



# **ZIA UL-HAQ – A LASTING IMPACT ON THE DIRECTION OF PAKISTANI POLITICS TOWARDS A FUNDAMENTALIST ISLAMIC STATE?**

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## **ZIA UL-HAQ – A LASTING IMPACT ON THE DIRECTION OF PAKISTANI POLITICS TOWARDS A FUNDAMENTALIST ISLAMIC STATE?**

*... we are starting in the days when there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State (Jinnah).*

*Indeed, if a secular and Godless, instead of Islamic, constitution was to be introduced and if the British Criminal Procedure Code had to be enforced instead of the Islamic Shari'a what was the sense in all this struggle for a separate Muslim homeland? ... Whatever the hurdles and however great they are, we have to continue our march towards our goal of a full-fledged Islamic state in Pakistan. (Maududi)*

*Neither Hindu nor Mussalman, let us sit and spin, abandoning the pride of religion. Neither Sunni nor Shi'a, I have taken the path of peace and unity. (...)*

*Bullhe! In all hearts I feel the Lord,*

*So I have abandoned both Hindu and Muslim. (Bullhe Shah) <sup>1</sup>*

### **Introduction**

Pakistan was founded in 1947 with Muhammad Ali Jinnah as its leader. Hoodbhoy describes Jinnah as “an impeccably dressed Westernized Muslim with Victorian manners and a secular outlook” (Hoodbhoy, 2004). The above excerpt of Jinnah’s speech to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in 1947 shows Jinnah’s conception of Pakistan as a secular state where Muslims would be equal citizens along with people of other faiths. However, as we shall see, this does not necessarily mean that he envisaged a state that did not act in religious matters.

The partition of India in 1947 meant the start of a debate and a political and moral conflict regarding the legitimacy and *raison d’être* of Pakistan. Should Pakistan be a secular state in which a Muslim majority would live side by side with members of other faiths (as was the intention of Jinnah, Pakistan’s founder), or should it be an Islamic state where Islamic law is the basis of the constitution. This debate intensified under General Zia ul-Haq (1977-1988) with the apparent rise to prominence of fundamentalists that adhered to the latter position (Haeri, 1993:198).

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<sup>1</sup> Sources of the citations

1) Muhammad Ali Jinnah in speech to the Constituent Assembly on 11 Aug 1947 (from Hay, 1988; p 384),

2) Syed Abu'l-ala-Maududi of the Jama'at-e-Islami in *Islamic Law and Constitution* (from Hay, 1988:403)

3) Bullhe Shah, 1680-1752, Punjabi Sufi poet (from Hay, 1988:486)

## Some terms and concepts of importance

The term religion can be explained in many ways. A sociological approach to the term is “a system of beliefs and practices related to an ultimate being, beings, or to the supernatural, or – that which is sacred in a society, that is, ultimate beliefs and practices which are inviolate” (Aquaviva 1979, cited in Haynes, 1998:4). A more operationalised approach for the context of religion and politics is to take one aspect of religion, namely *group religiosity* – of which Haynes says that its claims and pretensions are always to some degree political; there is no such thing as a religion without consequences for value systems. Group religiosity and politics are similar in the fact that they are a matter of collective solidarities but also of inter-group tension and conflict. They are focussed either on shared or disagreed images of the sacred, of culture or of class – and these are all political issues (Haynes, 1998:5).

Politics, in turn, is explained as the pursuit of power. But when power has been won it is also about how to exercise power and to regulate the conflicts that emerge between various interest groups (Haynes, 1998:4). Haynes states that if people are not especially religious, organized religion will often seek a public role, stating that society has taken a wrong turn, and needs religious values to get back on the right track. Religious leaders seek support from ordinary people by addressing “certain crucial issues, including not only the perceived decline in public and private morality, but also the insecurities of life ...” In Third World societies – where most people are already religious believers – religious groups focussing on disappointment at the outcomes of modernizing policies, will focus on and coordinate (political) opposition. If political leaders try to modernize society, religious traditions will respond. Thus in the Third World “in particular religion is often well placed to benefit from any strong societal backlash against the perceived malign effects of modernization” (Haynes, 1998:19).

Fundamentalism is a concept that is hard to define. The reason is that it mainly consists of organisations or movements that adhere to some sets of values, of which not all are present to the same extent in different movements. Marty and Appleby attempt to sum up a definition that takes up half a page, the main elements of which are something like “believers feeling their identity threatened, finding a strategy to preserve their identity, taking “fundamentals” from doctrine, beliefs or practices and using them to their end in a new context” (Marty & Appleby, 1991:835)

In the context of Islam, fundamentalism means the result of activities of a group of people that want to return to the fundamentals of Islam, taken to mean the Qur’an and the Sunnah (collection of sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammed), or to make Islam the fundament for all of society. This is in line with the above definitions of religion and politics: a religious group wants to gain power to mold society according to their own ideals. Despite the term fundamentalism’s roots in Christianity, several researchers use this word to describe something that is common for our time and that runs through all religions and faiths<sup>2</sup>.

Gilles Kepel uses the notion of fundamentalism in this way in his book *La revanche de Dieu* (Danish edition: *Gud tager revanche*), arguing that the present development within politics and religion is a result of the “crisis of modernism”. Vikør finds the parallels that Kepel draws between the “Abrahamic” religions dubious. The mid-seventies saw the election of the rightist Menachem Begin in Israel in 1977, of pope Karol Wojtyła (Pope John Paul II) in 1978 and by Jimmy Carter in the US in 1980, and Kepel interprets them as a sign for the turn from secularism to fundamentalism. Vikør says that these are very different types of phenomena

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<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the use of the term in non-Christian context, a typology of fundamentalisms and an attempt to account for fundamentalisms in South Asia, see Frykenberg (1994)

with differing underlying causes, and that it is hardly worth while to make this a proof of a world-wide tendency that finds its sources in the crisis of modernism (Vikør, 1995). I find it however, interesting that the consequences of all three elections are precisely what may be termed a reintroduction of God into political life, and Vikør's eagerness to dismiss Kepel also makes him overlook Kepel's observation:

...the breakthrough of the Islamic phenomenon often coincides quite precisely with the coming of age of the generation that is born after independence and the assumption of power of the indigenous elite

Kepel's examples from Egypt and Algeria show that this is a period of between 25-30 years (Kepel, 1992; p 220). Interestingly, the case of Pakistan follows the same pattern with Jinnah leading the country to independence in 1947, and General Zia ul-Haq's coup d'état exactly thirty years after, in 1977, whereupon he starts his islamization programme. However, his predecessor Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had been preparing the coming of Zia's programme, making the dividing line in the islamization programme anything but clear-cut. Bhutto needed and won the support of the Jama'at-e Islami and Maududi for his 1973 Constitution, in which Pakistan became the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and Islam was declared the state religion (Aijazuddin, 2004:9). Bhutto also was behind changing the official day of rest from Sunday to Friday, the prohibition of alcohol, of horse races and night clubs, and had announced that the sharia laws would be applied in Pakistan within six months. This did (partially) happen, but the person who implemented them was Zia ul-Haq, who ousted Bhutto from office soon after (Kepel, 2002:100). Apparently the dividing line between Bhutto's islamization and Zia ul-Haq's is that the latter managed to establish a host of Islamic or Islamicizing institutions in society, whereas Bhutto's contribution mainly consisted of establishing Pakistan as The Islamic Republic of Pakistan through his 1973 Constitution. A key player for the inclusion of Islamic provisions in this constitution was the party Jama'at-e-Islami, that against the Pakistan People's Party socialist majority in Parliament managed to lobby in what came to be "the most Islamic constitution in the history of Pakistan" (Ahmad, 1991:477)

### ***Secularism in the South Asian context***

It is not my intention, and it is also beyond the scope of this term paper, to review research literature for all discussions on the use of the terms secularism and fundamentalism. One relevant question to pose, however, is how the term secular is – or was – understood in the days of Pakistan's becoming independent. There seems to be a difference between the Western perception of secularism and a specific Indian approach. Pantham writes

In the West ...secularism usually refers to the state's separation from, or indifference toward, religion. Hence, the Western antonym of "secular" is "religious". In India, by contrast, it is "communal" that is the antonym of secular.

Indian secularism has furthermore been delineated by Smith thus:

To most Indians secular means non-communal or non-sectarian, but it does not mean non-religious. For most, the basis of the secular state is not a "wall of separation" between state and religion, but rather the "no-preference doctrine" which requires only that no special privileges be granted to any one religion (Pantham, Smith, in Aijazuddin (2004:9)

Further support to the idea that there is a special approach to secularism in the South Asian setting, is Mandair's statement that

Recent thinking about the question of religion, as opposed to assuming ready-made definitions of it (for example that religion is necessarily opposed to the political, meaning thereby that the political is necessarily based on the overcoming of the religious) suggests that there is a much stronger and often invisible connection between religion, enunciation and the political than is normally given credit (Mandair, 2004:649)

Mandair's argument is that until the advent of British rule, borders between many concepts, even that of "muslim" and "hindu" were blurred, and that Indian intellectuals reached new understandings or conceptualisations of themselves in the meeting with western thought. Thus, one conclusion of his own and other studies is that Indian languages do not possess a word for 'religion' as signifying something like a uniform and centralised faith community,

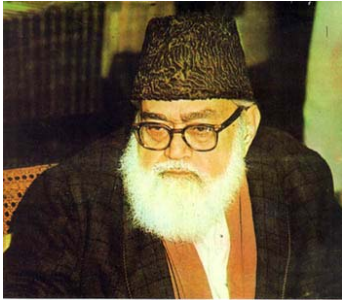
and most Indians participated in multiple religious and linguistic identities. That Hindus and Sunni Muslims in the Indian villages can eagerly participate in the Shi'a processions of mourning over the death of Imam Hussain in the month of Muharram is attested to annually on Shia news websites. I shall not enter into Mandair's rather complicated and philosophical discussion of our conceptions of India, and that India simply is providing 'response' to the Western quest for boundaries – even between religion and politics – the main point for this term paper is the dogma from Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, on the overcoming of religion:

The dogma consists in the idea that the standpoint of critical thinking or of the political is premised on the historicist overcoming of religion or the religious (Mandair, 2004:651)

Bhutto was born in India and educated in Britain and so was Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Their Western education could easily have implied that secularism to them was mainly a 'mark of modernity and metropolitan good taste' (Aijazuddin, 2004). The above discussion shows, however, that their Indian inventory of ideas contained a brand of secularism that did not rule out religion as part of state politics: The very call for Pakistan meant a call for a state where religion was a natural part of everyday life, and therefore could be a part of state affairs. As we have seen, this does not presuppose an overcoming of religion. There is ample room for Jinnah's statement "*that we are all (castes and creeds) citizens and equal citizens of one State*" in Pantham's definition of secularism. Bhutto and Jinnah's secularism can thus be said to lie somewhere between the Western perception of secularism and India's approach to the same (Aijazuddin, 2004:9).

The real shift to Islamicizing the state, however – in the sense of transforming the 1973 Constitution's formulation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan into reality in the form of Islamic institutions - comes with Zia ul-Haq.

## Fundamentalism in Pakistan – Syed Abul Ala Maududi and Jama'at-e Islami as a fundamentalist party



Syed Abul Ala  
Maududi

Source:

<http://www.abulala.com/shortbio.asp>

The course of events in Pakistan and the background for the urge for an islamisation programme cannot be understood without a brief mention of Maududi and the party Jama'at-e-Islami. Maududi (1903-79) has been called one of the most important thinkers of 20<sup>th</sup> century Islam and has become a symbol of the Islamic renaissance in our time. His influence on contemporary Islam is “so pervasive that, whether one agrees with him or not, no modern Muslim discourse on the social, economic, and political teaching of Islam can avoid using the terms first coined by him”. In 1941 he founded the Jama'at-e-Islami to give institutional shape to his ideas, and eventually a political party developed that took active part in (from 1947) what was to be Pakistani political life.

Maududi and his party took an indifferent stand in the creation of Pakistan as a home for a Muslim nation. The reason was Maududi's claim that Islam cannot be used as an ideological foundation for a nation state, since it is a universalist ideology. However, when Pakistan became a reality, Maududi moved part of his organization and himself to Lahore, from where they launched a massive campaign for the creation of a truly Islamic state in Pakistan (Ahmad, 1991:468)

The Jamaat-e-Islami's main emphasis is on resacralization of political life and the establishment of an Islamic state with the Qur'an and the Sunna as its constitution and the Shari'a as its basic law. The movement's literalist interpretation of the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet, and its hostility toward Islamic liberalism, give it the characteristics of a fundamentalist movement<sup>3</sup>. Its self-perception represents, however, a synthesis of tradition and modernity (Ahmad, 1991:458). The most important defining characteristic of the Jama'at-e-Islami is that they want political power because they believe that Islam cannot be implemented without the power of the state (Ahmad, 1991:463-4). On the other hand, Maududi does not recognise a secular sphere of society, and places the sovereignty of a state in God, stating that in secular states law is made by man, in Islam the laws are given by God through his prophet (Bruce, 2003:242) Bruce contends that Islam itself in this way prevents states from becoming strong units – precisely the reason why Maududi originally did not support the creation of Pakistan (Bruce, 2003:228).

Other main questions on which the Jama'at has taken a rigid and uncompromising position are: abolition of bank interest, introduction of the zakat system (obligatory alms for charitable purposes), introduction of Islamic penal and family laws, enforcement of a strict sociomoral code in sex roles, prohibition of birth control as a state-funded program, and suppression of heretical groups (Ahmad, 1991:463) A major defeat in the Parliamentary elections of 1970 where JI won only 4 out of 300 National Assembly seats, caused a shift in the party's policies

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<sup>3</sup> In a theoretical approach to establishing which movements can be characterised as fundamentalist, the Jama'at-e-Islami scores “high” on all particulars except millennialism on the “ideological ratings”, and high on two of four particulars in “organizational ratings”. This also establishes the Jama'at-e-Islami well into the fold of what is termed “Abrahamic Fundamentalism”. For the full discussion and establishing of the typology, see Almond, Sivan & Appleby (1995 I)

and working methods, all with the purpose of exerting continuing influence on the islamization of Pakistan. Ahmad states:

The disappointing results of the 1970 elections also psychologically prepared the leadership of the Jama'at to seek influence and power through nondemocratic means, including collaboration with the military regimes. The facility and ease with which the Jama'at joined hands with the martial law regime of General Zia ul-Haq in 1977 can be explained by their disenchantment with the democratic process which they had experienced in 1970 (Ahmad, 1991:476).

The zeal for political power to implement God's laws, and the JI's bad experience with democratic processes, to which they programmatically do not subscribe anyway, sets the stage for the alliance between themselves and a Zia ul-Haq in need of legitimacy for his rule.

## The case of Zia ul-Haq in Pakistan



Zia ul-Haq

Source: Story of Pakistan

The development in Pakistan and the coup d'état by Zia ul-Haq and his islamization programme, can be seen as follows: Earlier on, state leaders such as Turkey's Atatürk, Algeria's Bella, Indonesia's Sukarno, Egypt's Nasser and Pakistan's Jinnah organised their societies on the basis of secular values. The imperial interests of Britain and the United States caused the replacement of these regimes, in collaboration with such regimes as the ultraconservative Islamic regime of Saudi Arabia. Eventually, Britain ousted Nasser, US CIA ousted Sukarno in a coup etc. Secular, nationalist governments all over the Muslim world started collapsing. Internally corrupt and incompetent they proved unable to defend national interests or deliver social justice – in other words their legitimacy as governments waned. These failures in turn left a vacuum that Islamic religious movements grew to fill. (Hoodbhoy, 2002)



Timeline for Zia ul-Haq's regime (Source: Story of Pakistan<sup>4</sup>)

<sup>4</sup> The two pictures are taken from Story of Pakistan, an online web project, the two exact references are <http://www.storyofpakistan.com/person.asp?perid=P020&Pg=3> and <http://www.storyofpakistan.com/timeline10.htm>

With General Zia's military coup d'état of 1977, policies to Islamicize the nation can be said to have begun. From the outset, Zia ul-Haq allied himself with the fundamentalist organization Jama'at-e Islami – or as we have seen – the Jama'at allied itself with him. Thus, a revival of Islamic criminal law under the Hudood Ordinance was reinstated in 1979. (Haeri, 1993:202). Zia's policy had special effects on women's rights – Zia promised to return women to the sanctity of the chardivari (the four walls of the home), reaffirming women's domestic role as the cornerstone of a Muslim way of life (Human Rights Watch, 1999: III)

One question is whether there were institutional changes to change society into a true Islamic state under Zia ul-Haq. Political scientist Javaid Saeed's book *Islam and modernization* is a book with some very outspoken standpoints on such changes and their consequences. He provides a concise overview over the institutional changes that Zia made to implement his Islamization programme:

- The reconstitution of the Islamic Ideological Council, consisting of thirteen persons, eight of whom were maulanas/muftis (one pir).
- Judicial reforms
- Introduction of Islamic penal code
- New educational policy incorporating "Islamic tenets"
- Economic programs

The points are quite similar with the list of the JI's programme above. In August 1978 Zia associated himself with four of the nine parties in the Pakistan National Alliance to which the JI belonged, to help him enforce Nizam-e-Mustafa – an Islamic state according to the model of the Prophet. (Munir, 1980, p. 135, cited in Saeed, 1994:227 (footnote 164). The First Shariat Benches Order of 1978 meant the setting up of a Shariat Bench at each High Court and a Shariat Appellate Bench in the Supreme Court, the task of which were to declare a law invalid if it did not conform with the Qur'an and the Sunna. Jama'at-e Islami suggested to Zia to amend the Constitution by adding the Shariat Benches Order, a wish with which he complied. (Munir, 1980, p. 141, cited in Saeed, 1994:228 (footnote 164). However, Zia's Islamic radicalism had its limits: The Sharia Court could not challenge any martial law regulation or order – placing the military effectively above Islamic law (Jones, 2002:17)

## **Sharia**

In 1979 rape laws were changed when Zia included it as part of the Zina<sup>5</sup> Ordinance, a subcategory of the enforcement of the Hudood Ordinance. Rape became a religious offence, and non-marital sex became illegal. The standard evidence code (Qanun-e-Shahadat) governs the Tazir punishment, a less strict punishment in zina cases that cannot be evidenced to result in a Hadd sentence, and was introduced by Zia in 1984 (Human Rights Watch, 1999:VI). Zia also proposed laws regarding Qisas and Diyat – Islamic Penal laws governing compensation and retribution in crimes involving bodily injury. These were only implemented in 1997 when Zia's protégé, Nawaz Sharif, governed the country (Human Rights Watch, 1999:III). Zia also introduced new laws to the penal code in 1982 (295-B) which made desecrating the Qur'an punishable by life imprisonment, and in 1984 (295-C) came what is termed the blasphemy law making any derogatory remark on the Holy Prophet punishable with death or life imprisonment (Ahmed, 2002). An interesting aspect of the introduction of the Sharia in Pakistan is Haynes' depiction of a tension between the ideal state or rather *an* ideal Islamic state and the several types of Islamic societies that have developed as Islam spread over Northern Africa and Asia, and the tension that lies in the Islamic notion of the *umma* (the Islamic community as one unit) and all the states that take Islam as their religion. As mentioned above, from the beginning Maududi did not approve of Pakistan as a Muslim

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<sup>5</sup> Zina can be translated as both adultery and fornication, and zina-bil-jabr can be translated as rape. Hudood means "prevention, restraint"

nation for this reason. It is outside the scope of this essay to review the literature on this topic. But several scholars argue that Islam has a history above all of pragmatism, and that there has never been a Muslim society in which sharia law has governed more than a fragment of social life. In practice, there is very often “separation between the essence of the religious principles and institutions and those of the temporal ruler and State” (Haynes, 1998:128) Looking at Maududi’s and other fundamentalist movements’ attitude, let me use the case of women’s status: To give women education for work outside the home thus according them a higher degree of independence would pose a problem for orthodox muslims, in that it makes it impossible for them to reproduce their religion. The more obvious, and pragmatic position is that it would also mean competition for high-status jobs in society (Bruce, 2003:88)

Several discussions of the implementation of the Sharia also admit that although very rigid punishments were implemented for perpetration of family laws, and in particular, blasphemy laws, no single person has yet been executed after a verdict of a sharia court, the Federal Shariat Court always having reversed the punishments to less severe measures. The only Islamic punishment that has been carried out, is flogging. Stonings have occasionally taken place in tribal areas, but no sentence of stoning under the 1979 Hudood laws has been carried out. (CIA World Factbook)

However the Sharia laws did mean awarding lower status to all non-Muslims in Pakistan. It also meant that when the Ahmadi’s were declared non-Muslims they lost the right to high governmental positions along with other non-Muslims. It also meant that in court cases it would take the testimony of two Muslim women to equal that of one Muslim man – a provision that in the times of the Prophet was very revolutionary since women had no such right in pre-Islamic times. Women filing cases of rape who can not prove their case according to the Sharia laws’ strict demands on proof, risk being accused of having had illicit sex and being prosecuted for this, since they have given the best proof themselves: her own confession. Also the sharia laws meant that non-Muslims were assigned their own electorates for special seats in the National assembly, thus making it impossible for them to vote for Muslims and for Muslims to vote for a Christian. Ultimately Zia ul-Haq’s implementation of sharia laws and the accompanying institutions meant a shift in the level of tolerance towards different groups and roles of society. (XX tolerance discussion).

## **Education**

In education new goals were set for the propagation of and acceptance of the government’s Islamisation program among the people. Changes in government policy toward education are triggers for fundamentalist movements – secular schools and universities spread knowledge that challenge religious beliefs (Almond, Sivan, Appleby 1995 II:433)

Nayyar and Salim state that:

The military government of General Zia ul Haq after the coup in 1977 had its own problem of legitimacy, which it tried to guise in an overarching quest for Islamisation of the society. Education was among the first of its victims. Religious political parties became enthusiastic partners in this quest. In the educational sphere, this amounted to a distorted narration of history, factual inaccuracies, inclusion of hate material, a disproportionate inclusion of Islamic studies in other disciplines, glorification of war and the military, gender bias, etc. Subsequent governments either failed to check these harmful deviations, or willingly perpetuated them (Nayyar and Salim, 2002; Preface).

The hate material includes derogatory remarks of India, of non-Muslims and of every threat to Pakistani nationalism understood as the Islamic state of Pakistan in which there was no longer room for other religions: Christians, Qadianis or Ahmadis, Zoroastrians would all read textbooks with compulsory Islamic tenets and teachings. Moreover, my analysis shows the absence in (for my case Urdu) textbooks in primary schools of allusions to the very existence

of other faiths in Pakistan. This inculcates the following ideological attitude: If you are not a Muslim, you are not a Pakistani (Skov, 2005:10)

Islamic studies was made a compulsory subject for the bachelor's degree in all faculties. It consisted of knowing basic beliefs and rituals, prayers and some aspects of Islamic history. The dual system with government schools and traditional schools of Islamic education was maintained, and some secular subjects were included in the latter's curriculum (Saeed, 1994:100-101). In 1982 the government instituted "a pre-admission test in Islamic ideology for college and university [Muslim] students" (Keesing's Contemporary Archives, vol. XXXIII (1987), p 34992, cited in Saeed, 1994, p 228 (footnote 176).

Zia ul-Haq's commitment to make Pakistan an Islamic state can be given two interpretations. Firstly, it may be understood in terms of personal religious zeal for Islam and a military man's belief that an orderly society demands obedience of everyone to a common code of behaviour. Secondly, it may be taken as a search for political legitimacy for his regime, and that he thought that previous regimes had lacked such legitimacy because they had not provided a stable government and a just social order (Hay, 1988:383). I shall now look into how Zia ul-Haq gained legitimacy for his regime.

## **Zia's struggle for legitimacy**

Legitimacy of Zia's regime was low – he had taken over through a coup d'état and discontinued institutions and political life of the democratic state. Internationally he was under pressure and not accepted for the same reasons.

Zia first of all needed the people's support. He used religious rhetoric to create sympathy for his cause, and established an alliance with the fundamentalists to attain his goals. His programme relied heavily on a Sunni interpretation of what was Islamic:

When he attempted to implement the Sunni Hanafi law school as the basis for his Islamization programme, this became the starting point of Shia resistance, the size of the Shia population in Pakistan being 15-20 percent. When Zia ul-Haq in 1980 introduced the deduction of a *zakat* tax from all savings accounts, the Shias rebelled against this measure and they were exempted from the tax after demonstrations in Islamabad in July 1980 (Zahab, 2002:115)

Public sentiment against the Ahmadis had been a recurring issue in Pakistani politics, culminating in Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's declaring the Ahmadis non-Muslim in 1973. Zia inscribed several laws into Pakistan's penal code aimed at targeting the Ahmadis, among others making it illegal for them to use Islamic designations and greetings.



Map of Pakistan

Source:

<http://www.asiahotels.net/mypakistanhotels/images/pk-map.jpg>

Internationally, Moscow's occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 suddenly made him the key ally of the US in fighting communism – Pakistan's border with Afghanistan, as shown on the map, is very long, and thus strategically important in a war.

The Russian invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and the financial, military and international support given to him by the United States to fight a proxy war against the Soviet Union across his border, gave Zia an international legitimacy the Pakistani public were never permitted nor encouraged to decide (Aijazuddin, 2004:12)

Zia ul-Haq's success in obtaining legitimacy may thus well have been his wish to Islamize the country, at least partly. The failure of the Jama'at-e-Islami to win the elections of 1970 indicate, however, that the people may not have shared the JI's goals. JI mainly drew its followers from the cities, not so much from the villages where the majority of the population lived. Another explanation for obtaining legitimacy in Pakistan may thus be the fact that this was a time of substantial economic growth: After 1971 West Pakistan lost 50% of its internal market, East Pakistan.

The failure of Bhutto's economic and political programme served to undermine the radical and left groups that had fought hard to establish a modern and more equitable economic sector in Pakistan. The collapse of this alliance of radical urban intelligentsia, workers, rural tenants and landless led to the consolidation of more conservative social groups under General Zia ul-Haq. (Khanna, 2002)

The scholar in economy, Khanna's analysis shows how drastically Zia ul-Haq changed the structure of economy, leading to a growth rate exceeding 6 percent per annum during the 12 years of military regime. Zia used foreign aid and remittances to make Pakistan heavily dependent on continuous receipts of savings from abroad. "The high growth in the 1980s, along with rising consumption, provided the legitimacy that had eluded Pakistan's rulers for some time" (Khanna, 2002)

Zia's legitimacy is thus built partly on his alliance with fundamentalists and his implementation of an Islamization programme. Internationally, his legitimacy was established when he was made the key ally of the US in the war in Afghanistan. Zia was very successful in mobilising external assistance – people and funding - for the mujahedin (the Islamic freedom fighters) from the US and Saudi Arabia, which increased his political standing – abroad and at home – from 1980. But what helped him at most was the effect of this wealth flowing into Pakistan: the high rate of economic growth caused a dramatic fall in absolute poverty in the country, since most of the remittances were directed towards consumption. Also, the share of public spending on the military increased, including the salaries, which also created support for Zia. Thus: "Though the support for the regime can only be a conjecture since Zia did not contest any elections, it is clear that the dictator general managed to keep the powerful groups in Pakistan happy and compromised." (Khanna, 2002)

## **Lasting consequences of the Islamisation policy?**

Zia ul-Haq's Islamization policies can be said to have had a lasting effect on Pakistani policy, subsequent rulers of Pakistan such as Benazir Bhutto and today's General Musharraf have made attempts to change some or other of the provisions that Zia had inscribed into penal codes – but since the religious movements had meanwhile grown powerful these attempts have been less successful. (Bruce, 2003:187 – Hoodbhoy, 2004). Islamized legislation thus stays in force, the original freedom intended for all faiths and minorities in Jinnah's declarations in 1948 thus being relegated to history. Cohen (reviewed by Hoodbhoy) mentions as the greatest threat to Pakistan's future, what he calls its abysmal education system. Pakistani schools, not only the religious madrasas, are “churning out fiery zealots, fuelled with a passion for jihad and martyrdom”. Attempts to change this status meet resistance. Musharraf's former minister of education, Zubaida Jalal, pressurised by Islamists' street demonstrations, had to declare herself a fundamentalist and denounce as unacceptable school textbooks that do not include Quranic verses on jihad (Hoodbhoy, 2004). One reason for this persistence in the Islamization is Zia ul-Haq's reward to his main supporter, the Jama'at-e-Islami: throughout his period in office Zia gave jobs to tens of thousands of Jamaat activists and sympathisers in the judiciary, the civil service and other state institutions. The later campaigns e.g. for women to cover their heads, for shutting down restaurants during Ramadan, etc. can all be ascribed to the fact that after Zia, Islamic radicals held positions of authority (Jones, 2002:17)

### ***A world perspective***

Afzal Khan states that after 1979 the whole perspective on violence in Pakistan began to change. As Zia ul-Haq became increasingly involved in the US-supported war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, the insurgent, sectarian and ethnic violence in Pakistan began to take a new dimension, that developed into “a new kind of militancy that sought legitimacy under the banner of Islam”. Zia ul-Haq was encouraged by the US to accept ample financial support from Saudi Arabia. With this money came the message of Wahhabism, a fundamentalist sect of Sunni Islam. And with the money arrived also Osama bin Laden. Soon thousands of Muslim fighters from 43 Islamic countries were fighting with the Afghan mujahedin. And tens of thousands more foreign Muslim radicals came to study in the hundreds of new madrassahs that General Zia ul-Haq's military government established along the Afghan border, thanks to Saudi money (Khan, 2004). The map of Pakistan above gives a good impression of why Pakistan was important strategically due to the length of the common border between the two countries.

In Pakistani politics this development led to the victory of the religious coalition in the North West Province, with visible expressions such as the introduction of strict Sharia laws in the province, entailing full veiling of women, prohibition of radio music on public transportation, closing of cinemas, etc.

This means that in addition to changing legislation to a fundamentalist version of an Islamic state, and the active promotion of Islam through the education system, Zia ul-Haq's rule has had great implications for recent historical events in Pakistan's Kashmir conflict with India and in the wider sense of the on-going war on terrorism world-wide. Safeed Shafqat summarizes the effect of Zia's regime's education and other policies thus: “(1) They revived religious symbolism and lent legitimacy to religious groups; (2) they gave a new status to religious schools; which were allowed to award degrees; (3) and they provided funding to these schools. Thus the religious groups made a transition from the periphery to the mainstream in education and politics” (Shafqat, 2002:140)

## **Conclusion**

In this term paper I have shown that the military coup by General Zia ul-Haq has been significant in a change of direction in Pakistani politics from the founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah's secularist outlook on Pakistan as a state, to a more fundamentalist outlook on Pakistan as a truly Islamic state. However, Jinnah's perception of secularism was not truly non-religious, but closer to non-communal in the Indian tradition. I have also shown that General Zia ul-Haq's contributions to this end implied the introduction of new institutions in society, up to the level where the Supreme Court's Shariat Court is given the authority to declare any law unconstitutional if deemed not in accordance with the Qur'an and the Sunnah. This authority was, however not valid for martial law provisions and orders. Zia ul-Haq's islamicized educational policies and the introduction of the Hudood Ordinance have had severe impact on the development of Pakistani society until this day. However, Zia did not manage to implement the sharia law fully as the law of Pakistan. He did, however, lay the foundations for sunni-shia controversies in the country, and for the power of the religious education system. The madaris sent jihadis to fight in Afghanistan and Kashmir, thus funnelling the conflict with neighbouring India. Zia ul-Haq's islamization programme in Pakistan has thus had clear consequences also for later international developments leading ultimately to fundamentalists' attack on the World Trade Center in 2001.

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