

Pakistan: Social and Cultural Transformations in a Muslim Nation

By Muhammad Abdul Qadeer

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### Introduction

Muhammad Abdul Qadeer, the social scientist may not be popularly known as is the case of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, the nuclear scientist who is acclaimed as the father of Pakistan's atom bomb. However, Abdul Qadeer's achievements as a surveyor of Pakistan's social history from the mid twentieth century onwards would be rated as outstanding by any academic standards. He has provided us with the most relevant and useful insights into the dynamics of Pakistan society through his classic: *Pakistan: Social and Cultural Transformations in a Muslim Nation*. It is imperative that a nation which is globally acknowledged as a nuclear power must be thoroughly examined in terms of its strengths and weaknesses, its social choices, internal compulsions, its external challenges and its vision for the future. The book meets this objective fairly well.

Pakistan today is burdened with a host of contradictions, anomalies, paradoxes and dualities which pervade almost every sphere of its social life. Highlighting these contradictions in an emphatic and holistic manner could be adjudged as the seminal contribution of the author as a means to comprehending the compelling constraints on the socio-economic development of Pakistan. Fully conscious of these contradictions, the author focuses his mental energies

on an important question 'Whither Pakistan?' This being the title of the last chapter of the book, the author examines this question from diverse perspectives and then concludes, albeit with a sense of guarded optimism, that given all its paradoxes and contradictions, Pakistan as an independent state would not wither away.

We have to agree with the author that though political and economic histories are plentiful, social history has been a neglected field in Pakistan and that there is "no systematic account of the evolving social institutions and cultural patterns". (P. xiii) By writing this book, the author has been largely successful in filling this gap. What is characteristic of this effort is the comprehensiveness of the enterprise of presenting the social history of Pakistan. This is duly reflected in the span and sequencing of the chapters of the book namely (1) Changing Pakistan; (2) Patterns of social change; (3) Landscape of independence; (4) Nation and ethnicity; (5) Urban transformation; (6) Development and countryside; (7) Islam and social life; (8) Family, kinship, community and civil society; (9) Everyday life and (10) Whither Pakistan? The book is concluded with a brief 'Epilogue'. Each chapter deals with a different theme but it is based on the common day social phenomena supported by reliable data when required. Since the narrative of the book is simple and objective, the space for controversial issues has been squeezed significantly.

As reflected in the chapter headings, the themes covered in the book are multifarious and diverse. These include national traditions, ideology, demography, rural life Islamization, urbanization, family, kinship, civil society, ethnicity, Shari'ah, poverty, sectarianism, state, military and bureaucracy etc.

Notwithstanding its numerous merits, the book by Abdul Qadeer does have deficiencies and missing links which would be taken up in the concluding part of this review. Suffice would be here to state that the absence of a sound theoretical framework for analyzing cultural transformation

would be felt by any reader while going through the book. The approach of the author could be characterized as “sociological monolithicism” in the sense that the building blocks used in the analysis of social change in Pakistan predominantly belong to the discipline of sociology and that gives rise to questions such as: Are economy and society related to each other and is the cause and effect nexus between the two discernable in case of Pakistan? Does politics influence the cultural norms and behaviour of a community and if politics and culture have linkages, how would these explain the historical developments of the Pakistan society? How does religion affect the behavioral mores of the people of Pakistan which owes its *raison d'être* to religion itself. The last question has been explored in great details by the author and the theme of Islamization or Islamic revivalism carries a significant weight in the discourse on social change in Pakistan. The question of linking economy and society has been examined in the book, though some critical aspects of economy-society links have been grossly neglected. However, it is the role of politics in defining the landscape of a culture, which has been ignored in the study to a large extent. In this sense, there are visible gaps in the analysis which apparently have reduced the vigour and vitality of some of the main arguments and conclusions of the book.

### A Caveat

Islamization or Islamic revivalism happens to be the *leitmotif* of Abdul Qadeer's study. Islamization as a conscious and state-driven enterprise has had its origins in the second half of the twentieth century which continues to keep its momentum till today and has affected almost every thread, colour and pattern of social tapestry of Pakistan. Economy cannot be an exception to the Islamic paradigm. In fact, economic factors carry their impact on the social structure through myriad and varied channels. It is surprising

therefore to find only one para captioned "*Fostering an Islamic Economy*" in Chapter 7 of the book at page 168 to deal with this vast subject. The core theme of Islamization of economy relates to what is called Islamic banking or Islamic financial system etc which is supposed to operate on an interest-free basis. A vast literature has appeared in the Muslim world on the subject of Islamic banking and the related themes. Since this theme was left wanting in the book, this review has attempted to focus on the contradictions and inconsistencies of Islamic banking in Pakistan to establish that the whole venture of Islamic banking is hypocritical in nature and violates the fundamental precepts of Islamic Sharia'h.

The current and the futuristic scenarios of Pakistan have been analyzed in great details in the book especially in Chapter 10: *Wither Pakistan?* This is followed by a brief "*Epilogue*" which also focuses on the future of Pakistan, a subject which has attracted the attention of scholars and social scientists in Pakistan and rest of the world during the last two and half decades. The Pakistani analysts and researchers are contributing to this vital theme on a continuous, in fact, almost on a daily basis. This review incorporates in a succinct manner some of the key issues highlighted by the contemporary writers on Pakistan's present day predicament. Thus the analysis of Abdul Qadeer of 2006 vitage has been supplemented and carried forward which could provide a stimulus to Pakistan's policy-makers, political scientists and strategists to refocus on the serious existential challenges faced by Pakistan.

### The Trilogy of Analysis and the Historical Mapping

One of the interesting aspects of Abdul Qadeer's analytical approach relates to the choice of building blocks which are tripartite in nature. Whether by design or by default, this aspect does attract the attention of every serious reader of his book. To illustrate, three pivotal institutions of

Pakistani society are identified which serve as the main fulcrum for socioeconomic change. These institutions are religion (Islam), family and occupation (work). Apparently, this trilogy of institutions is not comprehensive enough to fully account for the social changes in Pakistan for the last five to six decades. There are other enduring institutions such as judiciary, military, executive, political parties and parliament which affect social behavior in a significant way, yet surprisingly, these are not rigorously factored in the wider analysis undertaken in Abdul Qadeer's book.

The author divides the economy into three sectors namely the modern or the formal sector, (consisting of private and public corporations, professional establishments and government departments), the 'bazar' or the informal sector (concentrated in small family enterprises) and the underground or "illicit" sector (associated the smuggling, drug-trafficking, black-marketeering and corruption-driven activities).

Then come the three processes which interact and complete with each other to bring about socioeconomic transformation. These processes are modernization, indigenization and Islamization. However, the author in certain sections of his book substitutes 'indigenization' with 'globalization' as the third process. The main stream of his discussion is restricted to modernization and Islamization as the two principal processes with some peripheral treatment of the third process i.e. indignation or globalization.

The author divides Pakistan's social history into three periods with each period responding to "particular ideological themes and power configuration of the government of the time." (p. 23). The periods are (1) 1947 – 71, which focused on attempts at nation-building and modernization; (2) 1972 – 77, marked by populist claims for egalitarianism as put forward by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto; and (3) 1977 – present, a period characterised by the interplay of the forces of Islamization, modernization and globalization.

The trilogy reappears in the third period which, according to the author, is characterized by three features that land it a certain degree of unity as a historical phase. First, the institutionalization of military's direct dominance of government and economy is the major development of this era. Second, the revivalist thrust in Islamic ideology and culture was witnessed in this period. Third feature of this period has been reflected in the accelerating modernization of the material base of the country.

### Microscopic View of Pakistan's Society

Intimate knowledge and minute details about the cultural and social aspects of Pakistani life provided in the book make it a fascinating piece of work. References abound about the people, the norms and modes of activity which are stunning in their impact as these reflect the microscopic and grass root picture of different aspects of Pakistani society and culture. A keen interest is evoked by the author when he makes a mention of *kundas* (tapping into power lines to get an unauthorized supply) (p. 104), *musallis* (untouchables who were converted to Islam), (p.113), the *Yamla jat* (naïve farmer) the stereotype of early 1950' (p. 122); the breakdown of *Seypi* system of cultivation, (p. 126); Pashtoon operators / drivers enjoying monopoly of Karachi local transport system (p. 127); and popular television serials of the period 1979 – 1992 such as *Waris* (The Heir), *Deewarain* (The Walls), *Tanhaiyan* (Lonelines), *Ghardish* (Going in circles) and *Chand Grahān* (Eclipse of Moon) (p. 136)

All these observations make the narrative of the book personal, interesting and useful. This view is substantiated when the author presents the social impact of migration and the newly acquired affluence of the migrating families. He captures this impact with his classic observations as given in the following paragraph:

“Prosperity does not lead to the modernization conceived by theorists. Social conservatism increases as households with a lower status climb the social ladder. For example, women of migrant households start observing purdah (veil) and stop working in fields, as they become more “respectable”. More money also means that those who could not have afforded them before could now follow religious and spiritual practices of the traditional rich. Holding *Khatam-e-Quran* (organized readings of the Quran) feasts, slaughtering goats at Eid-ul-Azha (annual festival of sacrifices), offering *nazrana* (ritual alms) at a shrine, or performing Haj (pilgrimage to Mecca) are practices that have become common among migrant households. What it means is that traditions and religious observances are reinvigorated with material advancement. Social change proceeds as much by incorporating traditions and reviving religious practices as by adopting modern material ways. Migration is a driving force in this dialectical process.”

That a close relationship exists between the material success and religious observances is an important discovery about the social ethos of the Pakistani society. In other words, wealth strengthens conservatism without diluting or undermining the modernist propensities. Hence the Pakistan society continues to live in the dialectical process and the behavior of wealthy migrant families is one such manifestation of this process.

### Nature of Urban Transformation

A valuable insight about urban transformations has been provided in the book by means of configuring economic sectors and circuits which serve as the foundation of fragmented cities.” (P. 94). First, the three parallel modes of

operation in Pakistan's economy are identified: (1) the "modern" or the "formal" sector; (2) the informal or the 'bazaar' sector; and (3) the "illicit" or the "underground" sector, as have been defined above. "Each of these sectors is vertically divided into circuits of higher and lower order according to size, economic and political power and market areas". (P. 93). By looking carefully at the interflows and input-output relationships between the three economic sectors and the complex hierarchy of multiple circuits, one can better understand the dynamics of social and economic change outside and within the cities. The configuration of sectors and circuits provides a framework to further probe and dissect the existing social layers and stratifications.

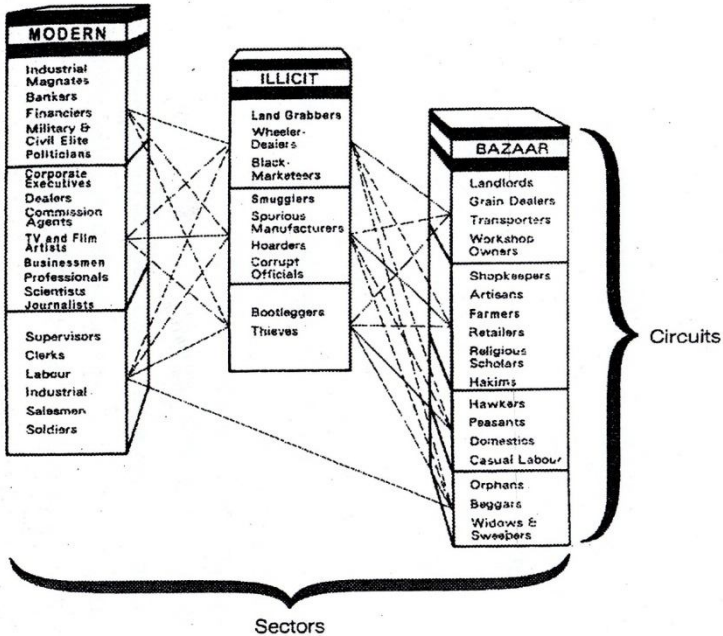
According to the author, "sectors and circuits differ not only in mode of operations and organization, but also in the business culture and participants' lifestyles. The bazaar sector in general and the lower circuits of the other two sectors in particular operate in vernacular norms and languages. Those involved in these sectors and circuits tend to be guided by local knowledge and family/caste traditions and values. A bearded Haji who shrewdly pursues profits and riches shrouded in an aura of piety and modern sector is the symbol of this business culture." He further adds: "The upper circuits of the modern sector are more affected by capitalist ethos and Western values. English is in common use and participants imbibe cosmopolitan lifestyles. The point is that sectors and circuits differ not only in modes of operation, but also by institutional culture. They represent variant lifestyles and subcultures. This diversity of economic organizations and group cultures underlies the fragmentation of urban structure." (P.93).

As the attached diagram (it appears as figure 5.1 at page 94 in the original text) shows that the Pakistani society is not only highly segmented but the "illicit", economy and "illegal" activities have a share in the range of 30 to 40 percent in the national gross product (NGP). These activities are carried out by unlawful agents such as black marketers,



smugglers, hoarders, hoarders, corrupt bureaucrats and spurious manufacturers. Their share of the national income remains outside the tax net and is thus the principal factor of low tax mobilization in Pakistan.

### Pakistan Economic Sectors and Circuits



### The Islamization and Its Impact on Pakistan Society

Islamization or Islamic revivalism is a recurrent theme of the book and it is evaluated in juxtaposition to the contemporaneous process of modernization. Chapter 7 of the book entitled "Islam and social life" deals holistically with this particular theme.

Abdul Qadeer claims that whereas modernization has some universal values and institutional form, Pakistan's

Islamization has by and large, not realized both these in ideals and practice. He goes a step further and suggests that "it has fostered social division by giving rise to Islamic segments in schools, colleges, professions, politics and social classes." (P.185). His indictment of the process of Islamization is quite unfavorable. In his words:

"The Islamization process in Pakistan has shown no promise of realizing increases in productivity, socio-economic equalization, efficiency, rationality, orderliness, punctuality, gender equality, individual rights, freedom, and the ideals of modernity."

In sum, Islamization simply does not come close to meeting the requirement of a modern industrial organization. All this gives the impression that Islamization as practiced in Pakistan is anti-development and anti-progress.

The book critically examines the question as to "how Islamization has been affecting the process of modernization in Pakistan?" The author of the book then suggests that the "two processes are largely compartmentalized in their respective spheres, namely material and legal / cultural. Yet they clash as well complement each other in myriad ways. The net result is a state of moral uncertainty and social cleavages." This predicament of a state of conflict between the two principal determinants of social transformation also explains the prevalent conditions of disorder, chaos and disequilibrium in Pakistan. Only an harmonious synthesis between these powerful forces can help the society to make a move towards stability and prosperity.

Islamization, *per se*, has affected the social fabric of Pakistan in myriad but fundamental ways. To start with, the process of Islamization has raised the status of the Ulemas and Mullahs offering to them new but lucrative opportunities in public affairs and making them rich and powerful. "They

reside in posh bungalows, chauffeured around in fancy cars and employ security guards for their protection. Occupational affiliation with Islamic institutions has become economically rewarding." (p. 184)

It can be inferred that with wealth and status, the clergy in Pakistan has re-emerged as a political force to reckon with. However, the author believes that the new powers for the clergy may not be conducive for social harmony and tranquility. He claims:

"Islamic revivalism is as much a drive for power and authority by Ulemas and Islamists as a movement to advance their ideological visions. By claiming to be the exclusive agency for interpreting divine edicts in human affairs, Ulemas and Islamists assert a veto right over legislative, social and political processes. It is this assertion of the right to be exclusive interpreters of Islamic laws that is the source of tension between modernity and Islamic revivalism." (P.305)

The subsequent discussion would show that the predominant influence of the clergy as "the exclusive interpreters of Islamic law" has been ubiquitous and a major block to enlightenment liberalism and social development.

### Scourge of Sectarianism and Role of the state

Chapter 7 of the book, *inter alia*, provides the reader with useful information and insight about the scourge of sectarianism which essentially got its roots in General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization policies. Various aspects of sectarianism are diagnosed in the book and vital conclusions are drawn such as: (1) Sectarianism grew in parallel with the Islamization process. (2) The precedent of pursuing the state's power into the service of sectarian objectives, first applied to expel the Ahmadis from Islam, has embroiled the

state in denominational disputes. (3) Sectarianism has become a source of endemic violence, largely through acts of terrorism. (4) Sectarianism is largely an urban phenomenon. Religious seminars and Madrassahs are the nurseries of sectarian soldiers. (5) Zealous Mullahs have used blasphemy and Hadood laws to harass rivals and to foment sectarian hostilities. (P. 179). Looking deep into the origin and the spread of sectarianism in Pakistan, one gets the tacit impression that the state has been a partner, a promoter and a catalyst of sectarianism and the resultant terrorism in the country. This is certainly a painful and unnatural phenomenon, which is undermining the very foundations of Pakistan nation.

This deduction is established and verified by the events of violence and mayhem which continue to occur till to-day with the same regularity, ferocity and intensity as nobody is held responsible for the recurrent sectarian crimes. The fast deterioration in the law and order situation in the country and the uninterrupted episodes of killings of innocent people only confirms the complicity of the state agencies in the heinous crimes of sectarian violence and mass murder. Abdul Qadeer puts it rather succinctly; "Pakistan at the turn of century was a country where insecurity and anxiety were the pervasive feelings, arising from bomb blasts, random sectarian killings and attacks on mosques." (P. 267)

We have to agree with the author's claims that "Islamic revivalism includes social justice as one of its ideal, but Pakistan's Islamic political parties are more concerned about covering women's faces or enforcing prayers and fasts than establishing minimum wage" ( P 270). Again the author is correct in his perception that "Islamic revivalism is the most pervasive form of reinvented tradition. It promotes a puritanical vision of society organized around Shari'a Laws." (P 271).

## Roots of European Renaissance and Reformation

The author seems to inadvertently run into a serious deviation when he writes: "As a social movement, Islamic revivalism parallels the contemporary evangelism in the USA and Europe and the messianic Judaism of Israel. It offers a belief system and emotional sustenance for the recently prospering and largely urban class segments of professionals and merchants. Islamic revivalism is the ideology of those climbing out of an agrarian/feudal milieu into an urban/commercial order. Functionally, it resonates with the Protestant ethics that complemented the spirit of nascent capitalism in the Europe of the seventeenth or eighteenth century according to Max Weber's famous thesis." (P. 71).

All the assertions embodied in the above paragraph are contestable. Islamic revivalism pertains to a religion which claims universality and transcends race, colour or nationality, and as such cannot be compared to Judaism which is exclusive to the Jewish race. Similarly it is difficult to agree with the author that Islamic revivalism provides "emotional sustenance for the prospering and urban segments of professionals and merchants". In fact, Islamic revivalism has greater appeal for the religious minded, the rural classes, the mullahs and clergy, the uneducated, and the laity. Further the claim of the author that functionally, Islamic revivalism resonates with the Protestant ethics appears to be farfetched and over-stretched. The roots of the Protestant ethics can be traced to the twin movements of Renaissance (14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Century) which brought about scientific thinking and progress and Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century which diluted the strong influence and hold of the orthodox Catholic Church on the daily lives of the Europeans.

The origins of Reformation are traced to the thinking, preaching and writings of Martin Luther (1483-1546) of Germany and John Calvin (1509-1564) of France. Luther's thinking condemned all modes of exploitation in the daily conduct of life such as monopolies, high prices, speculative

ventures, excessive love of wealth, trading in luxuries and usury i.e. the abnormally high rates of interest or profits. On the other hand, John Calvin's teaching emphasized Diligence, sobriety, tolerance, discipline, punctuality and frugality as Christian virtues. According to Calvin's philosophy, poverty is not justified but pursuit of riches should not permit reckless pleasure seeking. Moreover, idleness was regarded as the cardinal sin while profit, wages and interest were all permissible but these must be kept within reasonable limits and should not hurt the poor. Some interesting and fascinating discussion of the thinking of Luther and Calvin and their impact is given in Max Weber (1930) and R.H. Tawney (1926).

The original teachings of Islam fully endorse and build on all these values but unfortunately, there is a visible shift in the weight, scale and the emphasis on the value system under the newly advanced Islamization or Islamic Revivalism. Islamization as preached and practiced at present is reflective of extremism, dogmatism, puritanism, fundamentalism and sectarianism and this interpretation is duly elaborated in the book under review. What is critical in the contemporary social history of Pakistan in particular and other Muslim countries in general is clear regression from modernization which has led the Western world towards scientific progress, welfare state, religious pluralism and social justice etc to medievalism characterizing bigotry, intolerance, repression and fanaticism. The author clearly states: "The revivalist project in Pakistan promotes social conservatism, emphasizing vital pieties, women's segregation, rigid dress code, ascetic life routines, and a collectivist ethos." Then he adds: "So far this model has delivered little to improve daily life." (P.271)

### Social Contradictions and Conflicts

As pointed out earlier, Pakistan's social fabric remains under serious threat on account of innumerable paradoxes,

contradictions, conflicts, divisions and dualities. These contradictions which have grown along the historical evolution of the country permeate every layer and strata as well as across all spheres of social activity as graphically presented and analyzed in the book. As the centrifugal forces and movements with ever increasing strength and power overwhelm the feeble and diminishing centripetal movements, the society as a whole vacillates in a state of continuous disequilibrium. It is precisely due to these very contradictions and paradoxes that Pakistan of 1947 vintage was dismembered that led to creation of Bangladesh in 1971. Despite this catastrophic development, we have not learnt anything from history.

The book by Abdul Qadeer not only highlights these paradoxes but also its impact on the perspective developments of the Pakistan society. According to the author, despite long Muslim rule in India, the former Hindu castes kept their lands and ancestral identities as Rajputs, Jats, Junejos, Dasrs etc while craftsmen continued with their hereditary occupations and identities, classified in occupational castes, such as weaver, carpenter, barber or potter. Furthermore, as a consequence of the conquest by the Muslim dynasties the local tribal identities were overlaid with the conqueror's privileged status as Ashrafs (noble born) to form Muslim castes such as Sayyids, Qureshis, Ghaznavis, and Mughals." (P.113) He then adds: " The Muslim castes are endogamous and confer identity and status on individuals. This is how tribalism morphed into castes and clans..... and a typical village reflects Zat and biradari heirarchies, which correspond to the hereditary occupations and corresponding social standing, layered hierarchically into landlords, tenants, farm workers, maulvis (priests) and *Kammis* (serving castes such as cobblers, carpenters, matchmakers, and cleaners. (p.114).

The moral of the story is that the caste formations, various forms of tribalism and iniquitous land tenure system can be interpreted as the basic sources of social

contradictions which have persisted throughout the evolution of Pakistani culture. These contradictions have magnified as the process of urbanization has gathered momentum, and have fed into the divisions and dichotomies quite visible in the everyday life in Pakistan. Therefore the author is on point when he observes: "Everyday life in Pakistan is a mosaic of intersecting circles of different lifestyles and separated circuits of activities. Difference are stark, visible in dress, food, language, gestures, working conditions, deportments, homes and neighborhoods etc." (P231).

From the details of cultural groupings in Pakistan as given in Chapter 9 of the book (and outlined above) and those of economic sectors and circuits provided in Chapter 5 Urban transformation, one can clearly understand the deep divisions and dichotomies defining the social structure of Pakistani nation. These divisions only generate social regression rather than progress. There is hardly any country or a nation in the world, which exhibits such social layers and stratifications as are manifest in case of Pakistan.

### Blasphemy Law and its Impact

Blasphemy Law passed in 1986 during Zia's regime has serious implications for Pakistani society. In the context of this Law, Hussain (2012) highlights the ever rising tempo of radicalization in Pakistan which resulted in the murder of Punjab Governor, Salman Taseer in January 2011 by his own guard Mumtaz Qadri who was claimed as a hero and even a section of the lawyers community showered rose petals on him as he appeared in the court.

In recent times, on November 4, 2014 a mob in Kot Radha Kishan, in South of Lahore lynched a Christian couple (Shahzad Masih & his wife Shama) and then burned them in the kiln where they worked and earned their livelihood. A pen picture of the ghastly murder of the victims of radicalized society is drawn by Mir (2014) which runs as following.



“Let the image of Shahzad and Shama stay in your memory -- a family portrait with a colourful sheet displayed as a background, representing places they wanted to visit with their current and unborn children. Let their screams be instilled in your head as they were dragged across the dirt, blood flowing relentlessly from their lacerated bodies. Picture it. The blow to the head, the violent pull of the blood soaked hair. Engorged eye-balls begging for mercy. The earth must have turned crimson for a second with blood and then turned indifferent, as it always has, towards the life that it sprouts along with the death and blood that it absorbs. A brick kiln and the charred mutilated bodies of Shahzad and Shama, picture it. And then picture an eerie silence. Anger, disgust, outrage flowed. The same routine of calling for a report, and inquiry committee and speedy justice followed. In the larger scheme of things this is the equivalent of whispering, “terrible” and shaking your head as you move on to the next task.

Shahzad and Shama were accused of committing blasphemy. However, the examples of acts of extremism abound as we look back at Pakistan social history, which in the final analysis are causing massive haemorrhage in the social order and significantly weakening the Pakistani nation. It is not only the blasphemy laws but the radical mind-set of an average Pakistani which stimulates violence at the slightest pretext. Mir makes it clear when he adds:

“A lot of commentators, yet again, have brought the blasphemy law into focus. But no matter what you do with that law, it will do nothing to curb vigilante violence. A law on the books was not telling the local cleric to use his loud-speaker to spread death and incite violence. A particular mindset was.

His conviction that no one would stop him was crucial. The mob's abiding belief that the police would be helpless was equally relevant. And if you needed further evidence that the law has nothing to do with this, you just need to read about the latest incident in Gujrat: a policeman killing an accused with an axe during interrogation for blasphemy."

The change of the mind-set at a wider scale is a *sine qua non* for survival of Pakistan and its people. One of the manifold steps required for the mental transformation of the masses relates to introduction of an educational system which encourages scientific enquiry and rational thinking rather than pursuit of dogma. To achieve this objective, we have to remove the dualism in our system of education, which has persisted for a long period of time. Since long, the Muslim societies including that of Pakistan have suffered from multiple forms of dualism, and one specific form relates to Muslim education. This has been vividly highlighted by Professor Kenneth Craig of Sussex University in his celebrated "*The Mind of the Qur'an*" published in 1973. His observations are worth noting as he writes:

"There has long been a painful dualism in Muslim education. Theological and exegetical learning, with all its erudition and minutiae, is seriously remote, both in temper and in content, from the areas of life and study proper to engineers, technicians, physicists and men of affairs, struggling to overtake the pace of change. They find little leisure for what their criteria regard as the irrelevancies of shaikhs and mullahs. The latter, in turn, retreat from the real issues into bastions of dogmatism, or rely on harmonies of religion and science which do justice to neither. So there is disquiet on the one side and impatience on the other." (P.22)

## Islamization of Economy or Institutionalized Hypocrisy

Islamization of Pakistan economy was initiated by General Ziaul Haq as a serious project with the key component of introducing an interest-free banking system. This important issue has been dealt with in a perfunctory manner in the book under review. His contention that the *Zakat* tax as a compulsory annual deduction from the bank accounts generated a hypocritical system as a large number of bank account holders avoided *Zakat* deductions by filing false affidavits that they were followers of *Fiqh Jaffaria*. As regards the venture of Islamization of the banking system, immense energies were expended during Zia's rule and afterwards, to evolve a financial system without the norm of interest. In this quest, hundreds of books and reports and virtually thousands of articles were published by the Muslim scholars throughout the world to find out a practicable and viable Islamic financial framework which would operate without the norm of interest. The universally held belief among the Muslim Ulema and exegetes that the Riba prohibited in the Qur'an refers to bank interest was the driving force behind the enterprise of interest-free banking. Whereas massive literature was published in the last quarter of the twentieth century to provide theoretical support to interest-free banking, there was simultaneously a mushroom growth of financial institutions claiming to operate in sync with Islamic precepts of the Qur'an and Sharia'h.

It is ironic that the writings which expose the vacuity and implausibility of Islamic banking are extremely limited. Only a small number of researchers have picked the courage to challenge the mainstream proponents of Islamic economics or Islamic system banking. However a reference could be made to kazmi (1992, 1999 ,2000 and 2001) which make use of an integrated approach based on the three tiers namely etymological, epistemological and heuristic and

through the use of this approach Riba is defined as “ the sum total of all excess charges, exploitative payments and surplus value which one party realizes at the cost of the other without any quid pro quo, in trade, business and other transactions.” This definition helps in clearly differentiating between interest and Riba and also exposes the duplicity of Sharia’h experts who justify the use of mark-up (another term used for fixed interest rate) but disown the norm of interest.

Khan (2013) is undoubtedly the most outstanding and scholarly work on the subject of Islamization of economy. It is not only extensively researched and represents a critical appraisal of what the author calls the “establishment thinking” on the subject of Islamization and to which he himself contributed in a big way for about four decades and now all that he wrote or advocated as Islamic economies etc is refuted by him. While calling his gigantic intellectual enterprise of twenty two chapters spread over 503 pages as an attempt at self-rebuttal, his indictment of Islamic economics is sharp and focused. He writes:

“Most of what goes under the rubric of Islamic economic is a crude mimicry of conventional economics embellished with verses of the Qur’an and Traditions of the Prophet. Muslim scholars have failed to delineate Islamic economic teaching (which should be a social and behavioral science). A proper discipline of Islamic economics should consist of hypotheses, theories and laws that are verifiable or falsifiable. However, most of the knowledge content in the body of Islamic economics does not meet the criteria. At best we can treat that material as restatement of Islamic economic teachings stated in modern economic jargon. It remains, by and large, theology and cannot be termed a social science, as it has not been formulated in a format that can be

tested, nor is there any Islamic society where it can be verified." (P.xv)

In the similar line of argument, his evaluation of Islamic finance or Islamic banking system (ostensibly on an interest free basis) is candid and deserves the full attention the Muslim scholars:

"The contemporary movement of Islamic finance that has manifested itself in the form of Islamic financial institutions is based on the assumption that all forms of interest are *riba* and hence prohibited. It professes to have put its business on a basis other than interest. However, in practice these institutions have devised a whole host of ruses and subterfuges to conceal interest. The entire effort in the name of Islamic finance requires rethinking on the criteria of economic efficiency and risk mitigation. In the name of Islamic finance, Muslims have devised a mechanism of banking which does exactly what conventional banks are doing but in more inefficient and riskier ways. The same is true for Islamic insurance (*takaful*)". (P/XVI)

Islamic banking or Sharia banking has been examined by Fatah (2011) and he concludes that under Islamic banking, interest can be masked under the *niqaab* of *Mudarba*, *Musharaka*, *Murahaba*, and *Ijara* and for that very reason, Sharia banking is essentially a hypocritical undertaking. He refers to the book "*Islamic Banking: A \$300 Billion Deception*" authored by Muhammad Saleem, former President and CEO of Park Avenue Bank in New York which claims: "Islamic banks do not practice what they preach: they all charge interest, but disguised in Islamic garb. Thus they engage in deceptive and dishonest banking practices." (P.261)

## "The Reconstruction of Economic Thought in Islam"

In his "*The Reconstruction of Economic Thought in Islam*" Kazmi (2015, forthcoming) develops upon the basic theme that the common notion that interest is prohibited in Islam has no foundations.

The book defines and differentiates the dual concepts of Riba and interest, and establishes the legitimacy of interest from the Qur'anic perspective while exploring the psychological and economic basis of this important social norm.

The critical message of the book is that Riba which is condemned in the Qur'an in strongest possible terms, encompasses all configurations of "unjust" and "unequal exchange", all sources of unearned income and all means of exploitation pertaining to feudal, capitalistic and financial modes of transaction and activity. Since interest reflects the price or cost of hiring the services of capital, it is fundamentally different from the concept of Riba. When price of capital reaches the limits of exploitation, it is called "unsury" and in this sense "unsury" and not interest, is akin to Riba, forbidden in Islam.

By equating interest with Riba, the Muslim societies all over the world have continuously suffered from unwarranted paradoxes and painful contradictions. This is the natural outcome of the static attitude adopted by Muslim jurists towards economic realities. As Allama Muhammad Iqbal in his "*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*" repeatedly suggests, the Muslim Ummah should adopt dynamic modes of life by employing the principle of *Ijtihad*. It is by adopting this principle that we can dispel the historically maintained anathema towards the institution of interest all over the Muslim world. The title of the book and

its basic theme derive their inspiration from Allama Iqbal's message.

## Whither Pakistan?

### The Futuristic Scenarios

The last chapter of the book deals with the most critical question: Whither Pakistan? The author makes use of multifarious building blocks mostly belonging to the sociological sphere to answer this question. As a first step, he picks up development and modernization as the conceptual yardsticks for analyzing social change and then identifies the modernization ideals which are universal in scope such as technological mode of production, efficiency, organizations based on laws and reason rather than persons and customs, equality of opportunity, impersonalization of decision making, punctuality, enterprise and innovation etc. Then he refers to the institutional imperatives affecting the process of modernization in Pakistan namely to: (1) make synthetic provision of collective utilities and services for all, (2) organize space in urban modes, (3) develop civic order relevant for an urbanizing society and promote deliberated institutional development and cultural planning. Recognizing the state as the primary institution that can promote orderly social transformation, he concludes that the Pakistani state has been ineffective in fulfilling the institutional imperatives with the result that Pakistan is "turning into a weak state and a weak society". (P.261)

Against the background of a weak state and a weak society, a strong structure and agency of Islamization has appeared on the scene since General Zia's reign. The result is that social edifice of Pakistan now suffers from the triplicate structure i.e traditional-cum-historical, modernist and that of institutional Islam. Unfortunately, Islamic revivalism "defines moral, largely in terms of sexual mores, religious observances, and gender relations, remaining mostly silent about the challenges of impersonal relations,

bureaucratic institutions and balancing of public and private interests, the mass society of modern materialism" (P.272). As a consequence, "a traditionally organic society is being regimented into sharply differentiated groups of divergent life styles. Social distances are increasing and institutions are splitting. The fragmentation of society, without the common ground of an integrative moral order, is the challenge posed by the rapid social change in Pakistan". (P.279). The author suggests that the social change being complex, messy and contradictory in nature, the state has a critical role in bringing about socio-cultural transformation through deliberate reconstruction of institutions and through social legislation and public reforms. The state in Pakistan, however has starkly failed in fulfilling this vital responsibility.

In the 'Epilogue' of the book, Abdul Qadeer poses the two most relevant questions about Pakistan and then attempts to answer those questions which are"

- (1) hat could be the future of Pakistan as an independent state and society?
- (2) an modernization be integrated with Islamic revivalism in urban Pakistan?

To the first question, the author responds with somewhat subdued optimism that "Pakistan will be around in 2050 although it will certainly be nightmarishly crowded (population projected to be 250 million in 2025 and 344 million in 2050, hyperurbanized, relatively poor, and reaching limits of land, water and environmental resources". (P.300). Then he adds: "Pakistan may linger in a state of continual turmoil but it is unlikely to fall apart". (P.301).

Regarding the second question which relates to the possibility of integration of modernization with Islamic



revivalism, the author shows his objectivity and candour when he explains:

The revivalist movement has a wide range of ideologies. In Pakistan, it includes Islamic political parties currently following the electoral route to power, although the opportunistically also use violence to pursue their goals. It also includes freelance *mullahs* who proclaim Islamic rule in a locality, issue *fatwas* (juridical opinions), persecute nonconformists and challenge the state's authority. Farther to the right in the revivalist tent are *Jehadis*, sectarian purists and self-proclaimed enforcers of Islam, who terrorize citizens for "un-Islamic behavior," particularly women and minorities. They have caused mayhem and violence to the extent that Pakistan's peace and security are jeopardized. Various Islamists tend to undo each other in extremist or fundamental interpretations of Islam. Pakistan as a state and society will continue to be in moral confusion and raked by violence as long as these groups operate with relative impunity. It will be a society living on the brink of social breakdown. This is the pessimistic scenario. (P.306)

He also presents his optimistic scenario, but looking at the host of assumptions which *prima facie* are unrealistic and unobtainable under the current conditions of Pakistan, it is difficult to posit much confidence in the later scenario.

A vast literature has appeared during the last one decade or so dealing with the futuristic scenarios of Pakistan, where political factors and political developments have been assigned the central role in the analytical framework. Some of the most recent analyses have incorporated the international political factors, especially linked with the foreign policy imperatives of the U.S as well as the political

events and developments in Pakistan's immediate neighbours such as India, Afghanistan and to a lesser degree to those of China, Iran and Middle East. Ahmed (2002), for example, draws some of the most pessimistic conclusions about Pakistan's future based on geopolitical conditions faced by the Pakistani nation in the recent times. In the end of his essay "*Pakistan in the next 25 years*", his pessimism appears rather unprecedented and unwarranted when he writes:

"Some of the predictions are not long term. Pakistan's collapse as a consequence of the war in Afghanistan is a short-term prediction which can come true much before the 25 years are over and much before India emerges as a world economic power. India's future is pegged to its ten years of economic recovery, starting in 1991, when it began its gradual abandonment of the socialist economic model ordained in the Preamble of its Constitution. Pakistan's economic collapse, partially in evidence in 2000, is supposed to go on over the coming decades, till presumably the nuclear state collapses. Its low economic growth and other negative human indicators are supposed to continue well into the second decade of 2000. (P.292)

Among the factors which are driving Pakistan to the status of a "failed state", Ahmed includes corruption of the elite in Pakistan, the compact of the army and the clergy to keep Pakistan as a warrior state, deterioration in the working of Pakistan's bureaucrats and especially its intelligence agencies such as Intelligence Bureau (IB), Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) which surprisingly is held responsible for some of the acts of sabotage within the country, a static vision of Islam, state encouragement and promotion of extremism, spreading of attitudinal violence and fundamentalism by

institutions, such as Shari'at Courts and Council of Islamic Ideology and finally the serious mismanagement of the economy leading to its near collapse.

In some of his related works namely Ahmed (2010) and Ahmed (2011), the same factors are taken up to diagnose the growing challenges and problems of Pakistan as a failing state. A couple of interesting observations would be relevant in the current debate on Islamization. One, General Musharraf in his tenure had promoted the process of Talibanization despite the famous Lal Masjid onslaught in which a large number of students and clergy had lost their lives. During the Musharraff rule, the number of madrassahs had proliferated in Pakistan and especially in its capital, Islamabad. Second, Iran and Saudi Arabia have been funding the two main sects of Islam leading to a situation of constant conflict within the Muslim societies, including Pakistan. Ahmed (2011) gives the message in clear terms.

“Saudi Arabia funded the jihad, it brought Pakistan its first installment of forty F-16 warplanes from the United States, it gave Pakistan the read money for its Zakat fund which now stands of almost Rs. 12 billion annually to be distributed among the poor but which went predominantly to seminaries during 1980. Saudi Arabia allowed Pakistan to buy Saudi oil on deferred payment, which meant free oil. The ‘Islamization’ of Pakistan under the military ruler General Ziaul Haq proceeded under the tutelage of Saudi Arabia.” (P.xiii)

## The Contemporary Analysts and Pakistan Predicament

A large number of analysts in recent years have focused on Pakistan and the challenges it is currently facing. Schmidt (2012) presents an unbelievable scenario in which some extremist Jihadist outfit like Lashkar-e-Taiba takes over

Pakistan along-with its nuclear assets and that induces a joint Indo-American intervention and invasion on Pakistan leading to catastrophic results such as the “unravelling” of the invaded country.

Marino and Natale (2013) also conclude in a comparable manner: “A number of scenarios may unfold in the future and at this point none are reassuring. Pakistan is on the edge of a precipice into which it risks falling. If it does so, there will be fateful and immeasurable consequences for its inhabitants, the region and for the rest of the world.” (p.176)

Kissinger (2014) presents a variety of paradigms relating to peace and order in different regions of the world including the South Asian subcontinent. He shows his concern for both India and Pakistan as the nuclear powers which have already fought four wars in 1947, 1965, 1971 and 1999. His observation on this subject needs greater introspection as he writes:

“The Indian and Pakistani nuclear establishments are, in the first instance, directed against each other, affecting the strategic equilibrium in two ways. The risks of escalation may reduce the likelihood of full scale conventional war on the subcontinent. But because weapon systems are so vulnerable and technically so difficult to protect against short-range attack, the temptation for preemption is inherent in the technology, especially in situations when emotions are already running high. In short, proliferation generates the classic nuclear dilemma; even when nuclear weapons reduce the likelihood of war they would gigantically magnify its ferocity were war to occur.”(p.338)

## Pakistan and the India Factor

The message and the warning given by Kissinger about a possible nuclear holocaust in the Indian subcontinent must be examined by scholars, military strategists and policy makers living on both sides of the border dividing Pakistan and India. For one important development, policy makers of Pakistan have to define a new strategy and a doctrine while living in a nuclear world. That development relates to the victory of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Indian Lok Sabha elections of 2014 and the elevation of Narendra Modi to the Prime Ministership of India, who as the Chief Minister of Gujrat is reputed to have masterminded and executed the violence and murder of innocent Muslims in 2002. He has in recent months also ordered the Indian army to target the Pakistani citizens which has led to numerous casualties on the Pakistan's side of the border. As the biography of Modi by Marino (2014) shows, with the change of the government, Hindutva as the ideology of hard core Hindus would be reasserted with great vigour and toughness. Modi as a pracharak of Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) had started attending shakha of the extremist Hindus organization when he was eight years old and later established his credentials and commitment to fanatic Hinduism.

Modi in brief, suffers from a peculiar mind-set and a philosophy which is based on anti-Pakistan and anti-Muslim *Weltanschauung*. Moreover, Pakistan's greater worry relates to the perennial imbalances between Pakistan and India in terms of economy, military and polity. Zaidi (2014) makes the following remarks about India:

“India is bigger, economically more dynamic, geopolitically more robust, militarily more secure, and internally more coherent than any of its neighbours. India has an assertive and highly educated middle class that seethes with ambition and

existential anger about India's role in the world, not just in the last 67 years, but more broadly since the Mughals ruled over Mother India. This anger has been farmed productively by third generation Hindu extremists (a la RSS and BJP), in partnership with big business in India, to produce an intimidating combination of competence and swagger. India enjoys this swagger not just on its own shores but also through its massive, incredibly wealthy and influential diaspora. Bottom line? India is already a regional behemoth, and its role in the world is going to keep growing."

As Hafeez and Munawar (2009) put it: "The question arises, why the international system does not want Pakistan in the map of the world anymore? (p.366). They respond that the present international system does not accept Pakistan because it is a nuclear and missile power country. This is quite true. But what is more worrisome is the fact that Pakistan is fast melting down due to its internal fissures and self-inflicted wounds. That is why Sattar (2014) raises the question: *In this ship sinking?*

Sattar in his article raises some basic questions: How do you correct a wrong without first acknowledging it? How do you stay optimistic about the prospects of your country when the naked truth paints a dark picture? Is living in make believe world the true mark of love and loyalty or acknowledging your failures and faults with the object of stimulating change? He then presents the dismal and painful picture of the contemporary Pakistan reflected in the growing intolerance in the society, rampant misuse of blasphemy laws, forceful conversion of Hindu girls in Sindh to marry the Muslims, waves of terrorists attack killing innocent people, dominance of Jihadist outfits all around the country, widespread nepotism in the public sector appointments including the heads of OGRA, FBR, SECP,

NAB etc, and the continuous rule of corruption and misgovernance in the country.

### Vacuum of Leadership and Agenda of Reforms

The author shows serious concern for the prolonged vacuum of enlightened and devoted leadership in Pakistan, which can be identified as the principal factor inhibiting economic growth and social transformation. He eagerly looks for a Pakistani Nelson Mandela, Mohatir Muhammad, a Lee Kuan Yew who could lead this poor nation to stability and prosperity. Once such an honest and competent leader assumes power he is expected to introduce "vigorous and wide-ranging institutional reforms". Such reforms would consist of multiple elements and measures such re-building an accountable bureaucracy, establishing an independent judiciary, rendering policy-making process transparent and equitable, promoting democratic political culture, introducing a system of checks and balances to preempt the abuse of power, ensuring fair distribution of resources, enacting provincial and regional rights in accord with social pluralism, avoiding the pitfalls and personality cult, guaranteeing freedom of expression and enforcing the merit principle in public affairs. (P. 302)

This is a long agenda. However, the author is cognizant of the contradictions and uncertainties of everyday life in Pakistan, the endemic poverty and unmanaged population growth, personalized and ad hoc dealings in public space sapping people's energies, and public policy failures which collectively contribute to "raising the frustration quotient of everyday life." (P. 257) As a corollary, the author recommends fulfilling the people's needs as the first prerequisite of social change. He concludes his outstanding treatise on Pakistan's social transformation with a critical observation. "By improving the economic and social conditions of living, Pakistan society's preoccupation with theoretical questions of Islam and modernity can be

bypassed and a dynamic equilibrium between ideals and reality can be struck. Pakistan should focus on people's everyday problems and not be frozen in esoteric ideological debates. Ideology that helps fulfill people's needs commands their commitment." (P. 306)

Based on the recommendations of a conference on Democracy and Governance Abid and Abid (2013) have come up with a larger and more comprehensive agenda for stability and revitalization of Pakistan society, which includes measures such as establishing think-tanks for formulation of national policies, giving an active role to committees of the Parliament for defining national strategies to respond to critical challenges faced by Pakistan, defining merit on all time basis for public appointments, adopting austerity to reduce fiscal deficit, chalking out a comprehensive employment plan, introducing progressive and equitable tax system, adopting specific measures to eliminates corruption, increasing efficiency and profitability of public corporations, activating judiciary for quick dispensation of justice, addressing law and order failure, raising the allocations to education to 4.0 percent of GDP as a minimum constructing small and large irrigation and power dams and finally developing a culture of accountability across the board.

That none of these reforms could be carried out in Pakistan is a foregone conclusion. That reflects a serious disconnect between in Pakistan, which is probably the most debilitating malady of Pakistan's socio-political system. The mighty rulers of this poor country have always shied away from learning or self-education. They always seek wealth and power but not knowledge.

### Identifying the Shortfalls and Missing Links in the Book

Even though, the book treats comprehensively diverse aspects of social change in Pakistan, its deeper reading gives an impression that some important and critical issues have



not been given the weight which is due to them. One such issue is that of feudalism. It happens to be a complete system reflecting a peculiar mind-set. It affects in a long way the social, cultural, economic and political mores and norms of a community. The socio-cultural history of both developed and the developing countries has given a clear verdict that without eliminating feudalism along with all its vestiges, no community can move up the path of socio-cultural transformation. This can easily be verified by social and political evolution of Pakistan during the last six decades or so. The scourge of feudalism has remained fully entrenched in the system because of its deep roots which have not been touched by the economic and social reforms introduced in the country from time to time.

### Failure of Land Reforms and Dominance of Feudalism

Land reforms at a massive scale and imposing agricultural income tax in a steeply progressive mode are the two basic means for uprooting feudalism and landlordism in Pakistan. Unfortunately, both these measures have eluded Pakistan for decades for the simple reason that from the day Pakistan come into existence, its destiny has been in the hands of influential feudals and powerful land-owners. The land reforms introduced by Ayub Khan and Zulfikar Bhutto in 1960's and 1970's respectively failed to make any dent in the ranks of dominating landlords. As a result of the first phase (1960's) of land reforms, only 1.9 million acres of dubious quality were surrendered by the landed aristocracy. In the second phase, Bhutto's Land Reform Ordinance (1972) lowering the ownership ceiling to 150 acres, did not have any substantive effect on the pattern of land distribution. The landlords were able to transfer their estates to their children and even to their loyal domestic servants and were thus able to nullify the objectives of land reforms. Finally when General Zia assumed power, he ruled out land

reforms even at a limited scale. The Islamization process initiated by him touched all spheres of religio-social life of Pakistan, but it suffered a death-knell at the doorstep of land reforms which otherwise could help the society's movement towards a degree of egalitarianism.

Notwithstanding the reforms, the land distribution in Pakistan remains highly skewed province-wise and nationally. The available data confirm this pattern of uneven distribution. In the province of Punjab, 39 thousand land owners with land holdings above 50 acres constitute 0.7 percent of all the land owners of the province and possess 41 lac acres of land which is 15.0 percent of the total agricultural area of the province. The number of landlords with land holdings above 50 acres is 10 thousand which are 0.6 percent of all land-owners in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and possess 10 lac acres of land which is 17.0 percent of the total agricultural land of the province. In case of Sindh the number of land owners in the category of above 50 acres' ownership are estimated at 37 thousand which is 3.8 percent of all land owners having a claim to 33 lac acres of land which is 31.0 percent of the province's total agricultural area. In Baluchistan, 27 thousand land owners i.e. 8.2 percent of total land owners possess 73 lac acres claiming 72 percent of the total agricultural area of the province.

Due to heavy concentration of farm land within a limited number of agricultural families, feudalism continues to dominate the politic-economic behavior and structure of the country. As such, feudalism is a major constraint on social transformation in Pakistan. A detailed analysis of the relationship between the feudalistic norms and social change in the context of Pakistan is urgently needed, which is apparently missing in the book.

Demography is an important dimension of the phenomenon of social change. In the book under review, this dimension has been given a nominal and peripheral treatment which is primarily restricted to demographic transition which has followed the wave and growth of

urbanization in Pakistan. However, the precise linkages at micro and macro level between the demographic characteristics (age-composition, gender distribution, educational profile, rural-urban division etc) and social change have not been analyzed as is expected in the work of such a scope and coverage. At the same time, the stakeholders in Pakistan can ignore at their own peril, the warning given in the book that population of the country would almost triple in the next 40 years and that "two new but densely populated Pakistan will have to be constructed despite scarcities and a huge backlog of unfulfilled needs." (P.303). Our policy makers must look critically at the concept of 'optimal population' given by Aristotle in his celebrated "*Politics*," when he advises that the population of a state should not be so large that it becomes difficult for the legal authorities to identify the foreigners living therein. Secondly the population should be of a size which can be provided with adequate food, clothing, shelter, basic education and health.

### Intellectual Traditions and Cultural Change

When analyzing the cultural transformation of a society, it is imperative that all the aspects of the culture of that society must be accounted for in the discussion. Hence the question: What is meant by culture? According to Concise Oxford English Dictionary, culture refers to "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively", and culture also embodies "the customs, ideas, and social behavior of a particular people or group". Surprisingly, however, Abdul Qadeer's book completely neglects the intellectual achievements and traditions of the Pakistan society including their roots, their nature and structure, development, dynamics as well as their impact on social behavior. Every society, at a given period of time has a stock of intellectual capital reflected in its literature, poetry, drama, writings and books, scientific and

technical works, literacy infrastructure and output and so on. The educational system covering the primary to the tertiary level (the universities and the academic institutions is the main source of generating knowledge and the associated intellectual outflows which feed into the society's existing stock of intellectual capital.

Looking towards West, one may pick up any discipline of study (history, sociology, politics, economics, physics, chemistry, mathematics, engineering and so on) only to discover how rich the West is in terms of knowledge and intellectual ripeness. Hundreds and thousands of individuals and institutions are contributing towards deepening and widening the knowledge flows and intellectual streams. Contrarily, the state of knowledge and intellectual traditions in the Muslim countries including Pakistan is dismally poor.

### **"The Closing of the Muslim Mind"**

There could be many causes of intellectual backwardness of the Muslims all over the world, but one historical and fundamental factor of this phenomenon has been identified by Reilly (2010). According to Reilly, the manner by which man uses his powers of reason has been a decisive factor in determining the shape and destiny of a civilization. The powers of reason are associated with logic, philosophy and rational thinking. It is through rational thinking that the "Western Civilization has continuously experimented with new institutions, new laws, new forms of political order, new scientific beliefs, and the new practices in the arts. And this tradition of experiment led, in time to democracy, and to a form of social order in which free opinion and freedom of religion are guaranteed by the state", as is explained by Roger Scruton in the foreword of the book.

Between the ninth and the eleventh century of our era, the Islamic civilization underwent a moral and intellectual crisis when "it turned its back on philosophy and took refuge

in dogma." During this critical period, an intense debate took place between the proponents of two major schools of Muslim thought namely the Mut'azalites (supporters of reason and philosophy) and the Ash'arites (antagonists of logic and rational thinking).

The two philosophers namely Ibn Sina or Avicenna (980-1037) and Ibn Rushd or Averroes (1126-1198) made outstanding contributions to the Mut'azalites doctrine while the two Muslim thinkers i.e. Abu Hasan al-Ash'ari (873-935) and Hamid al-Ghazali (1058-1111) are identified as the leading proponents and defenders of Ash'arite school founded by Abu Hasan himself. Whereas al Kindi (801-873) belonged to the Mut'azalite school, Ibn Hazm (994-1064) and al-Fakhr Razi (1149-1209) made their common cause with the Ash'arites. The main pillars on which the Mut'azalite philosophy stands can be identified as the harmonization of human reason with divine revelation; reason's ability to know morality; the goodness and justice of God as required by reason; the unity of God; and the necessity of man's free will.

As regards the Ash'arites, their belief system revolves around the two basic precepts that is radical voluntarism (God as pure will) and occasionalism (no cause and effect in the natural order). Al-Ghazali in his popular work *"The Incoherence of the Philosophers"* had established that the reason "leads to nothing save darkness and contradiction and the only light that shines in the mind is the light of revelation." The arguments of Al-Ghazali were refuted by Ibn Rushd in his equally known *"The Incoherence of Incoherence,"* but by this time, due to various historical factors, Ash'arite doctrine was accepted by the Muslim world and by the twelfth century, the Muslim mind was closed to reason for all times resulting in the ubiquitous decay and disintegration of the Islamic civilization.

Pakistan faces the same predicament today and the contemporary wave of Islamization or Islamic revivalism has sealed the fate of the Muslims living here which means more

decadence and deterioration of intellectual traditions stemming from the triumph of dogma over the institutions of reason and logic.

## Conclusion

The book by Muhammad Abdul Qadeer is an outstanding study of Pakistani society and its evolutionary movements of the last five to six decades. The study is comprehensive as it is based on diverse strands and processes affecting social change such as population growth, urbanization and urbanism, economic development and modernization, social mobility and migration, communication and information, internationalism and globalization and finally Islamism as the popular ideology. On the basis of a thorough analysis of these processes, the deep-rooted and manifold contradictions of the society have been identified and some thought-provoking futuristic scenarios of Pakistan have been developed. The book has clarity in its narrative and candour in its arguments. All those seriously interested in Pakistan studies would find the book beneficial and rewarding. As Pakistan stumbles from one crisis to another, the prognosis of the book has become all the more relevant.

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