In the light of this analogy, the society is therefore prior to the state. As a social and political entity, the society embraces all aspects of human life and its cultural ties like the family, forefathers and religious aspects. On the other hand, the state is concerned only with governance and statecraft. As a sovereign entity, the state lays down its imperatives and whosoever violates these, is punished. On the other hand, the society does not possess and impose coercive power. Society maintains its rules to regulate the social behaviour which are not imperatives but principles of conduct. The members are expected to observe those principles. The state uses punishment as instrument for obedience while the society ensures observance of the social rules by motivations and appeal. As Barker opines, 'the area of society is voluntary cooperation, its energy is goodwill and method is elasticity, while the area of the state is mechanical action, its energy is force and method is rigidity'.[17]

Society and state of Pakistan – imperatives and prevalence
The founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah outlined his concept of the state's functioning during his address to the Constituent Assembly on 11 August 1947. He elaborated that 'the first duty of government is to maintain law and order, so that life, property and religious beliefs of its subjects are fully protected'. The second, he

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[16]   Jenkins R, *Foundations of Sociology* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), retrieved from http://en.org/wiki/society, pp.3-9.

[17]   Walter and Stephen, *The Nation–State and Global Order,* cited in *Fundamentals of Statecraft*, Vol. I, *op.cit.,* p.36.

referred to was bribery and corruption, which in his words was 'really a poison' that must be put down with an iron hand. The third thing, he referred was 'black marketing, a colossal crime against society'. The Quaid said that a citizen who commits black-marketing does the 'greater crime than the biggest and most grievous of crimes'. The fourth point he highlighted was the 'evil of nepotism and jobbery, which must be crushed relentlessly'.[18] These cardinal points of Quaid's vision clearly determine the contours of state's functioning for the society of Pakistan.

However, the prevailing state of affairs in Pakistan reveals that the vision of the father of the nation has not been materialised which is indicative of the fact that state and society cannot work in harmony, rather act in divergence. The conflict of society and state's functioning is the main cause of worsening law and order, centrifugal tendencies, degradation of economy and dissipating socio – cultural values in Pakistan. There could be many reasons for that, however, none justifies the divergence leading to threatening the very foundations of the country. The state machinery at the helm of affairs is obliged to bear the responsibility to the optimum.

Pakistan: society and state in historical perspective

Village based community and state system of Mughal era: The society of Pakistan finds its roots in Indian civilization far back in the history according to the evolution of mankind.[19] However for the purpose of this study, we start from the Mughal era, when Indian society was developed to form part of the state system in some stable and formal form. It was Akber, the Great Mughal Emperor, who formulated rules for community functioning and its relationship with the empire, some of which are still prevalent in our rural culture and structure.[20] The Mughals era can be termed as the beginning of a system which has its lasting imprints on Indo – Pakistan community system and society. The Mughals established community based system where village was the basic and central unit for all social and political activities. This included revenue collection, dispute resolution and security.[21]

The fundamental principle of the Mughal era was to go along with the people as per their local norms and traditions. Hence the

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[18] Hamid Khan, *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.49.

[19] I.H. Qureshi, *op.cit.,* pp.145-69.

[20] *Ibid.,* pp.48-75.

[21] Muhammad Waseem, *Politics and the State in Pakistan* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1994), p.14.

methodologies varied from region to region. It was an easy and natural way to rule the masses without disturbing their social structure. The village became a self sustaining political unit based on multiple and composite caste system. Within the village community, the division of labour was based on the caste system where certain castes were dedicated to provide services who would continue with the same profession from generation to generations, as has been the practice throughout the recorded history.[22] The village head was a *zamindar* (local feudal), responsible for revenue collection and submission of people to the will of the emperor within his area. In this way, the localised nature of power structure woven around *zamindar*, based on village as hub of social and political activities enjoyed virtual sovereignty. The state system and governance was the sum total of sub-sovereignties.

Society and state during colonial era: The British, during their colonial era in the Indian subcontinent followed a pragmatic approach after requisite studies of the socio – cultural environment of the Indian society. At the outset, their principle to rule was fundamentally the same as of Mughals; not to disturb the local norms and social values. Hence for the Indian society at large, it was a matter of change of rulers only. However since the economy had shifted from purely agriculture to trade and commerce, the East India Company introduced market system with increasing state interference. Since the British had attained their objective of capturing the political power as well as market for their goods, they were satisfied with the in-vogue feudal system of ruling the people from a distance through a loyal intermediary network of carefully selected influential locals.[23]

In the 18th century, having gained greater foothold in Indian subcontinent, the British tried different arrangements for collection of revenue. They concluded that the principal political unit of British administration for revenue collection was the district (comprising number of villages / towns) and collector of revenue at each district would also administer the provisions of civil justice. Consequently the title of deputy commissioner was given to this appointment and almost all powers of the governance were concentrated in his hands. The deputy commissioner would operate through village based feudal system.[24] In

22   *Ibid.,* pp.15-20.
23   *Ibid.,* pp.42-8.
24   Muneer Ahmed, 'The Development of Bureaucracy under Colonial Rule: Implications for Democratic Governance' in Abbas Rashid (ed.), *Pakistan:*

order to keep the society dormant, they had already strengthened the local feudal system by giving more lands to certain individuals. The mechanism of deputy commissioner further strengthened the feudal mechanism.[25]

Over driven by the traditions, the Indian society specially the Muslims remained satisfied and contended over their stagnant social system. The political leadership in the form of feudal lords were obliged by the British government through grants for higher education opportunities to their children abroad and subsequently appointing them on lucrative government posts like civil administration, where they could further serve the cause of British imperialism.[26] The British having evaluated the Indian society's ability to enforce political stability against their own people, exploited it optimally to enable their commerce flourished and property protected. They were allotted agriculture lands in great numbers, which made them landlords.[27] Therefore the landlord community of India became more and more loyal to their British masters than the masses in general.

Muslim society of India – attributes of belief and faith: First permanent Muslim foothold in the South Asian subcontinent was achieved with the conquest of Sindh by Muhammad Bin Qasim in 711 and subsequently autonomous Muslim states came into existence which continued till 1857.[28] There have been four distinct groups of Muslims who implanted Islam in this part of the world. The first were Turks from Central Asia, followed by Pathans from Afghanistan, the Mughals comprising Turks and Central Asian Mongols and the Muslim missionaries from all across the Middle East.[29] The Muslim community of the Indian subcontinent mostly embraced Islam on the hands of Muslim sufi saints who introduced Islam to the local population while remaining within the local traditions. These sufi saints inserted the unique blend of Islamic mysticism and brought about a large-scale conversion of low-caste Hindus and other depressed sections of the society to Islam and expanded Muslim society.[30]

Perspective on State and Society (Lahore: Shirkat Printing Press, 2004), p.104.

[25]   Muhammad Waseem*, op.cit.*, pp.47-50.

[26]   *Ibid.,* pp.55-6.

[27]   *Ibid.,* pp.37-42.

[28]   I.H. Qureshi, *op.cit.*, pp.2-9.

[29]   *Ibid.,* pp.15-51.

[30]   *Ibid.,* pp.10-22.

        In the late 18th and early 19th centuries Muslim scholars like
Abdullah Bin Abdul Wahab tried to profess the fundamentals of Islam in
their original spirits, which caused unrest in the Muslim population.[31]
This situation was exploited by the British and the Muslims got divided
into number of sects and factions. The British initially introduced Anglo-
Muhammadan law to replace the blend of Islamic and local laws and
ultimately enforced the English Common Law. These developments had
great social, economic and political impact on socio – ethnic fibre of the
Indian Muslim community. The failure of 1857's War of Independence
casted disastrous implications for the Muslims. The British viewed the
Indian Muslims as the greatest single threat to their predominance in the
subcontinent and consequently followed deliberate repressive policies.[32]

        As British rule perpetuated over India, the Muslims distanced
themselves from western education, hence failed to take up positions in
government, despite their comparative advantage over other
communities. The Muslim religious leaders, who had been quite active,
withdrew from the mainstream of the community life and devoted
themselves exclusively to imparting religious education. On the other
hand, the Hindu community accepted the new rulers without any
reservation, acquired western education and imbibed the new culture.
However soon, the Muslim reformists like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
realised the threat and advocated modern education for the Muslims.[33]
However despite efforts like this, Muslim society of India mostly
remained in illusion and divided on many fundamental issues, the
creation of Pakistan as a separate state remained one of those.

Ethnocentric approach towards society: The state in British India largely
exploited the ethnocentricity, especially among the Muslims, for the
purpose of 'divide and rule'. Firstly they made Muslims and Hindus as
rivals despite living together for centuries in united India and
subsequently the intensity of Muslims' division in various sects and
factions. To create rivals and seed enmity became a psychological
phenomenon especially with the Muslims, mostly on peripheral issues
even among themselves and this practice has continued after the creation
of Pakistan. The British officers in public administration mostly hailed
from middle class background had bias towards humanity and

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[31]   Ayesha Jalal, *Partisans of Allah – Jihad in South Asia* (Lahore: Sang-e-
       Meel Publications, 2008), pp.136-49.
[32]   I.H. Qureshi, *op.cit.,* pp.118-28.
[33]   *Ibid.,* pp.147-60.

philosophy.[34] They found Indian society following the rigid caste system which kept each man to his own function. By and large the society was distrusted being irrational and illogical in state's affairs.

Pakistan inherited these evils with in the society forming part of its population. In continuation of their psychological mindset of communal arrogance, the community based short-sighted leaders specially those belonging to the religious groups planted division of the society on the basis of religion. The society got divided as to what was right or wrong and is still so divided on fundamental issues of religion and state.

Theory and practice after creation of Pakistan

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah envisioned Pakistan, a country where people of all religions would have equal rights. He did not foresee any minority faction in the country that might result into division of the citizens.[35] The 'Objectives Resolution', passed on 12 March 1949, however, brought in the factor of religion in the matters of state and thus afforded space to religious parties to divide the educationally backward society of Pakistan into pockets.[36] Assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan in 1951 further exacerbated the problems of the country and led to a period of political turmoil and crises.[37] The tussle of power, based on personal interests, paved way for the dictatorship and frequent martial laws. The dictatorial running enhanced frustration as the main political actors went out of power stream.[38]

Religious leaders of united India had opposed the creation of Pakistan on the logic that Muslims all over the world were one nation and they could not be bound in geographical limits of a nation state.[39] They had also highlighted that more Muslims would be staying back in India after the independence than those in Pakistan and thus would be weakened in Hindu majority India. However, after creation of Pakistan, they gradually reconciled and started pleading their case for political space in the country. Their short sightedness confined Islam to the performance of worship rituals only; the broader part of the Islamic

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[34]   Muhammad Waseem, *op.cit.*, pp.52-5.

[35]   *Ibid.,* p.100.

[36]   Hamid Khan, *op.cit.*, p.59.

[37]   *Ibid.,* p.70.

[38]   Hasan Askari Rizvi, *Military, State and Society in Pakistan* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 2000), pp.8-16.

[39]   I.H. Qureshi, *op.cit.,* pp.837-40.

social life (human rights – *haquq-ul-abad*) lost its relevance in internal rifts.

After disintegration of Pakistan in 1971, Zulifiqar Ali Bhutto took over with a determination to build the country as a modern and progressive state. The society at large followed him and a degree of harmony between society and state established.[40] He built national consensus for constitution of Pakistan and laid foundation of Pakistan's nuclear programme. By and large he was also overwhelmed by the religious stalwarts, who got him to declare Ahmedis as non Muslims. His government was taken over by General Zia-ul-Haq through a military coup. The Zia's era started with Russian invasion of Afghanistan and Pakistan became relevant to US policy makers. In order to fight war against Russian invasion, network of *madrassahs* was strengthened with Arabs and American's support which provided more space to the religious parties. These parties fought America's proxy war against Soviets in Afghanistan based on the religious concept of *jihad*. Under such situations, the state functionaries remained short-sighted, stood baffled at a distance and a segment of society took its way to backwardness and extremism instead of progressive education and enlightenment.[41]

This was followed by democratic tug of war between political parties of Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan People's Party. The political parties could not resolve mutual issues, fell victims of frequent dissolution of assemblies and finally paved way for next military rule of General Pervez Musharraf, which ended in 2008.[42] The prolonged unconstitutional rules, with political manipulations, large scale rigging in elections, unconditional support to American invasions of other countries and misperceived enlightened moderation rather put the society at loggerhead to state's machinery.

Alienation of society from state – continuation of old practices: The society in united India during the Mughal era in particular and colonial period in general was largely shaped by the requirement of revenue administration and retention of political authority to rule.[43] The British

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[40]   Muhammad Waseem, *op.cit.,* pp.287-97.
[41]   Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp.320-25.
[42]   Hasan Askari Rizvi, *op.cit.*, p.xiv.
[43]   Abbas Rashid, 'Civil Society and Democracy in Pakistan: Constraints and Challenges', in his (ed.), *Pakistan: Perspective on State and Society, op.cit.,* pp.181-85.

additionally maintained the objective of creating and sustaining market for their industrial functioning. These requirements necessitated to keep the masses illiterate, tied to their orthodox traditions, confined within community bound feudal system and divided on caste, communal and religious basis. As the society had no direct role to play in the functioning of the state even after creation of Pakistan, the state mechanism kept the masses alienated and moved along the requirements of external factors and dictates. Whereas before the partition, it was the requirement to keep society alienated from the state affairs, it had to be reversed after the partition. The independence where it affords more sovereignty also obliges the people to be more responsive and self-sustaining. The society had to be prepared to understand and undertake the obligations of an independent state in the comity of nations. However that could not be achieved due to indecisiveness about the system of governance, the new state was to follow.[44]

A fundamental example of this divergence at the outset is that immediately after creation of Pakistan, the society got divided on the issue of national language. The decision was the outcome of few individuals' thought process and not the society in majority.[45] Mr Jinnah had wider vision on the issue of minorities in Pakistan as well as in India where Muslims in India would suffer the same fate as those of Hindus in Pakistan, if a pragmatic approach towards minorities in Pakistan was not followed. Therefore he had no intention of making religion as an issue. Unfortunately the society lagged behind in understanding the challenges of an independent Muslim state in true perspective.

Traditional outlook of society and politico-military interplay: Political and social histories of communities shape their socio-psycho makeup over period of time. The historical perspective of Indian civilization has distinct influences on the characteristics of Pakistani society which include great attachment to tribal / family traditions, influence of strong caste system, sense of great hospitality, strong religious belief – faith in spiritualism based on *sufism*, intolerance towards difference in opinion on fundamentals of religion, inward looking, contentedness, rival outlook towards India and suspicions about western civilization.[46] Additionally the autocratic system of the state over a longer period of time under military and civil bureaucracy, deficient and uneven economic

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[44]   I.H.Qureshi, *A Short History of Pakistan,* Book Four (Karachi: University of Karachi, 1961), pp.895-99.

[45]   Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule, op.cit.,* p.81.

[46]   I.H.Qureshi, *op.cit.,* pp.130-63.

development and influence of major powers in our domestic politics are the factors which shaped domestic environment of Pakistan.[47] Their interplay made the Pakistani society a complex subject to understand and implement state's system of governance. These characteristics inhibited the society to keep pace with the developments in all socio-psycho walks of life. Political and military alternativity, where it alienated the society from state's functioning, also provided sufficient space for bureaucracy to run unaccountable governance, baring large segment of the society isolated.

Socio-cultural and psychological dimensions: Pakistani society, predominantly the Muslim community inherited a unique pattern of belief, ideas and values which have been highly influenced by the system of state they remained under over centuries, especially since the Mughal era. Their contended way of life, coupled with religious norms shaped the code of ethics for their cultural and social life. At the same time, Pakistan with different races has many subcultures. The inhabitants of each region (based on the social norms and traditions) have distinct social and cultural values which make them different from other groups of the society. Within the cultural groups, the people keep their traditions very close to their hearts. The society, having various ethnic groups has also been greatly influenced by many of the surrounding countries' cultures, such as those of Afghanistan, Iran and India.[48] The rural areas are regarded as more conservative and dominated by regional tribal customs dating back hundreds of years. The society therefore has number of social and cultural sub-societies, ethnic communities and groups who are different in their outlook and approach towards life and rules of the state. This necessitates correct understanding of these communities and dealing with them differently in the light of their respective traditions.

Ethnic diversity of the society: Pakistan is ethnically a diverse country and has many ethnic groups like Punjabis (44.15%), Pashtuns (15.42%), Sindhis (14.1%), Saraikis (10.53%), Muhajirs (7.57%), Balochs (3.57%) and other ethnic groups including Northern Areas, make about 4.66 per cent of the population.[49] The Pashtuns and Balochs are linguistically Iranic, while the Punjabis, Sindhis and Saraikis are linguistically Indic.

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[47]   Hasan – Askari Rizvi, *op.cit.,* p.18.
[48]   Ahmad Hasan Dani (ed.), *A Short History of Pakistan* (Karachi: p.6-8.
[49]   Free Encyclopaedia. *Demography of Pakistan*. p.3-7. [Updated 26 September 2008; cited 27 September 2008]. Available *from* http://en.org/wiki/Demography_of_Pakistan.

Muhajir population is a multi-ethnical group, and includes mixed blood lines of people from the rest of South Asia who claim to be Afghan, Persian, Turk, Mongol, and Arab admixture.[50] Over 97 per cent of the population is Muslim, 77% *Sunnis* and about 20% *Shi'as*.[51] The *Sunni* Muslims belong to the *Hanafi* school with a small *Hanbali* school of thought represented by *Wahabi* and *Ahle Hadith*. The *Hanafis* include the *Barelvi* and *Deobandi* schools. Although the majority of Pakistani *Shia* Muslims belong to *Ithna 'Ashariyah'* school, there are significant minorities like *Nizari Khoja Ismailis* (Aga Khanis) and the smaller *Mustaali Dawoodi Bohra* and *Sulaimani Bohras*. There are around 75 to 80 known Pakistani languages.[52] Such is the scale of diversification of the society on multiple bases. Therefore the society, divided on values of varying criteria is difficult to be put under a uniform set of rules. It, therefore, needs diversity in the system of governance in the light of socio – cultural values of the people at large.

Societal temperament

Intolerance and dissention: First half of the 20th century gave rise to a number of sects in the subcontinent which divided Muslim community into various factions and groups. After the creation of Pakistan, absence of political process aggravated the situation. In the absence of state's capacity to arrange education facilities for all citizens, including religions education, illiterate community level religious leaders propagated their own understanding of the religion and deviation to that was considered religiously illegal rather sinful. It to led the tendency of arrogance, giving it intolerance and dissention, which took the society backward instead of giving it progressive outlook.[53]

At the same time, Pakistan's population of 172 million has over 2 per cent growth rate, which is one of the highest in the world.[54] The size of population is immensely disproportionate to the available resources. This has negatively impacted the social sector development, which in turn has led to frustration, violence, crime and susceptibility to manipulation. The state failed to mobilize resources to create facilities

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[50]   *Ibid.,* pp.4-12.

[51]   *Ibid.,* p.13.

[52]   *Ibid.,* pp.10-15.

[53]   Hamza Rizvi, *Religious Fundamentalism Socio Political Environment of Pakistan*, Vol.II (Islamabad: National Defence University, 2008 / 2009), p.128.

[54]   Government of Pakistan, National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA) (Islamabad: Islamabad Official Printers, 2008).

for the education of the masses, which could have played the role of checking the population growth. Resultantly human resource development could not take place as required and majority of the population still consists of unskilled labour.[55]

The governance vacuum: The word governance has Latin origin that suggests the notion of 'steering'.[56] Good governance has been a dream of the people of Pakistan, which somehow could not materialize despite promises by the political and military governments.

Unfounded concept of 'devolution of power' under the last military regime and its partial implementation, led to vacuum in district government's functioning, it can be seen as the latest examples of poor governance.[57] Therefore, this is one of the reasons that, according to a poll, 88 per cent Pakistanis feel that the country is heading in the wrong direction.[58]

Political uncertainty and unresolved socio-economic irritants: Over a period of time, the political uncertainty has given rise to political polarization, corruption, nepotism, constitutional anomalies, provincial disharmony, disregard of democratic norms, flaws in electoral systems and poor political leadership. Under such environment, the state institutions became stronger than political mechanism which made them dictatorial in their dealings with public affairs as well as political leadership. The institutions remained neither accountable to the political leadership nor to the public. In the whole process, the entity, which suffered the most, has been the people who lost confidence in the system and found ways and means to settle their issues through back door means.[59]

Military interventions in the state's functioning: Military strength is the gauge of national power against threat especially that of external nature. It is the most defined, potent and coercive instrument of national power.

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[55]   *Pakistan Economic Survey 2007-2008*; adjusted for AJK and FATA Population, Official Printers, pp.3-6.

[56]   *Free Encyclopaedia*. *Governance*. [Updated 24 September 2008; cited 27 September 2008]. Available from *http://en.org/wiki/Governanace*.

[57]   Government of Pakistan, *Devolution of Power* (Islamabad: Reconstruction Bureau, Official Printers), pp.9-15.

[58]   US based International Republican Institute, 'Poll shows pessimism growing in Pakistan', *Dawn*, 20 December 2008, p.1.

[59]   Muhammad Munir, 'Pakistan's Political Dilemma', *Pakistan Observer*, 13 September 2007.

However creation of Pakistan was not the result of a military adventure, rather an outcome of long political freedom struggle spread over decades. The real strength of the nation lies in the development of its institutions, of which military carries special significance as it inherits powers and is expected to play a vital role in the national affairs. Unfortunately the sanctity of military's role in our national affairs has been made absolutely controversial. The fact remains that majority of the society has always opposed any role for the military in the country's politics. The Quaid categorically defined the role of military, while addressing young army officers on 14 August 1947 at Quetta when he said:

> …not to forget that the armed forces are the servants of the people and you do not make national policy. It is we, the civilians, who decide these issues and it is your duty to carry out these tasks with which you are entrusted'.[60]

Despite this, frequent military take overs of legitimate political governments tarnished the image of the country and distanced the society from state's functioning.

Geo-strategic location and undue external interference: Located in the South Asian region, Pakistan shares borders with two nuclear powers (China and India), Afghanistan - one of the world's most volatile county – and Iran. At the moment, it has become the focal point of world and regional powers in view of its proximity to Central Asian Republics and Afghanistan due to richness of natural resources and centre of conflicts respectively. Under these circumstances, the external interference has greatly increased, which in certain areas amounts to violating the national integrity of the country which the society does not endorse.[61]

A way forward
Since decades, there has been a misperception about the type of state the Quaid had envisaged for Pakistan. Undue and unnecessary interpretations has left the society confused like whether Pakistan has to

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[60]   Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah**...** *addressing officers at the Military Staff College Quetta* [Updated August 2005; cited 15 December 2008]. Available at http://www.roedadkhan.com/updocs/Quaid-e-Azam%5C's%20 Historic%20Visit%20to%20Staff%20College%20Quetta%20by%20Roedad %20khan.doc.

[61]   *Free Encyclopaedia. Geography of Pakistan* [Updated 13 September 2008; cited 27 September 2008]. Available from http://en.org/wiki/Geography of Pakistan.

be a secular state or Islamic state. The Quaid's vision was unambiguous when he elaborated that within the state all citizens would be equal and there would be no distinction between citizens on the basis of their faith or caste or creed.[62] At the same time, he emphasised Quran as a complete code of life.[63] This defines his vision for Pakistan, which grants religious freedom, equality to all citizens in the state's affairs and teachings of Quran as beacon for our social and political outlook. In his address to the people of United States, in February 1948, he said:

> In any case Pakistan is not going to be a theocratic state. We have many Hindus, Christians and Parsis but they are all Pakistanis. They will enjoy the same rights and privileges as any other citizen and will play their rightful part in the affairs of Pakistan.[64]

The Muslim scholar Allama Muhammad Iqbal also elaborated that separate state would not mean' an introduction of a kind of religious rule.[65] There is a need to open a debate on the subject, based on correct understanding of the teaching of Quran, in our educational institutions and media. It would broaden our approach towards human rights, help in removing misperceptions of the society and give a proper vision for the future of Pakistan.

Developing society on progressive thinking: What Quaid-e-Azam envisioned for Pakistan was a modern, progressive and democratic state which will work for the welfare of the people.[66] This was the reaffirmation of what he had told to Doon Campbell, Reuter's correspondent in New Delhi, in 1946, when he said:

> …the new state would be a modern democratic state with sovereignty resting in the people and members of the new nation.[67]

In a state where 97 per cent of the population is Muslim, there cannot be any threat to the religion. Therefore the religion in not an issue, the overwhelming Muslim population, by mere practicing Islam can create an Islamic society; one does not require legislation to practice religion. There is a need to educate the society on the practical values and aspects of Islam rather than focusing on rituals only. There is no

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[62]   Hamid Khan, *op.cit.,* pp.49-50.
[63]   *Ibid.,* p.63.
[64]   *Ibid.,* p.50.
[65]   Muhammad Waseem, *op.cit.,* p.77.
[66]   Hamid Khan, *op.cit.,* p.50.
[67]   *Ibid.*

concept of 'enforcement of religious will' in Islam. Religion is rather a matter of free will.[68]

It therefore requires a fundamental change in the mindset of the society that the Islam teaches progressiveness and provides a complete system for human development. Had it been stagnant, it would have been for Arabs only as has been case of prophets prior to Muhammad (may peace be upon him). There is a need to employ media, particularly the visual media for creating awareness. Similarly there is a concept of '*Ijtihad*' in Islam, which needs to be understood in true spirit and essence. No individual or group of individuals have monopoly over the religion, it neither belongs to them (him) alone nor renders any authority to anyone for its enforcement. It is rather a divine guidance to order one's life according to the teachings of Allah which He revealed to the last Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). How can we do it; the only viable and speedy means are the educational institutions and media which should be orchestrated through a dedicated team of think tanks at the government levels.

Reforming education system: Different standards of education have posed serious problems in creating harmony within the society. At the same time, the education is not at par with international standards. In order to achieve the vision and goal of an industrialized and knowledge based society, the education system needs re-orientation.[69] The gap between skills and education is required to be reduced. The whole range of problems warrant educational reforms to include standardization of education system, revision of syllabi, development of infrastructure, raising the status of teacher in society, concept of lifelong learning, bringing *madrassas* in the main education stream and diffusion of technology in all fields of knowledge including religious education.[70]

The point is how to undertake these reforms? There are two approaches, one: centralised under the direct control of federal and provincial governments second decentralised under the provincial and local governments. Decentralised approach is simultaneous, has multiplication of effects, liberal and innovative in outlook, hence recommended. The federal government may only outline the policy guidelines including its national and international dimensions. Rest should be left to the local governments under the overall umbrella of

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[68] *Al Quran*, 'Sura Al Baqarah', Verse 256.
[69] Dr. Faisal Bari, 'Education System and Development', *The Nation*, 9 July 2007.
[70] *Ibid.*

provincial governments. The provincial governments would only coordinate the financial means whereas local governments should decide about syllabi, standards and disciplines as per requirements. This would also provide requisite diversification to absorb all kinds of manpower.

Social uplift of the society: Social uplift of the society is possible with human resource development and acquisition of skills.[71] In today's liberalized market economies and export-oriented growth, lack of skilled manpower impinges upon our economic revival. This requires a pragmatic approach to establish poly technical institutes down to town levels and awaken the society for attaining technical skills. It is only the strong technical education base which can facilitate in earning the livelihood. The social uplift of the society will automatically improve economic conditions of the people and bring in internal prosperity and stability. Thereafter it will become easy to involve educated and skilled society in national development and participation in the state's affairs.

Inculcating skills is an indirect approach of social uplift which is sustainable and respectable being closer to human dignity and ego. Here again the decentralised approach as mentioned above (under reforming education system) would develop requisite numbers of vocational and technical institutes at local levels to impart such training to the people. Skills provide means of earning and livelihood and consequently create a sustainable society.

Political reforms: Military interventions interrupted the political process and consequently society could not attain political maturity. The society as a whole lacks self-governance and responsiveness. At the same time, the population of the country has unevenly expanded beyond the management capacity of political entities. Resultantly there is uneven distribution of population with respect to areas, business opportunities and natural resources. There is a need to undertake major political reforms to include making manageable political division of the provinces based on the population and area, constitution of sustainable political units to form basic participatory political entities and revenue collection reformation.

This will also facilitate enacting laws taking into account local traditions and level of social development, more stringent political cum public accountability and community based developments. In this way, whereas the number of federating units would increase, it would, at the same time, reduce the number of districts to sustainability limits. The

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[71]   Moniza Inam, 'Human Resource Development' *Dawn,* 25 February 2007.

resolution of disputes and community management shall automatically be decentralised to local community levels. There is also a requirement to reduce the size of National Assembly and Senate as well as ministries, thereby affecting cut on the unproductive expenditure of the establishment. The broad based political reforms should aim at inculcating the spirit of managing governance issues at the local levels.

The basic question is how to create sustainable political divisions / entities? We have a history of local level governance efforts in the past, the latest one has been that of district government system by the recently concluded military regime. By and large, all these efforts failed due to un-sustainability of the political units created. The important thing is that a political entity has to be manageable from the point of view of governance. It should support people's lives and at the same time be financially sustainable. For this purpose, we have two options: one, create more provinces and second make sustainable districts or manageable political entities. Adopting first option, we may have to make as many provinces as total divisions of the country. Going for the second option, we would require readjusting district boundaries so as to make them economically / financially sustainable. Both the options are workable; to adopt either of the two we should hold referendum or seek public opinion through media to adopt what majority of the people vote for.

Integrated legislation: The society of Pakistan is composed of number of communities based on their history, geography, family and tribal traditions as well as religious affinities. Therefore they cannot be governed under one system of legislation across the board. The system of governance in contradiction to the local customs and traditions of the people cannot make accepting appeals. The system should rather make use of the time tested local social structure to facilitate law and order and community participation in the state's affairs. The British did the same during their rule of the sub continent. It is unwise to rule all segments of the society, having different levels of understanding and development through the same set of legislation.

There is a need to affect decentralisation and policy formulation with due weightage to local cultural traditions of various communities. For example if the people of Swat and other northern areas opt for *nizam-e-adal*, they should have the right to adopt legislation accordingly. Similar should be case for other areas. The lesson of our history is that the country cannot be governed through the tunnel vision of Islamabad. Let the people decide how they want to be governed and under what legislation.

Developing tolerance in the state and society: Pakistan is a pluralistic society, with number of sects or factions even within Muslims. The individuals of various sects are possessive of their ideals. They are intolerant with respects to others version of faith to the extent that they do not want to even discuss them; religion is hence a 'no go' area. There is a need to open a dialogue on such issues so as to make them public rather than treating them as sacrosanct. The attribute of tolerance dates back to early time of Islam where our Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) himself and his followers displayed utmost care in dealing with other factions of the community. The whole history of Muslims is replete with those humane and great principles which should be followed and practised. There is a need to build the society on those ideals.

          Diversified education systems advocating open debates on media and indoor studies, will help in transforming the society and state machinery by making them more tolerant and peace loving. The state mechanism needs to adopt decentralised approach to focus on competitiveness in technical education and skills.

Community based development: The community participation in national development projects is necessary to implant a sense of belonging. At the moment government contribution in building the infrastructure is not owned by the society, rather it is considered government's property. There is need to remove this impression by build an understanding that what has been done under state's management is for the society. Its destruction and ultimate closure will affect the society. It is possible that small projects are undertaken through community's physical and financial participation. For this, provincial autonomy and devolution of power provide the solution which should be implemented as a system without creating a parallel mechanism. Consensus based decisions are owned and upheld by the society. Sialkot airport is an example of community based undertaking of the projects and ownership. There is a need to make the society participate in decision making, especially in those projects which directly affect them like education, social uplift as well as agricultural and industrial developments. This is possible through a well orchestrated local government system as eluded earlier.

Building state institutions: Institutionalised approach has always been workable, instead of individualistic one. The non-functioning, yet existing institutions should be made functional and mushrooms disbanded. Each department should be entrusted with its constitutional role and should be made vibrant to undertake the responsibilities without any external support. An example is of police department, under a

situation, during 1990s in Sindh, it was augmented with Rangers. Now they should take on their role, most importantly maintenance of law and order, from the Rangers. The Rangers should revert to their original task. Similar treatment is recommended for other departments, which have been shadowed under certain conditions. Similarly Frontier Corps, Rangers and levies system are no more relevant to our society now. For internal security, they should rather be replaced with normal police safety systems. Strengthening of institutions would mean security to political system and to the state as well.

Independent judiciary: In a parliamentary form of government, independent judiciary is a counter balance to political manipulations. Its independence is also necessary to make free judgements on national issues. Unfortunately like other state institutions, judiciary has also been politicised over a period of time, especially under the military governments. There is a realization and need, as well, to make an independent judiciary. Under the new wave of realization in the backdrop of previous government's unconstitutional act of removing Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the judiciary has taken up a firm stand to undo the illegitimate unilateral decisions. An independent and honest judiciary is need of the hour, which would pave way for the development of other state institutions as well. The state mechanism should encourage such an approach through effective legislation and policies instead of getting at loggers head with them.

Economic reforms: Sound economy forms the backbone of all socio – political and military activities of a country. Pakistan is facing economic difficulties since its creation due to incorrect economic policies. There is a need to undertake stringent reforms to curtail the expenditure and develop agriculture and industrial sector to sustain food and financial security respectively. Since majority of our population is attached with agriculture, which is also the main source of food security, there is a need to develop it further through much needed land reforms, water management, construction of rural road network, facilitating the farmers in provision of latest techniques of farming, providing them profitable seeds and fertilizers and reaching out to rural areas for health care and educational facilities.

Conclusion

In order to take the society along in the state functioning, its participation is necessary. A democratic system of governance based on the spirit of Islam can ensure provision of participation of people in the state's

functioning. The fundamental requirement is to develop a vibrant progressive society. At the same time state institution like law enforcement agencies are in immediate needs of reforms so that they fulfil their responsibilities effectively and honestly.

The society in general has shown great sagacity whenever given a choice. Permanent functionaries of the state administration i.e. the civil and military bureaucracy, should be allowed to build their competence and professional efficacy, but under no circumstances should they be allowed to weaken the democratic institutions. For this purpose we need to invest heavily in our social sector, especially education.