

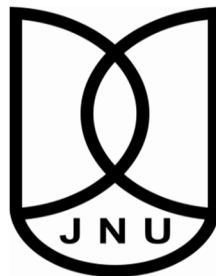
**DEMOCRATIZATION IN SOUTH ASIA: A STUDY OF
POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND PARTY STRUCTURES
SINCE THE 1970s**

Thesis Submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University

for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

MINAKSHI BURAGOHAIN



**CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY**

NEW DELHI-110067

INDIA

2017



Date: July 18, 2017

DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the thesis entitled “**DEMOCRATIZATION IN SOUTH ASIA: A STUDY OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND POWER STRUCTURES SINCE THE 1970s**”, submitted by me to the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi for the award of the degree of “**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**” embodies the result of bonafide research work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any degree or diploma of this university or any other university/ institution.

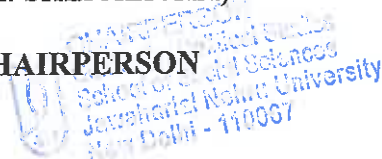
(MINAKSHI BURAGOHAIN)

It is hereby recommended that the thesis may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Forwarded by

(Prof. SHEFALI JHA)

CHAIRPERSON



(Dr. AMIR ALI)

SUPERVISOR

Centre for Political Studies
SUPERVISOR
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The process of winding up the writing remains incomplete without acknowledging various people who have stood by me in the journey.

I am greatly indebted to my supervisor Professor Amir Ali for the continuous support during my PhD and related research. His critical insights and helpful comments which have helped me clear the ambiguities in my arguments and whose patience of going through my every draft carefully have encouraged me to work harder.

Besides my supervisor, I would like to thank the entire department of Centre for Political Studies, who helped me to grow as a student of political science. I would also want to thank them for their insightful comments and encouragement and making me think in various directions of my research which motivated me to widen my research and think critically.

I would like to thank the staffs of the CPS office and Jawaharlal Nehru University library for their kind support to access the necessary documents. I would also like to thank the staffs of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library who helped me locate the required books.

I am especially indebted to all those people who have helped me during my field work in Bangladesh, especially Tawheed Da, who helped me get in touch with many of the people I interviewed. I want to thank all the people I met during my field-work in Bangladesh. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the staffs of Sufia Kamal National Public Library and National Library of Bangladesh who helped me find the books I wanted.

JNU, which never was just an institution but an idea for me, who nurtured me to grow in many ways. A special salute and thanks to JNU in its undying spirit of struggle for the most downtrodden of the society and for speaking truth to power. JNU shall always remain close to my heart.

A special thanks to my family. Words cannot express how grateful I am, to my parents for all the sacrifices that they made and the encouragements during times of distress. I would also like to thank all of my friends who have helped me strive towards my goal. At the end I would like to express appreciation for Punit who helped me survive.

MINAKSHI BURAGOHAIN

CONTENTS

Title	Page No.
Acknowledgments	i
Contents	ii
List of Abbreviations	iii
List of Tables	iv
Chapter 1. Introduction	1-16
1.1 Introduction	
1.2 Organization of thesis: Chapters and Methodology	
Chapter 2. Structure of Parties in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh	17-50
2.1 Evolution of Party System	
2.2 First Decade in India and Pakistan after Independence	
2.3 Political situation after 1970s	
2.4 Pakistan at crossroads: PPP and Awami League	
2.5 The Inescapable Fate: Creation of Bangladesh	
2.6 Rise of the Military Regimes	
2.7 Temporary Respite: Return of Democratic Rule	
2.8 Thwarting or Delay of the Formation of Dynasty Politics	
2.9 Conclusion	
Chapter 3. Dynasty and Democracy in South Asia	51-74
3.1 Is Democracy a pre-requisite for Dynasty?	
3.2 The Future of Dynasty Politics	
3.3 Conclusion	
Chapter 4. Women Leadership as Carriers of Dynasty in South Asia	75-104
4.1 Locating emergence of female leaders in the structure of patriarchy	
4.2 Religious chauvinism and defiance of women	
4.3 The state of Female Representation	
4.4 The route to the apex: Journey of women leadership	
4.5 Conclusion	
Chapter 5. Political Leadership in Military-Intervened Democracies: Pakistan and Bangladesh	105-140
5.1 The Neo-Liberal State in Pakistan	
5.2 Declining significance of Islam or a different kind of Islam?	
5.3 Bangladesh	
5.4 Liberalization in Bangladesh	
5.5 Conclusion	
Chapter 6. An Overview in lieu of Conclusion	141-154
Bibliography	155-163

ABBREVIATIONS

AFSPA	Armed Forces Special Powers Act
AMP	Anjuman Muzareen Punjab
BAKSAL	Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League
BAL	Bangladesh Awami League
BJP	Bhartiya Janata Party
BNP	Bangladeshi Nationalist Party
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPM	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
IJI	Islami Jamhuri Itehad
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INC	Indian National Congress
IS	Islamic State
LPG	Liberalization Privatization Globalization
MISA	Maintenance of Internal Security Act
MP	Member of Parliament
MRD	Movement for the Restoration of Democracy
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
PM	Prime Minister
PML (N)	Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz)
PML (Q)	Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam Group)
PPP	People's Party of Pakistan
PRO(D)A	Public and Representative Officers (Disqualification) Act
RSS	Rashtriya Swawamsevak Sangh
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organization

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Important events since 1970s
Table 2	Female Leadership across the globe

CHAPTER: 1
introduction

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

One question that is raised in many studies in South Asia is: Why did electoral democracy take root in India in the first four decades after independence, while it failed repeatedly in Pakistan? Part of the answer lies in the assumption that India turned to democracy because of the advantages associated with a long history of national struggle – like coherent political party and a phalanx of regional and central nationalist leadership committed to liberal democracy. Others reject this argument and suggest that whether or not a country was destined to be a democracy is determined by the distribution of political and economic power. With the exception of one suspension of Habeas Corpus for about nineteen months in the mid-1970s, India remained committed to elections. Philip Oldenburg writes, “It is rare for two countries as similar as India and Pakistan to have such clearly contrasting political regime histories”. Ayesha Jalal argues that the countries are both on the ‘autocracy’ side of the dividing line labelling India’s polity as ‘democratic-authoritarianism’ and Pakistan’s as military ‘bureaucratic-authoritarianism’. Oldenburg points towards how Pakistan’s political leaders were at a loss as to how to address the language issue and how religion would feature in the new political order whereas India managed to go ahead with writing the constitution within a few years of independence and also held adult suffrage and free and fair elections for the first time in 1951-52.

Why is the democratization process of South Asia important to investigate? By South Asia, this study has been limited to the three countries of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. India and Pakistan though has a shared history yet these two countries became quite different at birth, as both the countries took different routes as nations. Oldenburg writes in this context,

“In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the British began gradually devolving power to local authorities in several provinces across India. They did not pursue such reform very far in the North-West Frontier Province and Punjab, two provinces that made up the

bulk of Pakistan after the 1947 partition.”¹

India had an intact bureaucratic apparatus at birth, whereas Pakistan had to build an entire governmental structure. The only similarity that existed between these countries was that of being post-colonial nations. As Hamza Alavi puts it,

“The argument is premised on the historical specificity of post-colonial societies, a specificity which arises from structural changes brought about by the colonial experience and alignments of classes and by the superstructures of political and administrative institutions which were established in that context, and secondly from radical re-alignments of class forces which have been brought about in the post-colonial situation”.

Philip Oldenburg divides the history of India and Pakistan to two phases, one before 1977 and one after 1977; 1977 as a possibility where they both could have converged. In early 1977 India was two years into the Emergency declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, meanwhile in Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had just finished implementing a new constitution and devolved powers to the provinces. By the end of 1977, however India returned to democracy and Zia Ul Haq deposed Bhutto and brought in absolute control of the military. At a point when they could have converged, Pakistan moved away and imposed military rule and India remarkably came back to the democratic path.

In 1951-52, India held its first election. Eighty parties contested for 489 parliamentary seats and 3300 state legislative seats. More than fifty percent of eligible voters cast a ballot. India's advantage lay in three areas: The Congress party's virtual monopoly of power, its model of interlocking governance, and the accommodation of India's diversity. While, on the other hand, the conflict between the State and Democracy have been stark in Pakistan, with Pakistan not being able to develop a stable democratic system and a weak system of political parties that could not subsume the military under it.

The military in Pakistan stepped in to depose Ayub in March 1969. The military intervention

¹ Oldenburg, Philip. *India, Pakistan and Democracy: Solving the Puzzle of Divergent Paths*. Routledge 2010.

was accompanied by a promise of free elections to be held in December 1970. There were several developments during this era which also led to the breakup of Pakistan. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto won the March 1977 elections, but Jalal states on his victory, “It is the post-electoral scene that defeated him. Populist sentiments unmatched by an effective party organization proved to be fatal for a regime facing a determined effort by nine disparate political groupings—the PNA to seal Bhutto’s face for once and for all.”

On 7 June 1972, on the other hand, in Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman reiterated his commitment to secularism as thus,

“Secularism does not mean the absence of religion. You are a Mussulman, you perform your religious rites. The Hindus, Christians, Buddhists all will freely perform their religious rites. There is no irreligiousness on the soil of Bangladesh but there is secularism. This sentence has a meaning and the meaning is that none would be allowed to exploit the people in the name of religion or to create such fascist organizations as the al-Badr, Razakaars, etc. No communal politics will be allowed in the country.”

However, the 1990s saw major turn of events in Bangladesh which also ended the rule of the military. In Bangladesh, over the years, two progenies have emerged in the form of two female leaders representing two political dynasties; one representing Mujibur Rahman, the other representing Zia Ur Rahman. Although there have been questions (mostly from religious quarters) raised in these countries on a women leading the country, yet when one explores the position of women in Islamic societies, contrary facts are to be found. When Khaleda Zia was the Prime Minister in Bangladesh, she even offered important political positions to members of Jamaat.

Parties in South Asia have a multi-ethnic and plural background. The ethnic diversities in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are enormous. When these diversities are combined, the situation becomes much more nuanced. Often these diversities overlap or cut across each other. However, these diversities have contributed towards aggregation of interests and the emergence of several parties in recent decades.

When one looks closely at the party structures of these countries, one finds that parties are

largely de-institutionalized. Political dynasties have been a pre-dominant factor when one looks at the structures of political parties. It is interesting to note here that vis-à-vis these dynasties, there has been or still is a female leader who has been very influential during her tenure. One can quickly cite Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, Indira Gandhi in India, Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia in Bangladesh.

Hamza Alavi stated the relation between politicians and political parties as thus,

“Politicians and political parties stand at the center of a complex set of relationships. On the one hand, they are expected to articulate the demands of those from whom they seek support; they are supposed to attempt to realize those demands by their participation in the working of government. On the other hand, they also play a key role in manipulating public relations on behalf of those who do make public policy, to make it acceptable to the community at large. For that they channel public grievances and seek to promote an ‘understanding’ of the situation concerning public issues which would diminish potential opposition. Their relationship with the bureaucratic-military oligarchy is, therefore, ambivalent; it is competitive as well as complementary.”²

In order to look into Political Leadership and Party-structure in South Asia, two state apparatus have been taken into consideration, one is the military-bureaucratic apparatus and the other is of a democratic apparatus with least military intervention into the form of governance. The first apparatus is represented by Pakistan and Bangladesh and the other is represented by India. The chronological table below points towards the periods of military and other interruptions into democratic practices in these countries.

²Hamza Alavi: *The State in Postcolonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh*, *New Left Review* 1/74, July-August 1972

Table 1: Important events in South Asia since 1970s

India	
1975–77	National Emergency
1984	Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is assassinated
1991	Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi assassinated
1991	Introduction of LPG reforms
Pakistan	
1954	Dissolution of Constituent Assembly
1956	First constitution of Pakistan promulgated
1958	Dissolution of National Assembly
1958	Take over by military led by Ayub Khan
1958–62	Martial law
1965	War with India
1971	Civil war in East Pakistan and secession of East Pakistan
1973	New constitution by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto
1977	Military takeover by Zia Ul Haq dissolving the constitution.
1979	Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is hanged.
1985	Constitution restored with amendments
1988	Eight Amendment to the constitution which gave immense powers to the President
1988	Benazir becomes the Prime Minister
1990	PPP government led by Benazir Bhutto dismissed
1993	National Assembly led by Nawaz Sharif dismissed
1999	General Musharraf takes over
2002	Constitution restored

2008 and 2013	Peaceful transition from one democratically elected government to another
Bangladesh	
1971	Bangladesh Liberation war.
1975	Sheikh Mujibur Rahman killed in a military coup
1975–79	Rule by martial law
1982	Seize of power by Ershad from President Abdus Sattar
1982–86	Period of rule by martial law
1986	Constitution restored
1991	Return of parliamentary democracy through election of Khaleda Zia
1996	Sixth parliamentary elections held which was boycotted by opposition parties leading to a voter turnout drop to 21%
2014	Boycott of general elections by BNP

The above tables point towards the fact that Pakistan stands at the top among the three in terms of military intervention, Bangladesh comes next, and India comes third in terms of interruptions to its democratic procedures. The chronological events mentioned above points towards the fact that, India have practiced Democracy for the longest period without intervention, while the politics of the two countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh are marked by military interventions. Such diversity in political structures invites for further investigation as it would be very interesting to observe the current political structure of the parties and the process through which these parties have evolved. Oldenburg (2010) adds that a range of variables have inclined India towards democracy and Pakistan towards autocracy. He also further states that there is an element of historical contingency in each outcome (whether democratic or otherwise). For instance, India gained momentum as it moved along its democratic path and military gained a prominent position in the political life of Pakistan at an early stage and has been able to reinforce itself. The argument that he makes here is that democratic outcomes are path dependent.

1.2 Organization of thesis: Chapters and methodology

The chapters here deal with varied issues and topics that reflect upon the democratization process of the sub-continent. Party structures, women as carriers of dynasty politics, the relation between dynasty and democracy and military-intervened democracies are explored. The study suggests that dynasty politics have been a major determinant of democracy in the region and women leadership in this region has largely emerged from dynasties; although there are exceptions. Islamization in the countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh is closely associated with military rule and in the absence of a common uniting factor, religion served as a uniting factor in these countries.

The vibrancy of Indian politics is to be felt through the political parties and elections. Reflecting on the first past the post system of elections that a majority of governments here follow, political parties that hold a majority of seats in the national parliaments form the government. Congress was the dominant party for a long time after independence; however, this hegemony came to be challenged in the 1960s. The spread of democratization has led to what Yogendra Yadav would call the “third democratic upsurge”, which led to the mobilization of many formerly excluded groups of the society. Therefore, the loss of fortune of the Congress party can be seen in the period from 1989 to 2004 where Congress was in power for a very limited time. However, 2004 elections seemed to reverse the fortune of the Congress party. Defying predictions, Congress defeated the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and formed the national government.

The BJP is another party who have made its presence felt since the period of liberalization. The BJP came into limelight after the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992 in which it was an active participant. In 1998 the BJP formed the government with several coalition partners known as the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). During this period, BJP tried to pose as a Centrist party which can be seen in the debates that it raised. One instance of it was the propagation of the Uniform Civil Code for all communities, without privilege to personal laws. However, a closer look at the stand by the BJP only points towards the fact that the talks of Uniform Civil Code looks more like a method to discipline Muslims and other minorities and less to do with gender justice. The BJP have also maintained a close relation with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) which was once banned in India.

Leftist parties have also had a significant role to play in Indian politics as an alternative voice. The Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPI (M), gave support to the Congress government in 2004. The CPI (M) was formed in 1964 after an ideological difference with the Communist Party of India (CPI) which was formed around 1925. CPI (M) have also on occasion joined hands with other parties against Right wing extremism, like it did in 1996 by joining the United Front.

The first chapter of the thesis looks into party structures of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, while highlighting the routes that these countries have taken in establishing Democracy as a procedure. In spite of the differences in these three countries, certain parallels have been drawn between them which reflect upon the possibility of convergence of paths of these countries.

The second chapter looks at the connection between dynasty and democracy in South Asia. Politics of South Asia is deeply marked by its experiences with the colonial state. The experience of the post-colonial state is deeply embedded in the colonial state, which in turn has shaped the politics of this region. The dynasties that have led the struggle against colonial rulers were crucial in determining the politics of the region. They not only shaped the politics of that particular region, but also continued to exist as legitimate rulers of the region. Many post-colonial thinkers (Alavi, Vanaik, 2010) have argued that after colonization the states in these parts of the world have been left with an over-developed bourgeois state and institutions as compared to their social relations. This is reflected in the way politics has been practiced in these regions. Owing to an over-developed bourgeois state, it has been observed that whether it is in Pakistan or in Bangladesh, military rule has formed a major part of post-colonial history in these countries.

The institutional legacy of colonialism helped the Congress party in confronting various issues of the newly independent nation. The civil bureaucracy, military and police helped in the process of framing a constitution and enforcing authority over the highly diverse land. All these events helped towards the Congress party emerging as the main player in the new political order. Colonial definitions of Democracy remained intact as mere representation, where the tendencies of bureaucratic authoritarianism remained embedded in the non-elected institutions of the Indian state. However, as Yogendra Yadav (1999) would call it, a 'Creolized Democracy' has developed in the country which took into account the specific development

of the region.

It is significant to note here that many leaders of the region have been subject to political killings as a result of which the dynasties have been able to reproduce themselves in the form of electoral verdicts. Elections after the death of a leader has seen massive support for the Dynasty concerned in terms of electoral fortunes.

Though it is often seen that there is an attempt to attribute secularism to India and authoritarianism to Pakistan, Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal (1998) is of the opinion that, instead of tracing the linear development of Democracy and Secularism in India and authoritarianism and Islam in Pakistan, the spotlight is best focused on the historical dynamics of the transition from colonialism.³ This should allow for a better appreciation of the interplay between state consolidation and political processes as it was fashioned and refashioned by the relationship between the two sovereign centers and the various regions.

K.C Suri (2007) identifies the following possible reasons for the thriving of Dynasty politics in this region⁴. The first that Suri points out is, dynastic politics could be the result of the cultural values prevalent in these societies, where people want to locate their voting decision in an individual or symbolic identity. Secondly, those dynastic leaders seem to counter the erosion of ethics. The third is the ‘functional utility’ of such a leader, who would lead to electoral victory in absence of other strong leaders. Parties very often create such leaders that would lead a party towards electoral success. This also reflects poorly upon the institutional structure of a party, the lack of which makes parties move towards individuals. This chapter will be an attempt to explore questions like, what difference does it make, to citizens and the state, when family ties come to play an important political role?

The third chapter looks at women leaders as carriers of Dynasty in South Asia. There are many female politicians active in national politics all around the globe. The case of South Asia becomes interesting as it is worth exploring why nations that have been associated with unstable politics and subordination have also seen conspicuous presence of many politically

³Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal: “*Modern South Asia-History, Culture, Political Economy*, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp.203

⁴ K.C Suri: *Political Parties in South Asia: The Challenge of Change*, Sweden, International IDEA. 2007

prominent females.

The case of multiple war histories has also been taken into account, which inevitably goes into the history of the making of a nation. The journey of these women from wretched conditions to the apex is of interest if one enquires about what effects it has on the larger social positioning of women. Has the presence of women in public and political spaces changed?

Feminist social scientists (Sarkar et al., 2001) have highlighted the ways in which women have been and continue to be central to the project of the nation. Not only are they the biological reproducers of future citizens but also reproducers of the boundaries of national groups and the carriers of cultural tradition, therefore reducing them to their bodies as either mothers or sexed objects to be regulated and protected from the ‘outsiders’.

Religion presents itself as a very interesting and intriguing case when it is seen in the context of variables like Democracy, gender etc. Any religion is patriarchal by nature. The clash that is often seen between general laws and customary laws in any country reflects upon how customary law by nature is detrimental to women. The rights and privileges of a community is often maintained by trampling upon rights of women, the context of which is also very often used by the right wing elements of the society to challenge such laws. In spite of putting women in the status of a second class citizen, leaders like Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto or Sheikh Hasina has rose to political prominence. Leadership of women vis a vis religion also poses as very interesting owing to the fact that in both Pakistan and Bangladesh, religious leaders have opposed leadership by women and the various responses to such a positioning becomes very important.

Table 2: Female leaders across the globe

Female Leaders	Country	Position	Relative
Widows			
Sonia Gandhi	India	President, Congress	Former PM Rajiv Gandhi
Imelda Marcos	Phillipines	Congress woman	Former President Ferdinand
Khaleda Zia	Bangladesh	Leader, BNP	Former President Zia- Ur-Rahman

Wives			
Hilary Clinton	USA	Secretary of State / Presidential Candidate	Former President Bill Clinton
Cristina Fernandez	Argentina	President	Former President Nestor Kirchner
Nana Konadu Rawlings	Ghana	Candidate to lead ruling party	Former President Jerry
Sandra Torres	Guatemala	Was going to run for president	President Alvaro Colom
Sister			
Yingluck Shinawatra	Thailand	PM in waiting	Former PM Thaksin
Daughters			
Nurul Izzah Anwar	Malaysia	MP	Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim
Gloria Macapagal Arroyo	Phillipines	Congress woman	President Diosdado Macapagal
Martin Aubrey	France	Possible presidential candidate	Former president of European Commission Jacques Delors
Aung San Suu Kyi	Myanmar	Opposition Leader / First state Counsellor of Myanmar	Independence Leader Aung San
Keiko Fujimori	Peru	Lost presidential election 2011	Former President Alberto
Maria Gaidar	Russia	Former Deputy Governor, Kirov Oblast	Former PM Yegor
Park-Guen Hye	South-Korea	Candidate 2012 Presidential Election	Former President Park Chung-Hee
Sheikh Hasina	Bangladesh	PM	Former President Mujibur Rahman
Kaja Kallas	Estonia	MP	Former PM Siim
Marine Le Pen	France	Presidential Candidate	Former Party leader Jean Marie
Zury Rios Montt	Guatemala	Congress woman	Former dictator Efrain

Source: The Economist, 2011

The phenomenon of female leaders is often understood vis-à-vis their being members of prominent families – whether as daughters, wives or widows of former political leaders. These

female leaders seem to share dynastic origins with such leaders. Interestingly, in spite of widespread stereotypes about Islam, strong female leadership exists/have existed in Muslim states (Bangladesh and Pakistan) of South Asia. Women leaders have led struggles against dictatorships and participated in competitive, democratic elections⁵. Some of these women have made it on their own, like Indira Gandhi who stated “I am not a woman prime minister,” she added, “I am a prime minister”⁶. The family name helps in establishing contacts that are useful in bringing in financial contributions- all of which are crucial for democracies of this kind.

One question that arises here is that, why has so many women leaders in South Asia surfaced. A reason that can be given is that there was no one else in the family suited to take over the leadership. Another reason is, the traditional stereotype about gender roles did not seem to be a road block to such leaders, in fact it worked in their favor. Women leaders were generally perceived to be uncorrupted and naive to ride the roughshod of politics. This helped them in achieving what seemed as impossible: to present themselves as politically virtuous alternative. More generally, the comparative findings of this study will help critically re-examine gender vis-à-vis culture and democracy. The rise of prominent female leaders of South Asia who were related to prominent politicians in their country brings in two questions: First, why were these women chosen/elected to inherit the political legacy? Is it possible for women to enter into the game of politics without support of dynastic connections?

There are few cases in the Indian political scenario who buck the trend of female leadership flowing from dynasty politics. These women leaders can be called ‘self-made’ in a political scenario where female leadership have been emerging from dynasty politics. The case of Mayawati, Mamata Banerjee or Jayalalitha highlights this point. Ajay Bose, while writing a political biography on Mayawati writes,

“Both the past derision and current hype about Mayawati underline the entirely inadequate understanding about a leader who perhaps represent the ultimate political paradox in India. As the country’s most successful Dalit leader, overshadowing even Baba Saheb Ambedkar,

⁵Rounaq Jahan: *Women in South Asian Politics, Third World Quarterly, Vol.9, No.3,(July 1987) pp. 848-870.*

⁶Pupul Jayakar: *Indira Gandhi, A Biography, Viking Penguin India, 1992.*

she has indeed given unprecedented political profile and clout to a community crushed under social prejudice stretching back several millennia”.⁷

Ajay Bose is right in describing her case as a ‘political paradox’. In a situation where it is difficult to make a niche in Indian politics, these female leaders making it to the top have posed as exceptions. Bose further writes, a large measure of her remarkable achievement in a relatively brief period of time has been Mayawati’s ability to think and behave in an unconventional manner. Her core Dalit constituency has solidly backed Mayawati in her reported ideological flip-flops even when there seemed to be no direct connection between the political games she played and the larger benefit of the community. A school teacher by profession who wanted to become an IAS, life came a long way when she became the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh for four times. She was first recognized in a convention held by Raj Narain for the betterment of the “lower castes”, referring to them as “Harijans”, the term coined by Gandhi and which was vehemently opposed by the schedule castes. Mayawati, when the turn came for her to speak, rejected the term bitterly and gave a fiery speech, which brought her to the political limelight. Later on, Kanshi Ram came to her to urge her to work for the expansion of the party that he formed. It has been hard for political observers to fit her into any ideological category. She has allied with political parties of all colors. Therefore, although one can critique her position as “political opportunism”, yet one cannot deny the presence of her superimposing persona in Indian politics and what her presence means.

Another woman of similar stature is Mamata Banerjee, who is also self-made, with her career beginning as a student activist. Saroj Nagi (2011) writes in this context, Mamata Banerjee bucks the trend of India’s women political leaders whose rise can be traced to their familial or dynastic connections or the blessings of a male godfather. He also states that West Bengal perhaps provides the most secular and gender-neutral playing field for a leader without dynastic credentials to create a niche for herself. However, Mamata Banerjee did endure various misogynist comments from the Left front after she came to power. When Mamata Banerjee was making her foray into becoming the Chief Minister, a debate was raised about

⁷ Bose, Ajay. *Behenji: A Political Biography of Mayawati*, Penguin, Viking 2008, Pp 5.

whether Banerjee spells a new kind of politics reflecting the rise of the subaltern class or whether she will maintain the status quo without any substantial departure from the past. The question lies partly answered in the fact that, although Mamata Banerjee was herself not from the laboring class, yet she gave voice to the rural poor and the urban middle class who were upset with the corruption under Left Front government, agitated over land acquisitions. Though there were questions initially as to how far her anti-left politics will take her, yet she is in her second term as the Chief Minister of West Bengal since 2011. However, she has not been able to keep at bay other ills of Indian politics. For example, Of the 224 Trinamool candidates fielded for the April-May 2011 assembly polls, at least a dozen were relatives of party functionaries, including Union ministers and MPs. In allotting tickets to the kith and kin of her leaders, Banerjee has in the process also sown the first seeds of local dynasties.

But what gave these leaders the political legitimacy (whether dynastic or not) in a largely male-dominated political scenario? Perhaps, in the mind of the common man, their credibility lay in their being associated with prominent leaders in case of dynasties and being able to portray themselves as honest and above petty fight in case of non-dynastic leaders. As new to the political scenario, they could bring in a fresh and clean image, where people were otherwise tired of corrupted leaders. The point, however, that needs mention is that when one talks of women leaders, it is not always about how they were chosen but how they could establish themselves in the long run as “people’s leaders”. In the context of South Asia, these leaders transition from being political novices to being ruthless is remarkable. Also at the same time it is important to note that, female leaders had at times had to act much more ruthlessly than a male leader just to prove the point that a woman is equally capable of taking tough decisions.

The fourth chapter is about political leadership in military-intervened Democracies (Pakistan and Bangladesh). The two countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh are clubbed together because these two countries are different from other post-colonial country owing to the fact that they were both born out of partition and have seen a large role played by the military in their countries. Military intervention often happened because of weakness or on the pretext of weakness in political parties to fulfil their democratic mandate. The history of Pakistani Army and its three generations is taken into account in this chapter. The British generation, the American generation and the Pakistani generation. Each generation developing a specific character of its own. The once secular and liberal army of Pakistan under general Ayub to its

Islamization during the period of general Zia is explored.

The relation between the Left and Islamist forces is also taken into account here. Writes Vali Nasr Raza (2011) in this context,

“Islamist forces viewed the Left as a grave danger. This provided for a tactical alliance between the secular state and the Islamist forces. In each case the political leadership adopted a sympathetic posture toward a role for Islam in politics and society to broker an alliance between the state and the Islamist groups. In Turkey the eventual demise of the Left removed the state’s need for Islam. However, the growing power of Islamist groups under state patronage and in battle against the Left would turn them into a formidable force in both countries”.

In spite of the fact that Islamization in Pakistan happened largely through institutions of state yet with the death of Zia Ul Haq, the radical Islamization project slowed down and with it peoples enthusiasm for radical Islamism too started waning, which is reflected in the fact that after the death of Zia, it was not the religious parties who garnered votes, but rather Nawaz Sharif who could present himself as a midway.

Post-colonial theorists have generally identified the emergence of a “military-bureaucratic oligarchy” as a defining character of a post-colonial state (Hamza Alavi, 1972) and Bangladesh too fitted well into it. The military bureaucratic oligarchy successfully overthrew Mujibur Rahman and came to occupy a political central space. While looking at Islamization in Bangladesh, Taj I. Hashmi (2000) looks at the contradictions that globalization has created in a society like that of Bangladesh. He writes,

“It is often believed that the emergence of the new female working class in the garment industries in urban areas (workers mostly come from rural areas) and NGO-workers and beneficiaries in the villages is the main reason why *mullas* and village elders having conflicting interests with the garment industries and NGOs for ‘taking away’ their clients by providing credit and jobs have been terrorizing women to dissuade them from working outside”.

This chapter therefore looks at how military came to occupy center stage in both countries and the transition thereafter to relatively democratic dispensations. It also looks at the rise and growth of religion in both the countries under state auspices vis-à-vis the various leaders of the state that came to occupy the center stage whether military or political leader.

The last chapter is an overview of all the preceding chapters. The process of democratization in the three South Asian countries, that is, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh is analyzed by looking at the findings of the study. The first chapter looks at the structure of parties in the mainstream parties in all the three countries. Deinstitutionalization has been common to all the three countries. The second chapter looks at the phenomenon of dynasty politics in South Asia. How democracy and dynasty are intertwined and how one reinforces the other is taken into account. The third chapter is about female leadership in the sub-continent. How women have made it to the apex of political leadership is taken into account here. The redefining of gender through colonial encounter in the region as well as its relation with religion is explored here. The fourth chapter brings into fore the relation between military and religion and the complex role that military plays in the countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh. The findings in these chapters has been crucial to the understanding of the processes of democratization in the region. Though one cannot find a triumphalist notion of democracy in the region, yet the process unfolds nuances involved in the unfolding of newly independent nations of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER: 2

Structure of Parties in
India, Pakistan and
Bangladesh

CHAPTER II

STRUCTURE OF PARTIES IN INDIA, PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH

Why the democratization process of South Asia becomes important to look at. The region of South Asia and more particularly the countries of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are a key concern here. These three countries have seen history evolve in a certain way or to be more specific in a certain uniform way. However one needs to be aware against the sweeping generalizations that are being made regarding this area. Writes Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal in their book on modern South Asia,

“There are no grounds for branding the ancient, medieval and modern phases of the subcontinent’s long and complex history as Hindu, Muslim and British periods. It may have served James Mill’s purpose in the early nineteenth century, as he set about in his *History of British India* to buttress his theory of an ascending order of civilisations. But his lengthy, uninformed digression into India’s pre-colonial past as a justification of British colonial rule has by now long outlived its limited utility.”

However, colonialism did leave a deep mark on how the politics is going to be shaped. Writing about the idea of Pakistan, David Lewis writes, “The name *Pakistan* had been coined in 1933 by Choudhary Rahmat Ali (1897–1951) in the pamphlet ‘Now or Never: Are We to Live or Perish Forever?’ which was written while he studied law at Emmanuel College in Cambridge. The pamphlet advocated a national homeland for India’s Muslims, and the word *Pakistan* was derived from the names of the main Muslim majority provinces including Punjab, the North West Frontier or “Afghan” Province, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan. In this document, Ali had set out an early argument that these provinces should become part of a separate federation, so that Indian Muslims would avoid political domination within a future Hindu-majority state”. Many would also point towards the non-representation of Muslims in the Congress as a key reason for its creation. Much later when Bangladesh is created, however, the onus was on the nature of Pakistan as a state and the character that it inherited by virtue of being a post-colonial nation. The centralized character of the political parties and institutions led to exclusion and

exploitation of Bangladesh, which ultimately led to its separation from Pakistan. Therefore, party structures and political leadership is a key concern here, where I am arguing that it is this character of centralization in political parties that has led to the development of dynasty politics and once dynasty politics was established, it developed its own lexicon. Dynasty politics in the long run became inevitable, for the understanding of democracy in this region. Although dynasty politics doesn't inevitably means democratization; however, the process of democratization has for a long time depended upon the dynasties; since dynasties are also attached to two other things, that is, longevity and stability. Stability being the essence of a democratic nation.

However, when one looks at the politics of this region one would find religion deeply ensconced. It would be a mistake to overlook religion in understanding politics in South Asia. Whether Hindutva or Islamic fundamentalism, both started making its presence felt slowly in this region. The demolition of Babri Masjid in India and various instances of fundamentalism that evolved in this region has led to some serious probing in this field. How and why did once secular countries become the agents and harbinger of Islamization? (Nasr, Islamic Leviathan). One can enquire in the context of rising importance of religion, how Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was more than willing to adapt Islamic rhetoric to his ideas of "socialism". Why does it become important for leaders to show that they are religious? State institutions rather than Islamic activists became guardian of Islam and defender of its interests. Seyyed Veli Nasr points that this could mean two things, one that Islamic activists had a stronger control over society than the state. Second, to curtail their influence, the state has taken up their role. Again going back to the question of how and why did once time secular countries become the agents and harbinger of Islamization. This query is addressed by Veli Nasr when he writes,

“(T)he proclivity towards Islam has more to do with how states started shaping themselves in the post colonial period. During the colonial period the governed was significantly different from those who governed due to the fact that those who governed clearly wanted the governed to be separate from them. At the same time, they used to divide the population by various techniques of divide and rule. When in the post colonial period these tools of hegemony were unavailable to the new ruling class; the ruling class also required hegemony to initiate economic changes. Simultaneously, the former coterie of ruling class and its hegemony were wading away because these tools of hegemony were no longer available.

In such a situation of vacuum, there arose a challenge of Islamization from the below. When people saw that Islam can be utilised for the creation of hegemony to rule over the people. The ruling class started using it.”

There was another reason for the rise of Islam which reflects upon various ideological projects of the nation. The rise of Islamism was “engineered” to cleanse the political sphere of, what they perceived to be a greater danger that is of the Left.¹ Saadia Toor therefore warns one of falling prey to the dominant narrative about Pakistan as being a “place insufficiently imagined”, she points towards the fact that nationalism is, by definition, a discourse of power and is deeply contested. However the fact also remains that the greater a group’s institutional power, the greater is its ability to spread its own message far and misrepresent alternatives (Toor, 2011).

Now addressing the key query here regarding the role of party structure and political leadership in this region, dynasty politics manifested itself in the late 1960s and continued successfully till around 2010. Though dynasty politics doesn’t vanish after 2010 yet the influence of dynasty politics seems to be dwindling or the returns associated with the office of dynastic succession seems to be on the decline. It was Indira Gandhi’s rise to power for the very first time that brought into focus the element of dynastic succession. Next, in Pakistan we see a dynastic succession in Benazir Bhutto becoming the Prime Minister of Pakistan from the political party that her father founded. In case of Bangladesh, the two Begums (Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia) started to dominate the political scenario after the death of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Zia Ur Rahman. In India, the Congress Party was able to win the legitimacy of the larger population by and large. Writes Tariq Ali about the unique character of Congress, “The Congress was a unique political instrument: backed by capitalism, supported by the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie and with a limited following inside the working class.”² It is because of this legitimacy created by the Congress Party that the Indian Constitution could also be written early. Unlike other constitutions- such as the US- which were formulated after an

¹ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam: Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan*, Pluto Press, 2011. Page 3

² Ali, Tariq. *Can Pakistan Survive*, page 40.

antecedent moment of liberation, often associated with revolution and rebellion, the Indian Constitution in itself constitutes the truly revolutionary moment of rupture.³ But at the same time it is to be noted that, this is what the Muslim League in Pakistan lacked, the legitimacy among the masses. Writes Saadia Toor,

“The League’s loss of legitimacy was directly connected with its failure to deliver on its promise of economic welfare for ordinary muslims reflected in its hostility towards any efforts at redistribution after independence. The Pakistani State that emerged in August 1947 was dominated by an alliance of the main propertied classes- the small bourgeois class, the landlords and the military-bureaucratic oligarchy. (Alavi, Gardezi, 1973). Colonial history and their shared interests thus bound them in a neocolonial relationship with metropolitan capital and the metropolitan bourgeois classes, and pitted them against the majority of Pakistan’s population”.

How did the military come to hold the helm of affairs with other bourgeois group in Pakistan. Addressing this, Ian Talbot writes that the army’s predominant position in post-Independence Pakistan had its roots in the colonial states’s military recruitment policies in the late nineteenth century. This made Punjab the main army center. It ensured a steady stream of recruits from an area which was largely untouched by Indian nationalism. The Punjab’s ‘loyalty’ threat at the time of the 1857 revolt encouraged the development of strategic alliances between the Britishers and the military contractors.⁴

The appeal to Islam, however was not made until the death of Jinnah. Immediately after the death of Jinnah, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan started making appeals to various Islamic groups. The role played by US and also the cold war needs mention here. With the advent of cold war, Pakistan saw a rise in a class of intellectual who were anti-imperialist but at the same time anti-communist. This anti-communism came in handy to US to control the influence of Soviet Russia. Hence, it started supporting the state of Pakistan in its Islamization process. Bellicosity marked the relationship between India and Pakistan since the period of formation

³ Jayal and Mehta. *Introduction, The Oxford Companion to Politics in India*, 2010

⁴ Talbot, Ian. *Pakistan: A New History*, Pentagon Press, 2012

of Pakistan. It is worth noting that even in the midst of the endless hostility between India and Pakistan which has triggered three wars (1948, 1965 and 1971) and two major military stand-offs (1999 and 2002), a possibility of dialogue between the two sides have been taken up from time to time. It has resulted in major agreements, ranging from an understanding to share river waters (the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty) to normalizing relations over Kashmir (the 1972 Shimla Agreement). Since 2002 there have been further efforts to break the deadlock over Kashmir. These efforts have encouraged confidence-building- measures (CBMs), including bilateral trade, the relaxation of visa regimes, cultural exchanges and the settlement of lesser disputes involving troop withdrawals from the Siachen Glacier and the demarcation of the Sir Creek maritime border in the marshlands of the Rann of Kutch. However, such dialogues hardly seems to shift perceptions in both the countries.⁵

While one looks at party structure in Pakistan; the interventionist role of the army doesn't escape notice. Party politics in Pakistan for a long time was influenced by the army. When it comes to political parties, the army knows how to play the game of divide and rule. The political parties too have learnt to survive in such a context. The political parties have also learnt how to accommodate the army or to divide it. These dynamics of the civil-military relationship remain central to Pakistan's future for a long time.⁶

Party system was never a robust phenomenon in Pakistan, but it faced a severe blow with the rise of consequent leaders. Once Jinnah disappeared from the scene in September 1948, Liaquat Ali Khan instead of relying on parliamentary majority and the Muslim League immediately adopted the politics of Jinnah. As early as January 1949 he dismissed the Punjab Government on the pretext of mismanagement, although it enjoyed a solid majority in the provincial assembly. But of course this was a policy widely adopted by the leaders of post-colonial states to contain dissent of any form. B.D. Dua, writing on India, stated, Nehru's regime was near hegemonic. In the federal arena, Nehru built and nourished a broad institutional framework for consultation with the state governments, but he preserved the 'concept of hierarchy of policy' with the center on the top. Nehru never intervened in state

⁵ Shaikh, Farzana. *Making Sense of Pakistan*, pg 182, Columbia University Press, New York 2009

⁶ Cohen, Stephen P. *The Idea of Pakistan*, Brookings Institution Press, pg 144, 2004

politics but it was rare for a chief minister to retain his position unless Nehru showed some level of confidence in him⁷.

2.1 Evolution of Party System

In spite of all the problems that India and Pakistan suffered as post-colonial Nations, yet no one could stop the evolution of democratic process in these countries. Party System developed in both the countries. Although, between 1947 to 1958 there was no election held in Pakistan at the national level yet the first direct elections that was held for the provincial assembly of Punjab, around seven political parties participated. In the first general elections of India fifty four political parties participated in the national elections.

During the formative years in Pakistan the weakness of Muslim League seemed a roadblock in the establishing of a successful parliamentary democracy. Numerous parties surfaced, which were expressions of ethnic movements. In East Pakistan too, two regional parties emerged: Suhrawardy's Awami League and the Krishak Sramik Party led by Fazlul Haq, however most of these political parties were divided between the Eastern (now Bangladesh) and Western Pakistan. The only organizations claiming Pan Pakistan ambitions were those based on Islam, particularly the Jamaat-i-Islami and the Muslim League. For a long time, the League was a small elite group. After Independence both Jinnah and Liaquat used or were forced to use the party to exercise power and authority.

In contrast to Pakistan, however, there was a consensus that developed in India around Nehru, which came to be termed as Nehruvian consensus which helped the nation to move towards stability. Referring to this consensus Rajni Kothari writes,

“As the consensus developed under Jawaharlal Nehru, there were two main components of it: institutional consensus and ideological consensus. The institutional consensus was composed of two elements, one around the party system and one around the federal system. The ideological consensus also had two aspects to it: one in respect of domestic politics and

⁷ Dua, B.D: The Prime Minister and the Federal System, Nehru to the Nineties: The Changing Office of the Prime Minister in India

the other in respect of foreign policy”.⁸

While on the one hand, India developed a leader around whom consensus was developed, Pakistan was facing a leadership crisis with the death of Jinnah just a year after the formation of the nation. This led the existing leadership to resort to authoritarian methods in governing the country. The first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan promulgated the Public and Representative Officers (Disqualification) Act (PRODA), voted in on 26th January 1950. PRODA allowed the government to disqualify persons found guilty of ‘misconduct’. The assembly abrogated this law in 1954. Though creation of such laws are not extra ordinary in these parts which has been parts of the British rule. In India too, we saw such a law taking shape called MISA under Indira Gandhi’s regime. Such extraordinary have existed in India under various names like AFSPA, TADA and POTA. Yet, how are such laws challenged from becoming dominant in the political discourse becomes imperative upon the reaction of the civil society.

It is the success of the party system that leads to the formation of Bangladesh in 1971. The party led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Awami League became the medium through which the majority of East Pakistani’s were raising their voice against the atrocity of the West Pakistanis. Today there are two major political parties in Bangladesh, the Awami League and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. However, citizens have raised serious concerns over BNP as it is suspected to have links with the Jamaat-i-Islami considered to be a radical fundamentalist party. However, Bangladesh is marked as a partly free country by the Freedom House report scoring 49 out of 100. Since the boycott of last elections by the BNP, Bangladesh is not being seen as a democratic country, where it has been marked “partly free” by the index in 2016.

When one looks at the party system of these countries, few patterns can be observed. Parties generally do not adhere to institutional norms in recruiting to party offices and are less democratic. This also seems to reflect on the larger politics of the country itself, where flouting of institutional norm is often the case. As Kanchan Chandra points out, because of the high

⁸ Kothari Rajni. Political Consensus in India: Decline and Reconstruction, EPW, Vol.4, No.4, October 11, 1969 pp.1635.

returns associated with these offices and posts, often family politics or dynasty politics develops out of it. All the three countries have a two-party system with several smaller political parties. The 'feudal' nature of the politics was another characteristic feature of politics of these countries. The 'feudal' character of Pakistan politics goes a long way to explain the intensity of factional strife. The choice of a leader or of a party was to a large extent dictated by quarrels between tribes or family clans often going back to several generations. In India, the initial positing of Congress as an Umbrella party kept in abeyance the full manifestation of a 'feudal' politics for a long time. It was only when the initial charisma of Jawaharlal Nehru along with Congress diminished that slowly these feudal elements were seen in the Indian political scenario. The Congress party came to be criticized for its upper caste and upper class bias and slowly it lost its earlier hegemonic stance, with number of political parties which represented the country side enunciating the moods and aspirations of peasants and working class began its appearance in the parliament.

In Pakistan, the decline of Muslim League and the weakness of the Party system prevented the establishment of an essential link between government and people. The contrast with the situation in India is striking. Here the state was built gradually with the help of Congress party and its network. In Pakistan those in charge devoted all their energies to establish a centralized administration which lacked any electoral aspect right down to the local level.

2.2 First Decade in India and Pakistan after Independence

Few things that happened in the first decade of Independence had ripple effects that went into intersperse the history of these countries. Of special significance was the constitution building process, the ability or inability to sustain it, the capability to oppose reactionary forces, setting a discourse for the nation, democratic or undemocratic practices in institutional functioning, problems surrounding claims on Kashmir and of course the problems from East Pakistan, that was decisive in the formation of Bangladesh in 1971 and also the overbearing colonial traditions that have marked the politics in this region. The region of South Asia as diverse as it is, was ought to be challenged from various fronts. Centrifugal forces became assertive during this period of time. India and Pakistan both were entwined with claims to Kashmir. Within these newly formed countries, these forces were present. Granville Austin, writes,

“India was not, and its peoples were not, one at the republic’s beginning, which made the leaders anxious and focussed their minds on achieving unity. The subcontinent’s partition was only three years in the past, and its effects still reverberated. Some five hundred princely states had just been integrated into the union. Jammu and Kashmir continued tense in the aftermath of the Maharaja’s accession under the pressure of an invasion by Pakistan inspired guerrillas”.⁹

West Pakistan faced problems with East Pakistan from the very beginning. The geographical discontinuity between the two makes one speculate about the possibility of a united Pakistan at any point of time. Language was one of the first issues to develop in addition to other administrative issue. The imposition of Urdu became an issue in the Bengali dominated East Pakistan. There was also an outline of constitution that was being made, but this rough outline of a constitution soon gave rise to protests from Bengali representatives worried by the imposition of Urdu to the rank of national language which would lead to their under representation in the proposed institutions. Although the Bengalis were in a majority in the country, according to these proposals they would be represented on an equal basis with the other administrative entities of West Pakistan. This act was prejudicial in the sense that both the assemblies would have the same legislative competence. Faced with opposition from the Bengalis and with protestations from the religious groups, who felt that the report gave insufficient emphasis to Islam, Liaquat Ali Khan withdrew it in November 1950. Installing a democratic regime became difficult for Pakistan owing to the existence of various linguistic communities and their power relations. In fact Pakistan was to face this problem repeatedly until 1990’s. The constitution wanted parliamentary government but gave the president such prerogatives that he could not bring himself to let his Prime Minister get on with governing. In the case of a conflict, the only solution was to dismiss the government even suspending the institutions.

But in case of India, the first decade was more or less stable which led political scholars to claim of a “Nehruvian Consensus”. A detailed constitution was drafted pulling in the best of

⁹ Austin, Granville. *Working a Democratic Constitution: A history Of The Indian Experience*. OUP, 2003

ideas from US, UK and the Irish constitution. This consensus was more or less tacit until the death of Nehru and INC played a key role in shaping up the vision for the country.

These events that marked the first decade after independence, did not change radically in the second decade. One thing that was however, established was that the aspirations of the people cannot be contained within authoritarian motives. Democracy more or less became the keyword that was to become the guiding principle in the coming years. In the next decade India saw the death of its first Prime Minister and its takeover by Lal Bahadur Shastri, who walked exactly under the footsteps that Nehru established with no personal ambitions, Lal Bahadur Shastri dies in Tashkent during his tenure, which makes way for the daughter of Nehru to walk her first steps in politics. In Pakistan the PPP was established during this decade on 30th November 1967, by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto when he was the foreign minister during the tenure of military ruler Ayub Khan. The ground here is also made now, for the formation of Bangladesh with the movement in East Pakistan going strong under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Another question that arises in these societies is that, given the nature of these societies and their feudal ramifications one gets inquisitive about the nature of the left movement in these countries. This is also the time when Soviet Union was still successfully practicing a communist form of governance. India and Pakistan also saw a left movement as early as in 1925, but Left could never come to hold the reins of power. Saadia Toor also points towards the fact as to how an alternative Left imagination of Pakistan was nipped in the bud, when she looks at the work of progressive writers of Pakistan and progressive writers of India. She was of the opinion that there was a commonality in the imagination of these writers before the creation of Pakistan. This progressive writers association was affiliated to CPI. Ties between CPI and Muslim League began to grow in the 1940s, basis being CPIs support for Muslim Nationalism at that time.

2.3 Political situation after 1970s

The political situation after the 1970s changes drastically in terms of politics as well as geography. The early 1970s saw the formation of Bangladesh as an independent nation with Awami League forming the government. The mid 1970s saw the authoritarian Emergency rule

in India by Indira Gandhi, regarded as a dark phase in an otherwise successful democracy. This period also saw the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975 including many of his family members. The later 1970s saw the execution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto by Zia Ul Haq. Therefore this decade is marked by political instability marked by political assassinations and distrust. The institutions established at the behest of nationalist leaders seem to be wearing off with de-institutionalization and personalized political becoming the key marker. Certain parallels can also be drawn looking at the trends of these countries like rise of military regimes after democratic preludes, delay in the formation of dynasty politics due to military intervention and dynasty politics acting as a wall against authoritarian rule.

2.3.1 India

The early 1970's have been declared as an era of populism in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Indira Gandhi's rhetorical program like "Garibi Hatao" helped her sweep elections with little effect in actual circumstances. The reflection of party structure was becoming visible in the political organizations and functioning. Personalization of power was taking place at a great speed.

Nehru had a different style of functioning and worked with the belief that extending the Congress's social bases of support and the corresponding broadening and deepening of democracy in India could constrain the exercise of authority by the centralized state, which he couldn't afford given the fact that scars of partition were still fresh on the country. But things quite changed during the time of Indira Gandhi; her era marked a shift of relationship between center and region as opposed to what Nehru had presided over. Indira era, strengthened popular regional leaders at the expense of the center, thus modifying both the party and the state structure. Indira Gandhi kept populist leaders at an arm's length. Indira Gandhi did not allow inner party democracy to grow or take shape so that the regional leaders who were her loyal could not blast their way into power at the center. By imposing the 'Emergency' of 1975-77 Indira Gandhi's challenged the regional competitions by concentrating the power in the center and also to survive in a system that was largely getting destabilized owing to different problems that were emerging. The resort to overt authoritarianism aimed at increasing central powers was helped by the non-elected institutions of the state. However, this brief moment of

authoritarianism was rejected by the masses in the elections of 1977.¹⁰

2.3.2 Pakistan

Katherine Adeney summarises the context of Pakistan as thus,

“The lack of a genuinely representative national political party and the refusal to accept the legitimacy of linguistic claims to recognition contributed to the delaying of national elections and the proclamation of martial law in 1958. National elections were not held until 1970, 23 years after independence.”¹¹

Though Pakistan initially could show more than average higher rates of growth than in India, yet Pakistan today had little to show by way of economic development. When Pakistan had its first democratically elected Prime Minister Bhutto; he came with promises of redistributive reforms for the underprivileged by professing a left-leaning ideology, but he definitely watered down his populist programmes when he chose to add the much landed notables to his party instead of initiating his promised agrarian reforms. He did reform the military and civil bureaucracy but only to enhance his personal authority and not of institutions like parliament. But Bhutto could not desist the use of military forces which have been momentarily pushed out of power, when problems arose in Balochistan. In order to curb a tribal uprising in Balochistan, Bhutto made the military active again. Not only were the provincial autonomy provisions of the 1973 constitution ignored, but also no possibilities were seen to re-define the center-province relations.¹²

On 5th July 1977, one of Bhutto’s hand-picked chief of army staff, General Zia-Ul-Haq assumed control of the state apparatus. Assured of support from the army and a substantial proportion of the bureaucracy, Zia was eager to expand his support among the anti-Bhutto

¹⁰ Bose, Sugata and Jalal, Ayesha. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture and Political Economy* Third Edition, OUP, 2014

¹¹ Adeney, Katherine. *A move to Majoritarian Nationalism? Challenges of Representation in South Asia*, Routledge, 7 April, 2015.

¹² Bose, Sugata and Jalal, Ayesha. *Modern South Asia: History, Culture and Political Economy*, Third Edition, Pg 205 OUP, 2014

elements. After many broken promises Zia agreed to hold non-party-based elections in 1985 to the national and provincial assemblies, but he also passed a 8th amendment to the constitution which gave immense powers to the President. In the post-Zia era of Pakistani politics violence in informal arenas of politics and manipulation of kinship in the formal arenas of electoral representation became the key features (Jayal). In November 1988 elections, Benazir Bhutto (1988-90, 1993-96), daughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, won who has been leading the PPP after her father's execution by the Zia regime. It is important to mention that, Nawaz Sharif who led a coalition of parties called the Islamic Democratic Alliance and did perform well in Punjab area scrapped the Eighth Amendment after winning a two-thirds majority in the February 1997 elections. General Pervez Musharraf emerged at this point and overthrew the Sharif Government. In elections held in 2008, the PPP emerged as the largest single party. Musharraf resigned few days after this election.

2.3.3 Bangladesh

After its successful breakaway from Pakistan in 1971 Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was released from a prison in Pakistan. After returning to Bangladesh he became Prime Minister in the newly independent state of Bangladesh. In trend with the neighboring two countries populist politics was pervasive here too. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's populist economic measures included land reforms and nationalization of industries. Unable to meet the rising demands on the state, Mujib announced the setting up of a one party socialist state. In August 1975, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his entire family were assassinated in a military coup. His murder initiated a brief spell of authoritarianism in the country. General Zia Ur Rahman took over the government (1975-82) but he was assassinated in 1982. So General Ershad in this period ruled as a military dictator until elections were held in 1990s when Khaleda Zia won. Since the early 1990s Bangladesh had witnessed a series of general elections, leading alternately to the formation of governments by the Awami League under Mujib's daughter Sheikh Hasina Wajid and the Bangladesh National Party led by Khaleda Zia.

The three countries of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh becomes interesting in this context. These countries have been witness to similar unfolding of history, not only in terms of events but also in terms of responses to such ravages of time. The rise of Dynasty politics as a process

of stabilization of politics in these countries becomes remarkable in the context of these otherwise unstable democracies. Dynasty politics, as it is have very different connotations in other parts of the world, where Dynasty politics is largely a manifestation of power politics. Dynasty politics in these parts of the world are not just part of power politics, they have a different meaning altogether. In these otherwise unstable and fragile democracies dynasty have worked a cementing factor towards the continuation of the idea of democracy or rather enhancing it. Their role have been so important that in fact in all the three countries mentioned, dynasty and democracy have walked together and whenever dynasties have failed democracy also seemed to be constantly unstable. Dynasty seem to be the pre-condition for democracy, where democracy thrives under the dynastic rule of families.

Another characteristic feature is takeover of government by military regimes. It is only natural that these countries that were newly independent and have for a large part of modern history has been subjects to imperial invasions and have adopted democracy from the Britishers that was significantly different from the idea of “Liberal Democracy” as such had its own limitations for societies that were still not modern and people were still bound together by feudal ties. So it was but natural that the idea of Democracy as such shall be fraught with tensions. Therefore military rules have been very much part of Democracy of these parts of the world whether it be Pakistan or Bangladesh. Military rule in both the countries have come under the pretext of underdevelopment and non-stability of the polity. Interesting to note that whenever military rule was in place whether it was in Pakistan or Bangladesh they have thwarted the growing of dynasties. When one looks at the history of these three countries, some parallels can be drawn in their unfolding of events.

2.4 Pakistan at crossroads: PPP and Awami League

Though formed at different periods and under different circumstances, there are few parallels that can be drawn between the PPP and Awami League. East Pakistan always had an ambivalent relationship with West Pakistan owing to various reasons. Awami League in a way gave shape to the dissatisfaction of the people of East Pakistan. PPP and Awami League comes to power almost at the same period. Just before the creation of Bangladesh, PPP won a majority in West Pakistan and Awami league in East Pakistan. When Bangladesh finally got

independence from Pakistan the leaders of both the parties went on to become the head of the newly created nations. Both were populist in their style of functioning and had similar socialistic goals for their countries. Mujibur Rahman was killed and succeeded by a military rule in the country; so was the case with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who was succeeded by a military regime headed by Zia-Ul-Haq.

The 1969-71 period in Pakistan saw a rise in democratic urge on the part of a people, also coinciding with the birth of PPP. The parties in both East and West Pakistan led by Mujibur and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto were able to garner maximum support from their respective areas. In West Pakistan, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) led by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, reached millions of people with the message of 'socialism'. In East Pakistan, the Awami League led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took the Six Points to every street-corner and village. The issues were widely aired. Both leaders were under attack from various fronts, but fought back and succeeded in taking their agenda forward.¹³ Mujibur Rahman's campaign in the East concentrated on the national question. The Awami League leaders explained in great detail how their part of the country had been exploited economically and politically. They pointed out that Bengalis constituted a majority of the country's population, yet they were hugely discriminated against. Rahman campaigned on the lines of how the taxes paid by the East Pakistanis were virtually used against them in building a defense apparatus. The Awami League's election campaign captured the mood and aspirations of the masses. They wanted a confederal Pakistan.

The PPP (Pakistan's People Party) was established by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, when he was a foreign minister during the military rule of Ayub Khan. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's political career started as a foreign minister during the dictatorship of Ayub Khan. His popularity rose during the period that he was serving as a foreign minister. His vehement criticisms of pacts like SEATO and CENTO which did not help Pakistan in any way but indeed continued to keep Pakistan as a US's stooge. His change in foreign policies were very successful and drew wider attention. During this period that he decided to establish the PPP in 1967.¹⁴ Land reforms has remained one of the major unsolved issues in these countries. Leaders as and when they have tried to introduce land reforms have faced stiff resistance from the land-owning class and

¹³ Ali, Tariq. *Can Pakistan Survive? The Death of a State*, Penguin Books, 1983

¹⁴ Bhutto, Fatima. *Songs of Blood and Sword: A Daughter's Memoir*, Penguin Books 2010

owing to this land reforms have always been a haphazard process in these areas. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's one of the key ideas in the formation of PPP was land reforms, although he was also criticised for being populist. In his campaign against the military regime of Ayub Khan, Bhutto had stressed the importance of human rights. In one of the first pamphlets of PPP, Bhutto had argued: 'Civil liberties hold the key to our future happiness . . . All fundamental rights are important and stand or fall together. Genuine freedom of speech cannot function genuinely without freedom of the press or without a proper opportunity for free association.' It was a combination of democratic demands and socialist promises that helped Bhutto to win the 1970 elections in West Pakistan. In Pakistan, the PPP was building its base in Punjab area which had the largest concentration of people appointed into the army. Bhutto's anti-India and Anti-Tashkent approach made him the most popular leader in an era when there was mass dissatisfaction with the Ayub regime. People were tired of older feudal lords and Bhutto's party very brilliantly represented the aspirations of a new class that was emerging. Although Bhutto himself belonged to a family of landowners yet he posed himself quite differently from the existing leadership. His move towards support of students' movement at that time also led to his immense popularity. While there was immense support to PPP in the Punjab region of West Pakistan, there was immense support to Awami League in East Pakistan. This has led to the assumption during that period that in order to establish the hegemony of PPP in West Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto wanted to do away with the East Pakistan so that his sole leadership in Pakistan becomes established and uncontested.¹⁵

On 20 December 1971, the military high command handed over power to Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, chairman of the Pakistan People's Party. Bhutto was Pakistan's first civilian leader who became the Prime Minister. The defeat suffered in Dhaka and the break-up of the country traumatized the population from top to bottom. The army in the pre-Bhutto period was the spinal cord of the state apparatus. In Pakistan the army had been in direct political command as well. The defeat suffered by this army created conditions of extreme uncertainty. Bhutto's take-over was thus arranged by the army. Although he dismissed the generals who had formed the mainstay of the Yahya administration, and some months later, other senior officers in the army were removed and dispatched abroad as ambassadors, yet he did nothing qualitative to alter the

¹⁵ Ayoob, Mohammed. *Profile of a Party: PPP in Pakistan*, EPW, Vol.7, No. 5/7 pp 215-219, February 1972

army's character or function. He replaced Gul Hasan with Tikka Khan, a veteran of 'anti-insurgent operations' in the province of Baluchistan prior to his later role as the 'Butcher of Dhaka'. Tikka's ruthlessness as a military commander was an added advantage, as it delivered a veiled warning to the nationalists in the Frontier and Baluchistan provinces, where the PPP was in a minority and the National Awami Party constituted the major political force. But the challenge of a state formation to PPP were many; a crisis of legitimacy, a pressing need to resurrect the country's damaged political institutions, to restore its economy and to re-fashion its external relations.

Because the founding fathers of the PPP believed that the private sector as it was organized in Pakistan would neither benefit the poor nor bring about an improvement in income distribution, the state had to intervene directly in managing industrial, commercial, and financial assets. This approach was implemented aggressively once the PPP was in power. In a series of acts of nationalization executed in 1972-74, the state assumed control over large segments of industry and commerce operated by private entrepreneurs. It also took over all commercial banks and insurance companies. It went so far as to nationalize educational institutions that were operating in the private sector.

Bhutto experimented with various ideas, another idea was the idea of an Islamic Pakistan. Knowing the relevance of the idea, Bhutto advanced the idea of "Islamic Socialism". The political expediency of the idea led Bhutto to adopt it and use it.

To a large extent Z.A. Bhutto, who assumed power as Pakistan's first democratically elected prime minister, encapsulated the mood of this new Pakistan? He guided the country more clearly perhaps than any other leader before him in the direction of closer relations with the Muslim heartland. He did so consciously observing that 'the severance of our eastern wing ... has significantly altered our geographic focus ... At the moment, as we stand, it is within the ambit of South and Western Asia. It is here that our primary concern must henceforth lie.' Bhutto signaled changes that confirmed the new-found importance of Islam in the conduct of public affairs. His ruling PPP openly proclaimed the power of 'Islamic socialism' to drive its populist programme and moved quickly to forge alliances with various local pirs.¹⁶

¹⁶ Shaikh, Farzana. *Making Sense of Pakistan*, pg 95, Columbia University Press, New York 2009

For countries that were newly independent where conditions were very unique and different from other countries, democracy was not the panacea for all the diseases that these places have been ailing from. Constant pressure on the governments to perform and constant failure of government to meet targeted goals left most of the population in despair. It was this vacuum that was created by the political parties that the military rulers and army generals made no delay to fulfil. Whereas in Pakistan and Bangladesh the authoritarian military rules came largely from inside the army. In case of India, authoritarian rule in the shape of Emergency came largely through the Dynasty of Gandhi-Nehru family itself. In both the above mentioned instances one factor that remains common is that the governments were largely unable to deal with the growing pressures to perform which gave way to authoritarian regimes. The authoritarian governments came on the pretext of meeting required developments through imposition of various restrictions whether it be in terms of economy or whether by curtailing rights of political parties and fundamental rights of the population.

2.5 The Inescapable Fate: Creation of Bangladesh

Why was the creation of Bangladesh “inevitable”? Since the initial days of Pakistan, a hierarchy was created between Bengali speaking Muslims and Urdu speaking Muslims in Pakistan, with the Urdu speakers coming to hold the rein of powers while being lesser in number than the Bengali speakers. So from the initial days of creation of Pakistan, a stark gap was there between the two regions in addition to the geographical discontinuity between the two. The assertion of Bengali speaking Muslims had led to the invention of “International Mother Language Day” in Bangladesh. This assertion led to the formation of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s Awami League, which stood and challenged West Pakistan as a voice of protest on behalf of East Pakistan.

Throughout the Ayub years, the Awami League played the role of an opposition. In March 1966, Mujib advanced a six-point program of autonomy for East Pakistan. This called for parliamentary democracy and a genuinely federal constitution; for restricting the powers of the federal government to defense and foreign affairs; for establishing two separate currencies for each wing; for devolving fiscal policy to the federating units; for maintaining separate foreign exchange earnings for each wing; and for raising a separate militia for the defense of East

Pakistan. When the protests erupted in 1968, Mujib was on trial for allegedly conspiring with India to undermine the unity of Pakistan—the so-called Agartala conspiracy case, named after the eastern Indian town where Mujib was alleged to have met and schemed with Indian agents.¹⁷

The Awami League leadership championed the demands for “full regional autonomy” for East Bengal as expressed in their ‘Six Point Programme’, which found a common voice with the East Pakistanis and which led them to the victory of 1970.

In response to those demands by the Awami League, the leaders of West Pakistan decided to deal with it in an authoritarian manner by deploying armed forces in the region. The first general elections in Pakistan created a constitutional crisis created by the massive victory of the Awami League and PPP’s denial to accept the verdict. The Awami League tried to negotiate with President Yahya Khan but the army struck during the same time in East Bengal to suppress the East Pakistanis. Bhutto’s PPP was too arrogant to acknowledge the demands for regional autonomy and they stood for a united and strong center. The Awami League had an absolute majority in the National Assembly. It had a support base even in some pockets of West Pakistan, yet Bhutto denied to succumb to the demands of Awami League.¹⁸

Why the population of East Pakistan demanded for an independent nation, the reasons were various. Some of them were observed by Hamza Alavi in “Bangladesh and the crisis of Pakistan” are as follows,

“Firstly the consequences of widening regional economic disparities inherent in the unevenness of capitalist development; and the emergence of a sense of separate national identity amongst underprivileged regional groups in addition to imposition of Urdu in an otherwise Bengali speaking community. Population of East Pakistan constituted around 54 percent of the population of Pakistan and they agitated for a rightful place for themselves in appointments to the state bureaucracy and the armed forces and for measures to rectify the economic backwardness of that exploited region by a re-allocation of economic

¹⁷ Sisson, Richard and Rose, Leo. *War and Secession: Pakistan, India, and the Creation of Bangladesh*, Pg 19-20, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990

¹⁸ Alavi, Hamza. *Bangladesh and the Crisis of Pakistan*, The Socialist Register, 1975

resources and modification of state policies. Their confrontation with the Army in March 1971 was the climax of a long struggle.”¹⁹

While on the one hand, some thinkers like Alavi thought that creation of Bangladesh was “crisis” situation for Pakistan others have argued that it helped Pakistan develop an Islamic identity of its own which it was unable to till now, because of its association to East Pakistan which had a huge number of Hindus.²⁰

Mujibur Rahman came to the political limelight with his election to one of the posts of joint secretaries of the East Pakistan Awami Muslim League in 1949. Mujibur Rahman, known to be a charismatic organizer established his firm grip over the party over the years. Instead of allowing Rahman to form the government when he won with a huge margin in 1970s, the military junta tried to dilute the results of the elections. President Yahya Khan cancelled the National Assembly meet Dhaka scheduled to be held at on March 3, 1971. Mujibur Rahman called an all-out non-cooperation movement in East Pakistan. Bangladesh inherited an administrative structure which has developed as part and parcel of the Pakistani administrative system. Bangladesh, therefore aimed to break up the strangle hold of bureaucracy in the district administration closer to the people. Precisely because of this the bureaucrats and such other social groups which have been using the old administrative system to perpetuate their exploitation of the people, got annoyed with the Mujib government and conspired towards its downfall.

The Chinese leaders, on their part, gave unconditional and blanket approval to the Yahya regime in its attempt to crush the Bengali resistance. Their support extended far beyond state diplomacy; in a personal letter to Yahya Khan, Chou En-Lai openly supported the Pakistan army to trample on the aspirations of the people. China did not limit itself to verbal support for the military dictatorship in Pakistan. It provided crucial military and economic assistance. Chinese-made tanks were used to demolish workers’ districts in Dhaka and Chinese fighter bombers which bombed Bengali villages. At the height of the war, Peking also provided the

¹⁹ Alavi, Hamza. *Bangladesh and the Crisis of Pakistan*

²⁰ Shaikh, Farzana. *Making Sense of Pakistan*, pg 86, Columbia University Press, New York 2009

generals with a 100-million dollar interest-free loan. The modern highway linking Sinkiang with North West Pakistan across the Karakoram Range, from Sufu to Gilgit, was a channel for military and civilian supplies from China throughout the crisis. The Chinese issued dire warnings against “outside intervention” in Pakistan’s internal affairs indicating towards Indian intervention. Such statements have helped to confuse public opinion and boosted the morale of those who have perpetrated one of the worst crimes in history against an entire people.²¹

After gaining Independence Mujibur Rahman stated in a speech in post-independent Bangladesh,

“I would like to record our special debt of gratitude to India, to Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India and her government and her great people, for the total support extended by them to our struggle. I would similarly like to specially thank the Soviet Union, and its great people for the consistent support extended by them to our cause, and for the invaluable role played by it in the United Nations.”

Therefore the path of development to be adopted, their political alliances were determined from its initial years. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, chose non-capitalist path of economic development for his country. Accordingly his economic policies aimed at (a) Developing public sector as the dominant force in the economy (b) Abolishing the remnants of feudalism and (c) Checking the spread of capitalism in agriculture. He nationalized the key industries including banking and insurance. Jute industry and trade which were the mainstay of Bangladesh economy, were also nationalized. Further, to check the growth of private sector out of proportion, proper restrictions in the form of ceiling on investment were imposed and the right of nationalization was reserved with the government. A scheme was drawn to set up a multi-purpose cooperative system at village level. The scheme envisaged to form 65,000 multipurpose cooperative societies on each for 65,000 villages of Bangladesh. This policy was announced on March 1975. These cooperatives were envisaged to be the de facto owner of all available lands, orchards, fisheries and other economic properties and institutions of the villages. But the landed classes of the villages strongly opposed it and later on the military regimes scrapped it.

²¹ Alavi, Hamza. *Bangladesh and the Crisis of Pakistan*

Today one can see a lot of policies in Bangladesh which is quite opposed to the ideas that Mujibur stood for. For example privatization, like every other nation of South Asia is rampant here. One gets amazed at the private sector and foreign investment in the sector of education. The mad rush for raw material into the country by various imperialist forces makes things only worse. Therefore, it is no wonder that a country that is so rich in natural resources still lag behind in many indicators of development.

In Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Awami League established itself as the most dominant party. There are several reasons which contributed towards it. Its wide campaign during the Liberation war before Independence led to it being recognized as the main platform for opposing the injustice done to the East Pakistanis. Therefore the first general elections in independent Bangladesh had BAL as the dominant party. After its coming to power, it also imposed a bar on the contest of elections by right-wing parties. The result of which was that the number of parties contesting elections came down. The BAL also had an advantage over other parties owing to the fact that as compared to other parties it had automatic entitlement to few facilities; it used state-run radio and television to promote its policies and programmes which others lacked.²² In the year 2001 alliance politics appears in the Bangladeshi politics for the very first time. Prior to it since 1991, the country has seen two consecutive governments that is BNP and AL respectively.²³

Like the Indian constitution the Bangladesh constitution also has an elaborate list of fundamental rights. All human rights have been enlisted in the constitution. It also adopted a socialistic economic system and provided for the establishment of a unitary form of government in Parliamentary Democracy with the executive powers of the republic exercised by the prime minister. The Bangladesh constitution is based on Westminster model. Experience of India have also served as guideline. The problem of 'defection' has been taken care of by stating that a representative of a political party will have to give-up the membership of parliament if he changes his party. Fifteen seats were reserved for women in this constitution. The political power was monopolized by the Awami league which is the

²² Ahmed, Nizam. *From Monopoly to Competition: Party Politics in The Bangladesh Parliament(1973-2001)* Pg 57, Pacific Affairs, Vol. 76, No.1 Spring 2003

²³ Hossain, Moazzem. 'Home-Grown' Democracy, EPW, Vol.41, No.9, pg 791-793, March 2006

representative of the middle strata like the INC of India. Owing to the indeterminate ideological character of the AL fissiparous tendency have always been present in it. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman wanted to evolve a political system in which the forces of secularism, nationalism with democratic content might get full opportunities to develop themselves. It is also interesting to note here that “secularism” as a principle was added in the original 1972 constitution which was later on scrapped by Zia-Ur-Rahman in 1977. Since there are similarities in the way these countries have emerged, the governments that came to power and the policies that they adopted there can be few parallels that can be drawn in these three countries, even though India and Pakistan swears to be each other’s enemy.

2.6 Rise of the Military Regimes: Zia Ul Haq (1977-1988) in Pakistan and Zia Ur Rahman (1977-1981) in Bangladesh

It is worth noting that all the countries under study in South Asia started off as democratic nations with India standing out as it could hold on to the institutions promised to the population of the country and writing her own constitution successfully in the 1950s. However this was not the case with Pakistan and Bangladesh. The death of Jinnah led the country to disarray where political parties were yet to develop as strong institutions of democracy. At that point of time, general Ayub Khan took over the governance of the country. Very soon the popular aspirations of the people in West and East Pakistan is tapped by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. This leads to Bhutto becoming the fourth President of Pakistan in 1971 and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman the first in the same year after the creation of Bangladesh. But soon disillusionment followed with the rule of Bhutto and Mujibur Rahman as they could not fulfil the promises made to the country and at the same time hurting the economic and political vested interest of some groups. For Bhutto it was the army and for Mujibur Rahman, it was the banning of radical groups like Jamaat. This led to the removal of these leaders through coup and its place taken up by the army.

Bhutto’s social and economic policies and the way he conducted himself in office produced a number of predictable results. Of special concern for many people was the loss of political liberty. There was an expectation of a return to democracy following the end of the long military rule. Instead, Bhutto established a form of “civilian dictatorship” that was much more

vicious than the military rule of Presidents Ayub Khan and Yahya Khan. Many scholars have pointed towards the danger of implementation of a naive socialism.

Although Bhutto's economic and social policies had been widely expected to ease the sense of national malaise, his government's failure to live up to expectation and his regime was equated with the failure of secular regimes, which stood condemned for their dubious attachment to Islam. It was in this climate of enduring uncertainty that Zia set about addressing the ambiguities that surrounded Pakistan's new Islamic identity. His first move in this direction was the famous Objectives Resolution, which having served until then as a preamble to successive constitutions, was in 1985 made 'justiciable'—that is, subject to enforcement by the courts. The significance of the move lay in the formal application of the so-called 'enabling clause' included in the Resolution, which obliged the state to create conditions such as to 'enable' Muslims to order their public and private lives in accordance with the teachings of Islam'.²⁴ The sweeping changes associated with General Zia's Islamist brand of politics in the 1980s left little doubt that Zia himself associated the strengthening of Pakistan's Muslim identity with the steady erosion of the rights of its dwindling non-Muslims. His most decisive moves in this direction were contained in a series of judicial reforms announced in 1984.²⁵

Trying to look at the influence of Islam, Farzana Sheikh has pointed that Pakistan's problem lay not in the contested terms of Islam, but merely in the lack of 'fit' between the 'secular outlook' of some leaders and the temporary 'millenarian' enthusiasm of some followers. This, as Metcalf has observed, makes little sense when set against 'the self-conscious identification of Pakistanis with Islam which is notable even to other Muslims'.²⁶ She emphasizes, one cannot differentiate in the case of Pakistan between 'some authentic statement of Islam' and 'the opportunistic use of Islam'. Ziring has observed, the presence of East Bengal's large non-Muslim population, with its Hindu undertones, had always suggested that 'Pakistan could never realize its potential as a Muslim country while connected to East Bengal'.²⁷ Reflecting on the emergence of Pakistan as a 'more viable entity' after 1971, the Pakistani scholar, Burki,

²⁴ Shaikh, Farzana. *Making Sense of Pakistan*, pg 99, Columbia University Press, New York 2009

²⁵ Shaikh, Farzana. *Making Sense of Pakistan*, pg 76, Columbia University Press, New York 2009

²⁶ Metcalf, Barbara. *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan*, in *The Case of Pakistan*, Pg 219, OUP, 2004

²⁷ Ziring, Lawrence. *Pakistan at the cross-current of History*, pg 135, Oxford One world. 2003

has argued that the separation of East Pakistan was a development rich with possibilities for Pakistan. The latter, he claims, were damaged by the perpetual struggle over the meaning of Pakistan between those in the East Pakistan and those in West Pakistan.

Zia belonged to the social group-urban, middle-class professionals- that had high expectations from Bhutto when he took over the reins of government. This class was at the forefront of the agitation that brought down the Prime Minister, Bhutto when he failed to stand to their expectations. Zia believed that Bhutto's term in office had created a serious divide between the rulers and the middle classes. He also believed that Bhutto failed to follow what was expected of a Muslim leader. He provided leadership to the group disillusioned by Bhutto by spearheading a movement to bring Islamic values to the country. After all, according to him, Pakistan had been created for the Muslims of British India. It was now necessary to turn this Muslim country into an Islamic state. Zia's program of Islamization moved on three fronts—social, political, and economic. President Zia Ul Haq died in an air crash on 17 August 1988. The caretaker regime headed by the acting president decided to hold elections in October 1988 and when Benazir Bhutto's PPP won the most seats in the National Assembly, the establishment then decided to offer her the post of Prime Minister provided that she accepted some conditions.²⁸

Although Islamization in Pakistan is usually attributed to General Zia, its roots can be found in the period of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. However, it was General Zia who played the role of deepening the nexus between Islamization and the state by launching a comprehensive program of Islamic reform that paved the way for a legalist approach to substantiate Pakistan's Muslim identity. The 1980s witnessed further disparities following the reversal of Bhutto's nationalization programme. Under General Zia private entrepreneurs were encouraged to enter the educational market, where demand for English as the language of power had intensified at the same time as had demands for instruction in Islam necessary to qualify for service in the new, islamized state²⁹. Ironically Islamist groups were at the forefront of anti-English campaigns that peaked in the late 1970s, but were cut short by Zia—himself once their greatest champion—who reversed an order imposing Urdu as the medium of instruction in all schools.

²⁸ Burki, Shahid Javed. *Pakistan Under Bhutto, 1971-77*, London: Macmillan, 1980.

²⁹ Shaikh, Farzana. *Making Sense of Pakistan*, pg 145, Columbia University Press, New York 2009

Since the 1980s, Islamist groups have emerged as strong supporters of instruction in English. Maulana Mawdudi (1903–79) an Islamist philosopher and jurist is claimed to be the most influential of Pakistan's Islamists. In his view, Pakistan as a country had to be perfected along Islamic lines. He was also a scholar and educator, influenced by the Deobandis in northern India. His writings also influenced Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, which in turn has produced pan-Islamic doctrines of revolution and changes.³⁰

On the other hand, in Bangladesh, after the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, there was a caretaker government for a short while after which Zia Ur Rahman took over. This regime as soon as it came to power it annulled all political decisions of the Mujibur Government. It took a soft stand towards pro-Pakistani and communal elements in the country and was predominantly composed of the military. The army was dominant in this regime. Bangladesh army was raised mainly from former Bengali soldiers of Pakistan army and some Mukti Bahini personnel. The Mukti Bahini personnel however were not given any top positions in the army. Among the soldiers belonging to the former Pak army, there were those who had joined the liberation movement at the very beginning, helped considerably in organizing and training the Mukti Bahini and remained loyal to the Mujib government. There were others who have joined the liberation war but did not have any ties to the Mujib government. There was a third group who left Pakistan army on being tortured but they did not join the liberation war. Fourth group consisted of such personnel who joined the liberation struggle when they were convinced about the victory of the liberation forces and a fifth group composed of repatriates from Pakistan after Liberation. After the new regime came after the coup, it removed all top officials suspected to be loyal towards Mujib and promoted its own men. But they failed to achieve what they aimed at. The pro-Mujib faction inside the army re-organized itself and gained enough strength to challenge the anti-Mujib faction. The pro-Mujib faction was successful in thwarting the move of the regime to induct pro-Peking and pro-Pakistan elements into the army. The pro-Mujib faction captured Bangabhaban on 3 November, 1975 and installed their government which however continued for only four days. On 7 November, the counter-revolutionary forces led by one army officer, Zia Ur Rahman, staged a second coup and captured power murdering the leaders of the pro-Mujib faction. The pro-Mujib faction in

³⁰ Cohen, Stephen P. *The Idea of Pakistan*, Brookings Institution Press, pg 164, 2004

the army, despite this setback continued to hold on till November 23, 1975 when they were finally crushed by the regime with the help of pro-Pakistani elements. In Bangladesh there were about 1500-2000 Pak soldiers who were living underground since Liberation. After this the regime introduced measures to ensure that there would be no threat to its existence in the future. All political activities that could be possibly anti-regime were banned, martial law was imposed, and press kept under strict censorship. During Zia Ur's regime Bangladesh has almost reversed her earlier stand. Sheikh Mujibur had formulated a foreign policy which included close ties with India, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, anti-imperialism and non-alignment.

It is not unknown that international monetary institutions dictates the terms of economy in the developing countries. Foreign aid was a means to dabble in their politics. In Bangladesh the assassination of Mujib in August 1975 opened a new door of 'political conditionality' of foreign aid. Both the IMF and the World Bank saw the downfall of Mujib's socialist regime as an opportunity to intervene and pursue their goals.³¹

However, it was not a wonder that military regimes became dominant in these new democracies owing to various reasons. The cold war period saw an expansion of influence of Soviet Russia to newly independent countries who were clearly in a position of anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism. In order to counter this influence of Soviet Union, the United States developed the "modernization theory" in response to it. "Modernization theory" drew upon expertise from across the social sciences in order to lay out a teleology of economic, political, social and cultural change designed to bring the newly independent postcolonial states "up to speed".³² Although the underpinned idea was about the establishment of liberal democracy, modernization theorists, saw the military in Third World states as a progressive force. Third world militaries, particularly in Arab and Muslim countries, were thus pitched as the best candidates to initiate the kinds of social reforms that were required to free those societies of the shackles of "tradition" and bring them, kicking and screaming if need be, into

³¹ Quadir, Fahimul. *The Political Economy of Pro-Market Reforms in Bangladesh: Regime Consolidation through Economic Liberalization*. Contemporary South Asia, Volume 9, 2000, Issue 2.

³² Mustafa Kemal Ataturk was the first to use the term "modernisation" to refer to "a political and economic program" which was quintessentially an American product. (Gilman, 2003)

“modernity”.³³

Here it is important to note that India also saw a period of Emergency during the period of 1975 and 1977. Although it was equally suppressive in its policies whether imprisoning opposition to building a personal base of loyalty inside the party to flouting institutional norms yet it was different in one way. That is, the Emergency was imposed by a “democratically” elected government. Therefore, in the comparison that is being made between Bangladesh and Pakistan, India is not being included here. The Emergency here was induced by domestic circumstances of inter and intra party rivalry.

2.7 Temporary Respite: Return of Democratic Rule (through Nawaz Sharif (1990-1993), Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan (1993-1996) and Khaleda Zia in Bangladesh (1991-1996))

It is important to mention here that the events did not happen one after the other in an organized way. But the point here that is being made is of the overall trend. For example, after Zia-Ur-Rahman in Pakistan and Zia-Ul-Haq in Bangladesh, things didn't turn favorable all of a sudden. The damage that Zia did to Pakistan was irreparable. His politics of “Islamization” was anti-woman and anti-minority. So, although Nawaz Sharif comes immediately after him to power, all is not-well in a span of a day. In Bangladesh too, after the assassination of Zia-Ur-Rahman, Ershad comes to hold the reins of power. The military rule of Ershad ends in 1991 with Khaleda Zia being elected democratically as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. There are several opinion about, whether Khaleda Zia can be regarded as democratic; however by democracy here is referred to the way they were elected.

On 24th October 1990 Elections were held all over Pakistan. Bhutto’s PPP lost in all the provinces to IJI (Islami Jamhoori Ittehad) an alliance of rightist parties and on 10th November an 18 member federal government was sworn in by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Nawaz Sharif became the Prime Minister. On 18th July 1993, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dissolved the National Assembly and resigned. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif also resigned. On October 1993 the PPP won the most seats in the National Assembly, though did not win a majority. Benazir Bhutto was sworn in as Prime Minister. Bhutto serves a very small term until 1996.

³³ Saadia Toor.

The National assembly elected back Sharif on 1997 where he served his term until 1997.

In Bangladesh the period after which Khaleda Zia came to power, the country saw a political crisis created by the opposition with their demand for a constitutional amendment demanding a neutral caretaker government prior to elections but the Commonwealth Secretary General Emeka Anyoku had to intervene between the then Prime Minister and the opposition leader without much success. However, the thirteenth amendment to the constitution on March 1996 established the fact that there shall be a neutral caretaker government during the period of elections headed by a retired chief Justice.³⁴ The neutral caretaker government that was demanded by the Awami League then, was later on amended when the Awami league came to power. Religion became part of the democratization process under the BNP-alliance government; power has been concentrated in the hands of the prime minister; minorities and political opponents have been persecuted and stripped off their rights and even assassinated in some cases. Though Bangladesh has otherwise seen only two parties coming to power alternatively, the role of, Jamaat-i-Islami cannot be altogether denied. When the BNP came to power in alliance with the Jamaat in 2001, it was offered two important posts in the government.³⁵

In Pakistan, after the death of Zia the route to democracy has been more uneven. The interlude of democracy was witnessed between the period of 1988 to the end of 1999 until military takeover by Pervez Musharraf. It also witnessed the two consecutive government of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. Benazir Bhutto became the prime minister for almost a year until she was dismissed by president Ghulam Ishaq Khan. After her removal, Nawaz Sharif becomes the Prime Minister for three years from 1990 to 1993. In 1993 Benazir Bhutto comes to power. These years were not very conducive for democracy because the long shadow of Zia was very much visible on the society of Pakistan. His radical Islamization process could not be overturned so easily. In spite of Zia's non-popularity, Zia served the longest (eleven years) as the president of Pakistan. There were changes in blasphemy laws that have come into existence in the society with narrower meaning overriding the previous colonial-era blasphemy laws

³⁴ Hossain, Golam. *Bangladesh in 1994: Democracy at Risk*, Vol. 32, no. 2, A Survey of Asia in 1994: part II, Pp 171-178, Asian Survey, Feb 1995

³⁵ Ahmed, Nizam. *From Monopoly to Competition: Party Politics in the Bangladesh Parliament (1973-2001)* Pp 55-77, Pacific Affairs, Vol. 76, No. 1, Spring 2003

which were “intended to curb religious violence and to ensure protection to all religious communities from actions designed to humiliate or intimidate them”. Looking at blasphemy laws of Pakistan, Saadia Toor writes,

“What rendered these laws truly horrific, was the punishment prescribed for Blasphemy under section 295-C; as originally passed by Zia, the amendment had prescribed either life imprisonment or death. The government (Nawaz Sharif) could have appealed this decision of the FSC to the Shariat Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court within a prescribed period of time, but since it pointedly did not do so, the death penalty became the mandatory (and only) punishment available for blasphemy.”

Of relevance here is that the first government of Nawaz Sharif, the Islami Jamhuri Itihad (IJI) came with the alliance of Jamaat. Jamaat-e-Islami announced the decision to leave the ruling coalition formed by Islami Jamhuri Itihad on 5th May 1992. The Blasphemy Laws also quite predictably came to be widely misused. No wonder that, a case of blasphemy was filed against Benazir Bhutto in 1993 as she had argued that the system of separate electorates and the blasphemy laws went against human rights principle. In November 1996, President Farooq Leghari dismissed Prime Minister Bhutto, dissolved the National Assembly, and appointed a caretaker administration with Meraj Khalid as prime minister accusing the Bhutto government of widespread corruption.

Democracy has always been precarious in this region owing to various reasons. So the road taken by democracy in this region is also not straight, rather it is a zigzag, sometimes moving forward and sometimes moving backward. However, the phase of democratic rule that these two countries witnessed worked as a prelude to further democratic expansion in this region. In Bangladesh, the power has since been alternated between Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina. In Pakistan, the period of Musharraf was the last decade of military rule after which there has been more or less a peaceful civil government at place.

In India however, things were relatively different because there was no military government at place for the entire country; without overlooking the fact that AFSPA has been there since the fifties in Jammu and Kashmir and North-East India, lest we allow Shopian rape case and Manorama Devi's to slip out of our minds. However, when we talk of rest of India, the “one

party dominance” of the Congress rule was on the decline and widespread discontent with the government is visible. Coalition politics becomes a dominant trend till the next few years. This is also the decade of the adoption of economic reforms, which was widely referred to as the LPG (Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization) dictated by the IMF and World Bank ushered in by the disintegration of the Soviet-Union. The period that follows, witnesses the rise of BJP to power as a significant political force with major communal clashes in the country.

2.8 Thwarting or Delay of the Formation of Dynasty Politics: Bhutto’s, Sheikh Mujib’s and Zia-Ur-Rahman’s Dynasty By Military Regimes of Zia Ul Haq (1977-1998) and Ershad (1983-1990)

In spite of all political upheavals, dynasty becomes a very pre-dominant phenomena in the region of South Asia. Political instability in the region was a major reason for dynasties to emerge. On the pretext of instability dynasty politics slowly grew, whereby it assured bringing in of stability. However, it is interesting to note that, no political dynasties could develop until the rule of the military or rather there was a thwart to the development of dynasties when there was non-democratic rule. In Pakistan the Zia regime postponed the arrival of the Bhutto dynasty by almost a decade, the Ershad regime too delayed the arrival of the two dynastic begums of Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia by few years. Since there was never a military rule in India in the same way as it was in Pakistan or Bangladesh, the dynasty of Gandhi-Nehru developed as early as the time of Indira Gandhi.

While on the one hand, after the death of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, it would have been Benazir Bhutto who would have succeeded him in Pakistan’s politics but instead this predicament was thwarted by the intervention of the Zia regime who ruled the country undemocratically, without holding elections for almost eleven years. In Bangladesh too, because of the intervention of the Ershad regime, the formation of dynasty politics of the “two begums” were delayed for almost ten years.

In Bangladesh Zia-Ur-Rahman was assassinated in 30 May 1981 and after his assassination General Ershad moved into plunge the country once again to Martial law. Attempts were made by General Ershad to show that political stability in the country can only be maintained if the

army is in power. Hence democratic forces inside the country decided to launch a mass movement against the martial law authorities to recognize the democratic aspirations of the people. Thus, the entire democratic opposition irrespective of their ideological orientations opposed the communal and pro-martial law political forces which soon became so widespread that the Martial Law regime had to yield to democratic pressures culminating in the dissolving of Council of Ministers by Ershad and promising a free and fair election in which his government would remain neutral. The constitution of Bangladesh was amended several times through Martial Law Proclamations. The Fifth Amendment to the constitution ratified, confirmed and validated all such amendments. The amendments were legalized by the Fifth Amendment and Islamization of the constitution was made. The Martial Law Proclamation order No. 1 of 1977 inserted an invocation - "Bismillah-Ar-Rahman-Ar-Rahim" (In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the Merciful) on the top of the constitution. The same order removed the secular content of the constitution by substituting the words "pledging that the high ideals of absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah, nationalism, Democracy and Socialism." for "pledging the high ideals of nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism." There was a petition in the court in August 2015 challenging the legality of the constitutional provision of Islam as the state religion. On March 2016, however, the high court rejected the petition.

The delay in the formation of dynasties in these countries because of military intervention did not mean that the rule of military had the support of the people. In fact it was the dynasties that had support of the people. The dynasties had support of the people for various reasons. One main reason was the sense of legitimacy associated with the dynasties. Whenever dynastic politics has come to power, it has always been through elections and not a military takeover. Therefore, the delay in the formation of dynasties also meant that there were gaps in the process of democratization in this region.

2.9 Conclusion

The shape that political parties have taken so far has been of a de-institutionalized and centrally administered phenomena with mostly being dominated by a single family. However, political parties has been the pillar on which civil governments arose in these countries. Needless to add that political parties in this region need to undergo changes in order that accountability and

democracy can be imbibed in to the working of these institutions. There can be no questioning the fact that political parties play a major role in the creation of an effervescent democracy which is accountable to the people. However, the role of political parties in this aspect has been almost non-existent.

As far as India is concerned, though political parties have been a part of the democracy since its inception, yet dynastic politics has been a consistent trend, not only in the national level politics but also in the state level politics. Starting from the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty at the center to Abdullah's in Kashmir, to Raje's in Rajasthan to Mulayam Singh's dynasty to Patnaik's in Orissa have been dominant in the political spheres of the country. Though the state politics might very much be dependent on dynasty politics for coming few years, the fortune of the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty seem to be on a decline.

Ian Talbot has demonstrated how many of Pakistan's difficulties stem from the historical inheritances of the colonial era. According to him, low levels of political participation led to under-development of participatory politics, which could have strengthened the basis of a national identity for Pakistan.³⁶ Radical Islamization during Zia's regime unfolded various Pandora's boxes. Repression towards women and minority rose to such an extent that newer civil movements in opposition to this rose, whether the role of judiciary or the role of various women movement have been crucial in the process of reviving democratic practices. Pakistan was declared to be a failed state with various coups against democratically elected leaders however, 2001 brought a fundamental change in Pakistan's fortunes. With General Musharraf deciding to side with the United States, he gained recognition as Pakistan's legitimate leader, a status that was denied to him following the overthrow of a democratically elected government, and large amounts of foreign capital also began to flow into the country. This helped to revive the economy. While the performance on the economic front was impressive General Musharraf did little to open the political system to larger participation by the people. In fact, he brought the army into a number of areas in which it had not encroached under the previous military administration. Serving and retired senior officials of the military were given positions of importance in the government and also became managers of various parts of the

³⁶ Talbot Ian. Pakistan: A New History, Pentagon Press, 2012

public sector. The result of this was growing resentment against the military's role in managing the country.³⁷ Shortly after the 1999 coup, then "Chief Executive" General Pervez Musharraf was advised to hand over the reins of power over to civilians as quickly as possible which he denied to.

The role of religion in the South Asia is undeniably obtrusive. Whether it was because of initiatives of colonial government to divide the population and rule it or whether one considers it natural to the conditions of South Asia, religion became a reality in the region. It is interesting to note, how religion and the project of nationalism seemed to share the same boundary. Whether the rise of Hinduism in India or the rise of Islam in Pakistan and Bangladesh, religion fulfils the same purpose, that is, Otherizing the person from the opposite religion. For example, the Hindu imagination of India has forever assumed Muslims to be the "other" who have to be annihilated and the existence and survival of that imagination is solely dependent upon the existence of that enemy and India has found that enemy in 'Pakistan' and vice-versa. Similarly Islamism has been the driving force towards a greater Islamic consciousness across the Muslim world and in the process, religion has also posed a challenge to secular ideologies of the state. In this complex terrain dynasty politics is perceived to bring in a level of stability with it. These political dynasties which have grown out of perceived "instability" in the region, have posed as torchbearers of democratization in the region. However, it doesn't escape one's notice that these same dynasties were also crucial in flouting democratic institutions at various points of time.

³⁷ Burki, Shahid Javed. *Pakistan Under Bhutto, 1971-77*, London: Macmillan, 1980.

CHAPTER: 3

Dynasty and Democracy in South ASiA

CHAPTER III

DYNASTY AND DEMOCRACY IN SOUTH ASIA

It is interesting to see how dynasty politics emerged out of the nature of party politics in South Asia. However, rather than parties evolving as a modern phenomenon, it reflected in itself all the traits of a traditional system of loyalty. The preconditions which Western scholars often associate with democracy- homogenous population, an industrial economy, high levels of education, and shared civic culture - were absent in the India of the 1950s.¹ A traditional system of loyalty led to the evolvement of dynastic tendencies in parties. The point that was underlined in the last chapter was that although democracy might not need dynasty for its survival, Dynasty definitely needed and used democracy for its survival. This chapter will explore into, what is it in democracy that leads to the development of dynasty. Looking at the nature of democracy in India, Niraja Gopal Jayal states,

“For anything that has ever been said about Indian democracy, there is a good chance that its opposite has also been asserted. If some have described Democracy in India as an anomaly, others have seen it as an ideal case for testing democratic theory”.²

All the three countries under study has been witness to the phenomena of dynasty, India being the forerunner in the trend. The dynasties that are under study are the Bhutto’s of Pakistan, the Nehru-Gandhi’s of India and the two Begums of Bangladesh who have been coming to power alternately and who are also the successors of former leaders of the country. Why has India stood out in this trend of dynastic politics? India has witnessed dynasty politics not only at the central level but also at various regional level. Starting with the Abdullah’s in Kashmir to Raje’s in Rajasthan to Patnaik’s in Odisha, all these states have developed a significant trend towards dynastic succession. Therefore, some questions pertaining to dynasties needs to be addressed like what difference does it make, to citizens and the state, when family ties come

¹ Hasan, Zoya. (ed) *Parties and Party Politics in India*, OUP, 2011

² Jayal, Niraja Gopal. ed. *Introduction in Democracy in India*, OUP, 2001

to play a significant political role? Salman Rushdie writes in the introduction of Tariq Ali's *The Nehrus and the Gandhis*, "The continuing saga of the Nehru family, of the vicissitudes of Jawaharlal, Indira, Sanjay and Rajiv has been, for hundreds of millions of us, an obsession spanning more than three decades. In this version the dynasty as a collective dream- Jawaharlal Nehru represents the dreams noblest part, its most idealistic phase. Indira Gandhi, always the pragmatist, often unscrupulously so, becomes a figure of decline and brutal Sanjay is a further debasement of the currency".

In spite of the fact that dynasties are reflection of the lack of proper institutional mechanism at place, yet it is also something more than that. Dynasty provides legitimacy and also at the same time contests legitimacy. Dynasties provide a certain level of legitimacy to a government in a democratic set-up; whether it was Nehru's dynasty or the Bhutto's in Pakistan or the Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's family; howsoever populist their political programmes were, they were able to appeal to the common man because of their association with democracy. But at the same time, as soon as they perpetuate themselves in power, they flout the same democratic institutions which brought them to power. Charges of corruption against the Congress dominated by the dynasty of Indira Gandhi or the charges of corruption that Benazir Bhutto faced, points towards it. In this context, Christina Lamb looks at the extent of black market economy in Pakistan, which led the government to declare in the first budget of Benazir Bhutto that the government has taken out advertisements in the newspapers to explain that there was no money and it was having to print money to pay government wages. She further adds, "Benazir was much less adept at uncovering scams. Some of the projects have covered their tracks carefully and made figures open to the foreign press in a show of apparent openness and some of the projects were partnered by generals or senior military figures whom Bhutto could not afford to upset. Unable to prove anything, the PPP was left looking amateurish and vindictive."³ Currently the Sheikh Hasina government has also gone to extents to suppress voices opposed to the government, all these instances point towards the tendency of dynasties to flout democratic institutions. However, it is not surprising that, dynasties flout institutions owing to the fact that, a politics which is run by families and not by democratic principles can never be expected to run democratically. Why then dynasty and democracy complement each

³ Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy*, Viking 1991. pp 177

other so well. Why is it that only during democratic government dynasties emerge in full form? This definitely pushes forward some questions on democracy as well.

If Democracy is to be viewed merely as a set of institutions where a major role is played by free and fair elections, then India seem to be a successful candidate. But if by democracy, one is looking for truly equal citizens where they can hold their representatives accountable, then Indian democracy appears to be a poor candidate.⁴

In order to understand the nature of Democracy better one needs to look at the relationship between democracy and the state as well. For some the substance of democracy will vary depending upon the nature of the social formation, and the economic organization of the society, which determines the class character of the state. For others Democracy is inextricably linked to liberalism.

Rajni Kothari writes, 'in its pristine formulation (of Democracy), it took the form of a competitive interplay of interest in a free 'market', as the liberal polity was consolidated, it was through a set of institutions that its operating culture was crystallized. Such an institutionalized pattern of political behavior proved crucial in containing and channeling the other major consolidation during the same period of history- the modern national state conceived as a social institution. The very processes that put an end to the *ancient regime* in various regions of the world also gave rise to a new conception of the state as a social institution.'⁵

Atul Kohli describes the condition of Indian democracy as 'India's growing crisis of governability' focusing attention on the growing disjuncture between weakening institutions and multiplying demands. He also reiterates the fact that this characterization of contemporary Indian politics as being in crisis does not predict imminent breakdown of the democratic political order. Rather, the word 'crisis' is used to draw attention to certain tendencies towards steady deterioration within the Indian polity. The 'system' in India can continue to function but if it does so without major changes, its level of performance will remain quite low and will

⁴ Jayal, Niraja Gopal. ed. *Democracy in India*, OUP, 2001, pp 3

⁵ Kothari, Rajni. *The Crisis of the Moderate State and the Decline of Democracy*, ed. Democracy in India, Niraja Gopal Jayal. OUP,2001, pp 106

probably decline even further.⁶ He also refers to the growing authority vacuum created by the decline in the organizational ability of the Congress party and popular new parties failing to fill the organizational vacuum. Kohli further writes, the appeal and mobilization of ‘primordial’ loyalties arise from failure of the Congress party as an organization to incorporate a large section of the society in its fold.⁷

3.1 Is Democracy a pre-requisite for Dynasty?

In the context of India one have witnessed three phases of succession of the Nehru-Gandhi Dynasty. The phases represents forms of succession from the Nehru/Gandhi Dynasty; the first phase represents the coming of Indira Gandhi where Indira Gandhi did not succeed her father immediately but after the death of Shastri. Nehru as such did not have any succession plans for Indira Gandhi but the turn of events were such that she ultimately came to hold the reins of power. According to Sudipta Kaviraj, nothing was less inevitable in modern Indian politics than Indira Gandhi's rise to power.⁸ States Kaviraj, her coming to power was not dynastic, though subsequently it came misleadingly to appear that way. Two rather contrary reasons attributed her rise to power -an impression of her weakness and ideological indistinctness, and an ability to metonymically extend the charisma of Jawaharlal Nehru.⁹ The second phase represents the “immediate succession” of Rajiv Gandhi. This is the phase of ‘immediate’ succession because in this phase Rajiv Gandhi was made the Prime Minister immediately after his mother’s death flouting all rules of parliamentary succession. The third phase starts from 1991, the decade which saw the virtual absence of the dynasty from the Indian political scenario and the developments in this period which saw a non-dynastic member of Congress complete its full term as Prime Minister.

The period can be best explained by locating events in two axis. One represents the slow and steady decline of one-party dominance led by the Congress party and the other axis depicts the

⁶ Kohli, Atul. *Political Change in a Democratic Developing Country*, ed. Democracy in India, Niraja Gopal Jayal. OUP,2001, pp 129

⁷ Kohli, Atul. *Political Change in a Democratic Developing Country*, ed. Democracy in India, Niraja Gopal Jayal. OUP,2001, pp 132

⁸ Sudipta Kaviraj: *Indira Gandhi and Indian Politics*, EPW, Vol. 21, No.38/39, September 1986. pp 1697

⁹ Sudipta Kaviraj: *Indira Gandhi and Indian Politics*.

rise of regional political parties. This period saw a decline in congress party vis a vis a rise in regional political parties. This phase witnessed the demise of Congress party due to non-evolvement of a strong dynastic ruler.

These events points towards few questions of importance here, like, are dynastic ties a sufficient thread for someone to be able to hold to power. In India the beginning of dynasty politics marks the beginning of the process of deinstitutionalization under Indira Gandhi. The transition from the period of Nehru to Indira Gandhi is marked by the process of deinstitutionalization which Rudolphs' points to as a shift from command to demand polity.¹⁰ Under command polity the State is the sovereign, the state here plays a major role in determining what and how much is produced. The policies pursued under the regime of Nehru characterized this polity. Under demand polity, individual is the sovereign, this polity is oriented towards short-term goals; toward competitive processes for determining policies and the public interest and toward the provision of private goods. Though Mrs. Gandhi created the space for demand politics she could not pull it to its logical end, so from 1970s onwards she tried to free herself from the pressures of demand politics. Her strategy was to deinstitutionalize Party, Parliament, Public services and the Federal system which led to a major shift in the political scenario which brought about a system of patronage Democracy. Few interesting points about dynasty politics can be mentioned here. Firstly, although dynasty politics has an unintended beginning yet it continues to be a permanent feature of Indian democracy. Secondly, many political parties in the country are still dependent upon dynasties, implicating towards, and lack of internal democracy in those parties. Thirdly, only institutionalization inside political parties will lead to the weeding out of dynasty politics.

Kanchan Chandra asserts that dynasty politics in India is fundamentally shaped by modern democratic institutions and in particular, the state and political parties. This institutionally shaped form of dynasty politics reinforces some aspects of democracy while subverting others. Democratic institutions and dynastic politics can reinforce as well as undermine each other. When one talks of dynasty politics, one inevitably goes back to the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty. However, it is important not to overlook many dynasties in South Asia. The founders of these

¹⁰ Rudolph and Rudolph: *Demand polity and Command Polity* in Democracy in India, edited by Niraja Gopal Jayal, OUP 2007, pp 154

new dynasties do not belong to an old pre-democratic ruling class, but to a new elite created through the democratic process and while they might not have a national and international presence like the Nehru's and Gandhi's, many have strong local roots in their home constituencies. Why have these new dynasties taken such systematic root in India's democracy? The causes of Dynastic Politics in India according to Kanchan Chandra is the structure of two of India's contemporary democratic institutions -the state and political parties. Dynasty politics in India is concerned with a double form of exclusion- first by creating a ruling class based on birth and second by amplifying the representation of influential groups within the ruling class.¹¹

Probing dynasty politics at the level of the state, Chandra points out that "forward castes" as representation of dominant groups are the principal beneficiaries of dynastic politics in the Indian parliament. In her study she finds that in each of the three parliamentary elections between 2004 and 2014, a greater proportion of MPs from 'forward castes' were dynastic than any other social category. Chandra looks into the double benefit that this position accrues, already over-represented in parliament in relation to their proportion in the population, they are over-represented again among dynastic MPs in relation to their proportion in parliament. She states that parties dominated by 'forward castes' indeed favor co-ethnic dynasties in their processes of candidate selection. However, members of ethnic subaltern groups are more likely to enter the dynastic class only when they establish secure control over the internal organizations of the parties to which they belong. When they do not have such control, their inclusion in the outer circles of politics may be accompanied by continued or increased exclusion in its inner circles, of which the dynastic class is one.¹² This elucidation by Chandra points towards the fact that feudal politics is still a currency in Indian political scenario, which Saroj Nagi points towards while looking at non-dynastic rise to power of Mamata Banerjee. He writes,

"Mamata Banerjee bucks the trend of India's women political leaders whose rise can be traced to their familial or dynastic connections or the blessings of a male godfather. How and why

¹¹ Chandra, Kanchan. ed. *Democratic Dynasties: State, Party and Family in Contemporary Indian Politics*, Introduction CUP 2016

¹² Chandra, Kanchan. ed. *Democratic Dynasties: State, Party and Family in Contemporary Indian Politics*, Introduction CUP 2016, pg 214

did this happen? Was she able to do it because her battleground was West Bengal and not caste-ridden Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, tribal Jharkhand or for that matter any other state? Unlike most other Indian states, West Bengal perhaps provides the most secular and gender-neutral playing field for a leader without dynastic credentials to create a niche for herself/himself, even though the iron grip of an ideological wave poses political problems of a different kind”.¹³

Simon Chauchard asks, why dynasties are a significantly less important phenomenon among SC/ST members of parliament than among members of parliament elected from general seats. He argues that the relatively small size of pool of prominent senior politicians from these categories limits the emergence of dynasties within these reserved categories.¹⁴

When does dynasty politics emerge in a Democracy? It is not difficult to comprehend that deinstitutionalization and weakness in political parties and political leadership has led to a political vacuum and this vacuum has been filled by dynasty politics in order to counter an immediate crisis created out of this process. It is also important to enquire into what sustains dynasty politics. I argue here that it is not just political vacuum that has led to dynasty politics but the relation that dynasty has been able to establish with the economy too that has led to their continuing presence. That big businesses require stability for investment is not unknown; the dynasties by providing for stability instead of an unrest has assured big businesses of the safety. But the question that arises here is, how long the dynasties will be able to withhold the imminent breakdown.

Enquiring into how the structure of capitalism became indispensable in developing an understanding of Indian politics, Sudipta Kaviraj writes, “Long term structural compulsions on Indian politics, the choices of both the ruling bloc of propertied classes and the un-orchestrated subaltern classes, arise in several well-known ways, (i) Inclusion of Indian economy in the capitalist international market and its division of labor, (ii) the received

¹³ Nagi, Saroj. *Bucking the Trend*, Dynasty: A Symposium on Lineage and Family Ties in Subcontinental Politics. Seminar, June 2011

¹⁴ Chauchard, Simon. *Disadvantaged groups, Reservation and Dynasty Politics*, ed. by Chandra, Kanchan. *Democratic Dynasties: State, Party and Family in Contemporary Indian Politics*, Introduction CUP 2016, pg 194

structure of colonial economic retardation, (iii) The fundamental choice exercised by the leadership of the new Indian state in favor of a capitalist strategy of economic growth through a set of basic legal and institutional forms, example, the format of legal rights in the constitution, the set of ordinary laws ruling economic and corporate behavior etc.”¹⁵

Under such a circumstance, it will only appear as natural that political dynasties will have particular interests in protecting a certain kind of democracy, which is conducive to their existence. Today when every mainstream political party is hard bent on pleasing the corporate houses everywhere, how does dynasties stand out or do dynasties have anything new to offer vis-a-vis capitalism? Have they been appropriated by capitalism or are they an outcome of capitalistic manoeuvre. In every country though the government might change, the character of ruling class essentially remains the same, yet why are dynasties voted back to power with temporary breaks and seen as repository of restoring permanence and stability in the country; is it because of conditions specific to these countries or is it because of the fact that dynasties bring in certain level of stability with it. However, one can argue without qualm that dynasty politics fulfil both the qualifications, that is, conditions specific to these countries and also at the same time they do provide a certain level of stability. However deliberative theorists are speculative about one question as to, what differentiates political behavior from market behavior? This question arises in the context of whether political decisions can be solely reduced to be determined by market developments. Elster’s brings in two key points (regarding the validity of market-centric explanation of politics) that political reflection requires the citizen to go beyond the self interest in the market and dispose themselves to public interests and this reflection is tenable only if it enhances political decision making especially with regards to achieving common goods.¹⁶

In the context of the relationship between Democracy and dynasty, it is interesting to look at the dynasty of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Zia Ul Haq. Immediately after the death of Zia, his son entered the political scenario to enquire into the details of his father’s death. Benazir Bhutto

¹⁵ Kaviraj, Sudipta. *A Critique of the Passive Revolution*, EPW, Vol. 23, No. 45/47 Nov 1988

¹⁶ Elster, Jon. The Market and the Forum: Three varieties of Political Theory in *Deliberative Democracy*, ed. James Bohman and William Rehg.

too entered politics when her father was in jail. However, it is Benazir Bhutto who was able to garner support for her internationally instead of Zia's son. I assume here that, it is because the Bhutto family was associated with Democracy that they could withstand the test of time, as against the family of Zia who was associated with military rule. Christina Lamb writes in this context, "With the removal of both Zia and Bhutto, perhaps parties would forget about personalities and finally start fighting on issues. Some believed that People's Party would lost its thrust, no longer having an evil dictator to battle against."¹⁷ Lamb further adds, "Though Bhutto was seen as the first person to come to power through popular will in thirty years, Bhutto's accession was tainted by the fact that it had been made possible only through the denial of basic tenets of democracy to the Bengalis and the discrediting of the army hierarchy. Having discarded the Left, Bhutto brought into power the very same feudal forces causing oppression".¹⁸ Zia's death, writes Lamb, left a lot of answered questions and has neither ended the dynasty nor the Zia-Bhutto rivalry and axis of politics. His son Ejaz, a swarthy businessman just a year older than Benazir, abandoned a successful career as a banker in Bahrain to pursue the facts behind the mysterious death of his father.

With Benazir becoming Prime Minister, parallels between her and Ejaz strengthened. In their separate struggles to venerate their fathers' names, the two became as deadly political foes as their fathers before them, locked in a battle for future leadership of Pakistan.¹⁹ As Benazir's government got increasingly mired in worsening ethnic violence and allegations of corruption, Ejaz Ul Haq, merged onto the scene, hoping to assume center stage through the ballot-box backed by IDA and not by the army. Ultimately he was persuaded by the army to join Nawaz and later rewarded with a ministry in his government.

If dynastic politics is un-democratic, why does it appear to be a persistent feature of democratic regimes in South Asia? Do dynasties stabilize or weaken states? Whether dynasty is to be seen in the light of modernity or tradition. Moreover in a country like India, where the lines between tradition and modernity is already blurry and in a situation where many other things have coped itself to changing circumstances, even dynasties have coped itself with the change over time.

¹⁷ Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy*, Viking 1991. pg 78

¹⁸ Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah*, pg 81

¹⁹ Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah*, pg 93

However, it is not the case that only dynasties that were associated with democracy were putting forward their scions even military rulers developed dynasty politics. Writes Raza Ahmad Rumi, describing the state in Pakistan,

“Not unsurprisingly, the military rulers in Pakistan too have not been averse to creating a political legacy. General Ayub Khan’s (1958-69) son entered politics while his father was at the helm of affairs. He allied himself with right-wing politics in the later decades and rose to various positions of power. In the Musharraf era, his son also entered politics, was elected and became minister of state for finance. Similarly, the sons of General Zia Ul Haq too have been active in politics since their father’s death in 1988 and have been elected from their respective constituencies more than once.”²⁰

However, it’s quite intriguing to note that, these dynasties never gained the popularity which the dynasties associated with democracy received. In addition to the intricate relationship shared between liberal democracy and dynasty, one cannot deny the notion of “sacrifice” that these democratic dynasties have been associated with, which contributes towards establishing a legitimacy to their rule. The infamous execution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto or killing of Benazir Bhutto or killing of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi or the assassination of the entire family of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his home evokes a certain sense of sympathy in the eyes of general public, which brings in an element of legitimacy to their governance through their perceived sacrifice.

Dynasties that were seen as synonymous with democracy or has been credited with initiating processes of democratization has at many points themselves flouted the rules and have transgressed into non-democratic methods. One question that naturally arises here is, why did many leaders of the Third World did not build on the chances they had to build up institutions? Why are leaders of the stature of Nehru rare who at least tried to build institutions in spite of all criticisms?

With democracy increasingly becoming entangled with corporate houses and corporate houses becoming dominant in determining policy decisions in countries, it is no wonder that dynasty

²⁰ Rumi, Raza Ahmad. *Dynasties and Clientalism in Pakistan*, Seminar, June 2011

politics have also been accommodating corporate houses in its state of affairs, which would help secure their positions in the long run. As Kanchan Chandra would put it, that the ‘large returns’ associated with dynasty politics is the reason for longevity of dynasty politics. However, the tendency to ally with corporates is not something unique to India. It has been visible in various advanced democracies as well. Michael Parenti, for example, while explaining this relation, writes in the context of US,

“With the advent of world war II, business and government became ever more entwined. Occupying top government posts, business leaders were able to freeze wages, and let profits soar. Immediately after the war thousands of government-owned facilities were sold off as ‘war surpluses’ for a pittance of their actual value, representing a major transfer of public capital to private business. The U.S military budget was reduced but never to pre-war levels. If anything, after the advent of the cold war, the United States maintained a huge military budget and a permanent war economy that helped bolster business profits — in addition to other subsidies that were handed out to corporate America”.²¹

Dynastic political parties that are under study, that is, Congress Party (Nehru-Gandhi Dynasty), Pakistan people’s party (Bhutto Dynasty) and Awami League (Sheikh Mujibur Rahman) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (Zia Ur Rahman) were born either during time of independence or when there was large scale dissatisfaction with the government. However none of the parties had an explicit objective of forming dynasties. Dynasties were formed in due time under different circumstances. For example, in case of Indira Gandhi, stated Sudipta Kaviraj that, her coming to power was accidental due to Lal Bahadur Shastri’s sudden death and also of importance is the fact that she would only metonymically represent Nehru’s charismatic appeal without exercising real powers. Though of course this presumption was proved wrong as events unfolded.

If political representation is to be seen as an indicator of empowerment, it is pertinent to note that, the first women leaders of this region came from dynasties. Whether it was Indira Gandhi during late sixties or Benazir Bhutto later in Pakistan were few of the first women leaders at

²¹ Parenti, Michael. *Democracy for the Few*, Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2001, pg 60.

central role in these countries. Indira Gandhi, on being interviewed as to how she felt about being the first women president said that, “I am not a feminist at all. I am simply doing a particular job and would do it wherever I was placed”²². Though as against her, Benazir Bhutto was quite conscious of the fact that she was going to be the first women Prime Minister in an Islamic country. Benazir Bhutto has stated in the opening lines of her autobiography,

“Pakistan is no ordinary country. And mine has been no ordinary life. My father and two brothers were killed. My mother, husband and I were all imprisoned. I have spent long years in exile. Despite the difficulties and sorrows, however, I feel blessed. I feel blessed that I could break the bastions of tradition by becoming Islam’s first elected women prime minister. That election was the tipping point in the debate raging in the Muslim world on the role of women in Islam. It proved that a Muslim women could be elected Prime Minister, could govern a country and could be accepted as a leader by both men and women. I am grateful to the people of Pakistan for honoring me”.²³

What was it in the policies adopted by dynasties that made them so inexorably connected to democracy? The policies adopted by dynasties demands an examination. Socialism and secularism were rhetoric that had a major influence on these countries. Whether the time of Nehru or Indira Gandhi or Bhutto’s or the newly independent state of Bangladesh, all have alluded to socialism until the fall of Soviet Union in the late nineties.

Lawrence Ziring writes “with the loss of East Pakistan, Bhutto justified the severing of ties to SEATO. Not only was that alliance commitment a relic of the old Pakistan, but the independence of Bangladesh had removed Pakistan from the arena of Southeast Asian concerns. Pakistan did not withdraw from CENTO. The Central Treaty Organization represented the country’s association with the Muslim Middle East, and the membership of Turkey and Iran in that alliance made such a withdrawal inopportune”.²⁴ Therefore after its dismemberment, Pakistan saw itself as nearer to Middle Eastern countries. With his sharp political acumen, Bhutto was able to absorb the socialist ideas into his scheme of things. His

²² Ali, Tariq. 1985. *The Nehru’s and the Gandhis: an Indian Dynasty*, Picador, 1985.

²³ Bhutto, Benazir. *Daughter of the East: An autobiography*, Pocket Books, 2007

²⁴ Ziring, Lawrence. *Pakistan at the Crosscurrent of History*, One World Publications. 2003, pg 136

rhetoric of Islamic socialism had less to do with Islam as he wanted to appropriate the rising popularity of Islam in the country to his disposal. In Pakistan no government could come to power without support from the military. Yet when Zulfikar Bhutto came to power, he tried to cut down the powers of the military, but with little success. It became necessary for him to take refuge in the military as soon as problems and unrest in Balochistan surmounted.

One also needs to look a little closely at Pakistan's nuclear ambitions which proliferated during Bhutto's regime. Bhutto's politics largely circled around it in his vision to see Pakistan as a power vis-a-vis India. He went to the extent of saying that Pakistan will "eat grass" but will make the nuclear bomb. Bhutto was of the view and rightly so that the U.S was against the making of nuclear bomb. Fatima Bhutto writes, "Towards the end of his political reign, Zulfikar floundered. Despite the United States' hostility towards Pakistan's burgeoning nuclear programme, the building of the 'Muslim Bomb' was pushing ahead, though it was winning the Prime Minister no friends in the process. Henry Kissinger, who publicly rated Zulfikar an able and intelligent politician, was said to have warned him that the Americans would 'make a horrible example' out of him if he were to proceed with Pakistan's nuclear ambitions".²⁵ Stephan Cohen, while writing about Bhutto, puts it in this way,

"Bhutto's life was tragic in the classic Greek sense of the word; his very talents and abilities made him intolerant and scornful of lesser individuals, and lacking humility. He came to believe himself infallible, even when yawning gaps in his own experience ... laid him as over the 1965 war - wide open to disastrous error. Having come to power, Bhutto pursued domestic and foreign policies that he was convinced could transform what remained of Pakistan. Most were also designed to strengthen his status and power while weakening that of the establishment and the army".²⁶

He fostered close ties with Middle-Eastern and African countries, the culmination of which was seen at the OIC summit where colonel Gaddafi called Pakistan, 'the citadel of Islam in Asia' and promised his country's resources to Pakistan whenever it required Libya's friendship and aid. The OIC summit itself was a success and concluded by forming the Islamic Solidarity Fund and setting the foundations for the Islamic Commission on Economic, Cultural and Social

²⁵ Bhutto, Fatima. *Songs of Blood and Sword: A Daughters Memoir*, Penguin Books, 2010, pp 123

²⁶ Cohen, Stephen Philip. *The Idea of Pakistan*, Brookings Institution Press, 2004, Pg 139

Affairs. Pakistan also used the summit as an occasion to announce formally its recognition of Bangladesh and in return Bangladesh exonerated criminal charges against some 200 Pakistani soldiers in its custody. The OIC summit brought Zulfikar closer to those leaders in Asia who were natural allies: Muslim states coming out of recent liberation movement since the fall of colonialism in post-war world.²⁷

During this period Pakistan tried to develop closer links with the Middle-East and move away from its dependency on the West. Financial support from two of the participants, Saudi Arabia and Libya, was to be important in Bhutto's quest to secure nuclear weapons. Besides a radically altered foreign policy, for which Zulfikar will always be recognized in Pakistan, he made moves towards change in two other significant spheres- the formation of the country's new and first democratically proposed constitution and in the field of feudal land reform. The 1973 constitution came into law in August and built upon the foundations the country's previous constitutional charters with several important and far-reaching additions and amendments.²⁸

It is also pointed by Ian Talbot that, Bhutto's 1972 land reforms failed to remove the 'remaining vestiges of feudalism'. The maximum land ceilings were still 150 acres for irrigated and 300 for un-irrigated land. Intra-family land transfers were still allowed and individual ceilings could be increased if evidence of agricultural improvements, including the use of tractors and tube-wells, were provided. The fact that Bhutto's reforms removed any compensation for owners meant that they retained their most fertile holdings, leaving poor quality land to be distributed to landless tenants and small peasant workers. But ironically, rather than initiating a shift in the rural balance of power, the reforms encouraged many Punjabi landlords to enter the PPP's rank in order to safeguard their position. The PPP's weak institutionalization enabled them to take up leading roles. Despite his populist rhetoric, Bhutto liberally distributed election tickets to landlords at the time of the 1977 polls. This further disillusioned the PPP rank and file.²⁹

Adds Fatima Bhutto, losing his solid footing Zulfikar became nervous and amended the 1973 constitution several times through which he enhanced his own powers by allowing the federal

²⁷ Bhutto, Fatima. *Songs of Blood and Sword: A Daughters Memoir*, Penguin Books, 2010, pp 111

²⁸ Bhutto, Fatima. *Songs of Blood and Sword: A Daughters Memoir*, Penguin Books, 2010, pp 112

²⁹ Talbot, Ian. *Pakistan: A New History*, Pentagon Press, 2012 pp 117

government to ban political parties and curbing the power of the courts. Zulfikar went to the extent of hobnobbing with the religious parties which led him to pass decrees to define the parameters of who was a Muslim.

Zulfikar went further to ban alcohol, driving the country's gambling and entertainment industry underground and declared Friday a public holiday. Abdul Waheed Katpar, one of the founding members of the PPP, remembers this period as one of intense paranoia for Zulfikar.³⁰

As against Zulfikar, Benazir Bhutto was more liberal in the sense that she never made any reference to religion as such although without challenging or trying to challenge religion in her politics. However, Benazir also undermined the PPP's development by regarding it as an extension of her own persona. After her triumphant return to Pakistan in April 1986 she replaced the old-guard members with new comers who were loyal to her rather than the party. Asaf Ali Zardari was to receive much blame for Benazir's estrangement from the PPP old-guard activists, but even before her marriage she displayed little interest in strengthening and democratizing the PPP as part of her wider crusade for democratization of Pakistan's politics.³¹ Though Benazir seemed to believe that democracy would prosper under her leadership yet she could do nothing much in that direction due to her narrow victory. Benazir continued to speak in the name of democratic institutions but she clearly had opted for the more arbitrary powers.³²

Bangladesh started off as a socialist country relying heavily on socialist ideas by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, however after his assassination there were radical shifts in the political discourse of Bangladesh. In the current scenario the Sheikh Hasina government is applauded for rejecting help from the World Bank for the construction of the Padma Bridge from certain sections. In a speech in parliament Sheikh Hasina appealed to nationalist sentiment by invoking memories of the 1971 war of liberation. "They want us to beg. They want us to continue as guinea pigs", she said. "We will go ahead with this project using our own resources".³³

³⁰ Bhutto, Fatima. *Songs of Blood and Sword: A Daughters Memoir*, Penguin Books, 2010, pp 123

³¹ Talbot, Ian. *Pakistan: A New History*, Pentagon Press, 2012 pp 154

³² Ziring, Lawrence. *Pakistan at the Crosscurrent of History*, One World Publications. 2003, pp 215

³³ <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2012/jul/17/bangladesh-options-padma-bridge-world-bank>

In Bangladesh in August 1975, a violent military coup took place by disaffected army officers and resulted in the assassination of Mujib and the murder of his family, aside from his two daughters who were away in Europe at the time. After the 1975 coup, the government of General Ziaur Rahman (Zia) ushered in a new era of military politics. This brought a series of efforts at limited administrative decentralization, partly as a mechanism designed to build political support and legitimacy for unelected government. In 1971, Bangladesh's state institutions were fragmented and weak. The key task before the new country was the building of a viable foundation on which to build a resilient and responsive state, because the colonial state and the Pakistan state had been similarly distant and top-down in character and had excluded all but a tiny minority of East Pakistan elite from participation. Significant numbers of the Bengali elite had been killed. The human-resource base for the new government, in terms of skills and experience, was weak. There was a political and administrative vacuum created into which two main groups moved and started to compete for power. The first was made up of the returning politicians and activists who had supported the Liberation War from neighboring West Bengal, while the second was made up of members of the nationalist resistance who had remained within Bangladesh during the conflict.

By 1973, the terrible overall state of the economy, combined with Mujib's increasingly inept and unpopular approach to politics, had eroded much of the support he had counted on across a range of social groups for the first few years of the country's independence. In 1974, he declared a state of emergency, making himself president of Bangladesh. As he began to lose support from most sections of society, including the army, he set about trying to establish a socialist state and disbanded political parties to be replaced by a new national political party – the Bangladesh Peasants and Workers Awami League or BAKSAL. BAKSAL proved to be deathblow to the party Awami League which was opposed from all corners of the newly formed state which was formed after people's struggle represented by the elites. After Zia was assassinated in 1981, General H. M. Ershad continued military rule until the restoration of democracy in 1991 after a long mass-opposition movement was eventually translated into a peaceful "people's power" removal of Ershad from power where for the first and last time both AL and BNP came together in opposition to Ershad's dictatorial military rule.³⁴ In Bangladesh,

³⁴ Lewis, David. *Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society*, CUP 2011, pp 75

dynasty politics rose with the two Begums alternating office of the Prime Minister in the country. In an effort to look at the relationship between democracy and dynasties Manzarul Mannan writes,

“It may seem that the effort by political families to rely on old institutions and structures to define their new class realities and accumulate capital creates an enormous contradiction. In reality, the synthesis of traditional hierarchical culture and the modern forms of democracy has developed a consensus on governance. Legitimate governance depends on elections, which are held every five years to select a national leader from among the dynasties. People also alternate between dynasties despite the efforts of each ruling tribune to continue in power. Paradoxically, the enhanced political participation of a competitive electoral process produces democratic dynasties to govern the country”.³⁵

In the context of India, of importance is Nehru’s stand vis-a-vis other post-colonial nations. His policy of non-alignment was adopted by many newly independent nations. Nehru’s foreign policies were such that he wanted friendly ties with America, but not at the cost of compromise of policies. In a letter to his sister, he wrote,

“.....I want to be friendly with the Americans but always making it clear what we stand for. I want to make no commitments which comes in the way of our basic policy. I am inclined to think that the best preparation for America is not to prepare and to trust to my native wit and the mood of the moment, the general approach being friendly and receptive”.

Tariq Ali points towards the fact that, without being fully aware of it himself, Jawaharlal fathered a new trend in world politics when he refused to toe the American line in the Korean War. His position shocked both the two powers of US and the then Soviet Russia. Everyone found it hard to understand his position vis-a-vis the rising influence of capitalism in India. However his position got him some lifelong friends. In Tito and Nasser later on Nehru found two leaders who would remain his lifelong partners. Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal in their

³⁵ Mannan, Manzarul. *Governing culture of the Ruling Elite in Bangladesh*. Seminar, 2011

book titled *Modern South Asia* points towards the fact that in spite of Pakistan being seen as an autocratic country and India as a democratic secular country, both the countries differ only marginally when it comes to democratization of polity.³⁶ India, no doubt, has been holding regular elections and standing up to every parameter of democratization yet the fact that the bureaucracy, military and police has a huge role to play does not escape one's attention. Many a times force is used at several levels to maintain the democratic order of the society.

As against Nehru, Indira's era was completely different. In this era, of all the ghosts from governments past that haunted the opening years of the decade of 70's was that of 'authoritarianism'. Into this word Mrs. Gandhi's critics packed their discontents with themselves. And with her governments' actions since she had become Prime Minister in 1966. For her part Mrs. Gandhi called her critics ungrateful for her achievements and unwilling to acknowledge how well she had governed the country.³⁷ Fears of Mrs. Gandhi's 'authoritarianism' centered on her perceived intention to establish a 'dynasty' by arranging that the prime ministry would go to the younger of her two sons, Sanjay.

There is no linear explanation as to why dynasties gained legitimacy, it depended upon several historical circumstances specific to these countries. However, one major reason can rightly be said to be the relation that dynasty could establish itself with democratic institutions. Dynasties provided stability to the otherwise unstable society and economy. At the same time, they so deeply enmeshed themselves into democratic institutions that in spite of apparent contradictions between democracy and dynasties; dynasties became the legitimate rulers of these countries.

Closer home, we have dynasties in various states in India as well as neighboring countries. Almost the whole of North Indian states experience dynasty politics starting from Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar till Orissa in the eastern coast. Nyla Ali Khan exploring the relationship between dynasty and democracy has traced the roots of the Abdullah dynasty in Kashmir. In 1981, however, shortly before his death, Abdullah, in spite of his socialist principles and in a

³⁶ Bose, Sugata and Jalal, Ayesha. *Modern South Asia*, History, Culture, Political Economy, 2011, OUP, Delhi

³⁷ Austin, Granville. *Working a Democratic constitution, A history of the Indian experience*. OUP, 2008. pp 488

moment of poignant resignation, presided over the 'coronation' of his oldest son Farooq Abdullah.³⁸ However, at the same time it is also important to point out that dynasties cannot hold on to power if they are perceived to be corrupt by the people.

In Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh both the Scindia family has played major political roles in spite of them being a former princely family. In fact it is interesting to see how with sharp political acumen they have adapted themselves to changing political circumstances which very few princely family were capable of. Christophe Jaffrelot has said in this context, "the Scindias', the only princely family with members of the last three generations elected as MPs, are an interesting exception".³⁹ He has also interestingly pointed out that as long as dynasties fulfil people's aspirations and are connected to the people, it doesn't really matter which political party they are supporting. For example the incumbent CM of Rajasthan and her mother have been hardcore supporter of the Hindu Nationalists but her sibling and son Madhav Rao Scindia and Jyotiraditya Scindia both joined Congress party. So, therefore it is not much a matter as to which political party are they from as long as they are connected to the population that they represent.

But the dynasties in South Asian countries is different owing to the fact that the dynasties under study have had a crucial role in initiating processes of democratization but again a contradiction that is inherent in dynasties is that, it provides legitimacy of a certain kind to the government as well as contests it. The word 'democratization' is used with a little caution here as one needs to acknowledge the fact that a process of democratization cannot come from above, it has to come from within societies, which raises certain pertinent question about minority rights, about corporate loot, about right to dissent and about various other rights that are there in a constitution or which a constitution guarantees. In this context it would be worth noting that in an article by Murad Ali, he questions the link between democratization and U.S intervention. The claims of the United States that it intervenes countries to promote democracy shows quite the reverse. This study shows that, US aid shows a consistent pattern of high flows for military dictatorship and negligible flows for democratic governments indicating that US aid has not been used to promote democracy in Pakistan, in fact it has undermined it.

³⁸ Khan, Nyla Ali. *The Plutocracy and the Plebians*, Seminar, June 2011.

³⁹ Jaffrelot, Christophe. *What Princely Democracy: The case of the Scindias*, Seminar, June 2011

However, the dynasties once they come to power tries to perpetuate themselves in power in various ways starting from a patron-client network to accruing the perks associated with the office as observed by Kanchan Chandra and Wamiq Umaira. In the words of Kanchan Chandra,

“Two features of Indian democracy in particular encourage the emergence of dynastic politics – the large returns associated with state office, and the organizational weakness of political parties. The returns associated with state office ensure that the families of politicians will want to enter politics. The organizational weakness of political parties ensures that they are likely to get tickets when they do. Both features of Indian democracy are likely to persist or increase in the near future. Dynastic politics, therefore, is likely to increase in the near future as well”.

Though Indira Gandhi or Benazir Bhutto as first heir’s of their dynasties was not planned hence they came to occupy what may be seen as ‘delayed succession’ however they were groomed for the same by their fathers, yet the generation after that saw a desperate attempt to bring their heirs into positions of power and influence. Writes Raza Ahmad Rumi,

“Benazir Bhutto inherited the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) upon her father’s death, and in 2007 it passed onto her son and husband through a clear instrument of succession, i.e., a handwritten will, in the custody of a trusted domestic help. The Bhuttos are a unique case, for they combine not only popular following, but a cult of martyrdom, drawing on the widespread belief that the senior Bhutto, his two sons and daughter were all directly or indirectly murdered at the behest of state agencies. The cult of the Bhuttos also blends in with the narratives of sacrifice prevalent in Sindhi folklore and mystic poetry, which glorifies sacrifice to achieve the higher and sublime ideal”.⁴⁰ The same is true in case of India as well, Granville Austin noted,

“Sanjay Gandhi’s great ambitions and his mother’s interest in ‘dynastic succession’ seem to have come more clearly together a few days later. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chenna Reddy, while releasing the Telegu version of the constitution in Hyderabad in the presence of

⁴⁰ Rumi, Raza Ahmad. *Dynasties and Clientalism in Pakistan*. Seminar 2011

Law Minister Shiv Shankar advocated the convening of a new constituent assembly to change to the presidential form of government.”⁴¹

Therefore one can see the intricate connection between Dynasty and liberal democracy, where dynasty flourishes only in a democratic set-up. The relationship between market and political parties that have developed and have become inseparable has led to the development of dynasties who provide a certain level of stability required for liberal democracy to flourish. In this context, it is important to remember that even military rulers had their dynasties whether it was the case of Zia’s dynasty or Ayub’s dynasty, but they were not as successful as the Bhutto’s in capturing the imagination of the population at large. The only exception has been the dynasty of Zia Ur Rahman in Bangladesh represented through BNP who still is the largest party after Awami League.

3.2 The Future of Dynasty Politics

A question that arises here is that what are the analytical categories we should use to understand political families in South Asia and the role that they play? Do they represent the persistence of ‘traditional’ pre-colonial institutional forms, their reinvention, or the creation of new post-colonial institutions? How does the role of family ties vary across countries in South Asia? South Asian countries have had a varying history of political regimes – long periods of democratic rule in India and Sri Lanka co-exist with long periods of monarchic rule in Nepal and Bhutan, cycles of military rule in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and extended military rule in Burma. Are family ties associated with all these regimes equally and in the same way?⁴²

In a liberal democratic political set up, how long will a political formation which have no institutional base but dynastic base, be able to survive. Dynasty politics, though it might appear to be diminishing in surface have not actually diminished owing to the fact that the presence of dynasties is not to be seen only in the national level, it has become a phenomenon in the

⁴¹ Austin, Granville. *Working a Democratic constitution, A history of the Indian experience*. OUP, 2008. pp 490

⁴²Chandra, Kanchan. *The Problem, Dynasty: A Symposium on Lineage and Family Ties in Subcontinental Politics*, Seminar, June 2011

state level as well. Kanchan Chandra has argued how dynasty has, not only family affiliations but ethnic affiliations as well. According to Chandra, the term ‘ethnic’ is an umbrella term to refer to descent-based identities, including those based on caste, ancestral religion etc.⁴³

Many political scientists reiterated the fact that Indira Gandhi de-institutionalized, but made no efforts towards re-institutionalization of the system. Zoya Hasan laments that, under the regime of Indira Gandhi, the Congress Party which was once a robust institution, its roots have withered and it became more personalized and centralized. She adds, the erosion of institutional arrangements was intimately bound up with the deinstitutionalization of the Congress party and the emergence of genuinely pluralist politics in the post-1977 period.⁴⁴

Indian politics is remarkably dynastic considering the fact that it is a democratic country. Expressing concern writes, Kanchan Chandra and Wamiq Umaira,

“At least 29% of the current Indian Parliament consists of those whose family members preceded them in politics. At least another 5% had family members either enter politics simultaneously, or follow them. These dynasties are drawn from an extremely broad social base. They come from across regions and social categories. The northern states have a somewhat larger proportion of members with family ties (42%), the western and southern states are close to the average (32%) and the eastern and north-eastern states are somewhat below average (24% and 28% respectively). But all regions produce a significant proportion of parliamentarians with dynastic ties. Similarly, all social categories are associated with significant proportions of such parliamentarians, some to a greater degree than others: 66% of Muslim parliamentarians, 25% of parliamentarians from Scheduled Caste (SC) seats, 28% of parliamentarians from Scheduled Tribe (ST) seats and 34% of the rest, have family ties”.⁴⁵

⁴³ Chandra, Kanchan. ed. *Democratic Dynasties: State, Party and Family in Contemporary Indian Politics*, Introduction CUP 2016

⁴⁴ Zoya Hasan: *Conflict, Pluralism and the Competitive Party System in India* in *Parties and Party Politics in India*, Themes in Politics, OUP, pp 10-11

⁴⁵ Chandra, Kanchan. Umaira Wamiq. *India's Democratic Dynasties*. Seminar 2011.

However, it is also worth noting that, dynasty has become a part of the political process and leadership structure, therefore it would be somewhat misplaced to assume that dynasties will wither away in the long run, though it might change its style of functioning. That dynasties have also been subjected to immense challenges also becomes part of the public memory. Whether in India or in Pakistan, the Gandhi's and the Bhutto's have seen immense trial and tribulation by various social forces, which have sometimes led to paranoia in dynasties at times or to cling on more tightly to source or power.

In Bangladesh, the general elections of 2014 was opposed by the second largest party in Bangladesh BNP led by Khaleda Zia on charges of corruption, which led Jatiya Party to form the opposition in Bangladesh. Due to non-participation by the BNP, Bangladesh is perceived not in good lights in recent democratic analyses. For example the Freedom House Index has marked Bangladesh as partly free. There is immense pressure on the government of Bangladesh due to recent killing of bloggers by fundamentalist groups; which the government comfortably denies. Although often feudalism and dynasty politics is seen together as if one follows the other, this is not the case. Raza Ahmad Rumi writes, one important distinction is in order at the outset,

“Although the politics of dynasty in Pakistan has often been associated with the politics of feudalism, the two are not the same. As a general phenomenon, feudal politics has over time weakened in Pakistan. The Bhuttos are a unique case, for they combine not only popular following, a cult of martyrdom, drawing on the widespread belief that the senior Bhutto, his two sons and daughter were all directly or indirectly murdered at the behest of state agencies”.⁴⁶

In fact it is said that Bhutto gave away large portions of his own land to State to abide by his own principles. How successful was he, in implementing it as a general policy has to be questioned because the PPP has its leadership based in landowners of Pakistan. In India too, the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty adopted socialist goals. Indira Gandhi, during her tenure abolished the Privy Purse that was given to ex-royal families. However, land re-distribution is not something which can be implemented by a fool-proof policy. No wonder land is still a debate in polices of these countries.

⁴⁶ Rumi, Raza Ahmad. *Dynasties and Clientalism in Pakistan*. Seminar 2011

3.3 Conclusion

Though dynasty politics may be seen as feudal Kanchan Chandra argues that dynasties are but one expression of a network oriented society. They should not be seen as traditional but rather an integral part of modern democracy in India. In fact, the whole idea of juxtaposing the modern with the traditional is difficult in India, which is affirmed by Paul R. Brass, when he writes “In India modernization is not a one way process, political institutions modernize the society, while the society traditionalizes institutions.”

Therefore by way of conclusion, it needs to be reiterated that although democracy might not need dynasty for its survival, Dynasty definitely needed and used democracy for its survival. We also saw what is in the nature of democracy of the sub-continent that has led to the development of dynasty.

Dynasties has this unique element in them by which they provide legitimacy and also at the same time contests legitimacy. No wonder that only during democratic government that dynasties emerges in its full form. At the same time, it is also quite intriguing to note that, the dynasties (evolved out of military rule) never gained the popularity which the dynasties associated with democracy received. Examining the policies of both domestic and foreign policies in these countries ruled by dynasties, it appears that these countries initiated off with a rhetoric of socialism which had a wider appeal among the masses because of its pro-poor rhetoric. The rhetoric of socialism was soon taken over by rhetoric of Islam (in Pakistan and Bangladesh) due to socialism’s failure to deliver on the promises of development to the people.

However one cannot make a linear explanation as to why dynasties gained legitimacy, it depended upon several historical circumstances specific to these countries. One major reason can rightly be said to be the relation that dynasty could establish itself with democratic institutions. Dynasties provided stability to the otherwise unstable society and economy. Nonetheless, in the light of few developments that have occurred in the past, a question that naturally arises: what is the future of democracy, and will it persist or wither away with time? Dynasties have become a part of the political process and leadership structure, therefore it would be somewhat misplaced to assume that dynasties will wither away in the long run, though it might change its style of functioning. In fact, it is important to change with changing circumstances, otherwise their survival will be in question.

CHAPTER: 4

Women Leadership as Carriers of Dynasty in South ASiA

CHAPTER IV

WOMEN LEADERSHIP AS CARRIERS OF DYNASTY IN SOUTH ASIA

Democratization process in any country is incomplete without assessing the condition of the whole of the citizenry. Therefore when one looks at the relationship between dynasty and democratization one also needs to look at female leaders. The case of female leaders becomes interesting for few reasons. Power struggle anywhere in the world is highly competitive. South Asia have seen a considerable number of women in politics who has risen to the apex, but a trend that can be witnessed is that, these leadership is often seen as the continuance of leadership of once successful male members who act as interim until a male heir can take over. Therefore, they are seen as “carriers” of dynasty, that is, the burden of patriarchy is bore by the women leaders. It is also extremely difficult for a women leader to survive in the world of politics, which is very often misogynistic and men-centric. However when one looks at the general trends of representation of women, one finds that in order to avoid the dismal nature of representation of women, there exists certain arrangement for women representation in the nature of “reservation”. Pakistan and Bangladesh are two countries which have reservation for women in the parliament and India is still debating on whether representation to women in the parliament is viable or not in addition to the nitty gritty of such a reservation. However India has been able to ensure representation of women in panchayat level which came through the 73rd and 74th amendment to the constitution. Bihar is one state which has been able to ensure representation of women at panchayat level at 55 percent of total seats. It is interesting to look at how in an extremely male-dominated space, women leaders have carved out a niche for themselves although with limitations. The reservation provided by the 73rd and 74th amendment to the constitution in the 1990s gave women a sense of power sharing. It also acted as a momentum resulting in the upsurge of women participation.

The political representation of women is disheartening everywhere and even in South Asia, the top leadership that women have occupied largely came from dynasties. Though many have been skeptical about this fact, as mere political representation does not imply empowerment. These women leaders mostly represented someone else in the dynasty, who was either dead or

was in jail. Yet the leadership of these women leaders is important for various reasons. Indira Gandhi once said to her biographer Pupul Jayakar, “You know I am not a feminist in the accepted sense of the word. Till I was 12 years old I hardly knew the difference between being a boy or a girl. I was brought up amongst boy cousins, climbed trees with them, flew kites and played marbles. That is not the normal experience of girls in our country. Women in India, perhaps in most of the world, are so dominated and discriminated against. There is so much unnecessary cruelty and humiliation.”¹ Though Indira Gandhi maintained that she was not a feminist, she was aware and sensitive to the condition of women in the country. In fact her success in politics has always been attributed to her ability to connect to the people of the country.

However one question that one frequently encounters in this region is that, “Why is female life so devalued in a country(Pakistan) where a woman served as prime minister twice?” asks Bushra Khaliq in the context of the condition of women in the country.² But this question holds ground for many South Asian societies. A careful deconstruction of the societal constructions suggests that societies in South Asia still has a long way to go to ensure gender equality. A women’s independent identity as an individual rarely exists. Gender inequality still marks our society, with varying degrees of discrimination in both rural and urban areas, and in all classes.³

In Bangladesh, despite women being active participant in the national movement, their role in this struggle is hardly recognised owing to the male-dominated narrative of the war. This is reflected in the kind of non-recognition of their share of efforts in the war. States Kabir Rokeya and Omar Chowdhury,

“The most unkind, disgraceful and ruthless form of non-recognition occurred just after the War of Liberation when the nation came to know that the occupation army of Pakistan raped

¹ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi: A biography*, Viking, 1992, pp 265

² Khaliq, Bushra. *To be a Woman in Pakistan: Stories of Struggle and Survival in Women, Political Struggles and Gender Equality*, Ed. Margaret Altson, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pg 59

³ Khaliq, Bushra. *To be a Woman in Pakistan*, Pg 59

about 200000 to 400000 women during the nine-month war.”⁴

The nations of India and Pakistan were created out of the innumerable ‘sacrifices’ women made through violence inflicted upon her. Urvashi Butalia writes, in *The Other Side of Silence*, about such violence,

“The political partition of India caused one of the great human convulsions in history. Never before or since have so many people exchanged their homes and countries so quickly. Estimates of the dead vary from 200,000 to two million but that somewhere around a million people died is now widely accepted. As always there were widespread sexual savagery: about 75000 women are thought to have been abducted and raped by men of religions different from their own.”⁵

Therefore it becomes imperative that when one looks at the leadership of women in this region, one also have to invariably look at the position women comes from or where is she placed. In addition to politics induced calamity on women like the partition, women are also subject to constraints posed by the society, like those claimers of authority on religion. Founder of Jamaat, Maududi has maintained the position that the domain of women is inside the household and though women have the right to participate in elections, she cannot contest election. Bangladesh a new nation, that was formed as late as 1971 after breaking away from West Pakistan, have also witnessed large scale violence on women during the liberation war. A peep into these women’s lives becomes important due to the fact that these women, who are called ‘Birangonas’, a term that was coined by Mujibur Rahman, has withstood that violence and also how they look at themselves in relation to the leadership structure. Someone like Firdous Priyabhasini have been vocal about atrocities on women during the liberation war and did demand punishment to certain political leaders who were complicit during the war. Women from being placed in such a wretched condition to making her way to the apex becomes

⁴ Kabir, Rokeya and Chowdhury, Omar Tarek. *Women in Bangladesh, Invisible Heroes in the Economy and Society* in Women, Political Struggles and Gender Equality, Ed. Margaret Altson, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pg 79

⁵ Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence*, Voices from the Partition of India, Penguin Books, 1998, pg 3

interesting as to what effects does it have on the larger social positioning of women. Has the presence of women in public and political spaces changed? Looking at data of Election Commission of India, one finds that the number of women elected to Lok Sabha has increased from 22 in the 1957 Lok Sabha elections to 62 in the 16th Lok Sabha elections. However compared to the number of women who participated in the 1957 elections to 2014 elections, it appears that representation has increased only marginally as against participation, on the one hand the number of women who participated in the 1957 Lok Sabha elections were 45 compared to 574 of 2014 elections.⁶ The marginalization of women in the electoral process is also to be located in the party system and the imbalanced gender relations in the political dispensation of India including the patriarchal and male-dominant party competition structure. This acts as a factor of dissuasion for females from electoral politics.

When it comes to rights of women, generally those rights are intertwined with larger questions of society. One instance is how women rights are generally curtailed in the name of customary rights in the subcontinent. Writes Saadia Toor, in this context when it came to women, overlapping legal codes and the increasing legitimacy given to customary law enables a patriarchal opportunism, whereby patriarchal elites could “cherry-pick” the most constrictive norms and codes from among the different legal systems. The effect of the interplay of tribal codes, Islamic Law, Indo-British judicial traditions and customary traditions is that “any advantage or opportunity offered to women by one law is cancelled out by one or more of the others”.⁷ In the context of Pakistan, the attack on women and minorities which had begun under Zia gained greater momentum in later period, resulting in increasing levels of sexualized violence against women and targeting of religious minorities. (Violence against minorities was the result of widespread abuse of the Blasphemy Laws as amended by Zia).

Though these customary forms of violence didn't begin under Zia yet they gained new meaning under his gender regime. The 1990s saw an increase in sexual violence against women being used as a tool of political intimidation. In 1991 Veena Hayat, a close friend of then-opposition leader Benazir Bhutto and daughter of veteran politician Sardar Shaukat Hyat Khan was gang-

⁶ Data collected from the website of Election Commission of India. eci.nic.in

⁷ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam, Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan*, Pluto Press, 2011, pg 167

raped by goons allegedly hired by the son-in-law of President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. Given the stigma attached to female victims of sexual violence, it was significant that Hayat went public with the rape and about who she thought was responsible for. The case made news headlines because of the shocking nature of the crime, the victims' refusal to remain silent.⁸

Feminist social scientists have highlighted the ways in which women have been and continue to be central to the project of the nation. Not only are they the biological reproducers of future citizens but also reproducers of the boundaries of national groups and the carriers of cultural tradition therefore reducing them to their bodies as either mothers or sexed objects to be regulated and protected from the 'outsiders'. In India, feminist scholarship has underlined the ways in which the specific histories of colonialism, nationalist movements and embittered community relationships have reconstituted patriarchies. While narrating the status of women in India, the nation itself as a modernist enterprise has to summon a legacy stretching to an ancient and time-immemorial past. The story of Indian women begins with a customary reference to her high status in the Vedic period, the contentiousness of which has been increasingly questioned.⁹

While enquiring into the relationship between Women and the Liberal State, Maitrayee Chaudhuri looks into how liberal democracy's relationship with the question of rights of women was never simple, while equal rights necessarily meant rights of all, it was not unusual to define citizenship as exclusive of both women and the dispossessed. Looking into the myth of women as politically independent citizens, she quotes Mies,

"To draw women into the political struggle is a tactical necessity of any anti-colonial or national liberation struggle...but women did not work out a strategy for their own liberation struggle for their own interests. By subordinating goals to the national cause they conformed to the traditional *pativrata* or sati ideal of the self-sacrificing woman."¹⁰

On a similar note, Kumari Jayawardane maintains that, the emergence of democratic movement for women's rights and the feminist struggles in Asia have to be considered, on the

⁸ Toor, Saadia, *The State of Islam*, pg 168

⁹ Chaudhuri, Maitrayee. *Gender in the Making of the Indian Nation-State* from *Sociology of Gender: The Challenge of Feminist Sociological Knowledge*, ed. Sharmila Rege, Sage Publications, 2003, pp 342

¹⁰ Chaudhuri, Maitrayee. *Gender in the Making of the Indian Nation-State*, pp 355

one hand, in the context of resistance to imperialism and other kinds of foreign domination; and to the feudal structure of exploitative local rulers and religious structures on the other.

Kumari Jayawardena, locates the patriarchal oppression in capitalist expansion. She maintains that the capitalist expansion had an effect on the nature of resistance movements and the feminist struggle within it and these movements varied with the balance of forces that emerged from capitalist expansion. In most countries these movements were dominated by the local bourgeois.¹¹ In their search for a national identity, the emergent bourgeois invoked the need for a national culture: the new woman that was being visualized shall also represent the traditional culture. In seeking validity for this position, many reformers idealized the civilization of a glorious past, speaking of the need to regain lost freedom that women were said once to have possessed in their societies.¹² Though the issue of women's education was a primary concern with the nationalist yet the scope of such education was limited and had to be perceived within the limits of patriarchy. She writes,

“The motives of the male reformers were varied but education was a crucial issue for women. But it is also important to look at the type of education that was promoted. It was class based in the sense that it was geared to providing good wives and mothers for those men who had risen on the economic and social ladder of colonial society”.¹³

The involvement of peasant and workers however interspersed the resistance movement in a few countries which pushed the struggle to a broader front. They aimed at a more radical transformation of the society seeking equality. The women's movement in many countries of Asia achieved juridical political and legal equality with men but failed to make any impression on women's subordination within the patriarchal structures of family and society.

Often one tries to locate the study of post-colonial societies in terms of binaries of us versus them and in this case the colonizer and the colonized. However someone like Mrinalini Sinha would oppose the binaries of colonizer and colonized. She states that the term colonizer and colonized has been contingent and constitutive of each other, which has led to construction of

¹¹ Jayawardane, Kumari. *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, First published by Kali for Women in 1986, This edition published by Verso, 2016, pg 70.

¹² Jayawardane, Kumari. *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, pg 86

¹³ Jayawardane, Kumari. *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, pg 93

identities like the ‘manly Englishman’ and the ‘effeminate Bengali’. Gender was an important axis along which colonial power was constructed, and that, at the same time, the category of gender itself was closely attached to national, class/ caste, and racial categories. Sinha also brings in Edward Said’s ideas to expand our knowledge on understanding of colonialism and imperialism. She further writes,

“The earlier policy of relying on Western-educated Indians as the most trusted allies of the government began to falter as these groups began demanding a share in the exclusive privileges of the British colonial elite. The new attitude towards this group of Indians was reflected in the colonial ‘discourse’ that characterized them as an ‘artificial’ and ‘unnatural’ class of persons: in short, ‘effeminate babus’.”¹⁴

In Bengal itself, however, effeminacy came to be associated only with a small percentage of its total population. The majority of Bengalis, the laboring classes, and certain low-caste groups were specifically exempted from the charge of effeminacy.¹⁵ The construction of these categories is evidence to the fact as to how the binaries of gender were created, that real men (here the English man) behaves in a certain way different from others (Bengali men). The construction of gender roles comes to play here through the encounter with colonialism.

Tanika Sarkar in her book, *‘Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, religion and Cultural Nationalism’* traces the beginnings of what she calls a “Hindu cultural nationalism” that starts to replace a liberal reform tradition by the late nineteenth century¹⁶. She explores into this theme by reading into *Anandamath* by Bankimchandra and *Ghare Baire* by Rabindranath Tagore. *Ghare Baire* was a polemic against an imagined Hindu nation of Bankim. She writes, “In *Ghare Baire*, the country is an object worthy of love, while nationalism is a deeply suspect emotion or activity. In *Anandamath* by contrast the country is transfigured into a Hindu nation.”¹⁷ Tracing the origins of this revivalist tradition, remains crucial to understanding

¹⁴ Sinha, Mrinalini. *Colonial Masculinity*, pg 5

¹⁵ Sinha, Mrinalini. *Colonial Masculinity*, pg 16

¹⁶ Sarkar, Tanika, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation*, pp 1

¹⁷ Sarkar, Tanika. *Rebels, Wives and Saints* P 230

contemporary Indian politics, particularly in regard to the status of women and the problem of contemporary Hindu-Muslim violence. How the idea of the nation becomes embodied in rigid Hindu patriarchy. The significance of women in the nationalist imagination makes them potent symbols of the unviolated, chaste, inner space of the nation that needed to be protected by Indian patriarchy from the corrupting influence of the colonizer.¹⁸

4.1 Locating emergence of female leaders in the structure of patriarchy

It is worth exploring why countries so long associated with unstable politics and subordination have also seen conspicuous presence of many politically prominent females. The biographies of these women tend to enrich our understanding of leadership from a very different perspective. Structure of patriarchy have always been a decisive factor on the fate of women in most cultures around the world. Male dominance is legitimate in all fields of law, custom, politics etc. Politics or the public life is presumed to be a natural sphere for men while for women, the “natural” sphere was presumed to be private, though of course dominated by the male. Feminists have often pointed out towards the unequal space of the private and therefore debating on the fact as to whether state should or should not intervene into the private. Feminists have criticized privacy rights for inadequately addressing privacy for women and shielding from public scrutiny private abuse of women. The private family role that was being forced on most women formed part of the basis for making them “ineligible” for political roles. The impact of gender-based public-private spheres has been such that only that leadership by women is seen as legitimate when she fills a post vacated by death or imprisonment of a male family member. All the female leaders under study whether Benazir Bhutto, Indira Gandhi, Sheikh Hasina or Khaleda Zia are close relatives of deceased leaders. In South Asia the most important political posts open to women have been so because of dynastic ties to prominent male politicians.

In the absence of institutional mechanism and practices at place, female leaders, after the death of male counterpart are made to take up central posts in the party so that an impending

¹⁸ Sarkar, Tanika. *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation* pp 265

catastrophe is further delayed. The catastrophe being finding a leader from the party other than dynasties. Increasingly the absence of leadership is moaned today, while at the same time invoking the likes of Nehru, Mujibur Rahman etc.¹⁹

While locating women vis-a-vis the social structure in South Asia, a woman like Indira Gandhi stands out for the immense power she exercised and legitimacy she had in the nation as well as internationally. Indira Gandhi's early political trainings was about seeing her father and grandfather in and out of jail during the period of independence to her many tours across many countries with her father have given her immense political exposure. She also toured to the interiors of the country which helped her connect to the root of India that is the rural life in India which was the lifeline of the country. Though many of her policies were populist yet these ensured her immense political success. Her political acumen led her to take decisions at the right moment, whether her timing of nuclear tests, when in May 1974 George Fernandes the then President of Railway Workers' Union served notice to the government that railways workers would go on an indefinite strike unless their demands were met.²⁰ Or her sending flower from jail to Charan Singh who was the one who sent her jail in the first place were some of her tactical manoeuvre. Pupul Jayakar wrote, "A bouquet of flowers from Indira reached Charan Singh from Tihar jail with her warm greetings on his birthday".²¹ This can be read as her superb political skills to outmaneuver the Janata leadership. This was also the same period when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Pakistan was to appear before the Supreme Court to defend himself against the sentence of death passed by a lower court. Pupul Jayakar writes in this context, "The coincidence was ominous. The death sentence for Bhutto cast a shadow around Indira and Sanjay. In the atmosphere that prevailed, anything was possible".²² However, her closeness and blind trust in her son Sanjay led to many of her decisions which were later on proved to be wrong. For example, the imposition of the Emergency in the country. When she almost decided that she would quit from her post as prime minister that her son Sanjay convinced her to fight back. Sanjay knew the weak points of his mother and this helped him

¹⁹ Hasan, Mushirul. *Pathways of Political Leadership in South Asia: Limits and Possibilities*, EPW, Vol.33, No.11 (March 14-20), 1998 pp. 585- 588, pg 585

²⁰ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi: A biography*, Viking, 1992, pp 256

²¹ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 375

²² Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 372

manipulate her. When the excesses of Emergency was getting overhead, Rajiv was recorded to have said that “mummy should not have listened to Sanjay”. When the excesses of emergency reached Indira Gandhi, was she then convinced to revoke Emergency and called for fresh elections. In spite of her political successes and failures, she goes down in history as a leader who could take decision when it was needed. However, her immense distrust of leaders surrounding her led to a sort of paranoia in her, which grew extreme in the later days of her life so much so that an astrologer found a permanent place in her house who was called ‘flying saint’ by the media because of his fortune that he could make out of the association with the Gandhi family. At many times she also visited Anand Mai Ma in her Ashram in Haridwar, who also happened to be close to her mother.²³

At a point when Indira Gandhi was rising in the ladder of power by exercising immense power herself and alienating the old guards that the old guards felt that a strong action was required on their part to remove her from the political scene. After a meeting presided over by Nijalingappa, an announcement was made expelling Indira from the primary membership of the Congress on the ground that she had revolted against the congress party decision. The resolution read: The Congress is regrettably obliged to remove Mrs. Gandhi from the primary membership of the Congress organization for her deliberate action on defiance.²⁴ As the velocity of the attacks increased, Indira, addressing Congress Workers’ meeting in Poona, responding to her critics stated,

“Do not tell me I do not know Nehru’s ideology. We worked together. I was intimately connected with all his thinking. In any case I do not see myself in the role of an imitation of Nehru. If I think it is necessary to depart from his policies in the interest of the country I shall not hesitate to do so.”²⁵

She later on in her political life, departs from many of Nehru’s policies. One also does not forget the Kamaraj Plan, which was the brain child of Indira Gandhi when she was the party president for the first time according to which they made many chief ministers resign to reform

²³ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 341

²⁴ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 213

²⁵ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 196

the party. Leaders across the world often tried to play down upon her, thinking that she needs advice on leadership. She once shared with Pupul Jayakar, one such instance after returning from US and USSR, “You know Pupul, because I appeared young and spoke little, both Johnson and Kosygin felt I was a fledgling; they tried to teach me the direction in which to fly”.²⁶

Indira Gandhi also did not escape the attacks that were unleashed on her, because she was a widow. Just before the elections of 1967 a scurrilous series of posters began to appear on the walls and bus-stands of the capital, all posters emphasized her inauspicious star: an Air-India plane had crashed and Dr. Homi Bhabha was killed on the day she was sworn in as Prime Minister; on her first Independence day speech, an earth quake has struck Delhi: she was a widow and widows in the minds of vast numbers of people of India were regarded as inauspicious.²⁷

Once when she was campaigning in Orissa, someone from the crowd, threw a stone at her. At which she later remarked, “It was not an insult to her personally but to the country because as Prime Minister I represent the country.”²⁸ Indira Gandhi suffered from paranoia throughout her life as she could never tolerate the vehement attacks and criticisms on her. Later in her life when her son Sanjay Gandhi rose to disproportionate importance in the political scenario for which she was criticized, she maintained that any attack on Sanjay is an attack on her.²⁹ Her assistants who had worked with her over the years found her imperious. “She would brook no criticism, nor was she prepared to be questioned. She never trusted anyone completely - now she grew secretive, never divulged her mind, never changed it whether she was right or wrong. She would keep people guessing, wanted people to ask favors of her- it was one way of expressing her power. Sometimes I feel that she lost her balance after Bangladesh. Sanjay was in complete control. She would have been a great Prime Minister had Sanjay not been there” said N.K Seshan in an interview with Pupul Jayakar.³⁰

Indira Gandhi was also known to be firm on positions internationally which had attracted

²⁶ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 194

²⁷ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 198

²⁸ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 199

²⁹ Moro, Javier. *The Red Sari: A Dramatised Biography of Sonia Gandhi*, Roli Books, 2015, pg 205

³⁰ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 254

resentment from leaders like Nixon. President Nixon felt that Indian public opinion was pro-Kennedy and anti-Nixon. This dislike for Indira later on, made Nixon take positions in favor of Pakistan. During the Liberation war of Bangladesh, Nixon tried to intimidate by announcing that the Seventh Fleet was heading for the Bay of Bengal. Indira Gandhi responded by announcing in the radio, “we will not retreat. Not by a single step we will move back.” which later makes Kissinger say, “The lady is too tough to become anyone’s stooge”.

Once when Lal Bahadur Shastri was the Prime Minister, she is recorded to have said to her friend Pupul that she doesn't look upon herself as ‘mere Minister of Information and Broadcasting’ but as one of the leaders of the country. She further added, “Do you think this government can survive if I resign today? I am telling you it won’t. Yes, I have jumped over the Prime Minister’s head and I would do it again whenever the need arises.”³¹

Many who have met Indira in person after reading about her in newspapers often remarked that she was tinier than her stature was. Benazir Bhutto who had accompanied her father to Shimla remarks in her autobiography,

“How tiny she was, much smaller than she seemed in the countless photographs I had seen of her. And how elegant, even in the raincoat she wore over her sari under the threatening skies.”³²

Indira has often been known for her silences, which could mean several of her moods like anger, desperation or sadness. She loved the fact that over the years she came to be compared to Durga.³³ The writer Bruce Chatwin, who went with Indira in a campaign tour wrote, that during one such campaign, Indira told him “You have no idea how exhausting it is to be a goddess”. She didn't like her authority to be challenged at any cost. At a point after the death of Sanjay Gandhi, when Maneka who have already tasted power while being with Sanjay made Khushwant Singh publish an article which compared Maneka to goddess Durga. He wrote,

³¹ Jayakar, Pupul. *Indira Gandhi*, pp 171

³² Bhutto, Benazir. *Daughter of the East.: An Autobiography*, Pocket Books, 389

³³ Moro, Javier. *The Red Sari: A Dramatised Biography of Sonia Gandhi*, Roli Books, 2015, pg 202

“Maneka is like her late husband, utterly fearless when aroused, the very reincarnation of Durga astride a tiger”.³⁴ Indira was so furious at the intervention of Khushwant Singh that she denied to write the introduction to the book which Maneka was writing in memory of her late husband.

During 1974 Indira Gandhi’s paranoia increased by the fact that the previous year, when a CIA backed coup overthrew another socialist, democratically elected president of Chile, Salvador Allende. She knew who had orchestrated it, and feared that they might attempt to take advantage of the chaotic situation in India to try the same on her.³⁵ It is during the same period that the famous railway strike started. Seventeen lakh railway employees were demanding an eight-hour working day and a 75 percent hike in salary. As was the case with Indira Gandhi who was brilliant at manoeuvre, a few days later on 18th may 1974 the first nuclear test took place in Pokhran in the Rajasthan desert, near the border with Pakistan.³⁶

Just like Indira Gandhi who was expected to carry out the legacy of Nehru, same was with Benazir Bhutto. After the death of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, people saw in Benazir the hope for restoration of Democracy. Since 1977 she was under detention by Zia’s government in various places inside the country. In spite of the fact that she was under detention, the MRD formed for the restoration of Democracy by her mother and she has received widespread support from the country. Zia evading one after another dates calling for elections added to the frustration of the people. Finally after seven long years when she was finally able to move to London, she met her party members and continued with her party work there. Writing and publishing leaflets for millions of PPP supporters abroad as well as smuggling few to the supporters languishing in the jails of Pakistan. She notes however, that the senior party leaders who previously held positions in the government of PPP, came to her and demanded for portfolios inside the party. Some were reported to have said, “first the father, then the mother and now the daughter”.

By the end of 1980s, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s daughter Benazir- who was freshly out of Harvard

³⁴ Moro, Javier. *The Red Sari*, Pg 235

³⁵ Moro, Javier. *The Red Sari*, Pg 146

³⁶ Moro, Javier. *The Red Sari*, Pg 147

and Oxford and fearless in the demeanour in which she stood up to the regime- had become the symbol of resistance to the military dictatorship. However, her victory was diluted by the fact that the military establishment brokered a deal uniting the anti-PPP forces under the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad, a coalition of largely religious parties led by Nawaz Sharif.³⁷

Al-Zulfikar which was formed by Mir and Shah, Benazir's brother in Afghanistan also added to the woes suffered by the people in Pakistan, after a plane from Pakistan was hijacked by them in Afghanistan. As soon as the two brothers took responsibility for the hijacking, the torture on PPP members inside Pakistan increased forcing them to sign papers indicating the association between PPP and Al-Zulfikar. Later on when they met in France for a family gathering, Benazir told Mir, "violence only begets violence", urging them to forego violent tactics. Later on Fatima Bhutto wrote how the coming back of Mir to the country was celebrated, which added to the insecurities of Benazir of losing a claim to power, where a male heir is always sought for in the party as well as by the society.

Benazir Bhutto, who later on becomes prime minister of Pakistan twice wrote in her introduction to her autobiography , "I feel blessed that I could break the bastions of tradition by becoming Islam's first elected women prime minister. That election was the tipping point in the debate raging in the the Muslim world on the role of women in Islam. It proved that a Muslim women could be elected Prime Minister, could govern a country and could be accepted as a leader by both men and women. I am grateful to the people of Pakistan for honoring me".³⁸

Toor describes how the period of Islamization started by Zia known as *Nizam-i-Mustafa* had larger implications towards curtailing women's rights in the society. She writes, "It was the period of maturation of the social, political and cultural forces which Zia had unleashed". She further adds, "In fact the religious and sectarian violence which characterized this period were of a kind, scale and intensity never before witnessed in Pakistan."³⁹ The vulnerability was further intensified by the promulgation of the *Qisas* and *Diyat* Ordinance and a change in the Section 295-C of the Blasphemy Law under Nawaz Sharif's administration that made the death

³⁷ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan, Pluto Press, 2011, pg 159

³⁸ Bhutto, Benazir. *Daughter of the East.: An Autobiography*, Pocket Books, 389

³⁹ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, pg 159

penalty the only possible punishment for blasphemy. This period also saw the Zina Ordinance which rendered it impossible for a woman to prove a charge of rape. These policies were instrumental in masculinizing the public sphere. This period led to an increasing conservative (re)interpretation at this time.⁴⁰ Marriage was reinterpreted as a social and not a civil contract, the underlying idea was to prevent women from exercising agency, especially in matters relating to choice of marriage partner. The demand for equal rights for women was held to be the cause of decline of societies. An obsessive references to the moral decay of the West and the reasons for it show how important the West had become as a self-consolidating other within the national discourse.⁴¹ Toor also brings into light the relation between Islamic laws and customary law. She points out how both can cancel each other if one of them challenges the patriarchal imperative.

In Bangladesh, the country that is relatively younger than the other two have also witnessed the rise of two politically prominent females. One the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the other is widow of Zia Ur Rahman. Both have come to hold the reins of power alternately. On being asked as to how would he look at dynasty in women leadership, Misbah Kamal said, “Although at first, it could just appear to be representation of someone else, but over the years women develop her leadership skills”. Hereditary rule is accepted whenever there is a squabble and members of that dynasty becomes an uncontroversial leader. Comparing between Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina M.M Akash of Dhaka University has maintained that even though both of them have entered politics through dynasties yet Hasina has more legitimacy than Khaleda Zia because Sheikh Hasina has a vision for the country but Khaleda Zia is largely seen as a “poter bibi”(A begum in the portrait).⁴² According to him, Sheikh Hasina runs her own show but Khaleda Zia runs it with the help of people behind her. Therefore, in terms of qualification, the dynastic qualification is not enough. Of course dynasty gives an edge where one can start from a higher position. An initial capital is already there; but whether that capital can be capitalized will depend upon one’s own political qualification and co-relation of forces in the politics. Leaders like Indira Gandhi or Sheikh Hasina or Benazir Bhutto could benefit from their links with the dynasty but whether they could turn it to a success was determined by the

⁴⁰ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, pg 167

⁴¹ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, pg 178

⁴² Based on Fieldwork in Dhaka University, Dhaka, Bangladesh, June 19, 2016.

decisions they made in the long run.

The above presents a discreet description of life and events of prominent women leaders of the region. The description is an attempt to understand what women leaders perceived themselves as, how dynastic politics is manifested in the way that they exercised power. How the larger structures of patriarchy have implications in the way power is exercised by these leaders. For example, do power has a different meaning for women as opposed to men? All these questions are definitely a pointer to the fact that leadership exercised by women in dynasties are not just about women acting as a representative of men, it represents the diverse ways that power manifests.

4.2 Religious chauvinism and defiance of women

Religion presents itself as a very interesting and intriguing case when it is seen in the context of variables like Democracy, gender etc. Any religion is patriarchal by nature. The clash that is often seen between general laws and customary laws in any country reflects upon how customary law by nature is detrimental to women. The rights and privileges of a community is often maintained by trampling upon rights of women, the context of which is also very often used by the right wing elements of the society to challenge such laws. In spite of putting women in the status of a second class citizen, leaders like Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto or Sheikh Hasina has rose to political prominence.

In Bangladesh, the leaders of Jamaat-i-Islami regularly invoke women's privileged status as mothers to counter the claims of non-governmental organizations perceived as secularist operating in the country. Jamaat held a position which says that women's divinely ordained place is in the home. While the Jamaat today recognizes women as "individuals" and her right to study work and vote yet they enjoin women to fully domestic obligations.⁴³

Maududi stated that there has to be certain limits to women's political participation, which he propagated during a speech addressing women in Sahiwal in September 1950, "We have made our position quite clear about the right of women to vote. They do have this right like men. But

⁴³ Shehabuddin, Elora. *Jamaat-i-Islami in Bangladesh: Women, Democracy and Transformation of Islamist Politics*, Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 42, No.2/3, Islam in South Asia (March-May 2008) pp 579

we are not in favor of their taking part in politics. They can, of course, exercise their right to vote freely but they should not contest for the seats of an assembly....we are of the opinion that political affairs are the close preserve of men and the ladies should not be burdened with political responsibilities. But they should of course be consulted on political matters.”

However, Taj I Hashmi maintains that, it would be a mistake to assume that the Quran has given men a higher status than women and hence women are disqualified to be leaders in the society. “In fact”, he writes, “there is nothing in the Quran which disqualifies women as rulers. On the contrary, Sura 27, *al-Naml* (The Ants) glorifies Queen Sheba (Bilqees) of Yemen as a competent and powerful ruler. She is the only ruler other than the prophets to get a positive mention in the Quran”.⁴⁴

Taj I Hashmi maintains that both secular and Sharia based laws are equally bad for the society. He illustrates the lack in secularists by citing the controversy around Taslima Nasrin for her opinion vis a vis the society. He also further explores the growing pervasiveness of ‘political Islam’ in Bangladeshi society. He however states that, the political Islam that is practiced in Bangladesh is significantly different from the Islam that is being practiced in Saudi Arabia. He maintains,

“While Islam is the dominant ideology governing relations between women and men in Bangladesh, . . . the country’s geographic and historic isolation have made it resistant to the ‘divine, theocratic, centralist and establishment – based version of Islam, linked to Arabic learning and oriented to the Middle East, practised for instance in Pakistan.”⁴⁵

Hashmi further adds that man-made law and pre-Islamic customs and traditions, not Islamic teachings, are responsible for the promotion of misogyny and subjection of women in Muslim societies. Hashmi traces how Islamization build roots in Bangladesh. After the introduction of Islamization in the constitution in 1988, it has become imperative upon all political candidates to make reference to Islam. During the 1991 elections itself, all parties, even communist parties

⁴⁴ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, Beyond Subjection and Tyranny, Palgrave Macmillan, 2000 pg 49

⁴⁵ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, Beyond Subjection and Tyranny, Palgrave Macmillan, 2000 pg 5

were forced to show their allegiance towards Islam through their speeches, banners and manifestos. The Sharia is frequently cited to justify unequal inheritance rights. He cites the example of one female MP from the ruling BNP, Farida Khanam, when Khaleda Zia was the Prime Minister, who tried to table a bill in parliament to prohibit polygamy in Bangladesh, both BNP and AL opposed the move as encroachment of the Sharia Law.

Hashmi goes into details to locate the oppression of rural women at the hands of village *mullahs* and headmen. He writes,

“The sudden rise in the declaration of *fatwas* by *mullas* in rural courts against women, which has even led to several deaths (by suicide and murder) of poor women in the countryside, further aggravated the situation. By 1995, hundreds of women had been tried in sham rural courts, run by village elders and their associates (*mullas*), for allegedly violating the *Sharia* law and Islamic codes of conduct. It is often believed that the emergence of the new female working class in the garment industries in urban areas (whose workers mostly come from rural areas) and among NGO-workers and beneficiaries in the villages is the main reason why *mullas* and village elders whose interests conflict with the garment industries and NGOs, because the latter have taken away their clients by providing credit and jobs, have been terrorising women to dissuade them from working outside their villages.”

According to Hashmi, women in rural societies of Bangladesh visits local *Pirs* for the solution of many of her problems, mostly because of exclusion of women from all economic and other resources.⁴⁶

Female leadership was continued to be debated upon by Jamaat and other Islamists in Pakistan in the early 1980s because of Benazir Bhutto’s increasing popularity in the political scenario as well as in the early 1990s in Bangladesh with the restoration of democracy and the emergence of Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina in the alternating roles of prime minister and leader of the opposition.

There is another angle to the opposition to Benazir Bhutto during the 1990s. After the

⁴⁶ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, Beyond Subjection and Tyranny, Palgrave Macmillan, 2000 pg 65

oppressive regime initiated by Zia, which also promoted the Jamaat-i-Islami, the rise of Benazir Bhutto to power could mean the possible curtailment of the extensive powers they were exercising in the society. Although when Benazir Bhutto becomes the president for the first time, it was a coalition of odd groups, which also included members from religious parties. Ayub Khan, which otherwise posed as a non-religious leader, went to the extent of obtaining Fatwas from Ulama stating a woman could not be head of an Islamic State. Quite ironically Maududi retorted Ayub's position by saying, 'The real question was how could the nation get rid of a personal dictatorial rule which was responsible for the deterioration of Islamic values and the point at issue was not whether women should or should not participate in politics,'. Of course his retort was for the reason that his own party supported and fielded Jinnah's sister as a candidate.

When the movement led by MRD under the leadership of Benazir Bhutto was successful and she was campaigning after an abrupt announcement by Zia on May 29, 1988 for elections after dissolving the Parliament. She had to face attacks on her every day in various forms. She writes,

"The leaders of Zia's Muslim League publicly declared that they would not accept a Bhutto as leader of the government, regardless of the outcome of the November 16 elections. The fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami party trumpeted that leadership by a woman was un-Islamic, although they declared it Islamic in Zia's constitution of 1985".⁴⁷

Benazir Bhutto was opposed not only by the religious groups inside the country, she faced opposition from outside. She writes in this context, "I successfully defused an attempt to get the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) to recommend Pakistan's suspension from its membership for electing a woman Prime Minister. The religious scholars from different Muslim countries had jumped into the fray over my election and were busy giving Fatwas or edicts. However, I was fortunate that the scholars in Yemen, Syria, Egypt and Iraq, which had more secular governments, came to my rescue."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Bhutto, Benazir. *Daughter of the East.: An Autobiography*, Pocket Books, 389

⁴⁸ Bhutto, Benazir. *Daughter of the East*. pp 405

Once Benazir Bhutto was requested to appear in court in March, 1983, to give evidence at the trial of one Jam Saqi, a Communist who was being tried on charges of working against the ideology of Pakistan and spreading dissatisfaction against the armed Forces. Benazir Bhutto who saw it as one chance to give the party line and discredit the martial law, stated in the court, “In determining with clarity whether Martial Law has a place in Islam or not, we need to understand the concept of Martial Law and the concept of Islam. Islam is the submission before the will of Allah whereas Martial Law is submission before the army commander. A Muslim submits only before the will of Allah.”⁴⁹

However, on her part too Benazir Bhutto who became prime minister did not or could not bring in reforms in this area of the country. Christina Lamb writes in this context,

“In spite of all the promises and expectations, Bhutto’s twenty months in power saw no legislation other than the annual budgets. Not a move was made to repeal Zia’s repressive Hudood Ordinance, under which women could be jailed for being raped, even though 3000 women along with their children were languishing in Pakistani jails for crimes against “Hudood”.”⁵⁰

Rafiq Zakaria has analyzed in detail the position of women in Islam through the “trial of Benazir Bhutto” where he imagines an “imaginary” trial of Benazir Bhutto in front the most learned men of Sunni sect of Islam. He writes in this context, “while in this book, the persons are real, their words too are more or less authentic, but their appearance, cutting across time and space is imaginary”. In this allegorical trial he chooses seven eminent men to constitute the supreme Shariah Council for the trial of Benazir Bhutto. The trial consisted of two prime questions, whether Benazir was a true Muslim and whether a women can lead a country in an Islamic country. When the first question was invalidated over various arguments, the second

⁴⁹ Bhutto, Benazir. *Daughter of the East*. pp 234

⁵⁰ Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan’s Struggle for Democracy*, Viking 1991. pg 282

was addressed as thus,

“Iman Ghazili proceeded: “for my part, I have been influenced by one undisputed fact, that there is no specific bar in the Quran against a women being a ruler. Nor is it mentioned in any of the treatises on government written by the classical jurists from Faribi to Ibn Khaldun...true, the Prime Minister also enjoys a great deal of executive authority but he or she is subordinate to the President; in short power is shared between them”.⁵¹

Though Rafiq Zakaria doesn't point towards a strong position of women in the society by pointing that “she is subordinate to the President”, yet this analysis becomes important to locate the position of women in Islamic societies which are blurred with overlapping positions and interpretations.

4.3 The state of Female Representation

Representation is crucial to any political process. Therefore, in all the three countries of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, the number of women in the parliament is also crucial to look at. All the three countries have more or less the same number of representative in parliament with India standing at 62, Bangladesh at 69 and Pakistan at 67. Whatever might be the case, the condition of women is generally seen as grim in these parts of the world, with all the indices of development falling flat when it comes to women.

Though this sub-continent has witnessed women leaders both strong and weak, yet one also is not oblivious to the fact that in every sphere of life here representation of women is dismal. While underpaid jobs have a good number of women employees, jobs in corporate houses have a lower representation of women. The garment industry in Bangladesh is a case in the point, it appoints huge number of women employees and works on lowest paid salary on earth that is thirty four dollars a month. The fire break out and collapse of many buildings where garment industry is located also points out the precariousness of such works.

⁵¹ Zakaria, Rafiq. *The Trial of Benazir*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1989, pp 140

In terms of political representation, India and Bangladesh both have had a debate around reservation of seats for women in the parliament. In India in spite of the fact that several successive governments have failed to implement reservation of seats in the parliament for women yet the representation of women is almost equal to the other two countries. The debate for reservation for seats in parliament in case of India is mired in various debates of class and caste. One reason why the reservation for women bill in India could not be passed till today can be located in these issues where a consensus could not be arrived upon till date. Though there is reservation for women in parliament in Bangladesh yet it was for a limited period which led to its expiration on 16th December 1987 and the constitution provided no provision for the extension of the period of reservation. However, in 1990, with the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution, clause (3) to article 65 was re-inserted, which provided for 30 reserved seats for a further period of 10 years from the first sitting of the next parliament. Yet the reserved seats in Bangladesh are not directly elected but indirectly elected, therefore, in case of Bangladesh the women seat is most precious to political parties today as the recent trend in election have been that no party achieves absolute majority or a big margin. The reserved seats therefore, are the deciding factors as to which party will form the government. However, parties at large fails to indicate any comprehensive programme for encouraging women's participation in politics and even the major political parties gives 'ticket' to only 3 or 4 candidates.

Women representatives' role in the parliament becomes limited owing to the fact that they are not elected by the people. They would be able to play a meaningful role in country's politics which will help improve the lot of the womenfolk, only if they are elected directly. Currently only 7 women MPs are directly elected and the others have all been nominated for the specified seats⁵².

⁵² Tawheed, Fawzia. *Politics, Women and the Parliament*. calternatives.org/resource/pdf/Politics,%20Women%20and%20the%20Parliament.pdf

4.4 The route to the apex: Journey of women leadership

“After sixteen years of exile, of being kept quiet, Murtaza had been propelled into the limelight as the heir apparent of the PPP. He had been giving interviews to Pakistani newspapers throughout the summer, meeting journalists who flew to Syria to write about his decision to contest the elections, speaking to press clubs on the telephone, and sending statements from his black fax machine that hadn’t stopped whirring for months. In the beginning it was Al Zulfikar and the Bhutto brothers’ militant activities that fuelled much of the media interest. It was like a ball and a chain, holding Murtaza, his name and his reputation firmly in their place lest he ever got out of hand. He countered the allegations that he was an anti-democratic vigilante with candour”.⁵³

Fatima Bhutto describes the arrival of Mir Bhutto to Pakistani politics in this way. Definitely there was not an inch of doubt that Mir Bhutto’s rise to power could mean Benazir’s downfall. While on the one hand she was faced with the threat of her brother’s arrival to politics, at the same time, it also highlights the fact as to how a man in the family is seen as a true heir as against a woman. “Benazir was in power once again and this time she was faced with a different opponent, her brother. He wasn’t some ordinary member of a vague opposition party; he was popularly recognized in patriarchal Pakistan as the heir to the Bhutto throne. She was liable to be replaced and the threat came from within her own family.”⁵⁴

Although it might be relatively easy for women in dynasty to have access to mantle of political power yet they are not without struggle themselves. The life of Indira Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto well reflects this point. The reason that Indira Gandhi was made the Prime Minister after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri was that she would not be a strong candidate and can be replaced easily. The old guards started to find differences in her ways of operating and many times tried to throw her out of the party. In response to it, she formed a group of young Turks to oppose them. She was attacked from various quarters and when the attacks grew she became more and more suspicious and authoritarian. She became so suspicious that she trusted no one else other than her son, on whose behest he also suspended one of her close ministers. Her suspicions led to a feeling of paranoia in her, so much so that all the excesses of Emergency

⁵³ Bhutto, Fatima. *Songs of Blood and Sword: A Daughter’s Memoir*, Penguin Books 2010, pp 321

⁵⁴ Bhutto, Fatima. *Songs of Blood and Sword*. Pp 328

practiced by Sanjay went unnoticed by her because she failed to trust anyone. Later on, one of her former ministers wrote that, had she not worked on the advice of her son, she would indeed have made a brilliant leader. Indira's contests with the old guards within Congress happened mostly because they thought that a woman like Indira would not be able to exercise her powers and would give up. Tariq Ali in his book titled "The Nehrus and the Gandhis: An Indian Dynasty," describes Indira Gandhi as the "Empress of India". This was the time when in India "Democracy was preparing to confront its most critical period. Hard times were on the way". During the same period, in 1967, in Naxalbari, a small village in Northern Bengal, the district committee of the CP (M) unleashed a peasant insurgency, which spread slowly to other parts of the country. Even within the urban workforce the economy was in catastrophe. During this period of unrest, Indira Gandhi, unleashed some of the most undemocratic methods of quelling protests all over the country. Tariq Ali writes, "a total of 34,630 people were detained without trial throughout the emergency years under the provisions of the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA); 72,000 were arrested under the Defense of India Regulations (DIR). The arrests were by no means confined to right-wingers. Large number of CP (M) supporters and members, left wing students and trade unionists, radical or even slightly critical professors found themselves in prison. While no Indian leader of independent India has resorted to dictatorial tactics as Indira Gandhi, there is generally an assumption that female leadership is more public spirited and less power hungry than that of the males. However, this can only be considered a theoretical advantage since actual facts point towards something else. Another concern about female leaders that is shared is that, whether such "accidental leaders" will be decisive and tough enough to use power effectively.

The relation between Benazir Bhutto and Fatima Bhutto is also interesting to look at. Benazir Bhutto met the daughter of Mir in England when she was three years old. However, the accounts of the autobiography of Benazir and the book written by Fatima in memory of her father reflect two contradictory versions. When one looks at the two books, Benazir Bhutto's autobiography "Daughter of the East" and Fatima Bhutto's memoir "Songs of Blood and Sword", the struggles or disagreements within siblings of the same dynasty become apparent. Fatima Bhutto, the niece of Benazir Bhutto describes the cold way in which Benazir Bhutto responded to her father Mir Bhutto's death. Fatima Bhutto writes,

"The music on the other end of the line was soon interrupted by a click and a silence. 'Hello?

Wadi?. I said calling my aunt the name only I used for her. ‘No, she cant come to the phone right now’, came the reply. It was Zardari. ‘I need to speak to my aunt’, I said tersely, not wanting to speak to Zardari. I had wasted enough time on this phone call already. ‘She cant speak, she’s hysterical’, Zardari replied. As if on cue there was a loud wailing sound in the background. ‘What? No, I have to speak with her, please put her on the phone’, I continued, growing confused at what seemed like a theatrical attempt to keep me from talking to the one person who was in charge. ‘Oh, don’t you know?’ Zardari responded. ‘Your father’s been shot’.

Benazir Bhutto had two brothers Shah Nawaz and Mir Bhutto. Interestingly she describes in detail her relation to her brother Shah Nawaz and about his death in her autobiography detailing how events took place and how he was killed in France. But little do one come to know of her relation to Mir Bhutto. Whether the initial political disagreements took the shape of bitter political opposition remains unclear. But Benazir was opposed to their forming of Al-Zulfikar in Afghanistan to counter Zia back in Pakistan. Benazir thought that because of Al-Zulfikar many inside the country had to go through an ordeal uncalled for. People who were there in those army cells recalls their horror in various ways, how they were given electric shocks, the cruelty bestowed upon common workers of PPP to establish a link between PPP and Al-Zulfikar and various abductions and disappearances. Benazir always thought that the attacks by Al-Zulfikar diverted from the actual issue at hand. She was of the opinion that violence begets violence alone. She seemed quite attracted to an American notion of Democracy. She writes in her autobiography,

“As I prepared to leave Harvard in the spring of 1973, the strength of the United States constitution has been graphically demonstrated. My god! I thought. The American people are removing their president through democratic, constitutional means. Even a powerful president like Nixon who had put an end to the Vietnam War and opened the pathway to China could not escape the law of his land.”

Whereas in a country like Bangladesh, making sense of the leadership structure would be largely exalted if we fail to take into account the multiple war histories. Often the Bangladesh war is celebrated as a sign of victory against the Pakistani army and also celebration of all the

male virtues that is celebrated in winning a war. But little do people know of the multiple sufferings of women in the war. Yasmin Saikia mentions of Firdous Priyabhasini who has spoken in details about their own sufferings in the hands of Pakistani armies where they were abducted to unknown camps and made sex slaves. That women are made invisible in several layers of representation cannot be understood without taking into consideration the various structures which makes for certain inevitable results and in this context, it is the condition of women in a nation. A war in this context becomes something very important to look at, because it is during wars that the most vulnerable groups are targeted. Yasmin Saikia while looking at what effects the Liberation war of 1971 had, on woman looks closely at the relationship between state and women, self and the other, who is an intimate enemy etc. Her visit to a locality in Bangladesh called Camp Geneva and how it shaped her understanding of an “other” even within people who were themselves victims of state oppression evokes particular interest. The people that she met here were called the “Biharis” or the “Rajakars”; the term Bihari here doesn’t refer to a locality but a group of people who spoke Urdu and had migrated to Bangladesh before 1971 on business purposes. This group of people became largely unaccounted for and disappeared from archival history and became “refugees” in their own country and has continued living in the hope that someday they might be resettled. This Urdu speaking group stood with West Pakistan and hence were subjected to repression after the war. Violence against women becomes rampant during times of war. When the Pakistani Army wreaked havoc in the aftermath of the elections of 1971 there was rape, loot, arson everywhere. Not only the Pakistani Army even Mujib’s Mukti Bahini were equally guilty of rape and murder, which later on disappears from the records of Bangladesh. One such instance that Saikia, points is while she was collecting interviews across Bangladesh she met a School teacher who was willing to share her story with her. But when Saikia went to interview her neighbors prevented her from speaking anything, later on Saikia received a letter from a school teacher which said that as a child of thirteen during the war, she was raped by one of her neighbors. She brings into light here how women are doubly objectified here. Once when she is “objectified” by the perpetrator and secondly when the society to which she belongs fails to recognize that. After the war, Mujibur Rahman, called for adoption of a new word called “Birangonas” for the rape survivors and declared that job and land would be given to people who would marry the “Birangonas”. Affectionately known as “Bangabandhu” Mujib was very

much a people's politician until his violent death. Like many liberation leaders, he failed to translate the country's post-independence euphoria into effective leadership once he became prime minister. Eventually he turned Bangladesh into a one-party state and retained an extraordinary grip on the newly created post of president. Despite this Mujib is still revered as the father of Bangladesh for his role in its liberation. But in spite of its good will, it failed to help the rape survivors, it further alienated them and people who married them for the greed of a job never treated her well. Ultimately apart from being 'Birangonas' society had nothing to give to these woman. Saikia also discusses the role of 'forgetting' here. How many women she interviewed 'forgot' what happened to them. The societal pressure on them to 'forget' and they themselves desperate to become part of the society, 'forgetting' becomes a mechanism of overcoming a tortuous past. Another response that she got was that of a women who asked her what would she receive from such an interview and also at the same time warning her how such interviewed people can be despised upon by their own children and husband. The 2008 national elections were largely fought by parties on the promise of punishing the war criminals. There was a large hue and cry when the Awami League formed the International war crime tribunal, especially among the Jamaat leadership. Though few executions did take up under the regime of Sheikh Hasina, the latest being that of Motiur Rahman Nizami who was a member of Parliament when Khaleda Zia was the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Nizami being one of the notorious war criminals, who execution was celebrated in the country yet Sheikh Hasina's war tribunal is sometimes criticised as being biased against Awami League's opposition.

The corruption of the two begums of Bangladesh also comes to light from time to time. Both the leaders have been known to attempt towards politicising and bribing institutions which can possibly check their power.⁵⁵ Adds Najma Chaudhury "Corruption, particularly during Zia's second term, was unprecedented. The three successive governments led by these two women have once and for all dispelled the myth that women in power will not be corrupted".⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Mohiuddin, Yasmin. *Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia: Bangladesh's Military Is Desperate to Bring down These Two Former Leaders: And It's Dragging the Whole Country down with Them* International Journal, Vol. 63, No. 2, Russian Resurgence (Spring, 2008), pp. 461- 468 Sage Publications, Ltd. on behalf of the Canadian International Council

⁵⁶ Chowdhury, Najma. *Lessons on Women's Political Leadership from Bangladesh*, Signs, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Autumn 2008), pp. 8-15, The University of Chicago Press.

However, when one looks at why women leaders in dynasty gains legitimacy over the years Yasmin Mohiuddin analyses, “In a country where modern elections still rely heavily on the iconography of past freedom fighters such as Mujib, curtailing Hasina and Zia’s influence will be no easy task.”⁵⁷

4.5 Conclusion

There are few questions that arises in the context of female leadership, like does their political legacy have an impact on their experiences as political leaders? Were they able to claim a space and a scope for women in the larger political scenario? Were issues of women’s rights raised? Could women leaders intensify a sustained challenge to patriarchal culture, given the fact that they themselves grew in such a culture? Could these women leaders use their power to enhance women’s political strength and challenge the political system that is largely gendered? The meteoric rise of women leaders in the countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh is important because the political landscape in this region have seen the conspicuous absence of women and attentiveness to issues of women. Their rise to power have been owing to exceptional circumstance like a death or murder. Zulfikar Bhutto was murdered by Zia Ul Haq; the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a most charismatic leader popularly known as “father of the nation,” in 1975. Sheikh Hasina and a sister of hers were the only ones who survived the attack on the family of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Sheikh Hasina later takes up the legacy of her father and claimed loyalty to the followers in the Awami League goes on to become the Prime Minister. General Zia ur Rahman’s life was also claimed in a similar case of political violence in 1981. Khaleda Zia then goes on to lead the party formed by Zia Ur Rahman, the BNP. The powerful images of these women in the countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh, Benazir, Zia and Hasina standing for people’s democratic rights stood out and out in contrast to the conventional peripheral role of women in formal structures of politics in Bangladesh and Pakistan. The female leaders in these Islamic countries sparked a debate among religious and right-wing parties regarding the legality of a women leading a country. Weak institutional mechanism do impede a healthy democratic process to take place. Also as

⁵⁷ Mohiuddin, yasmin. *Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia*

against other western counter parts, the succession here have taken place more or less directly, even at the cost of institutional norms. It remains a puzzle as to whether dynasties promote or baffles democratic governance. However a fact remains and that is, longevity is one reason that gives these dynastic parties an edge over other parties. In South Asia, though Dynasties in many circumstances have promoted democratization or in pursuing a democratic route yet the contradiction lies in the fact that the same dynasties who have promoted democratic methods over the time becomes dictatorial or thwarts the democratic mechanism in the country. In case of India, Nehru was known for promoting institutional promptness whereas on the other hand, the period of her daughter, Indira Gandhi is seen as a dark period in post-independent India's history. In case of Pakistan the Bhutto family is seen as the beginning of democracy in Pakistan, yet the party itself was seen to be ridden with rifts over time. Christina Lamb looks into how the masses at large were expecting that Democracy would flow from a feudal princess that is Benazir Bhutto. Lamb writes, "What could these most marginalized of people really expect from the white-skinned feudal princess, arriving glitter-clad and attendant-surrounded on her rose-strewn stage? Yet they danced that night in the fever of hope."⁵⁸ Also they like the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty did not allow any other individual to rise to the helm of political power. In Bangladesh power often alternates between the two Begums, as people see in them a continuity of the dynasties that they are from, but the corrupt nature of both the two begums have not gone unnoticed from the public eye.

If we look at cases of dynastic succession by female leaders in South Asia, the female leaders here that immediately attracts attention are Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto, Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina who have served as Prime Ministers in their respective countries more than once. Indira Gandhi ruled India for almost two decades (1966-1977 and 1980-1984) and Benazir Bhutto, in spite of huge opposition from the army also came to power twice (1998-1990 and 1993-1996). Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina has alternatively served as Prime Minister in the country since 1991. Sheikh Hasina who leads the Awami League has been in power in the last two consecutive terms. On the positive side of these women assuming leadership roles have made way for the acceptance and normalization of women's leadership.

⁵⁸ Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy*, Viking 1991. pg 6

For the success of women leaders, it is of utmost importance that they try to build networks with women's movement, civil society groups to generate a consensus policy forum.⁵⁹ These alliances must be built on a common understanding of gendered power relations in society. However, these alliances remains a distant dream as no women leaders have made efforts in this direction till date. To be able to forge these progressive ties, women leaders need first to resist the patriarchal values they have been nurtured with.

⁵⁹ Dahlerup, Drude. "Women in Political Decision-making: From Critical Mass to Critical Acts in Scandinavia." In *Gender, Peace and Conflict*, ed. Inger Skjelsbaek and Dan Smith, 104–21. London, Sage. 2001

CHAPTER: 5

Political Leadership in
Military-Intervened
Democracies: Pakistan and
Bangladesh

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN MILITARY-INTERVENED DEMOCRACIES: PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH

Military-intervened democracy has a specific meaning in the context of South Asia. For a long time after the creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh, intervention of the military was a regular phenomenon until the time of Musharraf in Pakistan and Ershad in Bangladesh. Military intervention often happened because of weakness or on the pretext of weakness in political parties to fulfil their democratic mandate. Ayesha Siddiq writes,

“Given the problem of the absence of a neutral political arbiter compounded with the issue of self-interests, the major societal groups begin to view the military as a political referee which could negotiate between the various political forces and help the ruling parties in furthering their interests.”¹

Stephen P Cohen while looking into the roots of military in Pakistan, divides the history of Pakistani army into three phases. The British generation, the American generation and the Pakistani generation. Each generation developing a specific character of its own. In the British generation the army in Pakistan had the basic structure of the old Indian army intact and saw their British predecessors as professional role models. The American generation, brought with it American military doctrine and approaches to problem solving. The third generation, which is regarded as more representative of the wider society in class origin and more specifically the Islamization project started by Zia made it more “Islamic” in its orientation in this period.² However, the period of American and Pakistani army seemed to blur as the effect of American training stayed for a long time with the Pakistani army starting from learning guerrilla warfare to nuclear wars. The American contact helped Pakistan travel through new strategic byways.

¹ Siddiq, Ayesha. *Military Inc.* Inside Pakistan’s Military Economy, OUP, 2007, pg 67

² Cohen, P. Stephen. *The Idea of Pakistan*, Brookings Institution Press, 2004, pg. 106

An interesting contrast here can be drawn between Pakistani army and the Turkish army, because the army, in both the countries played significant roles and both societies being largely Muslim majority societies. The most important contrast between the Pakistani army and the Turkish army is that, while a radical Islamization in Pakistan came largely through the army; the army in Turkey remains the bastion of secularism.

In Pakistan a huge number of the military personnel came from the Punjab Province. The army in Pakistan is known for its ethnic homogeneity. The area known as the 'salt range' comprising of three districts of Punjab provides for approximately 75 percent of the army. Another 20 percent are from three to four districts in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and a 5 percent comes from the two provinces of Baluchistan and Sindh. The number of ethnic Baluch is the lowest in the army which is even less than the number of ethnic Sindhis in the armed forces. This composition also is reflected in the country's larger politics and it dovetails into the tense relationship between various ethnic communities and center-province relations. The British had a traditional procuring personnel from certain specific areas which was followed by the Pakistan's military recruitment policy.³

This recruitment policy had the effect of being biased against the recruitment of other ethnic categories like the Baluchs or the Sindhis, this led to the tension between the center and smaller provinces. As a result of which, the Baluch leaders view the armed forces 'not as a national military, but a Punjabi force with a mercenary and exploitative character'.⁴ Even the Bengalis displayed their dissatisfaction with this gross inequality. The language movement which started in Bangladesh and led to the celebration of International Mother Language Day on 21st February is a reflection of the widespread anger over imposition of Urdu and other discrimination and exploitation in the East Pakistan.

The Pakistan army which had been encouraged to be secular and liberal under General Ayub Khan, was "Islamized" during General Zia's years in power, so was the country's politics. By the time Zia's decade in power ended in a 1988 plane crash, Pakistan's political choices too had been generally linked to one sort of Islamist group or another. It was General Pervez Musharraf who came to represent a relatively secular alternative when he seized power in 1999.

³ Siddiq, Ayesha. *Military Inc.* Inside Pakistan's Military Economy, OUP, 2007, pg 59

⁴ Siddiq, Ayesha. *Military Inc.* 2007, pg 60

Musharraf also touted a proclivity towards a Kemalist kind of secularism which was also witnessed in the case of Ayub Khan. After Zia, Nawaz Sharif inherited the support of the Jamaat-e-Islami, which formed the core of Zia's support.

General Zia-ul-Haq once stated, "Pakistan is like Israel, an ideological state. Take out Judaism from Israel and it will collapse like a house of cards, take Islam out of Pakistan and make it a secular state; it would collapse. For the past four years we have been trying to bring Islamic values to the country". Faisal Devji who also makes similar comparison between Israel and Pakistan, enquires in this context the 'idea' of Pakistan not searching for cause of its formation rather the idea behind the insubordinate character of the demand for Pakistan. How Pakistan was born as a nation rejecting its past identity and the general identification of nation-state in 'blood and soil'. He further writes, "The Zionist movement leading to the creation of Israel in 1948 was simply one example of this political form, with Muslim nationalism, resulting in the founding of Pakistan a year earlier, constituting both its precedent, and perhaps its closest political relation as well."⁵ The same thought echoes in another thinker when he writes, "The peasant mobilizations behind Theo-political discourses of *Khilafat* movement in 1920s only become part of the later Pakistan movement in 1940s".⁶

Contradicting Faisal Devji, Saadia Toor asserts that unlike Israel which was from the very beginning cast as a homeland for Jews, Pakistan was never understood as the purported homeland for all Muslims but only those of the Indian continent; however Faisal Devji points towards the fact that the *Khilafat* movement's support to the Caliphate of Turkey the Muslim League indeed tried to build an international community of Muslims.⁷

As against Zia, Ayub's 1958 coup by contrast had symbolized a very different state and army. Ayub did not allow his own anti-communism to mingle with that of the more plebeian sections of urban society. Ayub's admiration for the Kemalist experiment in Turkey also played a part. Like the Turkish leader, Kemal Atatürk, Ayub hoped that wide-ranging social and economic reforms would help sever his country's links with its immediate past and, by extension, its ideological mooring in Islam. Ataturk had emphasized the need to establish Turkey as a secular

⁵ Devji, Faisal. *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea*, Harvard University Press, 2013, pg 3

⁶ Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism: Jamaat-e-Islami in Contemporary India and Bangladesh*, CUP, 2015

⁷ Devji, Faisal. *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea*, 2013, pg 80

state and had introduced wide-ranging reforms that successfully separated the country from its immediate past. Ayub sought to imitate Ataturk, but conditions in Pakistan were not the same. Turkey was born out of the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire and Pakistan was a post-colonial state who was born after partition. So Ziring has persuasively argued, any comparison between the two was doomed to failure: while Turkey was successfully salvaged from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire to emerge as a sovereign state, Pakistan remained the prisoner of a ‘colonial dispensation that had little relevance to the contemporary nation-state’.⁸ However, maintains, Vali Nasr Raza,

“The secular state in Turkey 1980s turned to both traditional Islamic thinkers and Islamist activists to constrict the Left and dismantle their organizational networks. Though after the “soft military coup” of 1997 it chose a path of retrenchment of the secular ideology of the state to the exclusion of any meaningful Islamic representation in the public arena and the political process.”⁹

The relationship between the Left and the State is also worth exploring in both Pakistan and Turkey. How religion was used by states in both the countries to sideline the Left whom they saw as the greatest enemy. In Turkey, however, the State could recover secularism after the decline of the Left, however the Islamist group became stronger in the process. In Pakistan too, the Left was sidelined by the ruling class with the help of religious parties like Jamaat and other religion-based groups. Something called the ‘Islamic Socialism’ was developing in Pakistan, ‘Islamic Socialism’ had referred essentially to a kind of welfare state, the justification for which was sought and found in the “egalitarian spirit of Islam”. The qualifier “Islamic” indicated its relationship to the principles of Islam, and served to distinguish it from other, “god-less” models of socialism/ communism which were gaining popularity across the subcontinent at that time. According to the Jamaat, *ishtiraakiyat* (communism) was by definition the very negation of Islam, a claim for which it found ample supportive material in US anti-communist Cold War propaganda.¹⁰

⁸ Lawrence, Ziring. *Pakistan: At the Cross-Current of History*, One World Publications 2003, Pg 87

⁹ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 21

¹⁰ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam, Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan*, Pluto Press, 2011, pg 100.

The term re-emerged in the late 1960s, only this time it was deployed, not by modernists for whom communism was too unpalatable, but by leftists trying to present an ‘indigenized’ version of socialism for popular consumption and hoping to disrupt the Islamists’ monopoly over “Islam”.¹¹

As the economic contradictions of the (Ayub) period intensified and discontent against the regime grew, the Jamaat came to realize the threat posed by the rise in left-wing politics and it focused its attention on ridding Pakistan of the menace of the Left.¹² It was also argued that Jamaat’s opposition to the anti-imperialist politics of the Left was intimately linked to the neo-imperialism’s new strategy within the developing world.¹³

During the anti-Ayub protests in Pakistan, realizing that a successful political campaign at this time would require the support of the left-wing groups, Bhutto decided to actively court them. Despite the trappings of socialism however, Bhutto was far from being a Leftist or a radical. He had the key support of a section of the military junta, which was critical of Ayub’s handling of the Tashkent Agreement, and the backing of the Sindhi landlords. The PPP’s unprecedented popularity given the short time of its existence, was a direct result of Bhutto’s ability to play the right political cards.¹⁴

However, Bhutto, who have accommodated the Left in his political party by accommodating something like ‘Islamic socialism’, later on went on to make claims on the basis of Islam. One such incident was that he decreed the ‘Ahmeddiyas’ of Pakistan as no longer Muslims. Vali Nasr Raza writes in the context of Turkey,

“In Turkey after the military coup of 1980, General Evren used Islamist groups to weaken leftist labor unions and student groups, and to minimise Leftist resistance to the coup and to the restructuring of the economy. In fact, the rise of Islamism in Turkey is directly linked to the process of economic reform since the coup. In a more sinister case, the Turkish

¹¹ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, pg 99

¹² Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, pg 99

¹³ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, pg 101

¹⁴ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, pg 98

military encouraged the growth of a militant Islamist group, Hizbullah (Party of God), in the 1980s to constrict the Marxist separatist Kurdish movement, PKK.”¹⁵

Islamist forces viewed the Left with suspicion which led to forming of a tactical alliance between the secular state and the Islamist forces. An alliance between the state and Islamist forces were sought by the political leadership by adoption of a sympathetic posture towards a role for Islam in politics. However, when the Left declined from the political scenario, the state’s need for Islam also declined. Having gained a political stronghold with state patronage and their projection against the Left, the Islamists group grew into a formidable force. With the demise of the Left, the eventual battle became the one between the state and its former partners in Islamist groups. Though the state wanted to end the relation with the Islamist parties yet the Islamist parties who have already been gaining steady recognition, let it be known that they would like to lay claim to the state.¹⁶

A question that arises here is that how a largely religiously neutral army have come to accept Islam in Pakistan. The answer can be partially be found in the fact that the most striking alteration since partition was that there was a sharp decline in recruitment of officers from the upper reaches of the rural gentry. The era of the ‘gentleman-cadet’ carefully nurtured and developed by the British had come to an end. The Jamaat-I-Islami, most influential among the city petty bourgeois, having encouraged its supporters to enlist in the army during the sixties and seventies which later had some dozens of officers at colonel or brigadier level, backed by a group of more junior recruits. The institution of military was made more open to Islam in the coming years, as the new recruits moved up in position. The Jamaat’s penetration could have been counterbalanced if there had been a key determinant to preserve the secular traditions of the army like Turkey. In Turkey the force of secularism turned to be stronger than Islam over time, which is best described by Vali Nasr Raza as follows,

“The limited interests of the state in Islamic politics, its refusal to accommodate Islam at a

¹⁵ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 23

¹⁶ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 24

fundamental level, and the transitory nature of the alliance with Islamist forces produced an untenable situation: it led to the rise of a powerful social movement that the state, owing to its essentially secular nature, could never fully control. In response to this challenge Turkey has opted to move back in the direction of uncompromising secularism.”¹⁷

The last of the military ruler in Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf clearly showed signs of non-inclination towards religion. However, even Musharraf or any other leader for that matter could not control the increasing influence of Islam in the society. It is important to note that the kind of Islam that Zia projected was significantly different from later Islam. Zia practiced and tried to implement a more blatant kind of Islam whereas the later leaders represented a different kind. There is a paradigmatic shift in the perception of religion from the Zia period to the period of Nawaz Sharif. After the death of Zia, the religious parties like Jamaat hoped that they would be able to come to power. But contrary to their expectations, Nawaz Sharif who was a protégé of Zia came to power in 1993. This doesn't imply that the role of religion diminished in the societies, but rather it meant that people have started to opt for a different kind of Islam which would have implications on governance as well.

It is interesting to see how from being largely irreligious during Ayub's period, the army in Pakistan has went on to use Islamic rhetoric in its political maneuverings during Zia's period of Pakistan. Similarly, how Bangladesh did went on to adopting Islam as a state religion, when the creation of Bangladesh was itself a challenge to the two-nation theory based upon religion. There are several reasons as to why Islam became a central force in Pakistan. One can look at timothy Mitchell's "Carbon Democracy" for an answer. Timothy Mitchell argues that rise of Islam as a political force in many of these countries are a result of intervention of the West, particularly the United States. He writes,

“As a rule, the most secular regimes in the Middle East have been those most independent of the United States. None of them (Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, post-independence Algeria) declared themselves an Islamic state, and many of them repressed local Islamic movements. In contrast, those governments dependent on the United States typically claimed an Islamic

¹⁷ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 24

authority, whether ruled by a monarch who claimed descent from the Prophet, as in Jordan, North Yemen and Morocco, or asserting a special role as protector of the faith, as in the case of Saudi Arabia. When other governments moved closer to the United States Egypt under Anwar Sadat in the 1970s, Pakistan under Zia ul Haq in the 1980s – their political rhetoric and modes of legitimation became avowedly more Islamic.”¹⁸

Mitchell locates the roots of this politics around the access to carbon energy. As energy from coal exhausted, countries like USA, France, and Germany were in search of new sources of energy; which they found in the middle-East. However, the aim of these countries was not to immediately start a process of production of oil. Rather they were in competition for exclusive power to build or block the paths of railways and pipelines with the intention to obstruct the supply of oil so that the monopoly of few companies could be maintained. Some of them were Deutsche Bank in Berlin, Rothschild’s in Paris and the Mellon family of Pittsburg, the founders of Gulf Oil.

Though there were initial hesitation in giving Islam a central role in national politics yet for a state that have been built in the name of Islam faced with insurmountable ethnic and class conflicts had to give in to the force of mobilizing Islamic symbolisms in the service of state formation.¹⁹

Many thinkers have tried to locate how the ‘ideology’ of Islam have influenced the making of Pakistan and what are the values that an Islamic nation would adopt. Although Jinnah was perceived to be secular, Islamic ideas and practices were invoked from its inception validating Pakistan’s claim for an independent country. In March 1949, the country’s first Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, while moving the Objectives Resolution to determine the principles of Pakistan’s future constituent assembly, declared that the state ‘will create such conditions as are conducive to the building up of a truly Islamic society’.²⁰ It was also ensured that Urdu is be recognised as the national language of Pakistan although only a small minority spoke or understood it at the time. In the context of creation of Urdu as the national language, which

¹⁸ Mitchell, Timothy. *Carbon Democracy*, Political Power in the age of Oil, Verso, 2011, pg 201

¹⁹ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, Pg. 60

²⁰ Shaikh, Farzana. *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Columbia University Press, New York 2009, pg 61

was seen as artificial in both West and East Pakistan, Faisal Devji writes,

“Urdu was not the mother tongue of any group in the regions that became Pakistan. In some respects like the adoption of Hebrew as Israel’s national language, this was an attempt to create a nationality by reaching for a unity that necessarily broke with the past of those who had to be made into the citizens of either state...Yet the very rapidity of her founding suggests that Pakistan possessed no nation in any conventional sense, and in fact Muslim nationalism was pressed from the very beginning to define itself by partisans and enemies alike.”²¹

In the period after the Arab uprisings in 2011, a theme of constant discussion has been about the rise of Islamist political movements that appeared to many to present an obstacle to building more democratic form of politics. However a question like this can be answered if we go back a little at the history of democratic movements in these countries. In the post first world-war period a problem relating to legitimacy of imperial powers in foreign lands were constantly rising, supported by writings like Lenin’s *Imperialism* published in 1917. In response to problems of consent from the governed, Woodrow Wilson developed an idea of “self-determination” of nations’ and people after the war. The idea of self-determination was, as articulated by Milner’s group following their return from South Africa to London, “the faculty of government is reserved to the European minority, for the unanswerable reason that, for the present, at any rate, this portion of its citizens is alone capable of the task. The principle of self-rule was not, therefore, in contradiction with the idea of empire.”²²

Vali Nasr Raza speaks of how a colonial state adopted European style of governance with emphasis on “self-determination”. Nasr writes, “The postcolonial state adopted European concepts of sovereignty and self-determination along with administrative features of the state to fashion itself in the mold of the European state, but it did not replicate the relationship between the state and its citizenry that is the hallmark of the European state. Instead, the

²¹ Devji, Faisal. *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea*, Harvard University Press, 2013, pg 6

²² Mitchell, Timothy. *Carbon Democracy*, Political Power in the age of Oil, pg 71

postcolonial state continued the colonial style of governance, whose limitation of popular participation in favor of decision making by an elite is more akin to traditional rule than modern democracy”.²³ However this doesn’t appear contradictory because this style of self-determination had something to do with what Europeans perceived to be self-determination. Self-determination was the perpetuation of interest of European states in the colonial states represented by a small elite.

In place of the international control of imperialism, a ‘general principle of national self-determination’ was proposed in those places, where populations lived under the rule of chiefs or councils who were ‘competent to speak’ for them. In other words, self-determination would constitute a process of recognizing forms of local despotism through which imperial control would continue to operate.²⁴ Therefore, it is not surprising that in many of the post-colonial societies, one can witness this trend, whereby one group or section of the state tries to build monopoly control over structures of power and in the absence of any strong alternative, Islam worked as a unifying force in these South Asian countries.

Syed Vali Nasr’s understanding of the Pakistani state and its relation to Islam can be brought into light in this context,

“The state in Muslim countries has played a key role in embedding Islam in politics. States have done so not merely in reaction to pressure from Islamist movements but to serve their own interests. State leaders have construed Islamism as a threat, but at times also as an opportunity, and in so doing have found added incentive to pursue Islamic politics. The turn to Islam is not so much a defensive strategy as a facet of the state’s drive to establish hegemony over society and expand its powers and control. Islamization is a proactive rather than a reactive process, in which state interests serve as a causal factor.”²⁵

Islamization had its roots in the challenge to state authority in the 1970s by the Islamists. In

²³ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 10

²⁴ Mitchell, Timothy. *Carbon Democracy*, Pg 80

²⁵ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 4

the absence of strong ideological tools these weak post-colonial states lacked other methods of asserting hegemony over the society. Islamization thus can be seen as phase in the life span of the postcolonial states. The post-colonial states became more and more dependent on ideology to gain legitimacy to rule in the absence of relations of order between the state and its subjects in place.²⁶

The relation between army and Islam is interesting to explore. Whereas on the one hand, Ayub was avowedly against religion being mingled with politics, Zia on the other hand was a general whose entire plan of power was restoring state power through Islamization and hence increase his own powers. Zia was successful to a great extent in imbining Islam to society, politics and economy and arrange things accordingly. However, his project remained incomplete owing to the fact that, he died in a plane crash. Ayesha Siddiqa points towards the fact as that,

“The case of Pakistan provides an opportunity to understand the issues that emerge from the financial autonomy of a politically powerful military. Pakistan’s military today runs a huge commercial empire. Although it is not possible to give a definitive value of the military’s internal economy because of the lack of transparency, the estimated worth runs into billions of dollars. Moreover, the military’s two business groups- the Fauji Foundation and the Army Welfare Trust - are the largest business conglomerates in the country. Besides these there are multiple channels through which the military acquires opportunities to monopolies national resources.”²⁷

Immediately after Zia, Nawaz Sharif too planned to acquire power in a similar way as he was aware of the power of Islam in the politics of Pakistan. However, his wishes could only be partially fulfilled as the president of Pakistan still exercised power to dismiss a government headed by the prime minister. This continued until Nawaz Sharif repealed the eighth amendment to the constitution through which the powers of the president was curtailed. However, the importance of Islam as a cementing force in the society was slowly declining, which reflected in the election of 1993, where Sharif who only projected him as a soft Islamist

²⁶ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 12

²⁷ Siddiqa, Ayesha. *Military Inc. Inside Pakistan’s Military Economy*, OUP, 2007, pg 2

came to power as against parties like Jamaat. The military rule of Musharraf who came by the end of the same decade saw a different turn of events altogether. He was a person who was clearly non-religious and who was pro-US. His coming to power marked the period where Pakistan came out in support of US in its 'war against terrorism'. This period also saw the rise of Talibanism in this area. However, the 1990s was significantly different from the previous decade; which saw the decline of the kind of Islam propagated in the earlier decades from public spaces. Funding from IMF also came in, in large quantities with its terms and conditions. The rise and pressure of market was also to be felt. For example, Nawaz Sharif, who is also a businessmen from the private sector has changed the public holiday from Friday to Sunday because holiday on a Friday hampered business interests.

When Zia became Chief Martial Law Administrator in July 1977, his personal beliefs coincided with the ideological needs of the exhausted state machinery in Pakistan. Though it was not important if Zia was a member of Jamaat-i-Islami yet what was beyond doubt was his affinity to the political programme of the organization. He was also an admirer of Maududi. Under Zia, Islamization went beyond the ban on alcohol introduced by his predecessor, General Tikka Khan and it was intensified in various ways. There was also changes that was initiated in the education sector. Zia introduced a core curriculum inculcating a particular type of interpretation of Pakistan, South Asia, and the world. In 1981 the University Grants Commission (UGC) issued a directive to prospective textbook authors, to demonstrate that the basis of Pakistan is not to be founded in racial, linguistic, or geographical factors, but, rather, in the shared experience of a common religion. Zia laid the ground for the deterioration of the educational system in the country.²⁸

The Jamaat is the most influential Islamic group in Pakistan in terms of organizational integrity and electoral power on the national level. Although the Jamaat doesn't have a solid electoral fortune yet compared with Pakistan's two mainstream parties, the PPP and the PML, it has a wide following among Pakistan's urban middle classes.

The process of Islamization in Pakistan also had a class angle to it. Writes Christina Lamb in

²⁸ Cohen, P. Stephen. *The Idea of Pakistan*, Brookings Institution Press, 2004, pg 237

this context, Islam is a very different with the urban educated class and very different in the rural villages, where the *mullah* is often a man to be feared, his battery powered megaphone the only closest thing to modernization”.²⁹

To understand Islam and Jamaat in Pakistan one have to look into the ideas of thinkers like Maududi who have provided the base for the formation of an Islamic state via the Jamaat-i-Islami. That Pakistan had to be perfected along Islamic lines was the view of Maulana Maududi who was one of the most influential Islamic leader. Mawdudi argued that the Muslim League had fulfilled a state ruled by Muslims - a Muslim state - whereas an Islamic state conducts its affairs in accordance with the revealed guidance of Islam and accepts the sovereignty of Allah and the supremacy of Allah’s laws.

Vali Nasr Raza locates the power of Islam in these societies as thus,

“Pakistan’s particularly strenuous experience with nation building and consolidation of the state, the deep-seated cleavages in its polity, uneasy coexistence between democracy and military rule made the emotive power of Islam increasingly more appealing. Following the creation of Pakistan, Mawdudi and the Jamaat quickly formed alliances with the Ulema and other self-styled religious movements in pressing the newly formed state for an “Islamic” constitution. In this climate the Jamaat successfully anchored constitutional debates in the concern for the Islamicity of the state.”

Maududi’s Islamic state required much more than constitutional changes in favor of Islam to realise its purpose; it needed an ideologically vigilant cadre to put its holistic ideology into effect.

Zia was the first army general to use Islam extensively to legitimize its own autocratic rule quite contrary to someone like Ayub Khan. Ayub Khan regarded the Islamist parties, especially the well-organized Jamaat, as a dangerous nuisance. The Islamist leaders too during this period portrayed themselves as heroes and martyrs who were suffering for their religious beliefs and

²⁹ Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan’s Struggle for Democracy*, Viking 1991. pg 31

invoked memories of martyrdom of early Islamic era. The treatment meted out to the Islamists parties, gave some of them a new respect for constitutionalism and civil liberties.³⁰

One of the Jamaat's great strengths has been continuity in leadership— it has only had three Amirs since 1941 to 2009: Mian Tufail succeeded Mawdudi in 1972, and Qazi Hussein Ahmed replaced him in 1987. Siraj Ul Haq being the current Amir since 2014 after the death of his predecessor Syed Munawar Hasan. In addition, its reputation for being corruption-free, its internal democracy, and the discipline and dedication of its workers set the JI apart from other parties.

However Ayub and his successor Yahya Khan fell from grace when they failed to win over East Pakistan. With them, their approach towards Islamism also fell from grace. The loss of East Pakistan was a challenge to the two nation theory out of which Pakistan was born. It also posed a serious challenge to Pakistan's ethnic, political and ideological balance. The West Pakistanis felt betrayed by East Pakistan. In trying to explain this, many concluded that the Bengalis were not "truly" Pakistanis. That is, they were not truly Islamic or Muslims - theirs was a moral and religious failure, not a political one. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto seized upon the idea of an Islamic Pakistan. Bhutto advanced the idea of "Islamic Socialism" after growing aware of the Islamist movement in Pakistan which have gained momentum by opposing Ayub and Yahya. Bhutto used the idea to his benefit given the resurgence of Islam as a political issue.³¹ Bhutto combined socialist rhetoric with Islam, talking of Islamic socialism and Musawat-I-Muhammadi (Muhammad's justice). In his desire to empower the state and expand its capacity, Bhutto wanted to use popular support to bring in social change.³²

This process of Islamization produced various contradictions at ground level. One was manifest in the education system. Writes Stephen Cohen,

“At the time of partition, there were only about 250 religious schools in Pakistan; by 1987 there may have been 3,000. Current estimates range from 10,000 to 45,000, of which some 10 to 15 percent preach a radical kind of Islam or provide military training. The

³⁰ Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, Brookings Institution Press, Pg. 168

³¹ Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, Pg. 169.

³² Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr. *Islamic Leviathan, Islam and the Making of State Power*, OUP, 2001

madaris³³ range in size from a few students to several thousand. One of the largest, the Dur-ul-Uloom Haqqania in Baluchistan, has a student body of 1,500 boarding students and 1,000 day students, aged six and upward, and was the school that taught the Taliban leadership. As a result of the state's official support (or exploitation) of traditional institutions, the number of scholars, Arabic teachers, students, and clerics far exceeds Pakistan's requirements."

Many seminaries looked beyond training Ulema to provide the Islamizing state with its new "Islamic bureaucracy." Various Ulema organizations and parties, as well as self-styled Islamist parties, also looked to new seminaries to help them expand their base of support.³⁴ But madaris are ill-adapted to find a job in the modern world. This have created a huge number of unemployable young men who see religious education as the only vehicle for social mobility. The rapid growth of madaris during this period correlates with the decline in basic public education and the rise of sectarian violence.

The failure of political parties to address these issues became very obvious. Ayesha Siddiqi notes,

"One of the reasons for a prolonged military control relates to the weakness of the political parties. The impotency of the political leadership and the civil bureaucracy can be attributed to their attitude and composition. As a part of the dominant classes in the country, the civil bureaucracy and the political elite have always viewed the armed forces as an essential tool for furthering their political objectives. This use and abuse of the military created a unique political niche for it. The acceptance of the military as a political arbiter, compounded with its prominent role as a guardian of the country's security, sovereignty and ideology, added to its significance compared with other domestic players".³⁵

³³ Used for plural of Madarassa

³⁴ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 143.

³⁵ Siddiqi, Ayesha. *Military Inc.* Inside Pakistan's Military Economy, OUP, 2007, pg 58

5.1 The Neo-Liberal State in Pakistan

The stabilizing and rebuilding efforts of the Pakistani state goes back to the era of Zia. Zia removed price controls, cut and eliminated export duties, floated the exchange rate, rationalized tariffs, and encouraged investments and technology transfers. The noted economist Mahbub Ul Haq also pushed for further economic reforms in the 1980s.³⁶ He produced a program for the liberalization, privatization, deregulation, and globalization of the economy. He urged for revenue generation to bring in economic growth. However, his reforms did not go down well with the business class and landowners which led to him being removed from the post. Though he returned during a later period in 1988 with more reforms, his policies did not get wider support with the public and led to wider protests. However, this era marked the beginning of economic reforms in Pakistan and there was no going back. In fact, the next generation of leaders took up the agenda of reform with more seriousness. Writes Stephen Cohen on the agenda of reforms of Nawaz Sharif,

“Nawaz Sharif’s first government brought more dramatic changes in economic policy. He took Mahbub-ul Haq’s reform program of liberalization, privatization, deregulation, and globalization seriously. Nawaz established a Privatization Commission to identify 100 state-owned enterprises that would be sold. He moved to privatize the Muslim Commercial Bank, one of the largest banks in the country. Nawaz also allowed some foreign exchange convertibility and moved to facilitate the transportation of goods and people. He announced a plan to build an expressway between Islamabad and Peshawar and introduced populist measures to alleviate urban unemployment, such as the Yellow Cab scheme allowing the duty-free import of cars”.³⁷

This agenda of reform was further pushed forward by Musharraf and his finance minister when major economic reforms were introduced by him, including a sales tax that resulted in an 800 million dollar increase in tax collection in the fiscal year 2000–01, mostly from import duties. In spite of these reforms, there remains certain structural problems which still comes in the

³⁶ Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, Pg. 250

³⁷ Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, Pg. 251

way of an all-inclusive development programme. One is the policies related to land and the other is a very high defense budget. Pakistan's economy was further pumped with aid by its alliance with US against its 'war on terror'.

However, these reform agendas did not always go well at different levels of the society. Due to lack of land reforms these reforms appeared superficial to many. Saadia Toor points towards one such protest in Okara.³⁸ It was significant, she writes, that in 2003, at the very moment that the confrontation with the AMP reached its peak, the state shut the door on any possibility of future land reforms. Even in the neoliberal era, land was still a problem unresolved in South Asia. One can look at protests in Okara which reflects on this tension. Saadia Toor while looking at the protests involving land where over a thousand farmers in the region of Okara refused to sign a new contract with the military which changed the terms of their sharecropping agreement, transforming their status from tenants to lessees writes, "the farms in Okara are a part of 68,000 acres of agricultural land owned by the provincial government in the most fertile part of Punjab...although the colonial government had promised propriety rights to migrant farmers from eastern Punjab who had been brought in to help develop the area, it had retained control over a large portion of these "canal-colonies" which contributed towards the creation of a landed elite in the Punjab and Sindh". The conflict over land is owing to the fact that land is still the most revenue accruing arena. Hamza Alavi while writing about post-colonial societies have written about how the military-bureaucratic apparatus try to keep control of land, as revenues from land is still the highest in those societies, added to the fact that, in post-colonial societies the ruling class doesn't consist of one unitary class, rather it is composed of three elements, the landowners, the native bourgeois and the metropolitan bourgeois. Therefore, land reform still has not been possible in this part of the world. Alavi writes,

"As regards economic aspects too, the specific nature of the relationship between the native bourgeois and the 'feudal' landowning classes in the post-colonial societies especially in the context of growth of capitalist farming under the auspices of big landowners rather than in conflict with them has made it unnecessary for the native bourgeois to seek the elimination of the feudal landowning class for the purpose of capitalist development...in

³⁸ Toor, Saadia, *The State of Islam*, Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan, Pluto Press, 2011, pg 185.

recent years in South Asia, the so called “Green Revolution” based on elite farmers has further solved the basic problem of increasing the agricultural surplus, needed to sustain urbanisation and industrialisation”.³⁹

Post-colonial countries are often made hostage of imperialist interest accruing to the contemporary neoliberal globalized world and Pakistan is no exception. Local ruling elites also provides the domestic basis to implement neoliberal economic agenda. The reliance on foreign aid and conditionality attached to them also leads to usurping of government power by those forces.

Ayesha Siddiqi too writes in such a context that such collusion between various power groups in Pakistan is the weakness of Pakistan’s political institutions as the crisis of an overdeveloped state. By the term ‘overdeveloped’, she refers to,

“The relative institutional strength of the state bureaucracy compared with political institutions, which resulted in a never-ending political crisis in the country.”

She brings into context the idea of ‘peripheral capitalism’, a concept that recognizes the plurality of economically dominant groups whose rival interests and competing demands are mediated by the state, which is composed of a strong civil-military bureaucracy and weaker political institutions.”⁴⁰

5.2 Declining significance of Islam or a different kind of Islam?

In spite of the fact that Islamization in Pakistan happened largely through institutions of state yet with the death of Zia Ul Haq, the radical Islamization project slowed down and with it peoples enthusiasm for radical Islamism too started waning, which is reflected in the fact that after the death of Zia, it was not the religious parties who garnered votes, rather it was Nawaz

³⁹ Alavi, Hamza. *The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh*, New Left Review I-74, July-August 1972 pg 75.

⁴⁰ Siddiqi, Ayesha. *Military Inc. Inside Pakistan’s Military Economy*, OUP, 2007, pg 68

Sharif who could present himself as a midway.

In Pakistan in spite of Bhutto's Islamic rhetoric, the industrial elite business classes that opposed him because of his seemingly socialist policies, joined forces with lower-middle-class merchants, and more important, with Islamist forces. After the coup of 1977, anti-regime forces gained quick ground under the leadership of general Zia-Ul-Haq. Under Zia, Islamization became a project of the state. Restoration of state authority via Islam was the prime concern of Zia. The alliance between the Islamists and the military produced a strident form of Islam. The handicap brought in by the colonial legacy was sought to be ameliorated by Islamism. The argument of Zia was that, politicians have proven themselves incapable of ruling the country effectively. The military decided that they have to be in power until they have rooted out Bhutto and PPP. Vali Nasr Raza writes about Zia,

“Zia believed that since the primary vehicle for national integration was the state, the military should remain in power until that consolidation was complete. As opposed to Bhutto, the military adopted a capitalist mode of development to generate growth. An alliance was also forged between the military and the private sector. Though the private sector was not happy with Zia because of his obvious preference for public sector, yet they joined hands with him to keep the PPP in bay.”⁴¹

Zia was conversant of Islamist works since his youth, and was particularly under the influence of the works of Mawdudi of the Jamaat-i Islami, following whom he developed the idea of Islamic State as a cure-all for sociopolitical problems. The Islamization process was not limited just to politics, it ran deep into society, state and economy. The funding of seminaries by the government increased manifold. The education system reflected upon Islamic ideals and values. However, the process of Islamization slowed down in the 1980s. The military regime in this period faced increasing resistance to the Islamization initiated by Zia. Though there were ethnic and other tensions, the greatest challenge to it came from demands for restoration of democracy. Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) for the same was formed by Benazir Bhutto. However Zia was killed shortly after in an airplane crash. During the decade

⁴¹ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr. *Islamic Leviathan*, Pg 132

of Democracy (1988-99) Pakistan went through four general elections and no government could complete its electoral mandate. Benazir Bhutto too could not challenge the Islamization process as she was limited by her narrow political mandate. What ultimately decided the fate of Benazir Bhutto's government was a combination of armed forces and Sindh. Unable really to rule Pakistan through fear of upsetting lobbies to which she was hostage if not a part, Bhutto increasingly found that her only role was to maintain law and order. It became equally clear that for this she needed military help causing a resurgence of the old comment that if the army was having to act as policemen for the government they might as well take over the whole show.⁴² The decade of democracy witnessed a gradual erosion of state authority, and a decline in centrality of Islamization to politics. During this period Nawaz Sharif emerged as the successor to Zia in terms of his reliance in Islam as well as his political affiliation. However, a tension also arose between Islamic parties like Jamaat and Sharif's party. When Jamaat actually contested the elections of 1993 with a hope to capitalize on Islam, Nawaz Sharif did better in elections than the Islamic parties. It was evident from the election results that while on the one hand there was an affirmation of support for Islamic causes and values, the Islamist parties gained little support in the entire process. The Muslim League was to form a stable right-of-centre government. The coup of 1999 led by Musharraf marked a diminishing importance of Islamization in the society of Pakistan. Musharraf separated questions of power, administration and growth from Islamization.

However, with US's 'war on terror' and the rise of Taliban thereof, has led to a revival of radical Islamism in Pakistan. Islamic sentiments were on the rise, immensely strengthened by new perceived threats from the West, especially America. Pakistanis, as much as other Muslims, see in the West a threat to their honor. Therefore, the importance of Islam on the society and politics still persist in the society of Pakistan, but its intensity varies from leader to leader in addition to the fact that a general preference for radical Islamism has dwindled in the public in the last few decades.

⁴² Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy*, Viking 1991. pg 287

5.3 Bangladesh

Faisal Devji has argued in the Muslim Zion as to how Pakistani state started behaving the same way that they opposed India as a nation. Writes Faisal Devji in this context,

“The literary critic Jacqueline Rose puts it in *The Question of Zion*, “Israel inscribes at its heart the very version of nationhood from which the Jewish people had to flee.” Yet the effort to make oneself at home in a new land, in the same way that one’s oppressor had in the old, remained an incomplete and ambiguous one, giving the lie both to attempts at defining Zionism merely as a form of colonialism, as well as to the movement’s obsessive insistence on belonging to the land.”

Muntassir Mamoon while conducting an interview in Pakistan regarding war memories of 1971 have noted that most of the people in Pakistan did not know the real cause of the breakup of Pakistan and in fact, people were still discovering the real reasons.⁴³ Mamoon gives instances as to how this Pakistani concept affected Bangladeshi rulers and politicians. General Ziaur Rahman conducted a ‘yes-no’ poll after coming to power, as Ayub Khan did. General Zia dissolved all political parties, and then allowed them to operate with the provision of registration. He brought changes in the main characteristics of the Constitution.⁴⁴

In the recent few years Bangladesh has been in the news because of violence that has been carried out by few fundamentalist group. This brought into question whether Bangladesh was going the radicalization way. While conducting my field work in Bangladesh many have maintained that these are not instances to be worried about and these can be found in various parts of the world and at the same time emphasizing that radical Islamism can never take roots in Bangladesh. However, developments in the past few years indicate towards rising Islamization the country. Of recent importance is the statue of Justice being removed from the Supreme Court premises on demand of a religious group. In this context, it becomes important, first to look at the history of Islam in this country and its current status and secondly the

⁴³ Mamoon, Muntassir, *The Vanquished Generals and The Liberation War of Bangladesh*, pg 3

⁴⁴ Mamoon, Muntassir, *The Vanquished Generals and The Liberation War of Bangladesh*, Salmani printers Naya Bazar Dhaka, pg 48

position of Jamaat on various cultural and political issues vis a vis Bangladesh⁴⁵. Though historically Bangladesh has seen the face of Islam even before West Pakistan, yet the kind of Islam that was practised in Bangladesh was significantly different from West Pakistan. Their's was more rooted in the land as against Pakistan where religion was forged artificially to meet the need of a nation. Therefore Bangladesh was opposed to Pakistan's understanding of religion from the beginning. The religious leader Maududi was crucial in giving shape to Islam in Pakistan was always opposed to Bangladeshi movement of language and culture. He maintained that if these people do not learn Urdu, how they can learn Islam. These things led to a resentment in the population of Bangladesh.

The favorable conditions for the eventual rise of Islamist politics in future were available in Bangladesh right from the *Faraizi* movement to the partition and post-partition debates marked by the rhetoric of religious nationalism in East Pakistan. Islam was articulated as a political discourse in nineteenth century *Faraizi* movement in Bengal led by Haji Shariatullah and later on by his son Mohammad Mohsin, popularly known as Dudu Mia.⁴⁶

While looking back at the history of the region of Bangladesh, Yasmin Saikia tries to locate the 'humanism' in the then existing sufi culture of Bangladesh dating back as early as the 11th century. She writes,

“The Sufi-Bhakti literature in South Asia is immense and inspiring. Conventionally the history of Sufism in the subcontinent began in the early 11th century as individual Sufi masters settled in the region. To me the Sufi-Bhakti message that shuns the fiction of enclosed and fixed identities and emphasizes dialogue for linking humans and enabling their humanization through human interactions and shared responsiveness, is most eloquently explained by Maulana Jamaluddin Rumi, a 13th century poet-scholar of Islam and Lalon Fakir, a 19th century mystic of rural East Bengal. The human journey for realizing man's human attributes in not limited to the mundane settings of human societies but it is ultimately transgressive and self-transcending to reach the Divine, in Rumi's message.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ New York Times. *Statue of Woman Removed From Bangladesh's Supreme Court*, May 26, 2017

⁴⁶ Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism*, pg 180

⁴⁷ Saikia, Yasmin. *Women, War and the Making of Bangladesh: Remembering 1971*, Women Unlimited, 2011, pg 23

Bangladesh was born in 1971 after it broke away from West Pakistan. Following the Muslim League regime, Yahya Khan's military regime tried to introduce religious education into the general education system and greatly undermined the status of Bengali as a medium of instruction.⁴⁸ However, the creation of Bangladesh brings in a certain level of departure from the past, as political events begins to unfold. Jamaat opposed the formation of Bangladesh along with a number of Muslim League factions on the ground that 'transferring power to PPP in West and to the Awami League in East Pakistan meant the disintegration of Pakistan'. Jamaat was convinced that Bhutto's PPP was a frontal organization of the Marxists and its anti-socialism campaign during 1968–1970 was by far the most important event in its recent history. It is interesting to note here that the same Jamaat, which gave the slogan '*Sochializm Kufir Hai!*' (Socialism is Disbelief) during 1968–1970 incorporated 'Islamic socialism', a socialism based on Islamic principles in its 1970 election manifesto.⁴⁹

Locating a political economic explanation to the rise of Islam in Bangladesh, Moidul Islam writes,

"Islamism generally became popular in the 1980s and 1990s not only among a section of middle peasants and a squeezed urban middle class, but also among the disgruntled children of the state elite who were looking for an ideological alternative to the discredited nationalism of their elders and who sought to establish new links with 'the people'".⁵⁰

Similarly, external pressures from oil-rich Islamic countries that have been funding Bangladesh over the years in various forms of aid and financial grants also significantly helped to revitalize Islamic symbols in Bangladeshi politics.

During my field visit to Bangladesh, both the major political parties in Bangladesh tried to shrug off their connections to Jamaat blaming each other of engaging Jamaat. However history

⁴⁸ Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism: Jamaat-e-Islami in Contemporary India and Bangladesh*, CUP, 2015, pg 191

⁴⁹ Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism*, pg 194

⁵⁰ Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism: Jamaat-e-Islami in Contemporary India and Bangladesh*, CUP, 2015, pg 179.

has been witness to the fact that both the political parties resorted into allying with Jamaat. We have seen in the case of Pakistan and Turkey that when a political party tries to “use” a religious party for its own benefit, it doesn't end with that. The religious party which gains legitimacy during the alliance, flexes muscles for more power sharing. In the late 1980s the Jamaat was accommodated by the secularist political parties including the Awami League during the Anti-Ershad agitations after 10 elected members of the Jamaat-i-Islami first tendered their resignation on December 5 1987, following which Ershad himself dissolved the National Parliament.⁵¹ This is interesting because both the members of AL and BNP that I approached in Pakistan, both tried to shrug off their identification with Jamaat, both accusing each other of allying with Jamaat.

When in the 1980's both Zia's BNP and Ershad's Jatiya Party used the Jamaat to consolidate a support base for their respective military regimes the Jamaat re-emerged in the political scenario. The re-emergence, prominence and legitimization of Jamaat in national political scene of Bangladesh also affected the political strategy of secular political parties like Awami League in using 'Islamic' religious symbols, emblems, and even rituals to recreate its own image in the Islamic mould. No wonder that parties like AL who made claims of being a secular party today widely uses phrases like “*Allah Sorbo Shaktiman*” (Allah, the all-powerful) in their posters and hoardings.

The Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Ataturk has been an inspiration for many leaders of emerging Muslim majority societies in the 21st century. Mujib too was influenced by Kemalism, which led to the development of something called Mujibism. He, like Ataturk delegitimized the religious parties of the country. However, the large development plans that was followed by Ataturk couldn't be reflected in Mujib's plan which led to the overturn of his rule. Also unlike Turkey, the military regimes in Bangladesh were never a strong defender of the Kemalist project of Mujibism.⁵²

In the context of the military in Bangladesh, a question that was being posed is that will the country's military will ever be as dominant as has been the case with Pakistan given the fact that there has been two military coups in the country, one by Zia Ur Rahman and the other by

⁵¹ Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism*, pg 176

⁵² Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism*, pg 185

Ershad. At least three facts seem to argue against the military's long term control of the polity, two of them are acts of the regime and the third a long term pattern. First, the caretaker government committed itself to separating the judiciary from the executive branch. Second, the caretaker regime launched the massive process of establishing a totally new voter registration system with individual ID cards, a move that indicated a degree of seriousness not exhibited by any previous government. Third, the military in Bangladesh do not have hold over profit accruing business like the Pakistani military has.⁵³

The newly created state of Bangladesh also exhibited all the characteristics of being a post-colonial state. Post-colonial theorists have generally identified the emergence of a "military-bureaucratic oligarchy" as a defining character of a post-colonial state (Hamza Alavi, 1972). The state mediates through patronage between the interests of three competing classes: the landed classes, indigenous bourgeoisie and metropolitan neo-colonialist bourgeoisie. Thus the state's 'relative autonomy' is maintained and it doesn't represent the interest of any one of these classes, making space for the military and bureaucracy to control the state. When Bangladesh emerged as an independent country, it was predominantly a rural society. As opposed to 'national bourgeoisie' what has emerged in Bangladesh was a 'vernacular elite'. National bourgeoisie never emerged in Bangladesh owing to the fact that a small number of elite families that dominated the few industries had been non-Bengalis. David Lewis writes in this context,

"Crucial to the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country had been the rise of what Jahan (1972) termed a "vernacular elite" in the East, drawn mainly from Bengali-speaking, provincial, lower middle-class families. This group contrasted with the traditional ruling "national" elite, composed of a mainly urban Calcutta-based cosmopolitan class, and the rise of the AL reflected the growing influence of this new vernacular elite."⁵⁴

When the nation of Bangladesh was formed, it adopted a secular constitution with the word 'secular' appearing in the constitution. However, over the first few years under the leadership

⁵³ Blair, Harry. *Party Overinstitutionalisation, Contestation, and Democratic Degradation in Bangladesh* in Paul Brass. Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics pg 110.

⁵⁴ Lewis, David. *Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society*, Cambridge university Press, 2011, Pg 14

of Mujibur Rahman, when the economy could not deliver on its promises, the country saw its first coup led by the army. The coup was not something surprising that came out of the blue. It was a tried and tested method in post-colonial countries. The peculiar nature of post-colonial state being over developed as compared to political parties have always kept this possibility alive on new independent post-colonial countries, whereby the army because of its experience in politics and economy can easily over power the weak political parties. In Bangladesh too, the Islamization process was adopted by the army as an overall process governing the society, polity and economy.

While on the one hand, the first prime minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was keen on establishing closer ties with India and Soviet Russia, the later military rulers were keener towards establishing closer ties with United States and other Muslim countries. Owing to its economic conditions Bangladesh had to seek foreign aid from quite an early phase which changed only in the post-1990s period with remittances to the country acting as the main source of foreign exchange. Its historical reliance on jute exports was replaced by two new nontraditional exports in the form of ready-made garments and frozen shrimps.⁵⁵ Mujib also introduced a socialist economic structure, where the size of the public sector increased from 34 percent of industrial assets in 1969-70 to 92 percent by 1975. However, the economy performed badly and added to it was the famine of 73-74. By 1973, agricultural production was 84 percent lower than it had been just before the war, and industrial production had fallen by 66 percent. Although the cost of living for an agricultural laborer increased by 150 percent, real incomes fell to 87 percent of their 1970s levels.⁵⁶ Just like Zia in Pakistan, Zia Ur Rahman in Bangladesh was able to capitalize on the dissatisfaction with the government. His clear anti-India position won him support inside and outside of the army. He took over as martial law administrator in 1976 after a coup overthrew Mujib. By 1977, he opened up the economy to the World Bank and under its diktat started to rehabilitate the private economy. During the rule of Zia Ur Rahman 'secularism' was removed from the constitution and Islam took its place as the state religion. During his tenure general Zia ur Rahman, a hero of the civil war,

⁵⁵ Lewis, David. *Bangladesh*, 2011, Pg 4

⁵⁶ Lewis, David. *Bangladesh*, 2011, Pg 80.

reestablished a bureaucratic-military state modelled after the Ayub Khan government of the Pakistan period.⁵⁷ General Zia also formed the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, that was to become a key competitor to Awami League and pursued a pro-market policy. However, Zia also faced the same problems of legitimacy as Mujib and was replaced by a coup by Ershad. Ershad too continued with the policies adopted by his predecessors. His unique contribution was however the decentralization of power process by creating the Upazilla system; which was later on abolished by Khaleda Zia when she came to power in 1991. Ershad too formed his Jatiya Party to civilianize his government. However his party didn't receive the support that BNP received owing to the fact that it was not rooted in the masses.

The process of Islamization in Bangladesh was introduced by Zia Ur Rahman. At its birth Bangladesh adopted secularism as a principle and banned religious parties. Though Mujib's Awami League banned religious political parties during the inception of the nation yet after the killing of Mujibur Rahman, a radical Islamization process began to take shape. The constitution eighth amendment act passed by Jatiya Sangsad, the parliament of Bangladesh on 9th June 1988 had introduced Islam as the state religion of Bangladesh. This has caused substantial damage to the secular character of the constitution of Bangladesh by putting the members of the minority community in an unequal position in relation to the Muslims. The result has been a serious undermining of the concept and character of the state of Bangladesh and tampering with the basic structure of the constitution.⁵⁸

While looking at Islamization in Bangladesh Taj I. Hashmi tries to highlight the contradictions created by the forces of globalization vis a vis the traditional hierarchies in the society. Hashmi also brings into focus two kinds of Ulemas existent in these societies. The lines of demarcation between the two categories of Ulama are not different from those drawn between the urban and rural ways of life- norms, behaviour and *modus operandi*.⁵⁹ Among the different species of Mulla or Ulama, Pirs or mystic guides and Sufis had tremendous influence on across all

⁵⁷ Kochanek A. Stanley. *Governance, Patronage Politics, and Democratic Transition in Bangladesh*, Asian Survey, Vol. 40, No. 3 (May - Jun., 2000) pg. 532

⁵⁸ Shah Alam, *The State-Religion Amendment to the Constitution of Bangladesh: A Critique*. Law and Politics in Africa, Asia and Latin America, Vol. 24, No. 2 (2. Quarter 1991), pg. 209.

⁵⁹ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, Beyond Subjection and Tyranny, Palgrave Macmillan, 2000 pg 62

class among Bengali Muslims. However these Ulamas were made to fall from grace during the period of the britishers. Hashmi writes in this context,

“The anti-British Wahhabi and Faraizi movements and the Mutiny of 1857 were mainly led by *ulama* and the Muslim aristocracy. Eventually their uncompromising, selfless and pioneering anti-British struggle led to the further emasculation of these people at the hands of the British *raj*, hence the decline of the *ulama* happened in Bengal, who had their ‘glorious past’ during Muslim rule. With their steep decline, both socio-politically and economically, after losing government patronage, the *ulama* in Bengal were fast turning into unemployed or under-employed members of the awe-stricken and backward Muslim community. The bulk of the *mullas* in Bangladesh either belong to the pro-establishment group or to a backward group who expresses tremendous anger towards modernisation, capitalist growth and development.”⁶⁰

Liberation war of Bangladesh was imbued with the ideals of nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism and participation in the liberation war was universal. Members of the minority communities fought together with their Muslim counterparts against Pakistani army. According to some this was a complete rejection of the two-nation theory on which Pakistan was built.

The demand for Pakistan came from the Indian Muslims who wanted a separate homeland owing to the discriminations they faced. Bangladesh, then East Pakistan, was a part of Pakistan from 1947 to 1971. However, the religious nationalism out of which Pakistan was born could not hold together both the geographical units for long and it gave way to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. The leaders of the Liberation Movement of Bangladesh successfully articulated the exploitation that had been perpetrated through the use of religion in making demands for independence from West Pakistan. After Bangladesh was created in 1971, Sheikh Mujibur relegated Islam to a position of minimal importance, religion-oriented political parties were banned, and secularism was officially proclaimed a state principle. However, within a short period, Islam appeared in the political scenario as a strong force.

⁶⁰ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, pg 70

The war for the liberation of Bangladesh was a protest against religious nationalism which provided the base for a united Pakistan, and it was thought to have removed Islam from its prominent position in the society. But within a few years of independence, the overwhelming presence of Islam was becoming evident in all sections of the Bangladesh society. Zia Ur Rahman played a key role in formally installing Islamization into Bangladeshi politics in 1977 and deleted the principle of secularism and replaced it with 'absolute trust and faith in the almighty Allah'. Zia also proposed the designation of 'Bangladeshi', to describe citizens of Bangladesh. The re-defined term was to differentiate itself from connotations of a common heritage with Hindu West Bengal, and imposed instead a territorial definition which clearly demarcated the two communities.

Therefore, whereas on the one hand when Bangladesh was born in a very different context whereby it stood in opposition to Pakistan, today it is being plagued by the same problems that challenges Pakistan. It remains to be seen whether Bangladesh will be able to overcome these problems in the coming times.

But given the nature of post-colonial societies, it is no wonder that Islam encroached into the politics of Bangladesh. In the absence of a strong unifying force and instability, it is bound to search for one unifying force. Islam served as an anchor which can provide unity to the country. The military too intervened into the politics of Bangladesh for the same reason it intervened in Pakistan. That is, weaknesses inside the political parties and their inability to address issues concerning the citizens.

Bangladesh, which was created out of its tension with Pakistan, has less in common with West Pakistan, than with the East of India geographically. Politically it had affinity and familiarity with Pakistan politics. The recent attack on bloggers, have attracted attention of the entire world towards Bangladesh, however Bangladesh at the same time, maintaining that there is no such "crisis situation" and things are going on as usual. A young country which have seen few events coming to its full circle like the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 to punishing the war criminals very recently is yet to unfold in many ways.

The tension between the secular forces and fundamentalist forces are still going on in Bangladesh. In this context Dr. Shantanu Mazumdar of Dhaka University points towards the fact that, secularism, in spite of its strength has been unable to reach the people, whereas Islam

has engaged with people at various levels⁶¹. Due to this, secularism has been largely equated with atheism in Bangladesh. In the context of ideas like secularism Rajeev Bhargava points towards the fact that the history of ideas is replete with great liberating ideas slowly turning into suffocating straightjacket. Bhargava points out that, one reason for this is that we forget that they need continual interpretation: no idea can flourish without its defenders finding better and better ways of articulating and formulating them. An idea faces an internal threat when its supporters, willful or unwitting neglect, ignorance, confusion or delusion cease to care for it, or when its own proponents mistakenly turn against it. Therefore, he points out that the main threat to secularism is internal.⁶²

Professor M.M Akash of Dhaka University believes that, it is because of the regimentation and discipline inside the Jamaat that has led to rise in Islamic fundamentalism.⁶³ Mahbubey Alam the attorney general of Bangladesh however, urges for a differentiation between religion and state. He also further stated that, although when the BNP came to power and passed the indemnity act by which all war criminals were pardoned yet a judgement in the court known as the 5th amendment to the constitution declared all martial law proclamations to be illegal⁶⁴. In 2009 when the Sheikh Hasina government came to power it accepted the decision of the high court.

Events in Bangladesh came to a full circle when the Sheikh Hasina government decided to go ahead with the procedure to punish the war criminals who allied with the Pakistani army during the war for independence of Bangladesh. There was an international divided opinion regarding the trials that took place. However, many in Bangladesh have maintained that the punishment for the war criminals were long due. The ICT (International Crimes Tribunal) Bangladesh was set up in 2009 to investigate and prosecute suspects of the genocide committed in 1971 by the Pakistani army and their local collaborators like Razakars, Al-Badr and Al-shams during the Bangladesh liberation war. On being interviewed on this issue, Mahbubey Alam maintained

⁶¹ Based on fieldwork in Dhaka, Bangladesh, June 18, 2016.

⁶² Bhargava, Rajeev. *The Distinctiveness of Indian Secularism* in T.N. Srinivasan (ed.) *The Future of Secularism*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2006, pp.20-53.

⁶³ Based on fieldwork in Dhaka, Bangladesh, June 19, 2016.

⁶⁴ Based on fieldwork in Dhaka, Bangladesh, June 20, 2016.

that the highest standard of punishment was maintained and was in accordance with the Nuremberg trial. Professor Misbah Kamal of Dhaka University and Sohrab Hasan, senior journalist with *Prothom Alo* (Daily Newspaper) also maintained that the punishment was long due⁶⁵.

Many of the war criminals who allied with the Pakistani army were associated with Jamaat. Professor Kamal referred to Quader Molla who was convicted by the ICT of Bangladesh, he was also referred to as the ‘Butcher of Mirpur’ as on one instance he killed more than 350 people. Referring to the condition of secularism in Bangladesh he stated that anyone who was perceived to be a “Nastik” (atheist) became the target of the killers. Parties like this further flexed muscle when they were supported by the BNP. The ideological bankruptcy that BNP suffers from is filled to some extent by the Jamaat. The military juntas in Bangladesh openly supported Islamization and patronized Jamaat. A binary is generally drawn in Bangladesh which sees the secularists as Pro-Bangladesh and those supporting Islamization as pro-Pakistan. Abed Khan, prominent Bangladeshi journalist and columnist also said that the killing of bloggers is not essentially a question of freedom of expression. He also indicated towards the relationship between corporate houses and freedom of speech. However, the *Dawn* of Pakistan has pointed towards Pakistan’s Foreign Office saying that Pakistan is “deeply saddened” by the execution; which appeared as an abstract concern for human life because of the complete indifference of the same for death sentences passed on countless people around the world.⁶⁶

The context of the caretaker government also needs to be examined in the context of Bangladesh. During my field visit in Bangladesh, BNP political leaders stated that the caretaker government was demanded by the AL and when situations were not in their favor, they demanded to withdraw it. However, one needs to look at the nuances of the politics behind the demand for or against the caretaker government. In early May 2004, the BNP passed the 14th amendment to the constitution which specified the mandatory retirement age for the chief justice of Supreme Court would be extended to 67 from 65. This seemingly innocuous change had huge implications for the next national elections for the 13th amendment passed after the

⁶⁵ Based on fieldwork in Dhaka, Bangladesh, June 18-23, 2016.

⁶⁶ Hoodbhoy, Pervez. *The Hanging of Mir Quasem Ali*, Dawn, September 10, 2016.

1996 elections had declared that the chief advisor of a caretaker government superintending the hiatus between parliaments would be the most recently retired chief justice. Advancing the retirement age meant that by the end of the 2007 elections, the incumbent chief justice would not have retired and so his predecessor, widely recognised as a BNP partisan, would take over the chief advisor post and be in a position to condone electoral malpractice, if not actually manipulate it himself.⁶⁷

At one point however, the caretaker government moved to exile Khaleda Zia and prevent Sheikh Hasina's return from abroad, replicating, in effect, Pervez Musharraf's actions against Pakistan's two feuding ex-prime ministers, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, but a combination of domestic and international pressure led the government to back down, and the "two begums" were not banned, although open politicking was not allowed to resume.⁶⁸

Few things can be summed up regarding State and Politics in Bangladesh, that, Islam has become a state religion. That Jamaat was an active ally of BNP who came to power with the help of Jamaat in 1991. Islam and Secularism were perceived to be poles opposite, which led to polarization between supporters of BNP and supporters of Awami League. Most NGO's took side with the secular groups. Islamic organizations were flexing muscles and parties like Jamaat were organizing themselves as an alternative force.⁶⁹

5.4 Liberalization in Bangladesh

Liberalization in Bangladesh created contradictions at various levels in the society. On the one hand it were creating 'working women' and on the other these women were some of the lowest paid workers in the world. The emergence of the new female working class post liberalization with the coming of the garment industry in Bangladesh which appointed a lot of unskilled women from rural areas was a sort of discomfort with village elders and Mullas. With the advent of this class of workers, these former authorities started to have conflicting interests with the garment industries and NGO's as they felt that they were taking away their former

⁶⁷ Blair, Harry. Pg 107

⁶⁸ Blair, Harry. Pg 108.

⁶⁹ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, pg 133

clients and therefore they have been trying to dissuade these women from working outside.⁷⁰ The transformation of production relation has the inevitable consequence of altering social structure and this has been opposed by these mullas as they were now placed in a disadvantageous position. Their interest in the status quo made them oppose these changes tooth and nail. Writes Taj Hashmi explicating this,

“Village moneylenders, are not at all happy with government or non-governmental organization (NGO)-backed credit schemes in the village because they drive away their potential clients from them. NGO-sponsored schools and medical centres are again *bêtes noires* to some *mullas* for taking away students from their *maktabs* (Islamic schools) and patients who would normally go to the *mulla* for amulets and ‘holy water’ as cure. Since modernisation also would mean women’s liberation and self-sufficiency, therefore women have been a constant target of attack by these people. *Mullas* have a vested interests in keeping women away from power, authority and property. Islam is being used by both the *mulla* and non-*mulla* sections of society in Bangladesh in order to perpetuate the servility of women.”

The portrayal of women as inferior and subhuman have only contributed towards strengthening the patriarchal forces, and religion have been well feeding on reinforcing and legitimizing their actions.⁷¹

The period of neoliberal reform in Bangladesh has been marked by wide economic restructuring which have also brought in a class of employed women and an informal labor market. Feldman Shelley writes,

“In Bangladesh, the demand for structural reform and privatization by the International Monetary Fund, with the support of the World Bank, was a pressure, the country faced immediately after the 1971 war. By the later 1970s and early 1980s, there began a dramatic increase in the volume of manufactured exports and a relative decline in that of primary

⁷⁰ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, pg 97

⁷¹ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, pg 95

products. In 1982, shifts in East Asian production regimes and pressure on Bangladesh to service its debt combined with demands from an emergent class of entrepreneurs set the context for the passage of a New Industrialization Policy (NIP).”⁷²

Bangladesh as nation has not been doing good on various indicators of growth and development. Bangladesh have seen abject poverty with an ever burgeoning population with dependency on aid, which made it a major test case for the World Bank’s new global emphasis on good governance as a prerequisite for rapid growth and sustained economic development. Despite flowing in of large amounts of aid, the World Bank and Western donors argue that poor governance and weak institutions in Bangladesh have acted as significant constraints on development.⁷³ One of the sectors in Bangladesh that has come to international attention in the last few years is the garment industry of Bangladesh which have also appointed large scale women employers in their factories. However points Shelley Feldman, the consequences of women’s incorporation into export production are contradictory as they are simultaneously emancipatory and highly exploitative. Trying to explain the increasing number of women in this field she writes, the regulatory gender regime has to be constituted through negotiation by women workers and entrepreneurs as each creatively manipulates and transforms normative meanings and practices (Shelley, 272). However, one cannot deny the fact that though the 1980s and the 1990s were witness to a spectacular expansion of women’s wage employment, there have already been varied efforts to weaken the presumed consensus about women being in the wage economy. An ugly side of the garment sector came to light with the collapse of an eight storey garment factory named Rana plaza on 24th April 2013. The buildings’ fall killed 1,134 people and injured hundreds of others. Though the collapse of the building was due to poor construction yet it is also marked by a growing global market for cheap fashion. As Kochanek would put it, they (the garment industry) are simply not immune to the discipline imposed by international market. In Bangladesh’s garment sector labor works for very low wages which is, 34 dollars a months. Therefore, it can be seen how liberalization in Bangladesh

⁷² Feldman, Shelley. *Historicising Garment Manufacturing in Bangladesh: Gender, Generation, and New Regulatory Regimes*. Journal of International Women’s Studies Vol. 11 no.1 November 2009, pg 270

⁷³ Kochanek A. Stanley. *Governance, Patronage Politics, and Democratic Transition in Bangladesh*. Asian Survey, Vol. 40, No. 3 (May - Jun., 2000), pp. 530

came with its own problems and issues. Another interesting thing about Bangladesh has been its policy of moving away from India. Deepa Ollapally observes in this context,

“In relations with India, the economic sphere was an early site for political contests, from the water-sharing question which had persisted since the 1970s to controversy about Indian industrial development. In a context of declining global foreign investment in Bangladesh, Tata’s \$3 billion would have matched all the foreign capital that has flowed into the country since 1971. But the deal is caught up in the larger vicious cycle from Bangladesh in which it would rather not develop its gas reserves than sell it to its most logical customer, India, because gas has been elevated as a symbol of national sovereignty.”⁷⁴

5.5 Conclusion

Both Pakistan and Bangladesh resorted to religion to build a unified state for states that otherwise lacked strong ideological tools. Although Pakistan seems to move a long way away from the period of Islamization introduced by Zia, yet religion still plays a very important role. The ‘long shadow’ of this period stayed with Pakistan with years to come reflecting on the rights of minorities as well as women rights. The strategic location of Pakistan has also made it amenable to the three A’s that is associated with Pakistan, Army, Allah and America. In spite of its early resistance to Pakistan politics, yet Bangladesh today seems to be moving in the same direction, that is, of increasing Islamization. This sort of religious extremism in Bangladesh can also be read as the clash and contradictions between forces of modernization and traditional forces. Both Pakistan and Bangladesh had been facing newer challenges into their polity in the post-1990s era. The rise of the Taliban in Pakistan and the space created by market for women in Bangladesh have been sites of contest. The Kemalist model of Turkey have been a reference point into the polity of both Pakistan and Bangladesh on different occasions, with the difference of the position of army, whereby the army in Turkey has been the bastion of secularism and vice-versa in the case of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

⁷⁴ Ollapally, Deepa M. *Bangladesh: Divided Politics and Geo-politics*, CUP, 2009 pg 190

CHAPTER: 6

AN overview IN LIEU OF
CONCLUSION

CHAPTER VI

AN OVERVIEW IN LIEU OF CONCLUSION

The process of democratization in the three South Asian countries, that is, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, has been dealt with, in the preceding chapters with the help of variables like political parties, dynasty politics, and women from dynasties in politics, and the growing significance of religion in the two countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh. A question that has been addressed in the thesis is why the democratization process of South Asia becomes important to look at. Colonialism left a deep mark on how the politics in this region is going to be shaped. Hamza Alavi's concept of post-colonial state comes into play here. How the alliance of the three classes in these post-colonial states was forged and how land reforms seemed unnecessary owing to this alliance is addressed.

The objectives have been to understand the nature of political parties in the sub-continent by looking at their structure. There was a constant call on the political parties to meet demands of various groups of the society. Political parties in this region are not institutionally organized, and reflect upon kith and kin connections for pursuance of political goals. Therefore, the relation between dynasty and democracy is explored here. I look at how dynasty politics of the kind seen in these parts of the world has an intricate connection to democracy. Though democracy doesn't necessarily need dynasty for its survival, in fact, dynasty needed democracy for its extension. The cases of Gandhi-Nehru dynasty in India, the Bhuttos in Pakistan and Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia are taken into account here.

Dynasty politics in the long run became inevitable, for the understanding of democracy in this region, although dynasty politics doesn't inevitably mean democratization. However, the process of democratization has for a long time depended upon the dynasties, since dynasties are also attached to two other things, that is, longevity and stability, stability being the essence of a democratic nation. The political situation after the 1970s changed in terms of politics as well as geography. The three countries of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh became interesting in this context. These three countries have been witness to similar unfolding of history, not only in terms of unfolding of events but also in terms of responses of the countries to various

situations. The rise of Dynasty politics as a process of stabilization of politics in these countries becomes remarkable in the context of these otherwise unstable democracies. Dynasty politics in these parts of the world is not just part of power politics; they have a different meaning altogether. In these otherwise unstable and fragile democracies, dynasty have worked as a cementing factor towards the continuation of the idea of democracy or rather enhancing it. Their role has been so important that in fact in all the three countries mentioned, Dynasty and Democracy have walked together, and whenever dynasties have failed, Democracy also seemed to be constantly unstable. Dynasty seems to be the pre-condition for Democracy, where Democracy thrives under the dynastic rule of families, as Oldenberg states that democratic outcomes are path-dependent. It seems that, since the initial period, these countries have depended unevenly on dynasties for continuance of democracy which led to the development of a connection between the two. For instance, the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty in India, the Bhuttos in Pakistan, and Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia in Bangladesh. These dynasties developed an intricate connection with democracy which led to them being associated with democracy. It is primarily because of this reason that party structures suffered from deinstitutionalization. As parties depended unevenly on Dynasties, it also became a road-block in the development of a healthy party-structure. In addition to these national-level dynasties, several State-level dynasties have also been examined which have developed in various states over the years.

In the next section, role of women in dynasty politics is examined. Though South Asia had a number of women leaders who left a mark in a political scenario otherwise largely dominated by men, these women leaders were connected to dynasties of powerful men in politics, either as daughters or as wives. Women leadership vis-a-vis religion in countries like Bangladesh and Pakistan becomes interesting to look at, given the fact that leadership by women have been opposed on religious grounds; which have been examined by locating the position of women in Islam as interpreted by Rafiq Zakaria. When one looks at leadership, how one looks at the everyday life of women in the region, and what effect their lives have on perceptions of leadership at large are sought to be probed into. For example, what effect the collective memory of torture and pain underwent by women during partition and Liberation war have upon the imagination of nation as a 'unified whole'. The fourth chapter deals with the two countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh by drawing certain uniformities between the two nations. What makes both the nation turn towards religion becomes a key query here. How and why

these onetime secular countries became agents and harbinger of Islamization is addressed here. In a situation of vacuum created by the ruling class, there arose a challenge of Islamization from the below. How the state dealt with the challenge of an increasing legitimacy of religion is being enquired here.

A study of military regimes in these countries has also been undertaken. The idea of “Liberal Democracy” was significantly different for these newly independent countries, which had a limitation of exhibiting feudal loyalties. So it was but natural that the idea of Democracy as such shall be fraught with tensions. Therefore military rules have been very much part of Democracy of these parts of the world whether it be Pakistan or Bangladesh where modern democracy seemed to fail to address much of the problems faced by the population.

Since there are similarities in the way these countries have emerged, the governments that came to power and the policies that they adopted, there are a few parallels that can be drawn in these three countries. These parallels do not indicate uniformity in this region, rather it points towards their common roots. The first parallel that is being drawn is the rise of the military regimes at the same time in Pakistan and Bangladesh, that is, of Zia ul Haq (77-88) in Pakistan and Zia ur Rahman (77-81) in Bangladesh. This was also the period when Emergency was invoked in India. These three instances point towards the uniformity of resort to “authoritarianism” at the same time. The second parallel described as ‘temporary respite’ points towards the return of democratic rule in Pakistan and Bangladesh during the period of Benazir Bhutto and Khaleda Zia. A third parallel is drawn towards the thwart created by military regimes in the formation of dynasty politics; the Bhuttos by the military regime of Zia Ul Haq, and Mujibur Rahman and Zia Ur Rahman by the regime of Ershad.

In spite of all political upheavals, dynasty becomes a very pre-dominant phenomenon in the region of South Asia. On the pretext of curtailing instability, dynasty politics slowly grew, whereby it assured bringing in of stability. However, it is interesting to note that, no political dynasties could develop until the rule of the military or rather there was a thwart to the development of dynasties when there was non-democratic rule. In Pakistan the Zia regime postponed the arrival of the Bhutto dynasty by almost a decade; the Ershad regime too delayed the arrival of the two dynastic begums of Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia by few years. In India the case has been a little different as imposition of military regime has not been even and

has been restricted to few areas. As Oldenberg has mentioned that though this did affect India's perception in the freedom house index, yet the intensity of these military regimes were not same as in Pakistan or Bangladesh.

The shape that political parties have taken so far has been of a de-institutionalized and centrally administered phenomena with mostly being dominated by a single family. However, political parties has been the pillar on which civil governments arose in these countries. Kanchan Chandra asserts that dynasty politics in India is fundamentally shaped by modern democratic institutions and in particular, the state and political parties. This institutionally shaped form of dynasty politics reinforces some aspects of democracy while subverting others. Democratic institutions and dynastic politics can reinforce as well as undermine each other. When one talks of dynasty politics, one inevitably goes back to the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty. However, it is important not to overlook many dynasties in South Asia. The founders of these new dynasties may not belong to an old pre-democratic ruling class, but to a new elite created through the democratic process and while they might not have a national and international presence like the Nehru's and Gandhi's, many have strong local roots in their home constituencies. The Pattnaik's of Orissa, The Yadav's of Uttar Pradesh, the family of Lalu Prasad Yadav in Bihar, the Thakerey's of Maharashtra, the Scindia's of Madhya Pradesh elucidate the point.

It is also important to enquire into what sustains dynasty politics. I argue here that it is not just political vacuum that has led to dynasty politics but the relation that dynasty has been able to establish with the economy too that has led to their continuing presence. That big businesses require stability for investment is not unknown; the dynasties by providing for stability instead of an unrest has assured big businesses of the safety. One can see the intricate connection between Dynasty and liberal democracy, where dynasty flourishes only in a democratic set-up. The relationship between market and political parties that have developed and have become inseparable has led to the development of dynasties who provide a certain level of stability required for market to flourish.

In the context of the relationship between Democracy and dynasty, it is interesting to look at the dynasty of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Zia Ul Haq. Immediately after the death of Zia, his son entered the political scenario to enquire into the details of his father's death. Benazir Bhutto too entered politics when her father was in jail. However, it is Benazir Bhutto who was able to

garner support for her internationally instead of Zia's son. In addition to the intricate relationship shared between liberal democracy and dynasty, one cannot deny the notion of "sacrifice" that these democratic dynasties have been associated with, which contributes towards establishing a legitimacy to their rule. The infamous execution of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto or killing of Benazir Bhutto or killing of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi or the assassination of the entire family of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his home evokes a certain sense of sympathy in the eyes of general public, which brings in an element of legitimacy to their governance through their perceived sacrifice. In the eighth general elections of India, after the assassination of Indira Gandhi, Congress under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi got an enormous 49.1% of total votes cast, highest recorded in the history of Indian elections. Benazir Bhutto's Movement for the Restoration of Democracy also garnered huge public support after Zia's death. In Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina still has sympathy of the general public as the daughter of the assassinated 'Father of the Nation', Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

In this context, it is important to remember that even military rulers had their dynasties whether it was the case of Zia's dynasty or Ayub's dynasty, but they were not as successful as the Bhuttos in capturing the imagination of the population at large. The only exception has been the dynasty of Zia Ur Rahman in Bangladesh represented through BNP who still is the largest party after Awami League.

It depended upon several historical circumstances specific to these countries as to why dynasties gained legitimacy. One major reason can rightly be said to be the relation that dynasty could establish itself with democratic institutions. Dynasties provided stability to the otherwise unstable society and economy. Nonetheless, in the light of few developments that have occurred in the past, a question that naturally arises is: what is the future of dynasty, whether it will persist or wither away with time? Dynasties have become a part of the political process and leadership structure, therefore it would be somewhat misplaced to assume that dynasties will wither away in the long run, though it might change its style of functioning. In fact, it is important to change with changing circumstances, otherwise their survival will be in jeopardy.

The political representation of women is disheartening everywhere and even in South Asia, the top leadership that women have occupied largely came from dynasties. Many have been

skeptical about this fact, as mere political representation does not imply empowerment. These women leaders mostly represented someone else in the dynasty, who was either dead or was in jail. Yet the leadership of these women leaders is important for various reasons. Democratization process in any country is incomplete without assessing the condition of the whole of the citizenry. Therefore when one looks at the relationship between dynasty and democratization one also needs to look at female leaders arising out of dynasty politics. South Asia have seen a considerable number of women in politics who has risen to the apex, but a trend that can be witnessed is that, these leadership is often seen as the continuance of leadership of once successful male members who act as interim until a male heir can take over. Therefore, they are seen as “carriers” of dynasty, that is, the burden of patriarchy is bore by the women leaders. Yet these leaders have also displayed a certain level of ruthlessness while ruling is also taken into account. At the same time, taking into account of women leaders who are “self-made”, like Mayawati, Mamata Banerjee etc. without whom the narrative on women leadership is not complete.

Therefore it becomes imperative that when one looks at the leadership of women in this region, one also have to invariably look at the position women comes from or where is she placed. In addition to politics induced calamity on women like the partition, women are also subject to constraints posed by the society, like those claimers of authority on religion. Founder of Jamaat, Maududi has maintained the position that the domain of women is inside the household and though women have the right to participate in elections, she cannot contest election.

When it comes to rights of women, generally those rights are intertwined with larger questions of society. Writes Saadia Toor, in this context when it came to women, overlapping legal codes and the increasing legitimacy given to customary law enables a patriarchal opportunism, whereby patriarchal elites could “cherry-pick” the most constrictive norms and codes from among the different legal systems. The effect of the interplay of tribal codes, Islamic Law, Indo-British judicial traditions and customary traditions is that “any advantage or opportunity offered to women by one law is cancelled out by one or more of the others”.¹

While narrating the status of women in India, the nation itself as a modernist enterprise has to

¹ Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam*, Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan, Pluto Press, 2011, pg 167

summon a legacy stretching to an ancient and time-immemorial past. The story of Indian women begins with a customary reference to her high status in the Vedic period, the contentiousness of which has been increasingly questioned.² According to Mrinalini Sinha, “Gender was an important axis along which colonial power was constructed, and that, at the same time, the category of gender itself was never distinct from national, class/caste, and racial categories.”

It is worth exploring why countries so long associated with unstable politics and subordination have also seen conspicuous presence of many politically prominent females. The biographies of these women tend to enrich our understanding of leadership from a very different perspective. All the female leaders under study whether Benazir Bhutto, Indira Gandhi, Sheikh Hasina or Khaleda Zia are close relatives of deceased leaders.

Toor describes how the period of Islamization started by Zia known as *Nizam-i Mustafa* had larger implications towards curtailing women’s rights in the society. The vulnerability was further intensified by the promulgation of the *Qisas* and *Diyat* Ordinance and a change in the Section 295-C of the Blasphemy Law under Nawaz Sharif’s administration that made the death penalty the only possible punishment for blasphemy.

Women’s status as mothers which is seen as a privilege is often invoked in Bangladesh by the likes of the Jamaat in order to counter the claims of the largely secularist non-governmental organizations operating in the country. However, they also go to great lengths to highlight Islam’s recognition of women as ‘individuals’ and ‘individual’ responsibilities to god and Islam as well as Islam’s support for women’s right to study, work and vote.³ The topic of female political leadership continued to be debated by the Jamaat and other Islamists in Pakistan in the early 1980s during Benazir Bhutto’s foray into politics as well as in the early 1990s in Bangladesh with the restoration of democracy and the emergence of Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina in the alternating roles of prime minister and leader of the opposition.

² Chaudhuri, Maitrayee. *Gender in the Making of the Indian Nation-State* from *Sociology of Gender: The Challenge of Feminist Sociological Knowledge*, ed. Sharmila Rege, Sage Publications, 2003, pp 342

³ Shehabuddin, Elora. *Jamaat-i-Islami in Bangladesh: Women, Democracy and Transformation of Islamist Politics*, *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 42, No.2/3, Islam in South Asia (March-May 2008) pp 579

Although it might be relatively easy for women in dynasty to have access to mantle of political power yet they are not without struggle themselves. The life of Indira Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto reflects well on this point. The reason that Indira Gandhi was made the Prime Minister after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri was that she would not be a strong candidate and can be replaced easily. The old guards started to find differences in her ways of operating and many times tried to throw her out of the party. In response to it, she formed a group of young Turks to oppose them. She was attacked from various quarters and when the attacks grew she became more and more suspicious and authoritarian.

Whereas in a country like Bangladesh, making sense of the leadership structure would be largely exalted if we fail to take into account the multiple war histories. Often the Bangladesh war is celebrated as a sign of victory against the Pakistani army and also celebration of all the male virtues that is celebrated in winning a war. But little do people know of the multiple sufferings of women in the war. There are few questions that arises in the context of female leadership, like does their political legacy of being a member of a certain family have an impact on their experiences as political leaders? Were they able to claim a space and a scope for women in the larger political scenario? Were issues of women's rights raised? Could women leaders intensify a sustained challenge to patriarchal culture, given the fact that they themselves grew in such a culture? Could these women leaders use their power to enhance women's political strength and challenge the political system that is largely gendered? The meteoric rise of women leaders in the countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh is important because the political landscape in this region have seen the conspicuous absence of women and attentiveness to issues of women.

In South Asia, though Dynasties in many circumstances have promoted democratization or in pursuing a democratic route yet the contradiction lies in the fact that the same dynasties who have promoted democratic methods over the time becomes dictatorial or thwarts the democratic mechanism in the country.

For a long time after the creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh, intervention of the military was a regular phenomenon until the time of Musharraf in Pakistan and Ershad in Bangladesh. Military intervention often happened because of weakness or on the pretext of weakness in political parties to fulfil their democratic mandate. Ayesha Siddiqi writes,

“Given the problem of the absence of a neutral political arbiter compounded with the issue of self-interests, the major societal groups begin to view the military as a political referee which could negotiate between the various political forces and help the ruling parties in furthering their interests.”⁴

The relationship between the Left and the State have also been explored. How religion was used by states in both the countries to sideline the Left whom they saw as the greatest enemy. Seeing in the Left a common enemy, a tactical alliance between the secular state and the Islamist forces was forged. The political leadership adopted a sympathetic posture toward a role for Islam in politics and society to build an alliance between the state and the Islamist groups. In Turkey the eventual demise of the Left removed the state’s need for Islam. However, after once exercising power the Islamist groups denied giving in and lay claim to more power. The Islamist challenge to state authority occurred during the 1970s when they saw the secular states failing. Vali Nasr Raza explains Islamization as thus,

“It was about the ideology of choice for state leaders in those weak postcolonial states that otherwise lacked strong ideological tools and had no mechanism to assert authority over the society. Islamization thus can be seen as phase in the life span of the postcolonial states. Without the relations of order between the state and its subjects in place, the post-colonial state became more dependent on ideology to get consent to rule.”⁵

The relation between army and Islam is interesting to explore. Zia was successful to a great extent in imbibing Islam to society, politics and economy and arrange things accordingly. Ayesha Siddiqa points towards the fact as to how the case of Pakistan provides an opportunity to understand the issues that emerge from the financial autonomy of a politically powerful military. Pakistan’s military runs a huge commercial empire.

While looking at Islamization in Pakistan, a contrast have to be drawn between the phases of Zia and afterwards, as there is a significant change in the ways Islamization was practiced. The kind that Zia implemented was blatant and rigid and he maintained close affiliation with the

⁴ Siddiqa, Ayesha. *Military Inc.* Inside Pakistan’s Military Economy, OUP, 2007, pg 67

⁵ Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan*, pg 12

Jamaat, however in the phase after Zia, although Islam is visible in the state agenda yet the blatantness of its use is no longer to be seen. Zia portrayed the reforms as leading Pakistan in the direction of becoming 'truly Islamic' and promised thorough and rapid implementation of the reforms. The reforms that Zia proposed, that was called the Nizam-i-Mustafa that contemplated ambitious reforms in Pakistan's institutions. It contemplated changes in Pakistan's economic system through the establishment of "Islamic Banks"; called for the abolition of bank interests, introduced mandatory Zakat taxes. He also made changes in educational curriculum which would orient students towards an Islamic approach.

The expansion of the parties like Jamaat had its influence on the growing importance of Islam in Pakistani politics. In formulating the idea of a 'Islamic State' and propagating Islam as a coherent ideology, Jamaat had a crucial role to play. The Jamaat's success had the effect of weakening the grip of political leaders who had secularist affiliations, like the fall of the regime of Ayub Khan and the collapse of the regime of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. However, the Islamization project of Zia was cut short by his sudden death in a plane crash. Therefore the end of the period of Zia also ended the formal alliance between Islamism and the State in 1988. As a result of Zia's sudden death, the democratic period that followed the Zia regime, was marked by struggle for power between the military and civilian politicians; Islamic and secular political institutions. The struggle between the PPP and the IJT (an alliance of pro-Zia forces, the PML led by Nawaz Sharif and Islamist parties) created in what Nasr calls a "crisis of governability" in Pakistan.

However, the scenario soon changes after 1993 as the 1993 election results showed that Nawaz Sharif whose progenitor was Zia had a strong appeal to the Islamic vote bank, with the result of defeat of Islamist parties like the Jamaat. The result suggested the emergence of a strong right-of-centre political party that would also represent the Islamic vote- rendering Islamist parties as irrelevant.⁶

That weakness in political parties were a reason for prolonged military control has been reiterated by Ayesha Siddiqi. She writes,

⁶ Nasr, Vali. *Military Rule, Islamism and Democracy in India*, Middle-East journal, Volume 58, No.2, Spring 2004, pp 195-201

“The impotency of the political leadership and the civil bureaucracy can be attributed to their attitude and composition. As a part of the dominant classes in the country, the civil bureaucracy and the political elite have always viewed the armed forces as an essential tool for furthering their political objectives. This use and abuse of the military created a unique political niche for it”

She further adds that collusion between various power groups in Pakistan is the weakness of Pakistan’s political institutions as the crisis of an overdeveloped state. By the term ‘overdeveloped’, she refers to the relative institutional strength of the state bureaucracy compared with political institutions, which resulted in a never-ending political crisis in the country.

While looking at Bangladesh one needs to first look at the history of Islam in this country and secondly the position of Jamaat on various cultural and political issues vis a vis Bangladesh. Though historically Bangladesh has seen the face of Islam even before West Pakistan, yet the kind of Islam that was practiced in Bangladesh was significantly different from West Pakistan. It is interesting to note here that the religious leader Maududi who was crucial in giving shape to the idea of Islamic State in Pakistan was always opposed to Bangladeshi movement of language and culture. He maintained that if these people do not learn Urdu, how they can learn Islam.

When in the 1980’s both Zia’s BNP and Ershad’s Jatiya Party used the Jamaat to consolidate a support base for their respective military regimes the Jamaat emerged in the political scenario. The emergence, prominence and legitimization of Jamaat in national political scene of Bangladesh also affected the political strategy of secular political parties like Awami League in using ‘Islamic’ religious symbols, emblems, and even rituals to recreate its own image in the Islamic mould.

The Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Ataturk has been an inspiration for many leaders of emerging Muslim majority societies in the 21st century. Like Ataturk delegitimized the religious parties of the country many newly independent countries also tried doing it. However, the large development plans that was followed by Ataturk couldn't be reflected in these

countries which had repercussions for their regime in turn. For example, Mujib's banning of religious parties during the initial periods of the creation of Bangladesh led to deep discontent among various sections in the Bangladeshi society.

In the context of the military in Bangladesh, a question that was being posed is that will the country's military ever be as dominant as has been the case with Pakistan given the fact that there has been two military coups in the country, one by Zia Ur Rahman and the other by Ershad. At least three facts seem to argue against the military's long term control of the polity, two of them are acts of the regime and the third a long term pattern. First, the caretaker government committed itself to separating the judiciary from the executive branch. Second, the caretaker regime launched the massive process of establishing a totally new voter registration system with individual ID cards, a move that indicated a degree of seriousness not exhibited by any previous government. Third, the military in Bangladesh did not own huge business houses accruing profit.⁷

Few things can be summed up regarding State and Politics in Bangladesh, that, Islam has become a state religion. The BNP cooperated with Jamaat when it came to power in 1991. In fact the role of Jamaat was crucial in this election. There is a radical Islamization process going on at the grassroots which might lead to a significant rise in the role of Islam in the long run in this society.

The emergence of the new female working class post liberalization with the coming of the garment industry in Bangladesh which appointed a large number of unskilled women from rural areas was at discomfort with village elders and Mullas.⁸ The period of neoliberal reform in Bangladesh is characterized by broad economic and social restructuring globally that has significantly increased women's participation in wage employment and informalized the labor market.

In the recent past, Bangladesh has witnessed an Islamic conservative ascendancy with the rise of Jamaat-i-Islami and other Islamist forces. It is interesting to note that the same Jamaat-I-

⁷ Blair, Harry. *Party Over-institutionalisation, Contestation, and Democratic Degradation in Bangladesh* in Paul Brass. *Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics* pg 110.

⁸ Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh*, pg 97

Islami who opposed the creation of Bangladesh as a separate nation-state from Pakistan enjoyed political power in alliance with a coalition government led by the BNP leader Begum Khaleda Zia from 2001 to 2006.⁹ The emergence of Islamic conservative ascendancy can be seen in reference to the statue of Justice that was stalled in Bangladesh Supreme Court last year. The statue was blind-folded and wore a Sari. However, the network of Madrassas known as the Hefazat-e-Islam demanded that the statue be removed. Their argument was that, the statue was an “idol” and offended Islam’s prohibition against representing religion in human form. When the objection was raised, the ruling party, that is, Awami League did little to counter such a demand. It is not for the first time that there has been a conflict between the Awami League, perceived to represent a secular platform and various religious parties, yet over the years, parties like Hefazat-e-Islam has become a leading advocate on Islamic issues and have extended its support base beyond the millions who attend or have attended its madrases. In recent years, it has secured important concessions from the government like revision of text-books that would Islamise the public school curriculum.

In the case of Pakistan too, one can see the extent of influence of Islamic conservatism in the likes of the case of Mashal Khan who was a student of Abdul Wali Khan University, was mob-lynched on the pretext of being blasphemous. However, one silver lining amidst Pakistan’s troubled politics is that the general elections that were held in 2008 and 2013 were peaceful transitions from one government to the other. For the first time in the history of Pakistan in 2008, the elections of 2008 was seen as a relatively free and fair national election which brought about a peaceful transition of power. The 2013 elections in Pakistan represented the first transition between civilian governments in a country that has been the bastion of the military for more than half of its history.

These countries of South Asia have been moving back and forth in their struggle against extremism and instability. There has been times when it appeared that they are successful and there have been times when they seemed to fail altogether as nations. Yet once can reiterate the point made by Philip Oldenburg that processes of democratization is path-dependent. The routes that these countries take will ultimately determine the kind of government that these

⁹ Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism: Jamaat-e-Islami in Contemporary India and Bangladesh*, CUP, 2015, pg 171

countries will have. These countries will be able to stabilize themselves only when they are genuinely capable of addressing issues facing the citizens. Therefore, in order to understand democratization in South Asia, multiple layers of issues have to be taken into account.

bibliography

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Ali, Tariq. *The Nehrus and the Gandhis: An Indian Dynasty*, London: Picador, 1985.

Ali, Tariq. *Can Pakistan Survive? The Death of a State*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983.

Ahmed, Ishtiaq. *The Concept of an Islamic State in Pakistan: An Analysis of Ideological Controversies*, Lahore: Vanguard Publishers, 1992.

Austin, Granville. *Working a Democratic Constitution: A History of the Indian Experience*. New Delhi: OUP, 2003.

——— *The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation*, New Delhi: Oxford India Paperbacks, 1999.

Bhutto, Fatima. *Songs of Blood and Sword: A Daughter's Memoir*, New Delhi: Penguin Books 2010.

Bhutto, Benazir. *Daughter of the East: An Autobiography*, London: Pocket Books, 2007.

Bose, Ajay. *Behenji: A Political Biography of Mayawati*, New Delhi: Penguin, Viking, 2008.

Burki, Shahid Javed. *Pakistan Under Bhutto, 1971-77*, London: Macmillan, 1980.

Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence, Voices from the Partition of India*, New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1998.

Blair, Harry. *Party Over-institutionalisation, Contestation, and Democratic Degradation in Bangladesh* in (Ed.) Paul Brass. *Routledge Handbook of South-Asian Politics*. London, 2010.

Cohen, Stephen P. *The Idea of Pakistan*, Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 2004.

Cohen, Stephan. *The Pakistan Army*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

Chandra, Kanchan. (ed) *Democratic Dynasties: State, Party and Family in Contemporary Indian Politics*, New Delhi: CUP, 2016.

- Chakravarty, S.R. *Bangladesh under Mujib, Zia and Ershad: Dilemma of a New Nation*, New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1995.
- Chaudhuri, Maitrayee. *Gender in the Making of the Indian Nation-State* in *Sociology of Gender: The Challenge of Feminist Sociological Knowledge*, ed. Sharmila Rege, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003.
- Chatterjee, Partha. *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* London: Zed Press, 1986.
- Devji, Faisal. *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea*, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013.
- Enayat, Hamid. *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, London: Macmillan, 1982.
- Elster, Jon. *The Market and the Forum: Three varieties of Political Theory in Deliberative Democracy*, ed. James Bohman and William Rehg, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1997.
- French, Patrick. *India: a portrait*, Allen Lane, New Delhi: Penguin Publishers India, 2011.
- Frankel, Francine R. *India's Political Economy, 1947-77: The Gradual Revolution*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Guha, Ramchandra. *India after Gandhi*, New Delhi: Pan Macmillan, Picador India, 2007.
- Hasan, Zoya. (ed) *Parties and Party Politics in India*, New Delhi: OUP, 2011.
- Hasan, Zoya. *Politics of Inclusion: Caste, Minorities and Affirmative Action*, New Delhi: OUP, 2009.
- Hashmi, Taj I. *Women and Islam in Bangladesh, Beyond Subjection and Tyranny*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000.
- Hart, Henry C. *Indira Gandhi, India. A political system reappraised* (ed), Boulder colorado: Westview press, 1976.
- Islam, Maidul. *Limits of Islamism: Jamaat-e-Islami in Contemporary India and Bangladesh*, Delhi: CUP, 2015.
- Jaffrelot, Christophe. (Ed.) *A History of Pakistan and its Origins*. London: Anthem Press. 2002.

- Jahan, R. *The Elusive Agenda: Mainstreaming Women in Development*, London: Zed Books, 1995.
- Jayal and Mehta. *The Oxford Companion to Politics in India*, USA: OUP, 2010.
- Jayal, Niraja Gopal. (ed) *Democracy in India*, New Delhi: OUP, 2001.
- Jayakar, Pupul: *Indira Gandhi, A Biography*, New Delhi: Viking Penguin India, 1992.
- Jayawardane, Kumari. *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*, First published by Kali for Women in 1986, This edition published by London: Verso, 2016.
- Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Kabir, Rokeya and Chowdhury, Omar Tarek. *Women in Bangladesh, Invisible Heroes in the Economy and Society in Women*, (Ed.) Margaret Altson, Political Struggles and Gender Equality, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Khaliq, Bushra. *To be a Woman in Pakistan: Stories of Struggle and Survival in* (Ed.) Margaret Altson, Women, Political Struggles and Gender Equality, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Kohli, Atul. (Ed.) *The Success of India's Democracy*, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Kohli, Atul. *The State and Poverty in India: the Politics of Reform*, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Lamb, Christina. *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy*, New Delhi: Viking 1991.
- Lewis, David. *Bangladesh: Politics, Economy and Civil Society*, New York: CUP, 2011.
- Marino, Francesca and Natale, Beniamino. *Apocalypse Pakistan: An Anatomy of 'the world's most dangerous nation'*. New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2013.
- Metcalf, Barbara. *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan in The Case of Pakistan*, New Delhi: OUP, 2004.
- Metcalf and Metcalf. *A Concise History of Modern India*, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

- Mitchell, Timothy. *Carbon Democracy, Political Power in the age of Oil*, New York: Verso, 2011.
- Mamoon, Muntassir, *The Vanquished Generals and The Liberation War of Bangladesh*, Dhaka: Somoy Prakashan, 2000.
- Mamdani, Mahmood. *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*, New York, Pantheon Books, 2004.
- Moro, Javier. *The Red Sari: A Dramatised Biography of Sonia Gandhi*, New Delhi: Roli Books, 2015.
- Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. *Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of the State Power*, New York: OUP, 2011.
- Oldenberg, Philip. *India, Pakistan and Democracy: Solving the Puzzle of Divergent Paths*. Oxon: Routledge 2010.
- Ollapally, Deepa M. *Bangladesh: Divided Politics and Geo-politics*, Washington, D.C, CUP, 2009.
- Parenti, Michael. *Democracy for the Few*, Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2002.
- Raghavan, Srinath. *1971: A Global History of the Creation of Bangladesh*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, London, 2013.
- Raza, Rafi. *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan, 1967–1977*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Saikia, Yasmin. *Women, War and the Making of Bangladesh: Remembering 1971*, New Delhi: Women Unlimited, 2011.
- Sarkar, Tanika, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community Religion and Cultural Nationalism*, New Delhi: Permanent black 2013.
- Sarkar, Tanika. *Rebels, Wives and Saints: Designing Selves and Nations in Colonial Times*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2012.
- Shaikh, Farzana. *Making Sense of Pakistan*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.
- Siddiq, Ayesha. *Military Inc. Inside Pakistan's Military Economy*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal: *Modern South Asia-History, Culture, Political Economy*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Talbot, Ian. *Pakistan: A New History*, London: C. Hurst and Co. 2012.

Toor, Saadia. *The State of Islam: Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan*, London: Pluto Press, 2011.

Zakaria, Rafiq. *The Trail of Benazir*, Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1989.

Ziring, Lawrence. *Pakistan at the cross-current of History*, England: Oxford One world. 2003.

Articles

Adeney, Katherine. *A move to Majoritarian Nationalism? Challenges of Representation in South-Asia*, Routledge, 7 April, 2015.

Ahamed, Emajuddin. *Current Trends of Islam in Bangladesh*, EPW, Vol. 18, No. 25 (June 1983), pp 1114-1119, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4372230/> (accessed 13 July 2016).

Alavi, Hamza. *Ethnicity, Muslim Society, and the Pakistan Ideology* in Anita Weiss, (ed) *Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan*, Syracuse University Press, 1986.

———*The State in Postcolonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh*, New Left Review 1/74, July-August 1972.

——— *Bangladesh and the Crisis of Pakistan*, The Socialist Register, 1975.

———*Misreading Partition Road Signs*. EPW, Vol. 37, No.44/45, November, 2002.

——— *Politics of Ethnicity in India and Pakistan* (Ed.) H. Alavi and John Harris *Sociology of Developing Countries*, London: Macmillan Education Ltd.

Alam, Shah. *The State Religion Amendment to the Constitution of Bangladesh: A Critique*. *Law and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America*, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp 209-225, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43110030/> (accessed 13 July 2016).

Ahamed, Emajuddin and Nazneen J.A. *Islam in Bangladesh: Revivalism or Power Politics*, *Asian Survey*, Vol.30, No.8, (August 1990) pp 795-808, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2644499/> (accessed 13 July 2016)

- Ahmed, Nizam. *From Monopoly to Competition: Party Politics in The Bangladesh Parliament(1973-2001)*, Pacific Affairs, Vol. 76, No.1 Spring 2003.
- Ayoob, Mohammed. *Profile of a Party: PPP in Pakistan*, EPW, Vol.7, No. 5/7 pp 215-219, February 1972.
- Chauchard, Simon. *Disadvantaged groups, Reservation and Dynasty Politics*, (ed) by Chandra, Kanchan. *Democratic Dynasties: State, Party and Family in Contemporary Indian Politics*, Introduction CUP 2016.
- Chhachhi, Amrita. *The State, religious Fundamentalism and Women: Trends in South-Asia*, EPW, Vol.24, No.11, March, 1989.
- Chowdhury, Najma. *Lessons on Women's Political Leadership from Bangladesh*, Signs, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Autumn 2008), pp. 8-15, The University of Chicago Press.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/588584/> (accessed 11 June 2016)
- Dahlerup, Drude. *Women in Political Decision-making: From Critical Mass to Critical Acts in Scandinavia*. In *Gender, Peace and Conflict*, (ed) Inger Skjelsbaek and Dan Smith, 104–21. London, Sage, 2001.
- Dua, B.D: *The Prime Minister and the Federal System, Nehru to the Nineties: The Changing Office of the Prime Minister* in ed. James Manor. *India in Nehru to the Nineties: The Changing Office of the Prime Minister in India*, Hurst and Company London, 1994.
- Feldman, Shelley. *Historicising Garment Manufacturing in Bangladesh: Gender, Generation, and New Regulatory Regimes*. *Journal of International Women's Studies* Vol. 11 no.1 November 2009.
- Hasan, Mushirul. *Pathways of Political Leadership in South-Asia: Limits and Possibilities*, EPW, Vol.33, No.11 (March 14-20), 1998.
- Hossain, Golam. *Bangladesh in 1994: Democracy at Risk*, Vol. 32, no. 2, *A Survey of Asia in 1994: part II*, Pg 171-178, Asian Survey, Feb 1995.
- Hossain, Moazzem. *'Home-grown' Democracy*, EPW, Vol. 41, No.9 (March 2006) pp 791-793, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4417902/> (accessed 26 August 2015)
- Hoodbhoy, Pervez. *The Hanging of Mir Quasem Ali*, Dawn, September 10, 2016.

- Jalal, Ayesha. *Conjuring Pakistan: History as Official Imagining*, International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 27, No. 1 (February 1995)
- Jalal, Ayesha. *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia*, Harvard University Press, March 2010.
- Kaviraj, Sudipta. *A Critique of the Passive Revolution*, EPW, Vol. 23, No. 45/47 Nov 1988.
- Kaviraj, Sudipta. *Indira Gandhi and Indian Politics*, EPW, Vol. 21, No.38/39, September 1986.
- Kochanek A. Stanley. *Governance, Patronage Politics, and Democratic Transition in Bangladesh*, Asian Survey, Vol. 40, No. 3 (May - Jun., 2000).
- Kothari, Rajni. *The Crisis of the Moderate State and the Decline of Democracy*, (ed) Democracy in India, Niraja Gopal Jayal. OUP, 2001
- Kohli, Atul. *Political Change in a Democratic Developing Country*, (ed) Democracy in India, Niraja Gopal Jayal. OUP,2001
- Kothari Rajni. *Political Consensus in India: Decline and Reconstruction*, EPW, Vol.4,No.4, October 11, 1969.
- K.C Suri: *Political Parties in South Asia: The Challenge of Change*, South-Asia regional report based on research and dialogue with Political Parties.
- Momen, Mehnaz. *Bangladesh in 2009: The Peril Within*, Asian Survey, Vol. 50, No. 1 (January/February 2010. pp 157-163.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2010.50.1.157/> (accessed 26 August 2015).
- Mohiuddin, Yasmin. *Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia: Bangladesh's Military Is Desperate to Bring down These Two Former Leaders: And It's Dragging the Whole Country down with Them*, International Journal, Vol. 63, No. 2, Russian Resurgence (Spring, 2008), pp. 461- 468 Sage Publications, Ltd. on behalf of the Canadian International Council.
- Nasr, Vali. *Military Rule, Islamism and Democracy in India*, Middle-East journal, Volume 58, No.2, Spring 2004.
- Quadir, Fahimul. *The Political Economy of Pro-Market Reforms in Bangladesh: Regime Consolidation through Economic Liberalisation*. Contemporary South-Asia, Volume 9, 2000, Issue 2.

Rashiduzzaman, M. *The Liberals and the Religious Right in Bangladesh*, Asian Survey, Vol.34, No.11 (Nov. 1994), pp 974-990, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2645348/> (accessed 13 July 2016)

Rashiduzzaman, M. *Bangladesh in 2001: The Election and a New Political Reality?* Asian Survey, Vol. 42, No.1, (January/ February 2002), pp 183-191, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2002.42.1.183/> (accessed 26 August 2015) .

Rounaq Jahan: *Women in South Asian Politics*, Third World Quarterly, Vol.9, No.3, July 1987.

Rudolph and Rudolph: *Demand polity and Command Polity in Democracy in India*, edited by Niraja Gopal Jayal, OUP 2007.

Shehabuddin, Elora. *Jamaat-i-Islami in Bangladesh: Women, Democracy and Transformation of Islamist Politics*, Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 42, No.2/3, Islam in South-Asia (March-May 2008).

Sisson, Richard and Rose, Leo. *War and Secession: Pakistan, India, and the Creation of Bangladesh*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

Seminar, June 2011. Chandra, Kanchan. *The Problem, Dynasty: A Symposium on Lineage and Family Ties in Subcontinental Politics*.

———— Chandra, Kanchan. Umaira Wamiq. *India's Democratic Dynasties*.

———— Jaffrelot, Christophe. *What Princely Democracy: The case of the Scindia's*.

———— Khan, Nyla Ali. *The Plutocracy and the Plebians*.

———— Mannan, Manzarul. *Governing culture of the Ruling Elite in Bangladesh*.

———— Nagi, Saroj. *Bucking the Trend, Dynasty: A Symposium on Lineage and Family Ties in Subcontinental Politics*.

———— Rumi, Raza Ahmad. *Dynasties and Clientalism in Pakistan*.

Talukder, Maniruzzaman. *The Fall of the Military Dictator: 1991 Elections and the Prospect of Civilian Rule in Bangladesh*, Pacific Affairs, Vol. 65, No.2, (Summer 1992), pp 203-224, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2760169/> (accessed 26 August 2015).

Toor, Saadia. *Moral Regulation in a Post-Colonial Nation: Gender and the Politics of Islamisation in Pakistan*, Special issue of Interventions: International Journal of Post-Colonial Studies, Volume 9, Issue 2, July 2007.