

Today, in a world so precariously hanging between conflict and cooperation, between prejudice and faith, between love and hate, I am sure, this book, projecting vision of an egalitarian society, will challenge faith communities of Pakistan as well as the state to strive for realization of the dream of a just society.

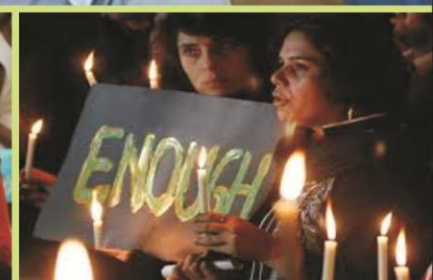
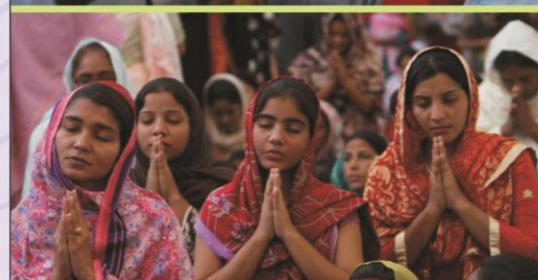
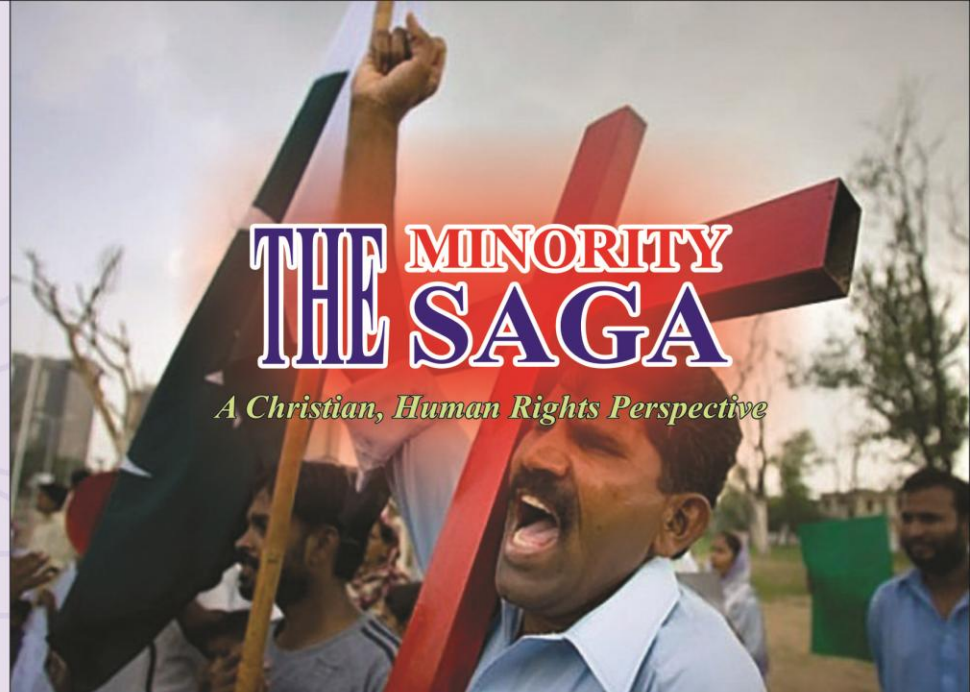
Hamid Henry
Hamdard University, Karachi

This research work by Mr. Yousuf Jalal Gill has explored the genesis of Christian history in Pakistan as well as the religious experience and the history of persecution of this minority. The book objectively describes prejudices and discrimination against the Christen community by the majority and sometimes by the state. The author has also shown many shortcomings on the part of the local Christians. I congratulate and appreciate the author for this work and concern for the downtrodden. The book is well researched and systematically documented with supported quotations.

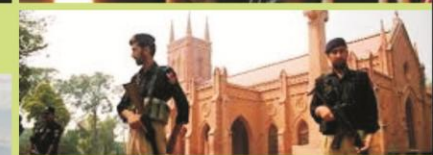
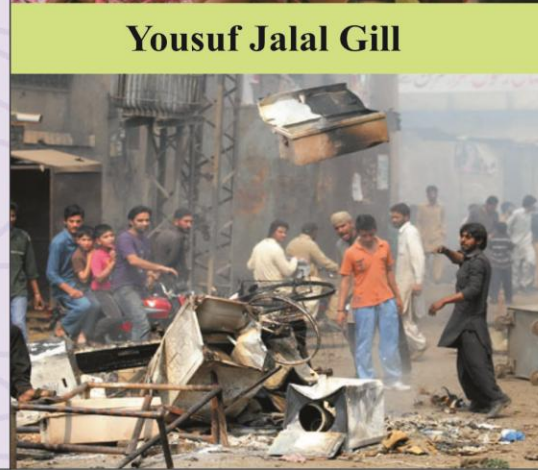
Dr. Alwin V. Murad
Government College University, Lahore

This is an important piece of research and I must acknowledge that this book is a good compilation of facts and analysis which is indeed significant contribution to our knowledge. It well captures historical evolution of Christianity in the sub-continent and presents socio-economic-political analysis of the current situation of Christian minority in Pakistan. It also provides good bibliography of the reference material which increases its authenticity.

Irfan Mufti
South Asia Partnership Lahore



Yousuf Jalal Gill



THE MINORITY SAGA

A Christian, Human Rights Perspective

Yousuf Jalal Gill

Publisher



UMEED ACADEMY
Umeed Partnership Pakistan (UPP)

Book: THE MINORITY SAGA
A Christian, Human Rights Perspective

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Printer: Zafarsons Printers, Lahore
Edition: First
Year: 2016
Print 1000
Price: Rs.200

UMEED ACADEMY

Umeed Academy is the publishing arm of Umeed Partnership Pakistan (UPP) that is involved in developing disadvantaged communities through education and training. Umeed Academy publishes, in particular, research works on downtrodden, women and minorities and helps disseminate people-oriented publications so as to facilitate transformation of society through sustainable social change. The publications of Umeed Academy reflect views of the researchers and writers and not necessarily that of the UPP.

Dedicated to:

Dr. John Perkins

A consistent and fervent supporter of UPP in its endeavors to
serve the most disadvantaged communities in Pakistan.

“The harvest is past, the summer is ended,
and we are not saved.”

-Jeremiah 8:20

“The test of courage comes when
we are in the minority;
the test of tolerance comes when
we are in the majority.”

-Ralph W. Sockman (American Writer)

About the Author

The formative years of Yousuf Jalal Gill (b.1957) were spent with the Oblate Missionaries whom Pope Pius XI (1857 – 1939) referred to as the “Specialists in the most difficult missions...” Moreover, his youthful days witnessed an era of political upheaval after the dismemberment of erstwhile East Pakistan in 1971. The following years saw Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto’s Pakistan Peoples’ Party’s populist regime encouraging progressive movements led by social activists, trade unionists and radical intelligentsia in Pakistan. As a young social activist, Yousuf Gill was deeply involved in the establishment of Derrickabad and Munda Chowk – Christian villages in central Punjab founded by the late Fr. Derrick Misquita, the then cabinet minister of Bhutto’s government (1971 – 1977).

As an Oblate missionary, Yousuf Gill worked in the province of Balochistan and had gained first-hand knowledge of poverty, hunger and destitution. Thus, his involvement with the marginalized people at grassroots level has been instrumental in shaping his person, his passions and commitment to social change. In 2000 Gill, primarily a Development Worker, earned his MA in Development Studies from the Development Study Centre, Dublin, Ireland. Being a pragmatic - but not an anti-intellectual - he brought out a monthly magazine “*Booe-e-Madran*” from Balochistan to highlight issues affecting poor and disadvantaged communities.

Before self-separation from the Oblate community in 2001, Yousuf Gill founded “*Umeed Partnership Pakistan*” (UPP) in 2000 with an aim to serve the tribal areas of Baluchistan on the Afghan border and then diversified geographically to the most disadvantaged communities of the Cholistan desert in southern Punjab. Simultaneously, UPP extended its sphere of activity to slum communities in Lahore and in the rural areas of Khanewal and Mian Chanu in Punjab Province. In line with its vision and mission, UPP works at grassroots level, principally for illiterate women, girls and street children in the areas of education, vocational training, development and human rights.

Yousuf J Gill, the founding Director of UPP, presently lives in Lahore with his wife and two children.

***Hamid Henry
Hamdard University, Karachi***

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface		1
Foreword		4
CHAPTER ONE:	INTRODUCTION	7
CHAPTER TWO:	THE CONCEPT OF MINORITY IN PAKISTAN	11
	Terminology	11
	The place of minority in Islam	12
	Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's concept	14
	Concept of Minority within the Constitution of Pakistan	15
CHAPTER THREE:	THE ROLE OF CHRISTIANS	17
	The historical background of Christians in the sub-continent	17
	The freedom movement and the creation of Pakistan	21
	The growth and development of Pakistan	23
CHAPTER FOUR:	THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS SITUATION	27
	Conversion to Christianity	27
	Haris and Sweepers	32
	Haris	33
	Sweepers	34
	Missionaries	35
	The fundamental rights	36
	Religious freedom:	40
	<i>Burning of Churches, Colonies and Institutions</i>	40
	Some Unforgettable Days	41

	Events that made Pakistani Christians uneasy	41
	Forced Conversions	46
	Blasphemy Law	49
	Section 295 A	50
	Section 295 B	50
	Section 295 C	50
CHAPTER FIVE:	THE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE CHRISTIAN MINORITY	53
	The effects of Islamization	53
	The Electoral System	56
	Unskilled Leadership	60
	The future of Christianity in Pakistan	62
CHAPTER SIX:	CONCLUSION	68
	Recommendations	73
	Afterword	75
	APPENDICES	77
	APPENDIX – I	77
	APPENDIX – II	78
	APPENDIX – III	100
	APPENDIX – IV	101
	APPENDIX – V	102
	APPENDIX – VI	103
	ENDNOTES	105
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	110
PROFILE:	UMEED PARTNERSHIP PAKISTAN (UPP)	114

Preface

“...But what was the League asking for? What gets overlooked today is the fact that the League was envisioning a separate country which had a Muslim majority, but would also become a home to India’s other minorities (such as Sikhs, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, etc.) as well as certain ‘oppressed groups’ (such as lower-caste Hindus). A number of lower-caste Hindus (especially in the Bengal) had joined the League. It was in Bengal during the 1946 election that the League’s leaders talked the most about a separate country where no distinctions would be made on the basis of caste and creed, and where minorities in India and Hindu groups that were ‘exploited and oppressed by higher-caste Hindus’ would be treated fairly and granted every opportunity to follow their cultural and economic aspirations without discrimination.”

(Excerpt from “*Polling for Pakistan: The democratic creation of a country*”, Nadeem F. Paracha, Daily Dawn, Images on Sunday, 6 November 2016, p.4).

In this research work the current situation of the Christian minority in comparison to the majority faith community of Pakistan has been evaluated. Along with many other issues in the country, that of protecting and safeguarding the fundamental rights of the minorities is a major challenge. The research highlights the issues faced by the Christian minority of Pakistan, relative to the wider Pakistani society. It also evaluates its present social, political, economic and religious status in the country.

Chapter one of the book presents background of this research work while chapter two discusses the concept of minority in Pakistan encompassing Islamic terminology about minorities, the place of minority in Islam, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision about Pakistan and its minorities and how the Constitution of Pakistan deals with minorities.

Chapter three describes the historical background of Christians in the sub-continent, the role of Christians in the freedom movement, in the creation of Pakistan and in the growth and development of Pakistan.

The Chapter four attempts to overview the social, economic and religious situation of Christians in Pakistan. It narrates the story of missionary endeavors to win indigenous low caste Indian tribes for Christianity. The chapter also unfolds the present situation of majority of Christians engaged in menial jobs of Haris and Sweepers in the rural and urban areas of the country. This part goes on to discuss the fundamental rights of Christians in the areas of religious freedom and social and political justice. Some major issues affecting Christians i.e. denationalization of Christian educational institutions, protection of life and properties including sacred places of Christians and infamous blasphemy law have also been discussed.

Chapter five gives an insight into the political system and the Christian minority in Pakistan. The effects of Islamization, the pros and cons of the electoral system, inadequacy of leadership and future of Christianity in Pakistan have also been discussed in some detail.

In conclusion, Chapter six offers some recommendations for the government, civil society and the church leadership so as to bring about a change in the dehumanizing situation of Christians in Pakistan.

It is proposed in this work that the Christian minority should adopt a positive approach towards controversial issues and take a united stand. A positive attitude should be shown towards the larger faith community so that Christians may become an integral part of the Pakistani nation. Certain elements which could hinder growth should be avoided. It is hoped that this contribution would encourage debate to identify a way forward.

I would like to thank my colleagues who have contributed their generous advice and deep insight. My special thanks goes to Mr. Hamid Henry, Dr. John Perkins, Dr. Alwin Murad, Mr. Irfan Mufti and Mr. Peter Jacob who read the draft critically, making valuable recommendations to improve the content, style and grammar. Heartfelt thanks to all others who have contributed to this and without whose assistance this research would have not been possible.

Yousuf Jalal Gill

November 9, 2016

Iqbal (the national poet of Pakistan) Day

Foreword

Christians, the largest religious minority in Punjab Province, face three tiers of persecution — terrorist attacks by militants, lynching by common people, and abandonment by the State. Terrorists have targeted Muslims far more than non-Muslims. However, mob rule has destroyed Christian settlements in Lahore, Toba Tek Singh, Gujranwala and Nankana Sahib. In Kasur, a couple was burnt alive less than two years ago. All incidents were triggered by allegations of blasphemy.

The first terrorist attack in Pakistan after 9/11 was on a Protestant church in Bahawalpur that left 16 dead. The following year, there were five terrorist attacks on Christians. But mob attacks predate that — in Shantinagar and Khanewal where, almost 20 years ago, over 2,000 Christians were displaced by mobs who burned churches and destroyed homes. Blasphemy persecutions also predate 9/11. Bishop John Joseph of Faisalabad committed *harakiri* in protest in 1998.

We know blasphemy allegations are often a way of settling material conflicts involving property or business, and that people's religious sentiments are exploited to destabilize communities. What is it that allows people to be provoked into barbarism? Fervent mobs declare that Christians are agents of the Christian West, but when did local Christians become such a proxy? Historically, they were not a conduit for revenge against the Christian colonizers of the Raj. In fact, accounts show that in violence during Partition, Christians marked their homes with crosses and were left alone by rioters.

Part of the problem could lie in the nature of Christian settlements. Initially, missionaries helped them establish segregated villages and settle as tenant farmers and labourers in new canal colonies. They managed their own land in the model of the English parish and this kept them away from the stigma of the 'chuhra' past (where identity was turned into a slur), but it also distanced them from local politics and from connecting daily with mainstream society. This separatism plays out in other contexts of multiculturalism versus assimilation, or in conflict amongst communities arranged on multi-ethnic lines.

These are but few incidents that have been a driving force in conducting critical research for this publication. Taking the Christian contribution in Pakistan as a starting point, the book examines the circumstances that eventually culminated in the present day degradation of the Christian community which otherwise made a significant contribution in the development of Pakistan.

Although it discusses the missionaries' endeavors to plant Christianity in the sub-continent, the book is not a typical Church history; but is an attempt to re-read the history of the Christian community in Pakistan from people's viewpoint - commonly referred to as a *Socio-Economic Structural/Historical Perspective*. Thus, adopting an analytical approach, the book offers internal as well as external critique on the present situation of the Christian minority in Pakistan.

Scholarly language means academic-style research and writing while popular languages varied styles of expression such as stories, poetry and critical social analysis with creative and participatory methodology. It also includes experiential insights, and drawings and paintings. Thus, the book may not be a prestigious narrative of a professional writer, but it is certainly the rendition of a sincere social activist. Again, the narrative may not have the academic excellence of a scholar, but it does have fluency and diction in everyday phraseology, reflecting the manner in which a rational mind understands people's sufferings.

The unassuming author does not claim that his narrative has literary flair but if his book is taken seriously it will be widely debated, particularly among the Christian minority. This is, of course, because it discusses the suffering of the community. The

author not only narrates the story of persecution but he also describes various social and political movements for emancipation that have emanated from the community.

It is my privilege to have known the author for the last three decades as a diehard social activist involved at the grassroots level. He founded the Umeed Partnership Pakistan (UPP) in 2000 to institutionalize his aspiration for social change. In a sense, UPP is not only author's identity but an expression of this identity.

It is in an endeavor to discover this identity that I invite you to study this work. You will be enriched and your own insights and commitment to egalitarianism will be renewed and deepened. Discover, as the author and the UPP fraternity has the experience of the authentic joy of being a Spirit-inspired activist, a missionary disciple who is on fire to live, witness, and proclaim Good News to the '*anaveem*' (downtrodden).

Today, we live in a world precariously balanced between conflict and cooperation; between prejudice and faith and between love and hate. I am sure this book, projecting the vision of an egalitarian society, will challenge faith communities of Pakistan (as well as the State) to strive for the realization of the dream of a just society.

Hamid Henry
Hamdard University, Karachi

April 28, 2016

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Christians in India and Pakistan inherited their culture and traditions from Hindus, Muslims and depressed classes from whom they were converted to Christianity. Due to their small numbers and lowly background they could not afford to be at loggerheads with Hindus or Muslims. In a united India an element of communalism of an aggressive type was on the rise between Hindus and Muslims. Christians in this hostile atmosphere played the role of leaven in the bread and salt of the earth. The aim of Christians was to serve humanity through their educational, medical and other social services as well as development projects. During upheaval in the subcontinent the Christians followed the line of least resistance, while remaining loyal to their faith and patriotic to the State but at the same time playing a decisive role in the freedom movement of Pakistan by aligning with Mohammad Ali Jinnah (Father of the Nation) hoping to get more privileges in their new homeland.

In the subcontinent both Muslims and Christians lived as minority communities thus the Christian leaders aligned with the Muslim minority and fought together for a new motherland. But in the new motherland the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims appeared to be of superior and inferior, majority and minority, masters and subjects which established its base in The Objective Resolution, adopted by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on March 12, 1949 and later was made part of the

Constitution of Pakistan under article 2 (A). In the Objective Resolution and subsequently in all the constitutions ‘The Republic of Pakistan’ became “The Islamic Republic of Pakistan” and Islam declared as the state religion along with various Islamic provisions.

The real problem for the minorities in Pakistan began with the adoption of the Objective Resolution in which Maulana Maududi’s theory of divine sovereignty was incorporated. Liaquat Ali Khan, the first prime minister of Pakistan, headed the faction of the Muslim League and his supporters saw Jinnah’s plan to secularize Pakistan to be a threat to the two-nation theory. After Jinnah’s death Liaquat Ali Khan introduced the Objective Resolution which provided Islam a constitutional space.

The non-Muslim members of the constituent assembly vigorously opposed it and all voted against the Objective Resolution. These members were of the opinion that Jinnah’s Pakistan is a secular state and it cannot be turned into a theocratic state. They argued that the establishment of a state religion is a dangerous principle. Previous instances are sufficient to learn lessons and not to repeat mistakes on the grounds that in the past people were burnt alive in the name of religion. Therefore, the sovereignty must rest entirely with the people.

Serious concerns of minority members of the constituent assembly were not taken into consideration. Instead more religious elements were incorporated into the constitutions with a multitude of contradictions. Article 25 says that all citizens are equal before law while Article 2 says that Islam shall be the state religion. When Islam is a state religion how can the followers of other religions be equal citizens? According to constitution promulgated in 1973 non-Muslim citizens cannot become head of the state or government, violating Article 25 which requires equality before law. If this equality of citizenship is not guaranteed, then how democracy can be possible in the country?

Joshua Fazaluddin, a veteran Christian leader of the Pakistan Movement, wrote in his book “Future of Christians in Pakistan” that the Objective Resolution and the two nation theory made Pakistan a government of the Muslims, for the Muslims and by the Muslims in which the minorities gradually have to yield ground in favor of Islam, thus losing their own identity. Along with Joshua, the non-Muslim members of the constituent assembly also foresaw

the bleak future for non-Muslims in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Pakistan Islamic Republic of Pakistan created in 1947 is hung between secularism and Islam on ideological frontiers as well as between political government and army rule on the administrative horizons.

Pakistan's 95 percent population is Muslim while religious minorities including Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis, Sikhs, Budhists and Scheduled Castes are 5 percent. Christians are about 3 percent.

Pakistan came into being as exclusive homeland for Muslims, though Christians also opted for it. Hence, Islamic option has always been very high. Eventually, with gradual rise of religious fundamentalism, fanaticism and terrorism religious and sectarian violence became common feature of its national life. Religious scholars and religio-political parties accelerated the religious frenzy on the pretext of annihilating Christians, Hindus, Jews and the Western nations. High illiteracy rate in the masses of the country, proved to be a springboard for religious scholars to gain mass popularity and momentum for their annihilative mission. Hence, Pakistan became a sanctuary to rear nursery of religious violence and terrorism.

Rapid growth of religious fanaticism in the country became a hanging sword for Christian community besides other smaller communities. It must be spelled out that it is a double-edged sword, one edge being the state and other the society.

State oppression combined with societal violence became the order of the day. Dozens of Christians were persecuted under false charges of Blasphemy Law. Many persons, priests and nuns were burnt. Several Christian villages were burnt and devastated. Christian education institutions were nationalized. Separate Electorate was imposed to weaken and marginalize the Christians politically, socially and economically. Legislative assemblies made anti-minority laws and debarred Christians and other minorities from many basic rights. State, legislative, judiciary, police, religious clergy and fundamentalist worked hand and glove to oppress and persecute the Christian community, anywhere and in any way. Bishop John Joseph Shaheed had to lay down his life to rescue the Christian community, almost an endangered community; here Christians of Pakistan have a long saga of suffering from 1947

to date. They have suffered but survived. Nonetheless, religious terrorism is flourishing with greater speed. If Pakistan's secularist Muslims, Christians and other communities do not turn this tide, every sign of goodness and humanism may be swayed away.

Over the years the political, religious and military lobbies hijacked Jinnah's modern secular Pakistan making it an Islamic state for their own political gain in which the religious minorities suffered gravely by facing discrimination and extermination. Successive rulers passed numerous laws that provided legal space for the growth and influence of Islam in the constitution. Because of these laws, religious minorities face blatant discrimination, violence and suppression. The extremists continuously attack minorities' places of worship, forcibly convert them to Islam, kidnap their women and compel them to marry Muslim men. Blasphemy laws are used as a blackmailing tool to provoke Muslims to attack non-Muslims and sometimes burn their homes and places of worship based on wild accusations, such as burning the Holy Quran or disrespecting Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Pakistan's civil and military leadership are equally responsible for ignoring the persecution of the minorities which have no concern whether Pakistan is becoming an Islamic republic or is being transformed into a secular state. Under no circumstances should such persecution be tolerated. Christians are proud of the successful military operations against the Taliban but that is irrelevant in terms of ending discrimination and persecution of minorities.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF MINORITY IN PAKISTAN

This chapter attempts to explain the term “minority”, its place in Islam, how Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah sees minorities and how the Constitution of Pakistan deals with them.

Terminology

The term “minority” comes from the Latin word “minor” which literally means a person’s legal infancy, being smaller, inferior, and being subordinate or being under full age. The French word for minority is *minorit’s*, means a person of minor rank. The Arabic term for minority is *Dhimmi* which comes from the Arabic word *Dhimma* meaning ‘protection’. It was applied to the people who, after the war, were defeated and held under the rule of the Muslim conquerors. Also the term *mu’ahid* was applied to non-Muslims with whom Muslims made a treaty, as in the case of the Christians of *Najran* who were called *mu’ahids*.

In Pakistan, none of these designations fits into any minority group, because they are neither a conquered people, nor a people with whom some treaty has been made. Rather, overnight on the 14th of August 1947, non-Muslims living within the boundaries of Pakistan became its citizens. The non-Muslims, such as Christians, Hindus, Parsis, Scheduled castes and Qadianis, are, therefore, considered the minorities.

The term generally refers to a part of a larger whole, but in a sociological sense it is not always a numerical minority of the population as is found in some parts of Southern States of the U.S., in East and South Africa and so on. For instance the black population in South Africa during the apartheid regime was the majority numerically but in terms of political power and rights, they were nonetheless a minority in relation to a smaller group of whites. Politically speaking, a minority group is less influential than the majority community.

The most common general description of a minority group used is of an aggregation of people who are distinct in race, religion or nationality from other members of the society in which they live. These people think of themselves, and are thought of by others, as separate and distinct.¹

The place of minority in Islam

The Islamic term *Dhimmi* for minority itself designates the sort of contract through which the Muslim community accords hospitality and protection to members of other revealed religions. The basis of treatment of non-Muslims in Islam depends partly on the attitude of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and partly on the teaching of the Holy Qu'ran.

When the Prophet (PBUH) entered Medina, the first work he did was to organize the Jewish groups present at Medina. Although at times he opposed them severely, he nevertheless submitted himself to safeguard Jews and Christians. We find even in the Constitution of Medina, a mutual negotiation between the Prophet (PBUH) and the leaders of the non-Muslims in Medina. The Prophet (PBUH) established good relationship with the Christians of *Najran*. He wrote to the bishop, priests and monks that for all their churches, services and monastic practices, they had the protection of God and of His messenger. No bishop will be moved from his episcopate, no monk from his monastic state, no priest

from his priesthood. There will be no alteration of any right or authority or circumstances as long as they are loyal and discharge their obligations and are not burdened by wrong and by not doing wrong. (Quoted by al-Mughirah).²

The first chapter of the Holy Qu'ran opens with the command to Muslims, 'to make friends of those who believe in one God and His messenger.'... *Sura 60, vv. 7-9 is about the one who is your enemy but who is loved by God and that God loves him because he practices justice. Sura 2, v. 62 says: "...surely those who believe and those who are Jews, Christians and Sabians whoever of these believe in God and the Last Day and does good, then they have their reward with their Lord and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve..."* The Holy Qu'ran also commands Muslims to tolerate and to protect non-Muslims and to allow them to continue to practice their religion provided they are not a hindrance to the welfare of the state and the nation.

The Qu'ranic words declare: *"We appointed rites and ceremonies to every people which they must follow. Let them not then dispute with thee on the matters, but do thou invite them to thy Lord, for thou art assuredly on the right way. If they do wrangle with thee, say, 'Allah knows best what it is ye are doing'. God will judge between you on the Day of Judgment concerning the matters in which ye differ".*³

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said *"All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white except by piety (taqwa) and good action".*⁴

In the light of the attitude of the Prophet (PBUH) and of the teaching of the Holy Qu'ran, Islamic tradition recognizes and protects the rights of non-Muslims, while at present the same is demanded of them.

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's concept

The two nation theory brought about partition in 1947. The same theory entered Pakistan also and this caused bitterness, communal strife and hatred among the people of Pakistan. Therefore, the most urgent task before Quaid-i-Azam was to

establish communal harmony and mutual trust. For him Pakistan was to be one nation, to which all citizens must show loyalty. He had visualized Pakistan not as a theocratic state solely for Muslims but as a modern state where each person enjoys equal rights and works equally for the betterment and welfare of the state. Each individual, whether Hindu, Muslim or Christian, should have an equal share in running the affairs of the state. It is expressed in the following words:

*“We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens in one state. . . . Now we should keep that in front of us as our ideal, and you will find that in the course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus, Muslims would cease to be Muslims but not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State”.*⁵

The founder of this country in his very first address to the Constituent Assembly on 11 August 1947 said:

*“You are free; you are free to go to your temples. You are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State.”*⁶

In his speeches the Father of the Nation stressed that the rights of minorities in Pakistan should be safeguarded. In his speech broadcast over Pakistan Radio, Lahore, on 30th October 1947 he said:

*“Now it is up to the leaders and the rank and file of communities to leave no stone unturned in fulfilling the sacred and honorable undertaking that was given at the special conference on the 29th.August, to protect the minorities and to work in every way for the welfare and safety of refugees”.*⁷

On Eid-ul-Azha, 24th October 1947, Quaid-i-Azam spoke to the nation and stressed: *“....the tenets of Islam enjoin on every Muslim to give protection to his neighbors and to the minorities regardless of caste and creed”.*⁸

The founder of Pakistan again assured protection to the Parsi community of Sindh on 3rd February, 1948, at Karachi. He said:

*“...Pakistan, which symbolizes the aspirations of a nation that found itself in a minority in the Indian sub-continent, cannot but be mindful of the minorities within its own borders”.*⁹

He spoke once again to the Quetta Parsi community on 13th June 1948 in these words: *“...it is the policy of my Government and me that every member of every community, irrespective of caste, color, creed or race, shall be fully protected with regard to his life, property and honor”.*¹⁰

Quid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was so serious on matters regarding minorities that in his every third speech we find some mention of the minority issue. However, the present authorities remain lukewarm on the matter.

Concept of Minority within the Constitution of Pakistan

The first Constituent Assembly and its head (Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah), emphasized both the equality of all people in Pakistan irrespective of their caste and creed. He guaranteed to safeguard the rights of minorities. A similar echo is found in the Constitution of 1962 and 1973 of Pakistan. The Constitution of 1973 states that, *“...there shall be no discrimination against any citizen on the ground only of race, religion, caste, gender, residence or place of birth”.*¹¹ It also states that, *“....all citizens are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of law”.*¹²

It is said that, *“Islam shall be the state religion of Pakistan”*¹³ and in this Islamic Republic: *“....Every citizen shall have the right to profess, practice and propagate his religion.....”*¹⁴ The Constitution has a very positive attitude towards minorities in Pakistan. It affirms that the state has the duty to maintain the rights of minorities. It says: *“The state shall safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minorities, including their due representation in the Federal Provincial Services.”*¹⁴

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s attitude and the constitutional words on minority rights ring loud and are clear enough for each one to hear and act upon them.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF CHRISTIANS

Before looking at the social, political, economic and religious situation of the Christian Minority in Pakistan we should first look at its historical background in the Sub Continent and the important role played before and after the partition and also the role being played at present in the growth and development of Pakistan. In fact it was Christian leaders who played a substantial role in the freedom movement in the sub-continent and in the creation of Pakistan.

a. The historical background of Christians in the sub-continent

According to tradition St. Thomas traveled by sea to India in 52AD since by that time the land and sea routes had been opened from the Mediterranean via the Persian Gulf to India. Saint Thomas the Apostle sowed the seed of Christianity at Kerala, India in 52AD by converting some high caste Hindus. The tradition goes that the new Christian converts were also from among the Jewish community who migrated to Kerala in 562BC after the destruction of first Jewish Temple. St. Thomas found it easy to adjust himself in India due to this Jewish community who spoke Aramaic which

was St. Thomas's own language, being a Jewish himself. After establishing seven Churches in Kerala and Tamil Nadu he moved to Northwest India converting many to Christ from all four major Hindu castes including the Indo-Parthian king, Gondophares and his brother. After the martyrdom of St. Thomas, a very little is known about the immediate growth of Christianity in India but there are some traces that by 226AD there were bishops in northwest India, Afghanistan and Baluchistan, with laymen and clergy alike engaging in missionary activity.

The community established by St. Thomas in India was known as Thomas Christians. In 345AD The Thomas Christian Community established contacts with Syrian Christians. Thomas of Kana (a rich Syrian Merchant and missionary) brought 400 Christians from Baghdad, Nineveh, and Jerusalem along with some bishops to India and joined the Thomas Christians that ultimately formed Syrian Christian Church in India.

Well before the Christian era India had a flourishing trade with Central Asia, Mediterranean, and the Middle East and the Christian merchants frequently traveled to India with most of them settling in cities along trading routes during the early centuries. Christianity was further strengthened in India by various Persian, Babylonian and Syrian Christian immigrant settlers during successive centuries until the Medieval Period.

During the modern era the south Indian coastal areas were "the greatest pearl fishery in the world", and the low caste Hindus who were engaged in fishing, pearl diving, trading and piracy and fished for oysters were known as the Paravas. These Paravas from 1527 were threatened by Muslim Arab fleets offshore and inshore by Raja who wanted to have control over the coastal areas. In order to seek protection a delegation of Paravas approached Portuguese explorers at Goa in 1532 who guaranteed protection on the condition that the leaders and their communities immediately baptized all as Christians and that the Portuguese would also gain a strategic foothold and control of the pearl fisheries. The deal was agreed and some months later 20,000 Paravas were baptized and by 1537 the entire community had declared itself to be Christian.

The history of Portuguese missionaries starts from 1498 with the arrival of Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama in India and found Christians in the country known as St. Thomas Christians

who belonged to the then-largest Christian church within India. In the 16th century, the proselytization of Asia especially India was part of the Portuguese colonial policy which was to rule over the land conquered by their conquerors. The missionaries of the various orders (Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits, Augustinians, etc.) flocked out with the conquerors, and began strengthening Christianity in India. Goa became their famous colony with the biggest population of Catholics in India. Along with trading, the missionaries started the proselytization of India making many new converts to Christianity. The Roman Catholic missionaries, particularly headed by the Jesuit priest St. Francis Xavier (1506–1552), expanded their bases on the west coast making many converts.

From the 17th century many protestant missionaries from Germany, Sweden and elsewhere came to India and began translating the Bible into Bengali, Sanskrit, Marathi, Tamil and numerous other languages and dialects. By the 19th century these protestant missionaries were found everywhere in India heavily engaged in the work of evangelization. During the 19th century, several American Baptist missionaries began their evangelical work in the northeastern parts of India among Nagas, Khasis, Kukis, and Mizostribes. Even today the heaviest concentration of Christians in India continues to be in the Northeast among these tribes. Jehovah's Witnesses began their activity in India in the early 20th century.

William Booth and his associates met in London in 1878 to transform their evangelistic organization, the East London Christian Mission, into The Salvation Army whose mission was to carry the blood of Christ and the fire of the Holy Ghost into every corner of the world. They first started preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor, the homeless, the hungry, and the destitute of London in 1882 and then they spread their mission globally. Major Frederick Tucker and his team from London came to India and began living and dressing as the indigenous population. They worked among the low caste Hindu tribes and converted them to Christianity.

During British rule in India the rulers brought missionaries with them to satisfy their religious needs as well as educational needs of their children. These missionaries later found that the work

assigned to them is not sufficient for them to keep themselves busy thus they got permission from the rulers to allow them evangelize the common masses. Since they did not know the local language and the geographical areas, the missionaries were assisted by their local artisans in contacting people who were receptive to Christianity. Later, when these missionaries managed to convert some to Christianity they appointed some lay leaders to assist them in their missionary work. These lay men were designated catechist and that's how the tradition of catechist was integrated into south Asian tradition.

In the beginning of the 20th century there was a huge flow of missionaries to the sub-continent of India who were heavily engaged in the work of evangelization. The Christian community was growing in all parts of the sub-continent. The missionaries were also engaged in serving the community at large through medical care, education, development projects, housing and nursing homes, homes for destitute lepers, and those who were physically, spiritually and mentally challenged. However, in 1947 when Pakistan gained its independence under the two nation arrangement, missionary work of evangelization came to halt. The Christians who came into post-partition Pakistan remained unchanged up to the present day. The growth of the Christian community in Pakistan stopped. The missionaries were discouraged, visa restrictions were imposed and they were given the impression as though they were involved in espionage. The flow of foreign missionaries to Pakistan was blocked. The missionaries who had served the community in Pakistan for many years began leaving for the lands of their antecedent.

But the missionaries who remained in the country in spite of numerous hurdles imposed by the government of Pakistan continued rendering their great services for the larger community especially in the field of education and health care. The result of these great services is seen in the fact that most of the senior officers in all professions and in other walks of life in Pakistan have been educated and trained by the Christian Institutions. In spite of their high quality education and training, those people trained by the Christian Institutions never changed their attitude to missionaries, who continued to suffer hardship and hatred caused by the ruling elites. The result of this was that the numbers of these

missionaries in Pakistan is now virtually nil. The Christian community, since independence of Pakistan, seems now to be in terminal decline. The Christian legacy of spreading the good news across the world has been brought to a standstill in Pakistan.

The freedom movement and the creation of Pakistan

Without doubt Christians have played an important role in the freedom movement and in the creation of the Pakistan state. In the sub-continent most of the English Education Institutions were owned and governed by the Christian community and thus most of the renowned leaders of the Pakistan freedom movement were educated and trained from these institutions. The Christians in the sub-continent were well aware and better trained in Western democracy and western style of education than Hindus and Muslims of India. Therefore many renowned Christian leaders played a prominent role in the politics of sub-continent especially in the creation of Pakistan.

Christians of the sub-continent favored the *All India Muslim League* instead of the *All India Congress* believing that the Muslims are more secular in their traditions and philosophy than the cast-ridden Hindu society which hence voted for the creation of Pakistan where they thought their rights would be safeguarded as a religious minority.

In 1885, a British Christian, Allen Octaviam Hume, helped establish All India National Congress whose first president was a Bengali Christian, Mr. Banerjee. Apart from many renowned Christian leaders who played a substantial role in Pakistan freedom movement, Joshua Fazal-ul-Din gave a turning point to the movement when he wrote in the Daily '*Inqilab*' that "...Pakistan, having relationships with Central Asia, was a separate country and had no connection with the rest of India and that he was in harmony with Choudhry Rehmat Ali regarding the separation of this territory from India as it was in accordance with the voice of God".

Many prominent Muslim leaders considered the idea of Pakistan a childish and impracticable but Ch. Rehmat Ali who was

impressed by the statement of Joshua Fazal-ul-Din wrote in a later article that Pakistan would be a democratic country and that all citizens (irrespective of their colour, race or creed) would be equal in the affairs of the government.

The Nehru Report was rejected by Mr. Jinnah though his stand was very weak as perceived by the over-overwhelming majority of Hindus. However, the All India Christian Association supported his stance. Before the presentation of the Nehru Report, Iqbal praised India and Mrs. Sarojni Naido presented Mr. Jinnah as the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity. At that crucial time Joshua Fazal-ud-Din said that those believing in Hindu-Muslim unity were living in a fool's paradise as any such attempt would make India a war zone.

The All India Christian Association was established by Dewan Bahadur S.P. Singha in 1942. This association strongly sided for and associated with Mr. Jinnah and his All India Muslim League at very critical moments when there was a great opposition for the creation of a new Muslim state. At an All India Muslim League convention held on 18 November 1942 at Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) the All India Christian Association declared its unconditional and full co-operation to Mr. Jinnah with regard to his efforts for the freedom of Pakistan. The Christian leaders opposed the partition of the Punjab and demanded that whole of Punjab be included in Pakistan.

The Christian vote was the only decisive vote before the plans of the Boundary Commission were published on the basis of which the new state of Pakistan came into being. Christians voted for Pakistan because they believed that Mr. Jinnah would be the real protector of their rights and interests. Since the Christians' decisive vote set the foundation of Pakistan the leaders of All India Muslim League and Mr. Jinnah promised to give more privileges to the Christian community in the new Muslim state.

The Christian leaders Dewan Bahadur S.P Singha, C.E Gibbon and Fazal Elahi demanded of the Boundary Commission that the demarcation of the boundaries of Christian population be included and termed as Muslim. Mr. C-E Gibbon appeared before the Commission to demand that Lahore must be part of the Western Punjab and that all the Anglo Indian Christians be transported to Pakistan as it was considered to be their final destiny.

Prior to partition of India, Mr. Jinnah visited Lahore to garner support of the minority community for Pakistan. He met the Christian leader Ch. Chandu Lal and Sikh leader Giani Kartar Singh. The Sikh leader turned down his offer while Chandu Lal declared unconditional support of Christians for the creation of Pakistan. When the resolution to join Pakistan or India was moved and voted upon in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, the three Christian members voted in favour of Pakistan and saved the situation. 88 and 91 votes were cast in favour of India and Pakistan respectively. In this way the three Christian votes decided the fate of the new country.

During the freedom movement many Muslim religious leaders opposed Mr. Jinnah's stance and term him as the British agent but the Christians continued supporting him at the cost of opposing their own British co-religionists. The Christian community, as an expression of affection with Mr. Jinnah, arranged many historic receptions in his honor for supporting his cause.

During the time of the freedom movement's activities, the Christian community of India vehemently supported the cause of Pakistan. They opposed the dominance of the Hindu majority and the British Government and put their lot with the Muslims of Pakistan. At this time Jinnah forcefully reiterated his firm belief in the equal citizenship for all irrespective of colour, caste, race and creed in the forthcoming independent and sovereign state of Pakistan.

b. The growth and development of Pakistan

After the creation of Pakistan the Christians participated in all the constitutional deliberations to their best and played a significant role in the progress and development of the country. While addressing the first constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 11th August 1947, Jinnah categorically repeated his faith in the equal citizenship of all. He said *"Pakistan is not a theocratic state and so we would treat the people of other religions with tolerance. We welcome all persons irrespective of caste, color or creed as being equal citizens of Pakistan."* He also said: *"You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to*

any other places of worship in the State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State. [. . .] We are starting with this fundamental principle: that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State. Now, I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus will cease to be Hindus and Muslims will cease to be Muslims, not so in the religious sense because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state.”⁽¹⁾

In spite of Founding Father’s promises of maintaining religious freedom and equal rights for all, irrespective of caste or creed in the country, the successive constitutions failed to give affirmative provisions for the rights of minorities and could not prevent persecution and violence against the religious minorities. Now, as a result, in Pakistan Christians face religious, social, constitutional, economic and educational discrimination. During the 1970s and 1980s the extremists began to dominate, manipulate and overpower all the affairs of the country in the way which suited their religious biases. In this atmosphere the role of minorities especially of the Christians played during the freedom movement and in the progress of the country went onto the back burner. The history of Pakistan which is misinterpreted by these extremists has no mention of the role of Christians in the creation and defense of Pakistan.

Principally, through education but also through other institutions the Christian community has done much to develop Pakistan. Across the country Christians established educational institutions, orphanages, homes for disabled children, leprosy centres and schools for the blind, deaf and dumb – the list is endless, also, schools for women’s empowerment, health and education, Nursing homes, housing and many charitable organizations for women’s welfare, including trust funds were established. These institutions have transformed the lives of the masses, shaping the country’s history and its future. Christians also played a very important role in the defense of the country, serving in the Pakistan Air Force, and other Military and Civil Security Services. The Christians, though very small in number, are like a leaven in the bread, yet they have done so much for this country. Their great services, contribution, dedication and love for this

country show that they are integral part of the whole and cannot be excluded due to its small size as a religious minority.

The Christian educational institutions in the first place helped the Christian community of Pakistan to achieve its present size and position. The institutions provided the real Christian spirit to the neophytes. The community has benefitted not only by its services but is enabled to play a meaningful role in the society. They supported the depressed and the underprivileged people to improve their status in the society.⁽²⁾

These institutions not only served the Christian community, but in the sub-continent most of the renowned leaders of the Pakistan freedom movement were educated in these institutions. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Ch. Rehmat Ali and Muhammad Zafarullah were product of these institutions. The most prominent institutions were the C.M.S School, Karachi; Bandera Convent School, Bombay; St. Stephens College, Delhi; Murray College, Sialkot; Gorden College, Rawalpindi; F.C. College, Lahore; Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore; and Edwards College, Peshawar. After partition the most prominent Christian educational institutions were spread widely throughout the country. It is a fact that most of the leading politicians and professionals are the product of these institutions.

They were the source of pride for Christians but their values were undermined when the government of Pakistan nationalized their educational institutions in 1972.

Nationalization was haphazard that unraveled a sound policy. Most private schools and colleges in Pakistan were run by missionaries. Once they were nationalized, most missionary teachers left and they were unable to be replaced with qualified staff. The lack of teachers training programs was another factor that contributed to the fall in the standard of public education.

As *Nazam-i-Mustafa* (Islamisation) was announced in the country in 1977 and the restoring of the institutions became difficult because the Christian institutions were falsely termed as a tool for conversions. Maulana Maudoodi says, "*The Muslims educated in Christian institutions, no doubt are not converted to Christianity, but they cease to be Muslims either*".⁽³⁾ For the Muslims the expansion of Christianity in Pakistan is a threat to Islam. Therefore, expansion is controlled by controlling the

educational institutions. In order to smooth their way, they violated the sacred rights and relegated Christians in status to that of an insignificant minority.

In 1988 the government denationalized some educational institutions. However, some of the nationalized institutions were completely or partially denationalized before being handed over to the owners in a dilapidated condition.

The local and international media is constantly reporting the violation of constitutionally guaranteed rights. Due to these violations the Christian communities feel vulnerable and alienated, and thus powerless. The Christians in Pakistan are being systematically dehumanized.

The total population of Christians in Pakistan is between 2.05 million or 2.09 million comprising 42 percent of total minority population. Between 82.5 and 90 percent of Christians live in the province of Punjab and about 95 percent are ethnically Punjabi. Appendix – I shows the statistics and the percentage of Christians relative to the other minority groups in Pakistan.⁽⁴⁾

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS SITUATION

In this chapter, it is intended to study the social, economic and religious situation of the Christian minority in Pakistan. At the first instance, looking at the history of Indo-Pak, it is generally understood by scholars that the low castes were converted to Christianity, and were involved in the economy as Haris and sweepers. Secondly, follows the discussion on the minorities' role in raising the social, economic and religious status of the new converts. Finally, it deals with the fundamental rights of the Pakistani Christians, such as the denationalization of the educational institutions and religious freedom following the burning of Churches and Colonies.

Conversion to Christianity

St. Thomas the Apostle, heeding the command of Jesus, ⁽¹⁾ entered the sub-continent in order to sow the seed of Christianity. After St. Thomas, the missionary activities were minimal until the 16th century when Christianity began to flourish due to the Portuguese Jesuit missionaries who were called and were established in the courts of Moghul emperors Akbar and Jahangir. They were allowed to build their churches. However, when Shah

Jahan came into power he dismissed missionaries and demolished the churches. ⁽²⁾ From then on until the middle of the 19th century, the missionary work was almost abandoned in the sub-continent. However, the roots of Christianity in the sub- continent are deep and go back to St. Thomas and in Pakistan, with the recovery of a cross and other relevant objects from Taxila, its roots have been traced back to the second century AD. With the recovery of the Taxila Cross, it has been established that the Christians are natives of Pakistan and their heritage and past go back to the early centuries of the Christian era. Christians are, therefore, *sons of the soil* and arguably have roots much deeper than the Muslim majority of Pakistan. However, for centuries the Christian population in the sub-continent has remained minimal.

The last few years of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century have been the most favorable for the growth of Christianity in this land. The period was characterized by western missionaries of a variety of Christian denominations who entered Indo-Pak with evangelizing zeal. In the beginning of 19th century United Presbyterians, Anglicans and Roman Catholic Missionaries started converting masses to Christianity from high class Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs but the conversion rate remained very low. Apart from conversion work the missionaries kept serving the English and Goan Christians in military, and railways in different parts of the country.

The missionaries began their work in the urban areas and believed that winning over the upper classes (Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs) was a better strategy than attempting to reach out lower classes. ⁽³⁾ Therefore, after so many years of struggle they succeeded in winning a few souls from the upper castes who suffered great dislocation and persecution. Most of the time, they became a burden on the missionaries. It was difficult to establish a strong Christian community with such converts, which caused the missionaries to revise their attitude regarding conversions. Then the movement among the depressed classes began. The depressed classes of the Punjab (commonly known as *chuhras*) were lowest and most despised of all groups. ⁽⁴⁾

The term 'Dalit' has roots in Sanskrit where the root 'dal' means 'to split, crack, open'. 'Dalit' has come to mean things or persons who are cut, split, broken or torn as under, scattered or crushed and

destroyed. By coincidence, there is in Hebrew a root 'dal' meaning low, weak, poor. In the Bible, different forms of this term have been used to describe people who have been reduced to nothingness or helplessness. The present usage of the term Dalit means the Outcastes and Untouchables as the oppressed and the broken victims of Hindu caste-ridden society. *Dalit does not mean Caste or low-Caste or poor*, it refers to the deplorable state or condition to which a large group of people has been reduced by social convention and in which they are now living.⁽⁵⁾

Dalits are called by many different names in different parts of India. These names were given by the Caste people as expressions of contempt; these names include: *Dasa, Dasysa, Raksasa, Asura, Avarna, Nisada, Panchama, Chandala, Harijan and Untouchable*. Each of these names has a history and background. Besides these names, there are a number of other titles or names which have been given to them at the level of the regional language. For example, *Chuhra* in Punjabi, *Bhangi* or *Lal Beghi* in Hindi, *Mahtar* in Marathi, *Mala* in Telugu, *Paraiya* in Tamil and *Pulayan* in Malayalam. These names carry within them the two-term contrast of "we-the pure" and "you-the impure". Since mostly Punjabi dalits converted to Christianity and Sikhism, they were named as *chuhras*.⁽⁶⁾

Chuhra (Punjabi) became a caste (name or title) in Punjab and other northern Indian states whose traditional occupation is sweeping. *Chuhras* are largely followers of Sikhism and Christianity. A small minority practice Valmikism, an offshoot or cult form of mainstream Hinduism which still incorporates elements of Sikhism in its practices. They are treated as untouchables or Dalits as they occupy the lowest category in Hinduism's religious hierarchy.⁽⁷⁾

The story of *chuhra* converts to Christianity began on November 17, 1872 when Nathu, a Hindu of the Jat caste (a Punjabi forward class) was baptized by the Rev. J. S. Barr at Sialkot. Since he was from a higher caste and a son of *Lambardar* (village Head), he soon became his father's heir bringing disappointment to missionaries but he brought a man called Ditt who was baptized and later became the founder leader responsible for the present Church of the Christian community of the Punjab.⁽⁸⁾

Ditt was from much lower and much despised *chuhra* tribe of a small village named Shahabdike in Sialkot District. In spite of great opposition from his family and tribe, in August 1873 he took his wife, daughter and two neighbors to Sialkot walking 30 miles from his village to get baptized. In 1884, eleven years after his baptism, he brought 200 persons to the Christian faith. By 1900 half of the population of his community had accepted Christ and by 1915 almost all the Dalits known as *chuhras* of Sialkot District had become Christians.⁽⁹⁾

There were several founders of Christianity in different regions of Indo-Pak, all from tribes of the *chuhra* caste. The most famous ones are Ditt of Sialkot district, Vethamanskam who established the Church at Karalla and Venkayya who is the founder of Andhra Pradesh Church.⁽¹⁰⁾

The *Chuhras*, whether rural or urban, performed those duties and jobs which the Hindus, Muslims and other groups considered most degrading and which made them untouchables. They lived in separate section on the outskirts of the village or in a separate part of the town. In many places they were forbidden to use certain roads, schools, and temples so as not to pollute others. A *Chuhra* was so despised that even his shadow was carefully avoided lest a higher caste's man be defiled by it.⁽¹¹⁾ Rigveda designate *churas* as *dasas* (slaves) who are outside of divine reality.

The *Chuhras* were conscious of their degraded position in their society and had a strong desire to improve it. The only way out for them was to join some other religion and raise their position. For this purpose many of them joined Islam, Sikhism and Hinduism but none of these religions gave them equal status. The *Chuhras* who joined Sikhism were called *Mazhabi* Sikhs 'by religion'. Islam named them *Musallis orKutanas*. Hindus tried to remove the stigma of 'untouchability' by performing a special ceremony of purification (*shuddhi*) but the stigma was never removed.⁽¹²⁾ However, the *Chuhras* who embraced Christianity found an improved social standing and achieved equal opportunities on an equal footing with their Christian neighbors. They were able to enter and pray in a church without being inferior to others; nevertheless there were certain reactions from the upper caste Christians. The equality and status provided by Christianity helped huge numbers of *Chuhras* convert to Christianity.

Guru Nanak (15th century), the founder of Sikhism, rejected the caste system in Hinduism and found a new religion declaring all human beings are equal. Hearing Guru Nanak's message, *chuhras* turn to Sikhism but the upper caste Sikhs (Jatts, Rajputs) adopted a discriminatory attitude and began calling them *Mazhbi* Sikhs with whom they did not mix nor intermarried.⁽¹³⁾

The *Chuhras* were largely converted to Christianity from *Mazhbi* Sikhs and the Hindu religion. A very few *Chuhras* converted to Islam called *Bhangis*. Now most of the converted *Chuhras* who embraced Sikhism, Christianity and Islam are mainly living in Pakistani Punjab (also other parts of Pakistan), Indian Punjab, Moradabad and Bijnor Districts in Uttar Pradesh in India. The remaining *Chuhras* who did not leave the Hindu faith continue to occupy the lowest rank in the Hindu religion hierarchy and are found throughout India.⁽¹⁴⁾

The other factor which made *Chuhras* embrace Christianity was the common elements in the two religions. They believed in one God, the Bala Shah was their mediator and high priest. They also believed that the spirit returns to God at death, the resurrection of the body, and judgment, angels, good and evil spirits, sin as a reality, sacrifice and offerings.⁽¹⁵⁾

The missionaries attracted the masses with their foreign aid, institutions and their way of life. They were now blessed with countless conversions. The Christianity which had struggled to survive from the time of St. Thomas up until the 19th century became a sizeable community in the sub-continent within just a few years.

In reality, the early missionaries, like Robert de Nebule, Ziegenbalg, Bishop Middleton and Alexander Duff of India, were not in favor of Dalit Christians and *chuhras* converting to the Christian faith. But ultimately the missionaries realized that they have to refocus their outreach from the large towns and cities to the country's villages; from the educated classes and people with a good social position to the poor and downtrodden in Punjab. Although the missionaries converted Dalits to Christianity, in spirit they never fully accepted them as Christians. The missionaries always supported the upper caste Christians with whom they felt at ease. The upper caste Christians never mixed with the Dalit converts. They refused to pray alongside Dalit Christians.⁽¹⁶⁾

This attitude of the missionaries and upper caste Christians had a negative effect on the Dalit Christians. The Punjabi Christians even today would like to forget their painful identity had in the past; they are afraid to talk about the past which reveals their low social status and background.

The missionaries established separate mission compounds and colonies for the Dalit converts to isolate and strengthen the faith of these new converts who were still considered to be heathens. Establishing separate places for the Punjabi Christians helped to create a very distinctive Christian culture and also projected an image which reflected 'chuhra culture' or the 'Christian culture' in a negative light. In Punjab (whether in India or Pakistan), 99% of Christians have a Dalit background.

The missionaries provided only a *partial salvation* to the Dalit Christians because they did not make efforts to relate the teaching of the Christian faith to the lives of ordinary people. They dealt only with moral issues, or personal holiness and other-worldly spirituality. This is the main reason for the perpetuation of *dalitness* within the inner being of the new converts. Even the Missionary Theology of Medieval Europe and Indian Christian Theology did not cure the Dalitness of the new converts; instead they perpetuated Dalitness in the Dalits.⁽¹⁷⁾

Thus the Christians in Pakistan not only suffer due to their minority status but also suffer from the perception that Christianity is a foreign religion; the structures of authority maintained by the churches culturally promoted stratification within the flock.

Haris and Sweepers

The low castes that had been converted to Christianity, although considered equal in the church, remained the lowest stratum in Pakistani society on the basis of their work, their lifestyle and their origin.⁽¹⁸⁾ Most of the Punjabi Christians of Pakistan are sweepers and Haris, whether in the villages or in towns. For Muslim majority sweeping is considered the lowest among all the occupations.⁽¹⁹⁾ Even in the field of agriculture the Haris are the lowest in rank but their social position is somewhat better than the sweepers.

Haris

In Pakistani villages, there are three categories of Christian workers. The first category is the *seypi* Christians who serve in landlords' houses, their work being to clean the premises and to assist at harvest, to collect animal dung and take messages. The second category is the *Athri* Christians who perform agricultural activities and serve one man (usually the landlord) or family only, to whom they are committed by debt. The third category is of Haris, who work as agricultural laborers. They cultivate the land as tenants and sometimes they own shares in the crops. They are more numerous than other classes of Christian sweepers.⁽²⁰⁾

Before partition in 1947 the Christian Haris worked on the land of the Hindus and Sikhs who owned large tracts of land, so they were unable to cultivate by themselves. After partition the Christian Haris lost their share in land due to the migration of their Hindu and Sikh masters to partitioned India. The land which was owned by one Hindu or Sikh was to be divided among several owners which pressurized them into cultivating the land on their own. Therefore, the Christian Haris were starved of land under the Muslims and this caused unemployment and unrest.⁽²¹⁾

Due to unemployment, the Haris began to migrate to other cities where they became sweepers. Some of them settled in the Christian colonies established by the missionaries. A few managed to obtain some land under government land schemes but most of them became wanderers. They moved all over the country in search of employment in the agricultural sector.

The land reforms and modern machines harmed the Haris traditional life style. The unstable economic factors also forced the Haris to leave their traditional occupations and become sweepers for which there was an increasing demand in the cities. The Haris vulnerable situation must be taken very seriously if minorities are to play a role in the wider society.

Sweepers

The question could be asked - why did the Christians obtain defiled work such as sweeping? One thing is sure. They did not take to this work willingly.

Firstly, partition caused unemployment which compelled the Christians to migrate to those towns where life was totally disorganized. Everyone was in need of security and safety for which it was necessary to find employment and shelter quickly.

Christians lacked time and motivation to look for, or to wait for, suitable employment. In this chaotic situation Christians turned to sweeping which was familiar to them. The other factor was the migration of Muslim *Muhajirs* (refugees) to the towns where they were held in great respect and were given assistance in everything. It was not possible for Christians to compete with these *Muhajirs*. Also, compared to *Muhajirs*, the Christian migrants lacked the professional expertise required for most work. Moreover, the demand for sweepers was substantial due to the increase in the urban population.⁽²²⁾

Relatives of the town sweepers who remained in the villages were attracted by the atmosphere and the lifestyle of the town dwellers. Desiring a brighter future, they migrated to the towns where ultimately they became sweepers. They did not all migrate at the same time as did the *Muhajirs* from India. Their migration to the towns ranged over a number of years and continues to this day.⁽²³⁾ Muslims consider them to be inferior and impure and so they have isolated them. Just as the *Chuhras* lived isolated in or just outside villages, so the Christians were required to locate their dwellings in marginal areas or on the outskirts of towns.⁽²⁴⁾

Due to job opportunities in the Middle East and elsewhere, many Christians go to other countries in search of work. They return to Pakistan with money and electronic trinkets, but not knowing how to use their money wisely. They have not been able to climb the social and economic ladders, but rather remain in the same stratum as when they left Pakistan.⁽²⁵⁾ Their improved status in Islamic society is based on financial prosperity and on higher occupations. This presents a challenge to all involved with the issues facing minorities.

Missionaries

Although the seeds of Christianity were sown in the sub-continent by St. Thomas, they failed to bear fruit until the 19th century. Millions of people remained ignorant of Christ over the centuries. The oppressed were looking for release. At last God said, “*I have seen the affliction of my people and have heard their cry because of their task masters; I know their sufferings, and have come down to deliver them, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey*”⁽²⁶⁾ Therefore, God sent His missionaries “...to preach good news to

the poor. . . . release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."⁽²⁷⁾ The dedication, tireless efforts and prayerful lives of the missionaries provide the history of Christianity in the sub-continent. Not only did they bring the masses to Christ but also tried to maintain their social, economic and religious status. After a few years of their efforts we find a sizeable Christian community, which had established churches, schools, hospitals and other charitable institutions throughout Punjab.⁽²⁸⁾

In 1889 the Capuchin missionaries arrived in Punjab and consolidated the Diocese of Lahore. In this Diocese, along with the Cathedral and the Bishop's House, churches, schools, colleges and orphanages were made available for the service of new converts.⁽²⁹⁾ Missionaries of all denominations established colonies for Christian families all over the Punjab. The most famous colonies are Maryabad, Khushpur, Francisabad, Antoniabad, Clarkabad, Montgomerywala, Isa Nagri, Stuntzabad, Youngsonabad, Shanti Nagar and so on. In these colonies the missionaries acted as spiritual as well as social leaders. They nurtured the ideal of a dedicated Christian life, both socially and from a religious perspective.⁽³⁰⁾

All these establishments helped the Christian community to achieve a certain standard in society. Under the patronage of missionaries, Christians made progress in the fields of education, medicine, agriculture and religion. Up until nationalization of Christian educational institutions in 1972, the best educational institutions of Pakistan were run by the Christians. In the medical field, we find that the majority of nurses are Christian in most of the nation's hospitals. The land provided for Christians in the form of colonies has been the best help from missionaries in the field of agriculture. The progress in religion can be demonstrated by the fact that the Pakistan Church is now a local Church.

As the past opened up before this scribe's eyes, a profound respect is born in heart for the missionaries. Their efforts in improving the social, economic and religious position of Christians deserve high praise. Their strategy of providing Christians with separate institutions and colonies helped improve community's position and avoid discrimination by Muslims. However, this made

Christians permanently isolated.⁽³¹⁾ Resultantly, there was minimal social, economic and functional interaction between Christians and Muslims. Unless we improve interaction we cannot see each other's strengths, we cannot face challenges and we cannot be a part of the larger society. Let us begin with whatever our elders or missionaries had failed to do. Let us fill the gap.

The fundamental rights

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948 states that *“there is to be no distinction made between people because of race, color, or religion”* (art. 2), and that *“everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. (art.18).⁽³²⁾* Pakistan is signatory to the Declaration and the Pakistan constitution guarantees the protection of fundamental rights of the minorities. It says: *“...the state shall safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minorities, including their representation in the Federal and Provincial services”.*⁽³³⁾ It also says: *“...freedom to profess religion and manage religious institutions. Subject to the law, public order and morality, every religious denomination and every sect thereof shall have the right to establish its religious institutions”*⁽³⁴⁾

The rights of minorities in Pakistan have been eroded step by step, so much so that the solemn statement in the Constituent Assembly by the founder of the nation, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, that Pakistan will not be a theocratic state and the state will not discriminate between caste or creed, but all will be equal citizens, have been flouted and the assurance given by all successive governments were mere empty slogans. Looking into the last 68 years all assurances and promises have been nullified. The Christian minority have been progressively deprived of their fundamental and human rights as equal citizens reducing the minorities to the status of second class citizens. Despite the fact that the Founder of Pakistan emphatically stated in the Constituent Assembly that religion is a personal matter of the individual, religion is being enforced by the Pakistan Penal Code. The primary function of any government is to maintain law and order to protect life and property of all the citizens, but the human rights of minorities are being violated as a result of revisions in the Pakistan Penal Code made from 1980 to 1985.

Christians are citizens of Pakistan. They are contributing their best for the prosperity and honour of the country. They did not migrate from any other territory and their forefathers have been here for thousands of years. In spite of being the original natives and owners of this land they have been watching a process in which they are day by day deprived of their basic human rights. The present situation of the Christian minority is very gloomy. They are beginning to feel alien in their own motherland. They feel threatened by every move of the fundamentalist and fanatics of the majority religion in Pakistan. Their lives, property, jobs and dignity are not safe. They are officially discriminated on the basis of religion and are de facto second-class citizens.

Christians are people of dialogue but this road to dialogue has been made very difficult. Their fundamental rights are eroded step by step. For example: -

- A. The rights of minorities are protected by the existing constitution to a certain extent. Yet there are some articles which give the impression that minorities are deprived of equal rights. For example, no minority member can even be considered to be a candidate to be the President of Pakistan. This is against the equal rights in state. This may give the impression that Pakistan is only for the Muslim, of the Muslims and by the Muslim. What then about the Christians, Hindus, Parsees, Ahmadies, Sikhs and other tribal religions in the country. Pakistan was created by the efforts, sacrifices and resolutions of the minority members as well. Christians in the Constituent Assembly played a crucial role in the creation of Pakistan. Those who deny this fact know nothing of the history of Pakistan which has become a history of Muslims.
- B. Christian students are not allowed to teach religion in the schools. A student of the majority community can learn and take exams for his or her religion whereas Christians cannot. Why?
- C. The Sharia law with the goal of Islamising all aspects of Pakistan's government and society was adopted in 1991. This law nullifies those rights guaranteed in the United Nation Declaration of Human Rights to which Pakistan is a signatory, as well as more recent United Nations

Conventions on elimination of intolerance and discrimination based on religion and belief (1981). Through this Sharia Law, the rights provided in the constitution of Pakistan in Article 20 and 25, and those mentioned in the Objective Resolution, as well as the sacred assurances given to the minorities by the Father of the nation, the Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, are all in jeopardy.

- D. In the mass media (radio, TV and press) sometimes derogatory presentations of Christianity and Christians are made which are blasphemous and hurtle to the feelings and sentiments of Christians. Several examples can be given from TV, lectures, radio programmes and the press.
- E. Another experience common to the minorities is the kidnapping of Christian girls as well as married women who are declared converted to Islam overnight. In the case of married women converted to Islam her first Christian marriage is declared null and void.
- F. Articles 295C of the Pakistan Penal Code, in their present form, are vague and general and thus are often used to settle personal scores. These laws have resulted in the murder of many Christians in the past. These laws are incapable of providing justice, and create doubts about the possibility of a fair trial due to threats and pressure on trial judges, lawyers and local civil administration. Finally these have no provision for equal punishment for false/accusations.
- G. Economically too, Christians belong to poor class. They do not own factories, mills or shopping plazas. Moreover, they face immense difficulty and discrimination in obtaining government or private job.

Christians are discriminated against. There is no harm in accepting this reality. There is no need to pretend that they enjoy equal status and their equal rights are safeguarded. The world knows it and well aware of their problems. Quite often, government dignitaries and officials, while visiting foreign countries, are questioned about the condition of human rights and particularly that of Christians in Pakistan. Amnesty International and other human rights organizations also testify to these realities. Reports prepared

by the different governments also agree with the problems of minorities.

For example, US State Department 1993 human rights report on Pakistan writing on freedom of religion (Page 11, 12) states: “Minority groups fear that the 1991 Shariat Law’s goals of Islamising all aspects of Pakistan government and society may further restrict freedom to practice their religion. The religious legislation has encouraged and atmosphere of religious intolerance which has led to acts of violence directed at Ahmadies and Christians. For example in 1993 a landlord from Sindh province bulldozed over 300 homes, a church, and a school, destroying a 30 year old Christian village, rather than wait for a civil court’s order in a land dispute. No action had been taken against the landlord as of the year’s end”.

Again in the section on Religious minorities, page 18 the report says: “There is much discrimination against religious minority groups in employment and education, and several international labour organization bodies expressed concern in 1993 that Pakistan’s early years, minorities were able to rise to the senior ranks of the military and civil services. Today, many are unable to rise above mid-level ranks. Because of the lack of educational opportunities for some religious minority groups discrimination in employment is believed to be increasingly prevalent. Christians in particular have difficulty finding jobs above those menial labors.”

Religious freedom:

Burning of Churches, Colonies and Institutions

On 14th of August 1947, Pakistan came into existence as an independent sovereign state for the Muslims of former British India. Since it was created for the Muslims, it became the laboratory of Islam.⁽³⁵⁾ In this laboratory, to understand the attitude of Muslims towards religious freedom of the minorities, let us refer to the Holy Qu’ran.

Sura 2.256 says “...*Let there be no compulsion in religion: truth stands out clear from error: whoever rejects evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trust worthy hand-hold, which never breaks.*” It means that non-Muslims are not to be coerced into

professing Islam and that it is the human right of non-Muslims living in territories governed by Muslims that they should have the freedom to follow their own faith-traditions without fear or harassment.⁽³⁶⁾

The Holy Qu'ran recognizes the human right of religious freedom, not only in the case of other believers in God, but also in the case of pagans, as long as they're not aggressive towards Muslims. For instance "*...if one amongst the pagans ask thee for asylum, grant it to him, so that he may hear the work of God; and then escort him to where he can be secured*" (Sura 9.6).

The Qu'ranic God is rabb-a-alamin, God of all the people, whose mercy extends to all creatures (7.156). Iqbal was an exceptional Muslim, in that he could go so far as to say "*...the infidel with a wakeful heart praying to an idol is better than a Muslim who is sleeping in the mosque*".⁽³⁷⁾

The above mentioned Qu'ranic exhortations call for inter-religious tolerance, understanding, equality and freedom. Even in the constitution of Pakistan, the Qu'ranic reflections on minorities are repeated. Especially in the preamble, religious equality and tolerance is stressed. In Pakistan we find time and again that Muslims deviate from above mentioned principles. Generally, in Islamic states, whatever is prescribed theoretically is not fully put into practice. In theory, a minority is fully protected and allowed to profess and propagate its faith, but in practice the minority suffers many bitter experiences.

In Pakistan there are many examples of religious intolerance where Christian places of worship, properties and houses have suffered arson attacks. On 5/6 February 1997, 3 Churches in Khanewal city and 4 churches and hundreds of houses in Shantinagar village and 5 Churches in another village near Khanewal were destroyed by fire. In 2001 a massacre of Christian worshippers took place at St. Dominic Church, Model Town, Bahawalpur.

There are very many instances of terrorist attacks on Christian places of work and worship. These are listed in Appendix – II.

Some Unforgettable Days Events that made Pakistani Christians uneasy

October 1, 1972:

Nationalization of Christian schools, colleges and hospitals.

September 1978: Separate Electorate:

Gen. ZiaulHaq asked the Election Commission to start fresh enrolment, delimitation and amend relevant laws for separate electorate.

1979: Promulgation of Evidence Act, Hudood Ordinance 1979.

November 27, 1979:

Burning of Catholic schools and Churches:

Presentation Convent High School, Rawalpindi was attacked and burnt.

1986: Blasphemy Law & Cases:

Section 295-B & 295-C were added to the Pakistan Penal Code.

April 20, 1989:

A Church building at Salamatpura, Lahore was attacked by a mob.

1990: Promulgation of Qisas and Diyat Ordinance 1990.

November 10, 1990:

Students stoned St. John's Church, Peshawar City.

December 1990: Tahir Iqbal, Lahore:

A former Pakistan Air Force Mechanic who converted to Christianity was arrested and booked under Blasphemy Law, died mysteriously in jail on July 19, 1991.

May 2, 1991: The punishment for blasphemy became a death sentence.

June 5, 1991: Shariat Act:

In this Act there is no description of the political rights of the non-Muslims.

October 8, 1991 Chand Barkat, Karachi:

An FIR against him was lodged under Blasphemy Act. Additional Session Judge acquitted him on January 24, 1993.

January 6, 1992 Niamat Ahmer, Faisalabad:

A teacher and poet was murdered by a Muslim student Farooq Ahmed for alleged blasphemy.

October 13, 1992 National Identity Card:

It was decided to insert a separate column for religion in the NIC.

January 24, 1993 Chand Barkat, Karachi:

The Additional Session Judge acquitted him of the charges under Blasphemy Act.

February 2, 1993 Anwar Masih, Samundri (Faisalabad):

A scuffle with a local shopkeeper resulted in his being charged with blasphemy.

May 11, 1993 Manzoor Masih, Rehmat Masih and Salamat Masih, Gujranwala:

Arrested on the charge of blasphemy.

August 23, 1993:

The High Court reserved its decision that non-Muslims can contest elections for general seats that are reserved only for Muslim candidates.

October 30, 1993:

The Supreme Court reserved a ruling it issued in August that had allowed Naeem Shakir, a Christian lawyer, to contest on the general seat from Constituency PP.126.

April 5, 1994:

Manzoor Masih was killed while he was coming to attend the hearing at District Session Court.

February 23, 1995: Lahore High Court acquitted Rehmat Masih and Salamat Masih.

April 21, 1995 Catherine Shaheen:

A 32-year-old principal of Government Girls High School was implicated in a blasphemy case.

November 13, 1995 Mukhtar Masih:

A 50-year-old Christian from Kasur city, died after a brutal beating by the police.

February 12, 1996:

In Kasur, 300 houses belonging to a Christian basti were razed to the ground including a makeshift Church – all without notice.

October 15, 1996: Ayub Masih and Samson (brothers), Sahiwal:

An FIR was lodged for having blasphemed against the Prophet (PBUH). Later Samson was released.

January 4, 1997: Nelson Manawwar Rahi Umer, Rawalpindi:

He was working as Naib Qasid of the principal of Rawalpindi General Hospital Nursing School when arrested under 295 – B and 295 – C.

Gul Masih, Sargodha:

Became the first person to be awarded the death sentence under Section 295 – C.

Bantu Masih, Lahore:

While he was being questioned for blasphemy at the police station the complainant arrived and stabbed him several times.

On August 9, 2002 grenades were thrown into a chapel of Taxila Christian Hospital killing four and wounding 25 men and women. On September 25, 2002 a Christian charity in Karachi was attacked killing six people. On December 25, 2002 a grenade was tossed into a Presbyterian church in Chianwala killing three girls. On November 14, 2005 unruly mob in Faisalabad set fire to five churches, a dozen houses, three schools, a dispensary, a convent and two parsonages. In November 2005, a mob of 3,000 militants attacked Christians in Sangla Hill and destroyed Roman Catholic, Salvation Army and United Presbyterian churches. On February 27, 2006, two churches were set on fire in Sukkur, Sindh. On August 2006, a church and Christian homes were attacked in a village outside of Lahore leaving three Christians seriously injured. The attackers also burned Church building and desecrated Holy Bibles.

In 2009, 100 Christian houses were set on fire and 14 Christians were burnt alive in Gojra Town. At least 20 people, including police officials, were wounded as 500 Muslim demonstrators attacked the Christian community in Gujranwala city on April 29, 2011. Whilst on September 23, 2012, St. Paul's Lutheran Church was destroyed, and a car, 9 bikes, St Paul's high school, a library, a computer laboratory and houses of four clergymen, including Bishop were set on fire. On March 9, 2013, 160 Christian houses, 18 shops and 2 churches were burnt in Joseph Colony Lahore and on September 22, 2013, All Saints Church was blasted and 78 Christians were killed by suicide bombers in Peshawar. On September 24, 2013 a Church was burnt in Korangi Karachi. On March 15, 2015 two blasts took place at Roman Catholic Church and Christ Church at Youhanabad Lahore. At least 15 people were killed and seventy were wounded in the attacks. From 1997 till 2015 altogether 21 Churches have been destroyed by fire in Pakistan.

Due to religious intolerance not only were Christian places of worship, properties and houses subject to arson attacks but also many Christians lost their lives. A list of targeted acts of terrorism on Pakistani Christians by religious Muslims since September 11, 2001 is given at Appendix – III.³⁸

There are other factors such as humiliation of Christians on Holy days and Feast Days when restrictions are imposed on the use of loudspeaker for celebration of holy mass and other religious ceremonies. In all these cases the lukewarm and pharisaic attitude of the government irritates the minority. Arguably, the remedy for all these problems is to continually remind Muslims of what the Qu'ran, Sunna, the Father of the Nation and the Constitution of Pakistan say about the fundamental rights of the minorities.

Pakistan is a Muslim country and in this overwhelmingly Muslim society sectarian consciousness is very strong. Suni or Shia comprehension of Islam is somehow conflicting. In Pakistan the individual confines himself to the bounds of his own school of thought instead of recognizing the fundamental identity of the Muslims as a whole. Each sect claims that it is true to Islam and that others have nothing to do with Islam.⁽³⁹⁾ It is more severe when it comes to the non-Muslims.

In this sectarian chaotic society, what is the role of Christians? Should they blame the unruly crowd who burn their places of worship or should they blame the government? Should they blame individuals or the Islamic society? Or should they blame themselves for their failure to explain their faith and commonalities among Christians and Muslims even after living for so many years among the Muslim brethren?

How can non-Muslims have equal rights, freedom and citizenship when in the Constitution of the country one article says one thing and the other goes in the opposite direction? Article 25 articulates that “...*all citizens are equal before the law*” while Article 2 says that “...*Islam shall be the state religion*” and the ‘*Holy Quran*’ and the ‘*Sunnah*’ as “*the supreme law and source of guidance for all legislations*”. When one religion, to the exclusion of all others, is established by the State, how can the followers of other faiths be equal citizens? Can they have equal rights and freedom?”⁽⁴⁰⁾

It is also declared in Article 41(2) that only a Muslim can become President and Prime Minister of Pakistan and a Muslim can only be appointed a judge in the Federal Shariat Court. In Article 260 the citizens of Pakistan are divided into two categories by naming them “Muslim” and “Non-Muslim,” thus facilitating and encouraging discrimination in the country on the basis of religion.

Not only this, the Constitution of Pakistan clearly remains discriminatory against non-Muslims. For example a non-Muslim assuming an office in the government has to take an Islamic oath not of his/her own religion. On 24 March 2007, Justice Rana Bhagwandas (non-Muslim) was sworn in as Acting Chief Justice of Pakistan and he had to recite the Qur'anic prayer: "*May Allah Almighty help and guide me, (A'meen)*" and not a prayer of his own faith.

Forced Conversions

In June 2016, the Senate Standing Committee on Religious Affairs not only termed forced conversions "illegal" but also against the principles of Islam. Committee's Chairman, Senator Hafiz Hamdullah, raised the issue of forced conversions with Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Chairman Siddiq ul Farooq as he was working closely with minorities in the country. "Forced conversion is against the teachings of Islam and also a violation of the law of the land," Senator Hamdullah said, adding, "it is unfortunate that girls are being forced to convert". He added that religion was a personal matter for every individual and no one could be converted by force. Leader of the house in Senate Raja Zafarul Haq also echoed this view, saying: "This is not a service to Islam. We are already under observation from human rights organizations due to growing incidents of forced conversions." Providing details, PPP Senator Gian Chand said that Hindu girls in Sindh were the victims of forced conversions and such cases were alarmingly common in that province. "This is mainly because police and local administration do not help the victims or their families, fearing a reaction from the local Muslim community," he said. The committee was told by the ETPB chairman that "an individual named Mian Mitthu was active in this regard, encouraging his followers to force young girls to become Muslims". In his ruling, the committee chairman demanded that the government formulate a comprehensive mechanism for the protection of women from minority communities. The committee also directed the federal and provincial governments to draft legislation which would curb the practice. (*Daily Dawn, Karachi, 22 June 2016*)

Forced religious conversion is the adoption of a different religion under duress. It is an acceptance of a philosophy against

the will of the subject, often with the threatened consequence of physical penalties or harm. These penalties could be a loss of job, social isolation, incarceration, black mailing, and torture or death. Apart from this the forced conversion also takes place due to trivial reasons such as when one aspires to change his/her social class, for example by marital conversion, deathbed conversion, conversion of convenience and forced conversion by violence. However, in the case of forced conversion the convert may secretly retain the previous beliefs and continue, covertly, with the practices of the original religion, while outwardly maintaining the forms of the new religion.

Forced conversions in Pakistan have become the latest weapon of Islamic extremists and a growing campaign against Pakistan's religious minorities, on top of assassinations and mob intimidation in places of worship. The minority groups are increasingly fearful if they still have a place in Pakistan. *"It is a conspiracy that Hindus and Christians and other minorities should leave Pakistan."* People from the minority communities feel increasingly insecure.

The government is too weak to respond effectively, and in some cases it is overtly complicit even as it panders to extremist groups for votes. The Information Secretary for the Punjab Provincial Government says politicians and police are afraid. Incessant bickering among political parties, the judiciary, the federal government and the military has worked in favor of extremists.

Conversion in Pakistan can only be one-way traffic. A non-Muslim can be converted to Islam but a Muslim cannot be converted to another religion. Thus all conversions taking place in Pakistan are forced conversions. After a woman from a minority community in Pakistan is abducted, raped and tortured, just one word "converted" (to Islam) uttered by the culprit's party is enough to cover up the whole story. Once it is said that she is *"Converted to Islam"* the Judiciary, the government and the media become silent. Islamic faith supersedes human rights and religious freedom.

In Pakistan, with regard to the incidents of forced conversion there is rarely any follow-up by the media or by the law enforcement agencies to know the fate of the girls who were forcibly converted. The affected party is not told how the girls left their parents' homes, or how their parents reacted to them being

taken away. Or, parents do not get to know anything from the girls themselves, as how do they feel about the whole experience? What is her present condition and how well has she been accepted by her new Muslim family? What happens to the girl after her conversion is never known. Also, in most cases, she is not allowed to meet anyone from her parents' family. Thus, the truth remains hidden. Ultimately, the girl is divorced or killed. In order to know the truth it is important to mobilize public opinion.

The issue of forced conversions to Islam mainly affects women of Christian and Hindu communities, which in Pakistan are the principal religious minorities. About 700 Christian women in Pakistan each year are kidnapped and forced to convert. Most cases are recorded in the Punjab, province of central Pakistan where Islamic extremism thrives.

The Washington Post reported on April 8, 2014 that 1,000 Christian and Hindu girls are forced to convert to Islam every year. Out of this number 700 victims are Christian and 300 are Hindu. It is a weighty issue which, if left to continue, will result in the sharp decline of the Christian and Hindu communities in Pakistan. These girls are usually between the ages of 12 and 25 when abducted, converted to Islam and married to the abductor or to a very much older third party.⁽⁴¹⁾

In villages the majority of poor Christians work with the landowners, while in urban areas poor Christian girls and women work as domestic servants where they are sexually abused, harassed, sometimes forced to convert to Islam, and are even killed.

Christian girls are the weakest and most vulnerable because their communities are defenseless and marginalized and therefore they are easily exposed to harassment. Often they do not even have the courage to denounce the violence or lodge complaints about the treatment they endure.

Arguably, Pakistan is one of the toughest and most hostile countries for minorities. Religious intolerance continues to grow and exacerbate the misery of young Christian girls. Religious freedom should be recognized as a fundamental right as Pakistan is a signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but it is rarely applied in practice.⁽⁴²⁾

The National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP) laid out a series of grim statistics relating to women in minority

communities Pakistan. The study surveyed 1,000 women, three-quarters of whom said they had been sexually harassed in the workplace, discriminated against in schools or pressed by teachers to convert to Islam. Yet they rarely complained. They remain silent because disclosure will bring shame on themselves and their family. Across Pakistan, hundreds of minority women have been abducted, raped and forced to convert to Islam. In the light of this hatred thousands of minority families have migrated to other countries as refugees.

Article 20 of the Constitution of Pakistan has conferred on every citizen three distinct religious rights i.e. the Right to Profess, the Right to Practice and the Right to propagate one's religious faith. This right is not conferred only on Muslims but on all citizens including non-Muslims. But this right should not be seen as a right to encourage conversions but it should be seen as a right against forced conversions or imposing beliefs on others. The articles of the Constitution of Pakistan on religious freedom are quoted when dealing with the cases of forced conversion. There is no separate law in penal code of Pakistan to deal with the forced conversion cases. Since forced conversion is a crime a separate law should be enacted. Along with other likeminded groups and leaders there is an acute need to lobby to move the matter forward to Parliament for legislation.

In Pakistan the Christians are being converted forcibly to Islam. Every year thousands of them are being forced to abandon their faith. There is no law in Pakistan to stop forced conversion. Everything is done purposely or knowingly to diminish this tiny community from this land.

Blasphemy Law

“The Blasphemy Law,” is a part of the Pakistan Penal Code which was introduced in 1860 by the British Government to protect religious sensibilities. It may be observed that Section 295 provides protection to places of worship for all faiths in the sub-continent. It does not contain elements of discrimination or preference to any class. It maintains equality to all before the law which appears to maintain mutual harmony and peace as well as to promote a sense of mutual tolerance, understanding and respect in the multifaceted society of the sub-continent. This section represents the typical

example of a secular democratic law for the benefit of all and loss to none. Whoever destroys or defiles any place of worship, or any object held sacred by any group of persons with the intention of insulting their religion shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years or with a fine or with both.

Section 295 A

In 1927 when religious riots rocked pre-partition India, 295-A was promulgated “...*Deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs. Whoever, with deliberate and malicious intention, outrage the religious feelings, or any class of the citizens of Pakistan, by words, either spoken or written or by visible representations, insult or attempts to insult the religion or the religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, or with a fine, or with both.*

Section 295 B

This law was amended further in 1982 by Presidential Ordinance 1: *Defiling the copy of the Holy Qur'an. “Whoever willfully defiles, damages or desecrates a copy of the Holy Qur'an or of an extract therefrom or uses it in any derogatory manner for any unlawful purpose shall be punishable with imprisonment for life.”* It stipulates life imprisonment for an offender who **willfully** defiles a copy or portion of the Holy Qur'an. It is observed that the law provides protection to the Holy Scripture of only one class of the country. The sentence of life under this section is not an expression of administering justice but rather a tempting tool in the hands of the Muslim extremists to hold the members of the religious minorities in religious-cum-judicial blackmail for personal vendettas.

Section 295 C

The above mentioned laws did not satisfy the extremists; but they did apply pressure to General Zia-ul-Haq to add 295-C through Criminal Law (amended) Act III of 1986: *Blasphemy against the Holy Prophet*. However, it was further amended by the judgment of the Federal Shariat Court making the death penalty mandatory on conviction for the offence of desecrating the name of the Prophet

Muhammad (PBUH). Not only that, but for the first time religious qualification was added to the Pakistan Penal Code, so that only a Muslim Judge may hear the case under this section of the law (Section 295-C). This is read as **295-C**: “...use of derogatory remarks etc., in respect of the Holy Prophet: – who ever by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by any imputation innuendo, or insinuation, directly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life and shall also be liable for fine”⁽⁴³⁾.

These laws seem to protect the embodiment of faith of only one community in a multi-faith society, whereas that community is already in majority and is the ruling class of the country. On the contrary, these laws provide no protection to members of other religions and hence they are discriminatory. They are used against members of other religious communities including Christians, Ahmadis, and Hindus and even against Muslims who have differences from the main sects. It is even being interpreted by extremists as ‘blasphemous’ to claim that it is not necessary for a man to grow his facial hair long in Islam. From 1984 to 2004, 5,000 cases of blasphemy were registered in Pakistan and 964 people were charged and accused of blasphemy; 479 Muslims, 340 Ahmadis, 119 Christians, 14 Hindus and 12 others. Thirty-two people charged with blasphemy had been killed extra-judicially. Eighty-six percent of all the cases were reported in Punjab.⁽⁴⁴⁾

In Pakistan attacks on religious minorities are increasing daily. During 2013, 178 Christian homes, 28 Shops and two Churches in Joseph Colony, Badami Bagh, Lahore were burnt and plundered during a blasphemy row. More recently violence against religious minorities in Pakistan culminated in the dehumanizing murder of a Christian couple Shama and Shehzad from Kot Radha Kishan who were beaten and subsequently burnt to death in the brick kiln by an angry mob due to an allegation of blasphemy but which was actually a cover for a financial dispute. In recent years many blasphemy cases have been registered against minorities and many members have been killed.

The Christians are persecuted through various discriminatory laws introduced by successive governments in Pakistan against them. These laws are misused against Christians to settle economic

feuds or communal rivalries. Now and then Christian homes, their colonies, their places of worships and other properties are being burnt into ashes. Under blasphemy law many Christians are put behind bars, accused and killed. Due to these laws, Christians are frightened to interact with the majority community. The gap between the minority and majority communities is widening daily. The atmosphere of coexistence, peaceful pluralism, respect for diversity and human rights has now become a dream for Christians in Pakistan.

Appendix – IV show the number of alleged blasphemers from different minority groups in Pakistan from 1953-July 2012.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Appendix – V shows the number of holy places desecrated by the Muslims.⁽⁴⁶⁾

CHAPTER FIVE

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE CHRISTIAN MINORITY

This chapter deals with the political system and the Christian minority by reflecting on the effects of Islamisation, the system of electorates, unskilled leadership and finally, the future of Christianity in Pakistan.

The effects of Islamization

After partition in 1947 the country moved into the sphere of influence of those who received their training from the British rulers or worked with them. They were, to a great extent, 'secularist' in their outlook. Even Muhammad Ali Jinnah himself was educated in the United Kingdom.⁽¹⁾ The Westernized elites who were ruling the country appeared as the custodians of the Western rule in their own country. Therefore, the fundamentalists, who were dreaming of establishing the rule of the pious Muslims, turned against them.⁽²⁾

Muhammad Ali Jinnah founded only one Pakistani nation, consisting of Muslims and non-Muslims, having civil rights without

any distinction of race, religion or creed and that religion would be merely a private affair of the individual.⁽³⁾ The Ulama rejected this view on the basis that they would be unable to tolerate a state which is based on nationalism. They applied pressure on the rulers who followed Jinnah to introduce Islamic system in the state. Their influences could be seen from the date of independence until the general election called by Mr. Bhutto in March 1977. This period is generally known to be the first stage of Islamization. At this point three Constitutions in 1956, 1962, and 1973 were drawn up, and each presented the extended picture of Islamization.⁽⁴⁾ In spite of the periodic shift in political, social and economic orientation, the process of Islamization remained in progress.

The real Islamic process came in force in the second stage when, in 1977, Zia-Ul-Haq took over the country and the fundamentalists were absorbed in government to govern the country. In order to justify his rule the military dictator General Zia ul-Haq used religion and Islamized laws and society. With his regime and the revolution in Afghanistan, radical and political Islam emerged in Pakistan. After the Russian invasion of Afghanistan the dictator became ally of the United States. In Pakistan Zia ul-Haq consolidated his power by introducing pro-Islamic legislations that resulted in mushrooming of religious madrasahs throughout the country. These Madrasahs became nurseries to produce *Mujahideen* to fight in Afghanistan, Kashmir and Palestine against infidels. Thus, the Jihadi culture was introduced in the country and this continues today. These *Mujahideen* began fighting against each other after the extraction of Russia from Afghanistan and the influx of America and its allies in Afghanistan. The influx of America into Afghanistan brought great consequences to Pakistan. The Pakistani regime used anti-Western policies as the State's policy to promote a religious and political agenda. Not surprisingly, this was harmful to the non-Muslim population, particularly the Christians.

As members of the country's cabinet the fundamentalists were in a position to declare Pakistan an Islamic state on 10th February 1979. However, Muslim rulers throughout history have avoided establishing religious states. All Muslim states suffered a decline when leaning towards theocracy, the two most glaring examples being the Mughal and the Othman empires.⁽⁵⁾

Pakistan society has been 'sick' from the time of partition until now, afflicted by religious and sectarian intolerance. The most persistent signs of this sickness are the persecution of Ahmadis, nationalization of Christian institutions, burning Christian churches and Hindu temples.⁽⁶⁾ The religious intolerance found in the country is not only a problem for the minorities but also for the Muslim majority. There have been bloody Shia-Sunni riots in Karachi, Jhang and Parachinar, violent Deobandi-Barelvi clashes in Lahore, the Pathan-Behari riots in Karachi. A number of religious-political parties, aligned with a number of sects, are squaring up to each other.⁽⁷⁾

The fundamentalists call the minorities *Kuffar* (atheists). They will have no voice in making of laws, no right to administer the law and no right to hold public office. Even the head of the State cannot delegate any part of his power to a *Kafir*, says Maulana Abdul Hasnat Syed Muhammad Ahmad Qadri, president of Jamiatui-Ulama-i-Pakistan and Maulana Ahmad Ali.⁽⁸⁾ Mian Tufail Muhammad of Jamaat-i-Islami says "...I do not acknowledge the rights of Christians or other non-Muslims in Pakistan, if the State is founded on the ideology of the Jamaat."⁽⁹⁾ He even asserts that those non-Muslims who do not come under the category of Dhimmi or Mu'ahids, do not have any right of citizenship.⁽¹⁰⁾

Under clause 10 of the Shariat Bill, 1991, Muslim women and minorities are excluded from holding any posts in the Judiciary. The 8th Amendment of the Constitution Act, 1985 directly violates the rights of the minorities and Muslim women. The Hudood Ordinance 1979, the law of Evidence, 1984, the Draft Qisas and Diyat Law and the Qazf Ordinance 1990 are in direct contravention of article 25(2) of the Constitution which says that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of gender alone. The ninth amendment of the Constitution Bill 1986 enlarges the powers of the people. However, through this amendment the women and children will be directly discriminated against.

In the light of the above-mentioned effects of Islamization, the future of Pakistan and especially for the minorities appears to be alarming. It is incumbent upon educated people to stress to the uneducated masses the importance of suppressing religious and sectarian intolerance for the survival of Pakistan. The minorities

have to act as a moderating force influencing the society in a positive way.

The Electoral System

In order to see which system of electorates suits the minorities of Pakistan, let us first evaluate the history of Pakistan in which the system of electorates has been changed from time to time.

In undivided India the Muslims, being a minority, feared that under a joint electorate system they would be dominated both politically and economically by the Hindu majority represented by the All India Congress Party. Therefore, to protect the rights of the minorities the All India Muslim League demanded a separate electoral system in the subcontinent.⁽¹¹⁾ From then until 1954 all elections in Pakistan were held in accordance with the demand accepted by the government of India Act 1935.

In the Constitution of 1956 the provision for a joint electorate was incorporated, but no elections were ever held under this Constitution. Under the Constitution of 1962 elections were held on the basis of separate electorates. In 1970 after the abrogation of the 1962 Constitution the elections were held on the basis of a joint electorate system. The 1973 Constitution provided elections on the basis of joint electorate, with a provision that for some time the minorities would also have nominated members in the assembly. In 1987 the Government passed an amendment, saying that the future elections in the country would be held on the basis of a separate electoral system.⁽¹²⁾

Before 2002, (when joint electorate system was restored) the electorate in Pakistan is differentiated on the basis of religion. The Muslim majority voters and the non-Muslim minority voters used to elect their own representatives under the system of a separate electorate. This distinction led to segregation and discrimination, due to which the minority community was unable to participate in the political activities of the country at any level. They were divorced from mainstream society and could not make any contribution to the affairs of state. Their votes were useless for the politicians and so no one from the majority community took a stand to safeguard the minorities' rights. Slowly, the minorities lost their

sense of belonging to the nation and became more and more isolated. In this isolation they squabble amongst themselves with the consequence that their very survival was at stake.⁽¹³⁾

These are reasons enough to deduce that the system of separate electorates does not suit the minorities. There have been always reactions to this system from the minority communities. In 1954, D.N. Dutta, a Hindu leader said in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan “...we want to be united with you. We want that there would be one electoral roll for both the Hindus and Muslims. This will accelerate the growth of a nation i.e. the growth of Pakistan”.⁽¹⁴⁾ Another Hindu leader said in the same assembly “....I do not want any special rights. I do not want any privileges. I do not want reservation of seats in the legislature. I say frame the same laws for me which affect everything equally”.⁽¹⁵⁾

Almost always the appeal of the minority for joint electorates was rejected by the governments, saying that the Muslim majority did not wish to mix up with non-believers. Also the majority had the attitude that Muslims and non-Muslims may live in peace within a single state but can never be merged into one community. Islam enjoins toleration but frowns on fraternity.⁽¹⁶⁾

In the process of Islamization taking place in Pakistan it was rather difficult to demand the system of joint electorates. In an Islamic State minorities cannot take part in the elections and be members of the legislature with the same rights as Muslims. Muhammad Munir in his book, “Jinnah to Zia” writes “...In my opinion it is impossible to put the unbelievers in the same position as the Muslims, there being no instance in an Islamic State where the unbelievers were included in the law making body. For them there could be reservation of seats or separate electorates through which they could choose their own representatives.”⁽¹⁷⁾

The protagonists of the separate electorates system sought to justify it with reference to the two-nation theory and the existence of separate electorate in pre-partition India. The British introduced the separate electorates because the Muslims, especially of the minorities' provinces, themselves demanded this. Living in the midst of a dominant majority, they feared lesser representation than the percentage of their population warranted. In Pakistan, the minorities never made a demand for separate voting rights and a separate category of non-Muslim candidates.

Various governments, under the mask of Islam, have deliberately imposed the system of a separate electorate on the minority in order to control the expansion of the community. The minority community had to find ways and means at any cost to demand the permanent introduction of the system of joint electorate in the country. Failure to do this would result in the minority disappearing entirely from the scene.

The separate electorate introduced in 1985 was a departure from the principles enunciated by the Father of the Nation, who struggled for equal rights. The separate electorate system served no purpose other than alienating the minorities by pushing them out of the mainstream of national politics. It was a system that was obscurantist in motivation, divisive in spirit and wholly inconsistent with the evolution of modern and progressive Pakistani nationalism.

At the persistent demand of minorities, the joint electorates were restored in 2002 by Pervez Musharraf, the military dictator. A new system of reserved seats was introduced to provide chance for the minority members to have representation based on proportional representation in the elected bodies. The decision to reduce electoral discrimination by doing away with separate voting for minorities religious groups was an important development that helped make Pakistan a moderate state, and end existing discrimination. The joint electorate system and a return to the electorate dispensation as originally envisaged in the 1973 Constitution marked yet another step in the direction of liberalizing Pakistan's electoral system.

At present there are reserved seats for minorities: four in Senate, ten in the National Assembly, eight in Punjab, nine in Sindh

and three each in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Assemblies.

The constitutional package announced by Gen. Parvaiz Musharraf government (1999 – 2008) took three significant decisions - reverting to the system of joint electorates, increasing the number of parliamentary seats and setting graduation as qualification for persons intending to take part in the general election. These three steps were a major shift from the past.

The political representation of religious minorities in the National and Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan is outlined in Appendix – VI.¹⁸

These seats are filled by nominees of political parties in proportion to the seats secured by respective parties in the general elections. The contesting political parties submit a priority list of minority candidates before the general elections to the Election Commission of Pakistan. The Election Commission then notifies successful members from the priority list according to the abovementioned criteria. The separate electorate limits the choice of voters on the basis of religion while the current mode of reservation provides for minimal minority representation in the Federal and Provincial legislatures. Voters therefore have equal standing in the general elections along with reserved representation in the elected bodies for minorities.

Although the joint electorates were restored, their potential and benefit remained un-realized. Due to a major flaw in the system, the expected results of promoting equal citizenship, equal human rights and reducing discrimination on the basis of religion among people were not met. This also applies to equal economic, social, cultural and political opportunities, quotas for jobs and reserved seats in the educational institutes. To have the realistic benefits of the joint electorates the following steps have to be taken:

1. The rationale underpinning joint electorates should be explained fully.
2. There is a need for improving arrangements for minority representation in economic, social, cultural and political mainstream.
3. There should be minority community representation in the Parliamentary committees *viz* Electoral Reform Committee, Constitutional Review Committee, Curriculum Review

Committee and others to present the minority point of view on each issue.

4. There is a need to change the method of nomination of minority representation in the elected bodies to provide opportunities to each minority community and not just the Hindus and Christians.
5. There is need to have a proper census of minority population at a federal level, and a proper registration of minority voters.
6. The number of seats of minority representation in the elected bodies of the country should be increased.
7. Demarcation of workable geographical constituencies for minority contestants across the nation.
8. The reserved seats for minorities should be filled by candidates being nominated and their names submitted to the Election Commission well ahead of time.
9. There should be a minority voice in the Federal and Provincial Ministries for minorities.
10. Minority communities should have representation in the Ministry of Religious Affairs.
11. At the national level *bona fide* minority political parties should be established under a strong political leadership.
12. The establishment of a forum of political leaders of minorities is a vital ingredient for justice for the minorities.⁽¹⁹⁾
13. The delimitation of constituencies should take the minorities population concentrations into consideration.
14. Inadequate representation of minorities in services, trade, business and politics is creating a sense of deprivation and discrimination among the minorities.

There are voices in favor of separate electorates also. Certainly there are merits and demerits of both systems of electorates. The separate electorates cannot be practical since minority communities are so small in a vast country with an overwhelming majority of a single cultural/religious group. Now, since the wish of the minority is granted in the shape of joint electorates, serious efforts should be made for it to be applied.

Unskilled Leadership

The *Baradari* system is an indispensable phenomenon of Punjabi culture. The “*Baradari*” is led by several *Chaudaries* (elders) who have a firm hold over the community. They are appointed by the community, no matter how many qualifications or leadership qualities they have. Even in the political sphere of the country, they are pushed by the people as their representatives. The *chaudaries* who live in a closed ghetto lack political knowledge, and are inferior in all respects. When entering the political arena, they get lost in the system. We find a very primitive type of leadership in the Christian community, which cannot cope with modern political developments and cannot fulfill the needs of the population.

Western missionaries worked for the development of the community. It was a badly-needed missionary assistance for the people, but most of the educated and trained Christians from the missionary institutions ultimately became the Church employees who for most of the time were busy in serving the missionaries. They never came out of their own world. Indeed, they built walls of prejudice against the outside world. The missionaries even affirm a ghetto mentality by segregating Christians into closed colonies, separating them from members of other faiths and giving them the understanding that no truth exists outside the Church.⁽²⁰⁾ For the Christians, the missionaries were their *Mai-Baap*, (mother-father) and leaders in all spheres of their life. Therefore, we find a long period with no effective leadership in the Christian community.

In the past, and even now, the Church seems to be allergic to politics. Instead of encouraging, she discourages the community from participating in politics. If in the past the, Church dared to help her people, she would help only those who were her favored ones. Usually, Catholics were told not to vote for non-Catholics. The Protestants took the same line - Christians are yet to learn how to become good leaders.

Literacy, poverty, inferiority complex, religious indifference, the process of Islamization and the prevailing electorate system are the causes of division that helped promote unskilled leadership in the Christian community. Religious denominations, the caste system, different *baradaries*, etc. are also the cause of division in

the Christian community. Such division does not allow Christians to unite for a common national leadership.

Even the political system of the country fails to offer any effective leadership to the common people because there have been several Martial Law Governments since partition in 1947 in Pakistan. The people become tools of the ruling class. They were never allowed to aspire to effective leadership and to participate in the affairs of the country. The minority was thus doubly affected.

At present, Christians who manage to secure seats in the assemblies are allergic to the ordinary citizens. They wish to avoid anything that may jeopardize their position. Also they do not want to antagonize the government by insisting on the rights of the Christian minority; they aim at establishing good relations with the authorities. In this present process of Islamization they are more vulnerable than ever before.⁽²¹⁾

Could the community which is rife with internal problems and which has issues arising from the government, have proper leadership? Arguably, there is a great need for political and moral “conscientization” and uniting Christians into one stratum in order to have skillful leadership for the community.

The future of Christianity in Pakistan

The future of Christianity in Pakistan is, in the first place, based on mutual Christian-Muslim understanding. So far both have been backward looking and have confronted each other over trivial matters.

In the West the process of reconciliation has progressed greatly. Christian and Muslim scholars together have undertaken works of research that is amply illustrated by such an outstanding book as the Encyclopedia of Islam.⁽²²⁾ The centers of dialogue and research all over the world are the source of bringing Christians and Muslims together in an act of reconciliation.⁽²³⁾ In Pakistan, we still come across magazine articles raking up the bitterness of the war of the Crescent and the Cross.⁽²⁴⁾ Both Christians and Muslims have made false accusations against each other’s religions. The Muslims call the Christians atheists (*Kuffar*) and Christians claim that Islam is a false propaganda. Both deny the basic truths of each other’s religions. They are self-centered and antagonistic towards each

other. They rarely fight for a common cause. On the contrary, they establish an atmosphere of hostility and prejudice which usually results in the Christian community suffering. For its survival, the Christian minority has to find ways and means to promote the process of reconciliation with their Muslim brethren. Christians cannot live in a Muslim country and pray and act as if Islam does not exist. They cannot exist in the long-term as an isolated and segregated community. For a brighter future they have to understand, and have to be understood, by Muslims.

There is an urgent need for the Christian Church to research local Islam and adopt a theological approach to their beliefs and doctrines.⁽²⁵⁾ The Christian Church has already given a lead in the field of dialogue and research. In Lahore, Fr. Butler had a hostel to establish contacts with University students and professors. The Christian Study Center at Rawalpindi is involved in promoting inter-faith harmony and doing scientific research on Islam. The Pastoral Institute in Multan conducts the Christian-Muslim dialogue sessions. The erstwhile Idara-e-Amn-o-Insaf and Catholic Social Services have been promoting conscientization work. Fr. James Chanan runs a Christian-Muslim Dialogue Centre in Lahore. All these efforts are praiseworthy but they cannot alone be enough. In the work of evangelization the future Christian Church should engage in dialogue to understand fully other religious traditions, in particular to understand the Islamic religious values as the top priority. If she succeeds in this area, then there would be no question of violating the rights of the Christian minority. Christianity and its expansion in the country would be no more a threat to Islam; rather, Christian-Muslim would live in harmony and brotherhood, which is the basis for a brighter future for Christianity in Pakistan.

The major problem for the Christian community is its *inner dalitness*. Although Punjabi Christians have embraced Christ for many generations they still are influenced by their Dalit background. Christians in Pakistan considered themselves inferior and ineffectual. They believe themselves to be voiceless and therefore vulnerable in the milieu of the overwhelming Muslim majority. In Pakistan the Christian community lives in fear, being unprotected and with an unpredictable future. The Christian community lives in enclosures (colonies, settlements, villages) with

their own Christian neighborhood. They rarely live among the Muslims due to their own inner pain and fear they have inherited due to their Dalit background. To cure dalitness among the Christians a Dalit theology has to be evolved in the Church. This should be done on the basis of a cure and healing mechanism.

Another important factor for a better future for Christianity can be identified in one word - **Education**. Today Pakistani Christians are poor - socially, politically and economically - because of lack of education for poor people. It is interesting to note that in Pakistan the Church has played a significant role in the field of education and even now the role of the Christian Church is prominent. But in the first place she served the Christian community by producing catechists and cooks, in the second phase teachers, clerks, priests and Nuns and in the third phase people for the army.⁽²⁶⁾ Consequently, she did not bring any change in the quality of life for the Christian community.

The Christians are backward in education. “*Approximately 85% of youth have no admission in any school*”.⁽²⁷⁾ Although the number of schools are being run under the administration of clergy, their doors are shut to Christians. The strength of such schools in thousands but Christian students does not exceed 2% because they cannot afford expenditure to maintain the schools’ standards.

Many former presidents, premiers, ministers and senior officials are Old Students of Christian schools but the Christian community remains neglected without education. If these schools can produce senior world figures, why are they unable to produce physicians, engineers and political leaders for the Christian community? The fact is that they are not sincere with their cause; they need to re-set priorities. Just to give an example of the great services the Christian educational Institutions have done to this country a list of Notable Alumni of one institution i.e. St. Anthony’s High School & College, Lawrence Road, Lahore is being presented at Appendix – VI.⁽²⁸⁾

Now is the time that we should produce the fourth phase, the Christians who could raise the social, political and economic standards within the Christian community. It could be done only by appealing to the conscience of the established authorities of our educational institutions who claim that they are doing great service in the area of education but remain in ignorance of the Christian

community. It is also necessary to “conscientize” parents and the teachers who could then devote themselves to this work. Finally, each person should be made aware that a better future for an individual is dependent on the amount and quality of education that individual receives.

Another important factor for the better future of Christianity is ‘Economy’. Due to lack of education the Christian youth have no basic knowledge of economy of the country. The poverty-stricken masses are leading miserable lives. They can never aspire to a comfortable existence with modern facilities. Unemployment among Christians is very high, not to mention that of the illiterate masses. Even qualified and skilled people fail to secure employment. Nearly 75% of Christians live in rural areas, they work in fields from dawn to dusk but still find it difficult to make ends meet. Their women work in landlords houses where they are routinely sexually abused and sometimes killed.

Christians are poor and 80% to 85% live in Punjab province, with 40% living below the poverty line. This number could grow in the future, not just because the government has no interest but because the Christian political and church leaders have no interest in nurturing marginalized Christians living in remote areas.

“Employment” is another important factor for the better future of Christians in Pakistan. The Christian youth lack information and they therefore lag behind their Muslim peers. They are not equipped to avail themselves of the existing opportunities in employment. Most of them do not have the knowledge that according to a notification (CMA No. 3426/2014 dated 26.5.2009) issued by the Government of Pakistan, Cabinet Secretariat, Establishment Division, there is 05% quota reserved for employment of Minorities (Non-Muslims), as defined in Article 260(3) (b) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, to all posts across the board in the Federal Government Services jobs to be filled by direct recruitment including CSS, in addition to their participation in the open merit.

The Government of Punjab also issued a notification No. SCR-III(S&GAD)1-35893, dated 27.3.2010, announcing 5% quota reserved for Minorities (Non-Muslims) as defined in the Article 260(3)(b) of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, against the total number of posts advertised in future. This includes

the posts to be filled on the basis of competitive examination to be conducted by the Punjab Public Service Commission. In the Khyber Pakhtunkhawa (KPK) Civil Servants (Appointment, Promotion and Transfer) Rules, 1989, Rule 10 specifically provides reservation of 5% quota for minorities in all provincial services. Baluchistan has made a similar statement with regard to the reservation of special quota for minorities in provincial service. There should be information desks in every city for Christian youth in order to provide updated information regarding the available employment opportunities in the country.

To work for the welfare of Christian land owners, Haris and a different category of workers are also important for a better future for Christianity. The land of Christians is divided among their many children and grand children who sell it and migrate to towns where they become sweepers or poor laborers.⁽²⁹⁾ Due to a similar problem the Haris suffer unemployment and poverty. The workers are unable to rise above the stigmatized atmosphere. The situation for these people is very serious and should be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

In the milieu of hatred, discrimination and persecution, Christians have little hope for a better future for their descendants in Pakistan. Many are leaving this country and becoming asylum seekers suffering in camps in foreign countries. In Pakistan the Christians are pushed into menial jobs. The white collar jobs are out of the reach of Christians. There are no equal opportunities for employment, education or to improve their social status. In Pakistan the hallmark of Christian missionaries is educating Pakistani nation but their own community remains without education. The Christian community is neglected by the state as well as by their own political and religious leadership. The community is just like a sheep without a shepherd. The socio-political and economic situation of this community is on the verge of collapsing. The Christian women/girls are the cheapest human commodity for the majority men. They are abducted, raped, forced to convert to Islam and to marry their abductor. The Christian Haris have no future in Pakistan. Due to religious bias the majority land owners do not rent their land to the Christian tenants. Resultantly, in hunt of their daily bread the Christian tenants leave the rural areas and migrate to cities where, due to economic constraints, they ultimately become

sweepers who are considered untouchables by the majority community.

The small size of the community does not matter but it certainly matters how effective, influential and developed this community is across the nation. There are smaller religious communities (Agha Khan etc.) than the Christian community in Pakistan who are well organized, well developed and well educated playing a significant role in the development of the country. The Christian political and religious leadership is very powerful where as the Christian masses (laity) remains powerless. This power imbalance model which Christian leadership is following is the overall model of this country which is ruining the whole Pakistani society. The future of Christians in Pakistan depends upon their shedding psychological problems, inferiority complex, and dalitness. There is a need to have more dialogue and interaction with the majority community. Metaphorically speaking the dividing walls between majority and minority should be demolished and work together for the common good of the nation and of the country. Education and employment of Christian Haris is of prime importance for a brighter future for Christians in Pakistan.

In spite of all the difficulties faced by the minorities in Pakistan, we find that the Christians are becoming more and more aware of their dire situation and are now struggling for their human rights. They are looking forward to a national leadership in the country. They are now less dependent. Even the Church has changed its work strategy and its attitude towards local people. Organizations are working to organize people to distribute power equitably. It is a move towards a better future, but it is just beginning; there is much to be done.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The Pakistani Christians should know that in spite of all tribulation they had an interesting past and now they have a favorable but nevertheless challenging present in Pakistan.

To make the Christian minority aware of the favorable age, an attempt is made through this research to show them their humble background and their present socio-political, social and religious situation in the country. It is believed that the minority is in a better position now than in the recent past, but the fact remains that the

world is developing rapidly and the minority is still lagging far behind. Instead of self-admonition and self-stigmatization it is important for the minority community to take advantage of any privilege granted by the government or other institutions at whatever level or scale they could be. To cope with global developments, the minority should abandon its ghetto mentality and introspection. The minority community is forced into seclusion by others but the minority community also must make an effort to integrate into mainstream society.

It has to be accepted that the history of oppression in the country poses a huge challenge to the whole society particularly to the smaller minority groups. Since the whole institutional and organizational structures are hierarchical, domineering and oppressive the model of humanity becomes the model of an oppressor in Pakistani structure. It becomes extremely difficult especially for the minority groups to change it. Therefore, it is suggested that minority should keep on posing challenges as well as keep on growing while working under an oppressive and unjust structure, for there is no other option.

The oppressive and unjust structure in Pakistan are also affecting the Christian minority because at the political, religious and social level their real problems of curing inner pain, inner emptiness, inner lack of self-esteem, inner *Dalitness* which are a result of centuries old oppression by a caste system out of which this community emerged had been not addressed. It is due to the fact that the political and religious leadership of Christian community sadly belongs to a small elite, powerful and influential group (just like the other powerful groups of the country) of people who enjoy almost all the resources and have most of the decision-making powers. This group works for the people, decides for the people, and looks after the people. The gap between this small group and the Christian community is quite large. To develop this vulnerable community they have to become the leaders of the Christian masses.

Education is the answer to most of the problems being faced by the Christian community in Pakistan. The Christian institutions played a great role in educating the nation, while sometimes ignoring their own people. Also the education provided by these institutions is based on ethos of power, authority, domination and

competition rather than on service, humility, equality, justice and the spirit of sharing. It is noted that most of the trained leaders from the Christian institutions have been and are the ones in the country who manipulate, dominate and exploit the common masses especially the minority community. It is high time for the Christian educational institutions to re-evaluate their slogan of service in the country and not to turn off their faces from their own stigmatized community in the society.

The Christian students cannot afford to study in the private educational institutions of the country since their fee is out of their reach. In the state run educational institutions the minority students do not survive due to the prevailing culture of hatred and discrimination as a result of teaching biased curriculum. In these institutions the minority students feel isolated because they learn from a very young age that they are second class citizens and have less importance. Vulnerable, poor minority students have no equal chances to study and develop because there is a social gap created in the classroom which causes an increase in the rate of drop-out and illiteracy. Teachers from majority community often reinforce the discriminatory material by their behavior and attitude towards minority students, showing a clear bias towards them and therefore giving majority children, already a biased mindset, an opportunity to tease or ignore minority students. As a result, in government schools the dropout rate is high and minority groups are much more vulnerable.

The removal of biased material from Pakistan's national curriculum has become the national and international concern since it is the base for promoting the culture of hatred, strife, oppression and degradation of minorities in particular and Pakistani society in general due to which minority students suffer most. From many sectors and organizations the work is being done on the issue but it is not sufficient, much more has to be done to provide a base to Government to present overall direction or guidelines for the curriculum and quality of education by introducing a better well researched curriculum. A thorough baseline research on the biased curriculum of Punjab has already been done by Awaz-e-HaqItehad (A rights based Coalition of 12 NGOs of Punjab) and Justice and Peace Commission of Pakistan (NCJP). Government has to be demanded of to have Merit based selection of curriculum review

committee members with the representation of members from all faiths. The government of Pakistan should be demanded of for the prevention of the violation of Article 31 (A and B), Article 22 (A) (C.P. 1973) & Sec. 26 UDHR SDGs G 4: (Quality Education) G16: (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) Article 4 CRC Implementation of Supreme Court Judgment (June 2014) and Article 5 NAP.

Arson attacks on Christian places of worship, properties, houses, killing and jailing countless Christians is not the result of anything else but due to the manipulative use of blasphemy law in the country. The sword of blasphemy law is constantly hanging over every Christian in Pakistan. Due to this law Christians all over the country are intimidated, opt to remain aloof from the majority community, the atmosphere of coexistence, peaceful pluralism and respect for diversity and human rights becomes a dream in Pakistani society. Due to this law Christians have become introvert and ghetto. For centuries due to their low social status in the society they faced inferiority complex, the stigma of being untouchables, chuhras and dalits are now being perpetuated instead of lessening their force. Due to the fear of blasphemy law thousands of Christians have fled from Pakistan taking refuge in other countries becoming asylum seekers. This law is the main cause of religious intolerance, sectarianism, violence, strife and hatred. This law has to be repealed as soon as possible in order to save the minorities from diminishing from this country.

Forced conversion is another tool being used by the majority community to intimidate the minority groups in Pakistan. It is our experience that the forced conversion takes place mostly among the poor slaves, bounded laborers, Haris, rural peasants, seasonal crop weavers and all those involved in menial jobs. Mostly minority girls/women are picked up, raped, forced to convert and forced to marry by the powerful land lords or their men. In many cases minority families are forced to convert to Islam to settle debts, economic or property feuds. Every year thousands of minority members are being converted and the number is increasing every year. It is a great concern for the minority groups and if there will be no halt to it then the minorities will diminished from this country. Forced conversion is a serious crime but there is no law so far enacted to stop this crime. The minorities should lobby with the

likeminded groups and move the matter forward to Parliament for legislation.

Before 1947 the Christian Haris in western part of India (West Pakistan) were tilling the land of Sikhs and Hindus who owned big farms but after the partition when Sikhs and Hindus left for India, the new Muslim migrants were allotted with these lands who on the basis of religion refused to hire the Christian *Haris*. As a result these *Haris* became jobless and faced a serious problem of their survival. For most of them there was no other option but to migrate to big cities where they had to get involved in menial jobs which made them again to become *Chuhras*, *Bhangis* and untouchable a stigma they had before their conversion to Christianity. But many of these *Haris* opted to remain in the same villages becoming unskilled poor labourers and peasants engaged as seasonal crop weavers, collect dungs and provide fodder for land lords' animals, work in the paddy fields, go out for cotton picking, wheat harvesting, weeding crops, perform bounded labor at the brick kiln. They are employed by the land lords on their land for very long hours and on very low wages. Most of the times they are paid in kind or material (wheat, grains etc.) on annual basis. They are excluded totally from the mainstream and are kept out of the national affairs of the country. Their ethnic, social, religious and political rights are not recognised. Not very many organisations work for the wefare of these *Haris*. The government remain mindless of these peasants and along with the elected minority leadership keep on chanting the slogan of "All Is Well" with minorities in Pakistan forgetting the misery, oppression and painful existance of these Christian *Haris*. It is, therefore, recommended that the government should allot the agricultural land to these *Haris* who in return would contribute greatly to the backbone of the economy of the country.

The minority political leadership remains mindless of their people due to the present system of electorate for the minorities in the country. Alongwith the joint electrate system which at persisitant demand of minirities was restored in 2002 by Pervez Musharafa system of reserved seats for minorities was also introduced. These reserved seats are filled by nominees of political parties in proportion to the seats secured by respective parties in the general elections. The political Christian leadership who have

resources, contacts, influence, approach, pleasing strategy, waging around tale tactics, aligned with the oppressive structure, go more with the selecting party's manifesto and remain mindless of his/her own people are nominated and selected by the political parties. The Christian political leadership remains faithful, loyal and committed to their masters instead of their own people. If the minorities want to get rid of this selfish, elitist political leadership and get into the political mainstream of the country then they need to demand from the Government of Pakistan for the benefits and potential of the joint electorates. The potential and benefits of joint electorates include promoting equal citizenship, equal human rights and reducing discrimination on the basis of religion, equal economic, social, cultural and political opportunities, quotas for jobs and reserved seats in the educational institutes.

In spite of serious problems faced by the Christian community in Pakistan yet, at the same time there are many good things taking place in the country, many lay people's groups, organisations, NGOs, CBOs and institutions are working for the promotion of rights of minorities. There are many organisations and institutions of the majority community who keeps their top agenda to work for the promotion of rights of minorities. Much research is being done on deplorable conditions of the minority groups by these institutions. The land mark decision of Supreme Court of Pakistan in 2014 regarding the protection, safeguarding and promoting the fundamental rights of minorities in the country is a ray of light and hope for the minorities. The issue of addressing the violation of minority rights in Pakistan is also on the agenda of National Action Plan.

Recommendations:

There is a need to end sectarianism, provincialism, and communalism and instead to promote national integration and peace so that Pakistan may progress and prosper.

Pakistani minorities feel insecure, alienated and oppressed by injustice and due to step by step erosion of their equal rights as citizens of Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan should reassure them that they are equal citizens of Pakistan.

All Minority communities (Quadianies, Bahai, Parsees, Hindus, Sikhs and Christians) should unite to raise their voices and fight injustice.

Use electronic and print media to promote dialogue and tolerance among the people of different faiths in Pakistan and discourage those lectures which create tension and disharmony. Verses from the Holy Quran and the Holy Bible can also be telecast on TV and broadcast on radio.

Before making any law, government must consult the members of the minority community.

Repeal all discriminatory laws.

The government should take affirmative action to bring to the marginalized sections of the society at par with others.

We, as Pakistani Christians feel there is need of collaboration and understanding between the people of two great religions of the world, Islam and Christianity. Both are universal religions. Both have many things in common.

There should not be compartmentalizing civilizations. We should not talk of clash of civilizations. This is a very dangerous concept. Why the millions of students travel from East to West to acquire knowledge and skills?

We see signs of hope and shared awareness and cooperation between Christians and Muslims. Our Muslim brothers desire and are open to it. It is a sign of time and most urgently needed. Let us share our problems. Let us respect one another and meet on the equal basis. Let us have a dialogue on all levels of our lives, be it religious, political, social or daily life. Let us make an alliance. Let us put our full trust upon one another and those we choose as leaders.

It is hoped that this research would become an aid to enable Christians in Pakistan to understand themselves and their faith which binds them to be docile to the country and its rulers but at the same time stand for the truth, for truth will set them free. In spite of prejudices, hatred and religious intolerance experienced every day Christian community should continue to serve the best interests of Pakistan. Rest leave to others to judge whether the rights of minorities guaranteed in Islam, by Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and in the Constitution of Pakistan are granted to them.

Afterword

The Christians in Pakistan has been going through identity crisis ever since the earlier generations were converted to Christianity. This research work by Mr. Yusuf Gill has explored the genesis of Christian history in Pakistan as well as the religious experience and the history of persecution in Pakistan. *“We, the Christians of Pakistan, have not accepted our history, the past humble context or the story of conversions. Many of us deny our link with poor workers or with our ancestors”*, the author says.

The early missionaries looked after the day to day needs of the people converted to Christianity and many conversions were made with the aid provided in the form of rations, canned food, clothes and so on. That aid did increase the number of community members but faith formation was lacking and therefore was not deep rooted. This work also informs how the early missionaries only produced the workers who could serve them as the colonial masters. In the earliest years they produced only waiters, cooks, catechists and junior teachers. To secure Government jobs and work in higher education was discouraged. They established separate villages and

colonies for the converted Christians and because of this the Christians could not become part of the mainstream society.

This book is written objectively and it describes the prejudices and discrimination against the Christian community by the majority and sometimes by the State. The author has also shown many shortcomings on the part of the local Christians. We were unable to develop a theology which would bind us with local and Islamic society. The author has also made suggestions as to how we could get into dialogue of life with our Muslim brethren, and how could we become an integral part of the mainstream society?

I feel that this work is not enough; more research is needed to understand the historical background that could help us to integrate fully in this context. At the same time, as Christians, we must maintain ourselves as the salt which adds taste to a bland meal.

I would like to add some extra information about the arrival of St. Thomas to the city of Taxila in the sub-continent. This research discloses the arrival of St Thomas in Pakistan in the first century. According to Indian Priest Rev Vincent Chittilappily MCBS, St. Thomas made two visits to the subcontinent. The first trip was made by land to Taxila. He taught in the ancient kingdom of Taxila, near Rawalpindi in Pakistan, and established a Christian community. His second journey was by sea, and he landed at Maliacara (Cranganore) on the coast of Mylapore. He founded seven Churches in the province of Kerala and remained there until his death. The area, where his tomb is situated in Madras (Chanai), is known as St. Thomas Mount. The seed of peace, the love of one's neighbor and the tolerance and lessons of brotherhood was implanted by St. Thomas fulfilling the command of Jesus and this must bear fruit and play the role of salt and the light of the world.

The work in your hand is well researched and systematically documented with supported quotations. I would like to congratulate and appreciate the hard work of the author and his concern for the Christian community.

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April 20, 2016

APPENDICES

APPENDIX - I

The total population of Christians in Pakistan is between 2.05 million and 2.09 million comprising 42 percent of total minority Population. Between 82.5 and 90 percent of Christians live in the province of Punjab and about 95 percent are ethnically Punjabi. Below are the statistics to show the percentage of Christians relative to the other minority groups in Pakistan.

SOURCE: Movement for Solidarity and Peace. Report: Forced marriages and forced conversions in the Christian Community of Pakistan, Islamabad April 2014, page 3.

	Punjab	Sindh	KPk	Balo-Chistan	Total	%
Christians	1,699,843	294,885	36,668	26,462	2,057,858	42
Hindus/ Scheduled	116,410	2,280,842	5,090	39,146	2,441,488	50

Caste						
Ahmedi(Qadiani)	181,428	43,524	42,150	9,800	276,902	6
Others	48,779	23,828	14,726	6,471	93,804	2
TOTAL	2,046,460	2,643,079	98,634	81,879	4,870,052	100

APPENDIX - II

List of targeted acts of terrorism on Pakistani Christian by religious fanatics since September 11, 2001

SOURCE:<https://freedomdeclared.org/media/Attacks-on-Pakistan-Christians-Summary.pdf>

Date	City/Settlement/Area	Killed	Injured	Description of attack
8/29/2015	Islamabad (Punjab)	0	0	A Catholic government Minister for Human Rights and Religious Minorities was targeted by Terrorists.
7/30/2015	Youhanabad, Lahore (Punjab)	1	1	A Christian is shot to death for marrying a Muslim, while his wife is tortured.
5/24/2015	Lahore (Punjab)	0	6	The Christian area of Sanda/Gulshan Ravi, in the oldest area of Lahore was attacked by a

				violent mob.
4/17/2015	Lahore (Punjab)	0	3	Extremists open fire on a Catholic school.
4/15/2015	Lahore (Punjab)	0	1	A 10-year-old boy is beaten and burned alive for telling two Muslims that he is Christian.
4/1/2015	Lahore (Punjab)	0	1	Islamic militants shot and wounded the brother of the Christian lawyer and activist SardarMushtaq Gill.
3/29/2015	Islamabad (Punjab)	0	1	ShamimMasih - a Christian reporter exposing Muslim persecution – was attacked in Islamabad by two men on a motorcycle.
3/24/2015	Lahore (Punjab)	0	2	Extremists on motorbikes open fire on a church.
3/15/2015	Lahore (Punjab)	18	70	Targeted suicide bomb attacks by Jamaat-ul-Ahrar near two churches leaves fifteen Christian worshippers dead, three more Christians die later of injuries.
2/19/2015	Kasur	0	0	Three armed men

	(Punjab)			hostage Catholic Priest and snatched everything.
11/4/2014	Lahore (Punjab)	2	0	An extremist burns a Christian man and his pregnant wife alive for alleged 'blasphemy'. The victims were tortured for two days prior to being shoved into an oven.
9/25/2014	Rawalpindi (Punjab)	1	1	A policeman shoots a Christian pastor to death who was in jail for a false charge of blasphemy.
8/4/2014	Karachi (Sindh)	1	0	The 65-year-old principal of a Christian school is gunned down in a targeted attack.
4/16/2014	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	A 22-year-old Christian is shot to death for refusing to embrace Islam.
4/3/2014	Islamabad (Punjab)	1	0	A young girl is murdered by the Taliban for helping her cousin convert to Christianity.
2/11/2014	Islamabad (Punjab)	1	0	Extremist police arrest an innocent Christian father of

				two and torture him to death.
10/4/2013	Islamabad (Punjab)	0	3	Two Christian teens and their uncle are badly beaten in their own home for refusing to embrace Islam.
9/14/2013	Karachi (Sindh)	1	0	A Christian's throat is slit on the street after being branded an 'infidel' and blasphemous.
7/27/2013	Okara (Punjab)	1	0	A Christian is beaten and executed in front of his children by extremist gunmen.
7/5/2013	Islamabad (Punjab)	1	0	Islamic fundamentalists attack a local church, shooting one person to death.
6/11/2013	Sheikhupura (Punjab)	1	0	A Christian teen is tortured and killed on (false) suspicion of relations with a Muslim girl.
5/22/2013	Karachi (Sindh)	1	0	A Christian man is gunned down by two men in a targeted attack.
5/19/2013	Khushpur (Punjab)	1	3	Angry extremists fire on a Christian village, killing a

				teenage student.
5/2/2013	Manghopir, Karachi (Sindh)	2	2	Two watchmen are shot dead during an attack by the Taliban on a Belgian missionary school.
4/4/2013	Manga Mandi (Punjab)	1	0	A 20-year-old Christian is shot in the head by extremists calling their religion 'supreme'.
4/3/2013	Gujranwala (Punjab)	0	18	Eighteen Christians are injured by an extremist mob whipped into a frenzy by a cleric.
3/18/2013	Kalaswala (Punjab)	0	1	A Christian missionary is severely beaten by extremists.
3/9/2013	Lahore (Punjab)	0	35	An extremist mob rampages through a Christian neighborhood, burning more than 100 homes and injuring three dozen.
2/16/2013	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	A 45-year-old Christian is murdered in cold blood by an extremist arguing religion.
2/8/2013	Pattoki (Punjab)	0	3	Three Christian women are beaten and tortured by an

				extremist mob in their own home.
2/4/2013	Chaman (Balochistan)	1	0	A Christian dies after being shot five times by extremists angry that he would not embrace Islam.
1/9/2013	Bahawalpur (Punjab)	1	0	Extremist stabs a 19-year-old Christian to death for seeing a Muslim girl.
12/30/2012	IttehadChowk Karachi (Sindh)	1	1	Gunmen fire at two Christian brothers in a targeted attack. One later dies of injuries.
12/27/2012	Quetta (Balochistan)	1	0	A Christian girl is shot execution style through the head.
12/3/2012	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	A 72-year-old female Christian charity worker is shot in the neck by suspected extremists.
9/28/2012	Youhanaabad, Lahore (Punjab)	0	1	A protestant bishop is assaulted byangry extremists and beaten outside his church.
9/21/2012	Mardan (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa)	0	12	Thousands of men burn down a Lutheran church and thrash a dozen Christians.
9/16/2012	Hyderabad	0	1	Extremists angered

	(Sindh)			over a film ambush a nun and her driver outside a cathedral.
9/15/2012	Karachi (Sindh)	2	4	Six Christians are shot at close range in their homes by extremist gunmen.
8/28/2012	Karachi (Sindh)	1	1	Extremists open fire on a pastor, injuring him and killing a church member.
8/21/2012	Faisalabad (Punjab)	1	0	An extremist perpetrator is strongly suspected by the minority community in the targeted torture and murder of a 14-year-old Christian boy.
8/14/2012	Sahiwal (Punjab)	1	0	A 14-year-old Christian girl is gang-raped and murdered by five extremist men.
7/22/2012	Hyderabad (Sindh)	2	0	Two Christians are shot to death by extremists.
7/8/2012	Kot Ghulam (Punjab)	1	0	A Christian laborer is pulled out of his truck and shot point-blank by an extremist.
5/15/2012	Quetta (Balochistan)	1	0	A Christian man is shot to death while

				walking home.
5/8/2012	Dhamala (Punjab)	0	3	Three Christian women are 'beaten mercilessly' in their own home by an extremist gang.
2/26/2012	KotMeerath (Punjab)	0	1	A Christian woman is brutally tortured and paraded for harboring alleged 'anti- Islam' views.
2/22/2012	Faisalabad (Punjab)	0	2	An extremist mob attacks a church and shoots one Christian while pushing another off the roof.
12/22/2011	Lahore (Punjab)	0	1	A young Christian is stabbed several times after having been falsely accused of insulting Islam.
11/25/2011	Muzaffargarh (Punjab)	0	2	Two Christian women are beaten on their own land with clubs by a group of extremist men.
11/23/2011	RenalaKhurda (Punjab)	1	0	Extremists torture and shoot to death a Catholic father of four.
11/16/2011	Karachi (Sindh)	1	0	A pastor is shot in the neck and face in a targeted ambush.

11/6/2011	Abbottabad (Punjab)	0	1	A pregnant Christian woman is tortured for three hours by police.
10/12/2011	Korangi, Karachi (Sindh)	1	0	An extremist slashes a Christian mother's throat after raping her.
10/5/2011	MianChannu (Punjab)	1	38	A Christian trying to build a church orphanage is murdered by extremists in a "land dispute."
9/14/2011	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	A 15-year-old girl is strangled to death by her uncle for a suspected affair with a Christian boy.
9/9/2011	Islamabad (Punjab)	1	0	A Christian imprisoned for 'offending the Quran' dies after being denied medical treatment by prison officials.
9/4/2011	Mariamabad, Sheikhupura (Punjab)	1	0	A Catholic pilgrim is kidnapped and murdered while walking to a shrine.

8/28/2011	Faisalabad (Punjab)	0	1	A 64-year-old maid is beaten by madrassah students
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				for hosting a Christian prayer meeting in her home.
8/14/2011	Karachi (Sindh)	0	2	Two Christians are beaten to unconsciousness with iron rods after refusing an offer to embrace Islam.
8/14/2011	Karachi (Sindh)	0	1	A Christian is beaten with iron rods after declining an offer to embrace Islam.
8/5/2011	Drigh Road, Karachi (Sindh)	1	0	A Catholic man with children is the target of an attack that leaves his driver dead.
6/21/2011	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	A Christian father of four who worked as a garbage collector is stabbed to death by an angry extremist.
6/10/2011	Farmwala (Punjab)	0	1	A Christian boy is beaten for refusing to embrace Islam.
6/9/2011	Landhi, Karachi (Sindh)	1	0	A Christian civilian is shot to death by extremist gunmen.
4/30/2011	Gujranwala (Punjab)	0	25	Fueled by rumors of a Quran desecration, an extremist mob of

				hundreds attacks a Christian village, burning homes and assaulting the innocent.
4/30/2011	Gujranwala (Punjab)	0	25	Twenty-five Christian men and women suffer injury following an attack by an enraged extremist mob of about 350.
4/17/2011	Gujranwala (Punjab)	0	12	Twelve worshippers at a Pentecostal church are pulled out and beaten by an extremist mob.
3/25/2011	Hyderabad (Sindh)	2	0	An extremist mob invades a Pentecostal church, burns Bibles and kills two worshippers.
3/22/2011	Hyderabad (Sindh)	2	0	After yelling abuse at worshippers outside a church, an extremist mob opens fire, killing two.
3/2/2011	Islamabad (Punjab)	1	1	A Catholic cabinet minister is brutally shot to death in his car after being accused of blasphemy.
2/6/2011	Nut Kallan	1	0	A young Christian is

	(Punjab)			tortured to death by several extremists.
1/11/2011	Lahore (Punjab)	0	2	Two Christian women are violently beaten and humiliated by an extremist mob over claims they had 'abused' Muhammad (PBUH).
1/4/2011	Islamabad (Punjab)	1	0	Punjab governor is assassinated at a cafe for appealing on behalf of a Christian woman jailed for blasphemy.
12/24/2010	Shahdra, Lahore (Punjab)	0	1	A 12-year-old Christian girl is kidnapped, raped for eight months and forcibly converted to Islam.
11/22/2010	Sargodha (Punjab)	0	1	A protestant pastor is beaten and set on fire by six extremists who caught him evangelizing.
10/1/2010	Haripur (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa)	7	0	A Christian couple and their five children (ages 6-17) are brutally shot to death in their home by extremists.

8/25/2010	Swat (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa)	3	6	Three Christian aid workers helping flood victims are kidnapped and murdered by extremists.
7/22/2010	Rawalpindi (Punjab)	0	2	Two Christian girls are gang-raped by extremists.
7/19/2010	Faisalabad (Punjab)	2	1	Two Christian brothers who were pastors, are accused of blasphemy and then brutally gunned down outside a courthouse while in chains.
7/15/2010	Sukkur (Sindh)	5	6	Five members of a church, including the pastor are brutally shot to death outside the building by extremists.
7/13/2010	Karachi (Sindh)	0	1	A Christian woman is raped and then thrown from a roof by an extremist doctor.
6/14/2010	Peshawar (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa)	0	1	A Christian professor is badly beaten by his students for refusing to embrace

				Islam.
6/3/2010	Sahiwal (Punjab)	0	3	A pastor and his pregnant wife are brutally assaulted by angry extremists accusing them of evangelism.
5/28/2010	Faisalabad (Punjab)	0	5	Extremists fire into a Christian community, hitting five innocents.
4/28/2010	Quetta (Balochistan)	1	0	A Christian man is gunned down by suspected extremist militants as he is washing a car.
4/24/2010	Karachi (Sindh)	1	0	A Christian police officer is kidnapped and brutally tortured to death by extremists.
4/21/2010	Sargodha (Punjab)	1	1	Two young Christian brothers (ages 12 and 14) are beaten with an iron rod by an extremist yelling religious slurs. One dies.
4/13/2010	Sargodha (Punjab)	0	1	A Christian barber is badly beaten and sodomized by an angry mob for cutting an extremist's beard (on request).
3/22/2010	Rawalpindi	1	1	A Christian dies

	(Punjab)			after being burned alive three days earlier for refusing to embrace Islam. His wife was also raped.
3/7/2010	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	A Christian man dies during a home invasion by extremist gunmen.
2/26/2010	Lahore (Punjab)	0	3	A Christian family is terrorized in their home by an extremist gang. One girl is raped and the other stabbed four times.
2/5/2010	Karachi (Sindh)	33	80	A Christian family and dozens of Shiites are blown to bits by Sunni bombers at two locations, one a hospital.
1/22/2010	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	A 12-year-old Christian girl is raped, tortured and killed by her extremist employer, a respected lawyer.
12/25/2009	KalarKahar (Punjab)	0	60	About sixty Christians are injured when an extremist mob attacks them during Christmas prayers.

12/24/2009	Peshawar (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa)	4	24	A suicide bomber detonates near a Christian school, killing four others.
9/14/2009	Sialkot (Punjab)	1	0	A young Christian is beaten to death after being arrested for blasphemy.
8/28/2009	Quetta (Balochistan)	6	7	Six Christians are gunned down after refusing a 'convert or die' offer from extremists.
8/3/2009	Gorja (Punjab)	1	0	A Christian man succumbs to injuries suffered by an extremist mob attack.
8/1/2009	Gojra (Punjab)	8	18	Eight Christians are burned alive by a mob angered over a rumor of Qur'an desecration.
7/30/2009	Gojra (Punjab)	7	19	Seven people, including women and children (the youngest of whom was 4), are burned alive when an extremist mob rampages through a Christian community over rumors of a Qur'an desecration.
7/7/2009	Lahore	0	1	A Christian man is

	(Punjab)			crippled by an extremist, who shoots him eight times in the legs for refusing to pay <i>Jizya</i> (Protection tax).
7/1/2009	Faisalabad (Punjab)	0	1	A young Christian is brutally tortured by an extremist mob on charges of desecrating a Qur'an.
7/1/2009	Lahore (Punjab)	0	15	Fifteen Christian women and children are burned when an extremist mob throws acid on them.
6/13/2009	Bahawalpur (Punjab)	0	10	Ten Christians are injured by an extremist package bomb.
7/16/2008	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	A teenaged Christian boy is kidnapped, tortured for two days, then killed by extremists for dating a Muslim girl.
5/4/2008	Hafizabad (Punjab)	1	0	A 19-year-old Christian is tortured and killed for having a relationship with a Muslim woman.

1/17/2008	Peshawar (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa)	1	0	A Christian man (and father of an infant daughter) is brutallygunned downby masked men.
1/11/2008	Sheikhupura (Punjab)	1	0	A 13-year-old Christian boy is targeted and killed by extremist gunmen.
8/29/2007	Islamabad (Punjab)	2	0	A Christian pastor and his wife are brutally murdered in their home by extremist gunmen.
10/31/2006	Azad Kashmir	1	0	A Christian missionary is shot to death by extremists.
9/30/2006	Bahawlnagar (Punjab)	1	0	A Christian is killed by authorities who arrest and imprison him for 'blaspheming' Islam.
12/31/2005	Rawalpindi (Punjab)	2	0	Extremists kill a 23- year-old Christian and his extremist girlfriend because their relationship was against Sharia.
8/11/2005	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	Extremists kidnap, torture and kill a Catholic layman.
8/9/2005	Lahore	1	0	A Catholic layman is

	(Punjab)			abducted and strangled to death by extremists.
4/7/2005	Peshawar (Khyber Pakhtunkhawa)	2	0	A priest and his Christian driver are detained then stabbed to death by extremists, who also cut off the hands, noses and ears of the victims.
10/27/2004	Karachi (Sindh)	6	2	A vicious killing by extremists, who barge into a Christian charity office, tie up six men, then execute six by shooting them in the back of the head.
8/19/2004	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	Extremist mob takes 26-year-old Christian from his home then tortures him to death.
5/28/2004	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	Pakistani Christian who was attacked with a hammer by a policeman for violating the State's blasphemy laws dies of his injuries.
5/18/2004	Karachi (Sindh)	4	0	Four members of Pakistan's Christian minority are targeted and killed by

				extremists. One was a kidnapped youth and two others were on their way to a picnic.
5/7/2004	Toba Tek Singh (Punjab)	1	0	Catholic student abducted by extremist refuses to convert to Islam and is tortured to death.
4/2/2004	Lahore (Punjab)	1	0	Christian pastor is gunned down by extremists in front of his wife and four children.
1/15/2004	Karachi (Sindh)	0	12	At least a dozen people are injured when a car bomb explodes outside the local headquarters of the Christian Bible Society.
1/5/2004	Khanewal (Punjab)	1	0	Christian priest shot dead by extremist terrorists as he was boarding a train.
7/5/2003	Ranala Kot (Punjab)	1	0	Catholic priest, who received death threats from extremists, is shot and killed in his home.
12/25/2002	Daska (Punjab)	3	14	Christmas grenade attack on a

				Christian church kills three girls and injures fourteen young women.
9/25/2002	Karachi (Sindh)	7	3	Seven persons are killed and three others injured in a terrorist attack on a Christian welfare organization's office - the Idara-e-Amn-o-Insaaf (Institute for Peace and Justice). The victims were blind-folded, tied to chairs and shot in the head.
8/5/2002	JhikaGali, Murree (Punjab)	6	4	Six persons killed and four others injured in terrorist attack on Christian missionary school.

6/15/2002	Faisalabad (Punjab)	0	1	A 16-year-old Christian girl is doused with acid for refusing to convert to Islam.
3/17/2002	Islamabad (Punjab)	5	45	Grenade attack on a Christian church kills five worshippers including American woman and her 17-year-old daughter.

				Forty-five others were injured.
10/28/2001	Bahawalpur (Punjab)	18	9	A policeman and seventeen Christians, including five children, are killed and nine others injured when six gunmen opened fire on a church.
		219	630	

APPENDIX - III

Number of alleged blasphemers from different minority groups and Muslim Sects in Pakistan from 1953 to July 2012

SOURCE: Blasphemy Laws in Pakistan: A Historical Overview Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), Islamabad 2014, page 52.

[file:///H:/Blassphemy%20and%20forced%20conversion/blasphemy lawsinpakistan.pdf](file:///H:/Blassphemy%20and%20forced%20conversion/blasphemy%20lawsinpakistan.pdf)

Pro- vince/ District	No. of Cases	No. of Persons	Sunni	Chris- tians	Hindu	Ahmadi	Shia	Total No. of Mino- rity
Balo- chis- tan	3	9	3	-	-	6	-	6
Islam- abad	5	11	3	8	-	-	-	8
KPK	9	10	7	1	1	1	-	3

Punjab	157	271	131	99	-	37	4	136
Sindh	37	42	28	3	3	7	1	13

APPENDIX - IV

Number of holy places desecrated during 2001 – October 2011

SOURCE: Blasphemy Laws in Pakistan: A Historical Overview
Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), Islamabad 2014,
page 52

[file:///H:/Blassphemy%20and%20forced%20conversion/blasphemy lawsinpakistan.pdf](file:///H:/Blassphemy%20and%20forced%20conversion/blasphemy%20lawsinpakistan.pdf)

Holy Places Desecrated	Total Number	Killed	Injured
Mosques	41	582	1,099
Imam bargah (Shia Mosques)	20	271	858
Ahmedi Mosques	3	104	112
Shia Religious Processions	4	158	613
Sufi Shrines	9	183	456
Churches	6	32	86
Madrasahs (Religious Seminaries)	1	11	-
Total	84	1,341	3,224

APPENDIX - V

**The political representation of religious minorities in the
National and Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan**

SOURCE: Movement for Solidarity and Peace. Report: Forced marriages and forced conversions in the Christian Community of Pakistan, Islamabad April 2014, page 6.

Religious Community	Seats allocation In National Assembly
Christians	4
Hindus and persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes	4
Sikh, Buddhist and Parsi Communities and other non-Muslims	1
Qadianis or Lahori Group (Ahmedis)	1

Seats Allocation in Provincial Assemblies

Province	Christians	Hindus and Scheduled Castes	Sikh, Buddhist, Parsi and Others	Qadiani/ Ahmedi/ Lahori Group
Khyber Pakhtunkhawa	1	1	1	1
Balochistan	1	-	1	1
Punjab	5	-	1	1
Sindh	2	5	1	1

APPENDIX - VI

**Notable Alumni of St. Anthony's High School & College,
Lawrence Road, Lahore**

SOURCE: The Anthonian: Annual Magazine 2014-2015, St. Anthony's High School & College, Lawrence Road, Lahore pages 9-10

Sr. #	Category	Names
1	Politicians	Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif SardarAyazSadiq Salman Taseer (Late), Ishaq Dar, Salman Shah, Ahmad Mukhtar, MushahidHussain, Khalid Ranjha, Brigadier Samson Simon Sharaf, WaseemSajjad.
2	Armed Forces	Major Shabbir Sharif (NH), Air Com. Cecil Chaudhry (NJ), Sq. Leader Sarfraz Ahmad Rafiqi, IftikharJanjua, Gen. Jagjit Sing Arora (India), Air Chief Marshal (R) D. A. La Fontaine PVSM AVSM (India), Maj. Gen. Noel Israel Khokhar, Group Captain Sameen Jacob (PAF), Brigadier Syed Mushtaq Ahmad.
3	Nuclear Science	Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, Dr. Samar Mubarakmand
4	Education	ShoaibHashmi, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Stockholm University, Honorary Senior Fellow, Institute of south Asian Studies (ISAS), National University of Singapore.
5	Sports	Rameez Raja, Waseem Raja, SaleemAltaf, Majid Khan, JavedBurki, Shahbas Ahmed, Adnan Ahmad, Adnan Zaka, Imran Zaka.
6	Judiciary	NaeemBukhari (Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan), Ahmar Bilal Sufi

		(Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan), Anwar Kamal (former President LHCBA), Justice Sarmad Jalal Osmany (Chief Justice Sindh High Court), Justice Tejinder Pal SingaChawla (Former Judge, Delhi High Court).
7	Film/Media	ShoaibHashmi, MoammarRana, Faisal Rehman, AsifRaza Mir, UsmanPeerzada, (owner of Rafi Peer Theater group), NajamSethi.
8	Religious Leaders	His Grace Lawrence John Saldana, Ex-Archbishop of Lahore (2001 to 2011) His Grace Joseph Coutts, Archbishop of Karachi
9	Civil Service	Syed Hassan Raza (Diplomat, Ambassador of Pakistan to Qatar), S. Azmat Hassan Babar, W.Malik, Samuel Thomas Joshua (Pakistan Foreign Services)
10	Journalism	NajamSethi (TV Anchor, Editor-in-Chief "Friday Times"), RashedRahman, Editor Daily Times, Syed AsimMahmood, writer and journalist.

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PROFILE

UMEED PARTNERSHIP PAKISTAN (UPP)

UPP has a non-political, non-profit ethos, registered under Societies Act 1860 with registration # 764 and it is entitled to work nationwide. UPP is an humanitarian organization committed to working for the development and promotion of human rights. UPP has its Head office in Lahore along with three regional offices in Loralai Baluchistan, Bahawalpur and Lahore. The UPP is managed by an executive committee. It has a partner organization in the UK – the Umeed Partnership (UK) which is also registered in the UK as a charity under the UK Charity Commission. In the year 2000 UPP initially started working in Baluchistan tribal areas and then its activities spread rapidly among the desert communities of the District of Bahawalpur/Yazman, rural areas of Mian Channu/Khanewal and slum areas of Lahore. This was possible because of the trusted contacts with the people in these regions.

Umeed is the Urdu word for Hope; thus, the Partnership of Hope.

The Umeed Partnership exists to provide opportunities through education and training to vulnerable and disadvantaged girls and women, and boys and young men, across Pakistan. The organization is multi-faith and is operational in the tribal communities of Baluchistan, in slum districts of Lahore and in the marginalized low-caste Dalit communities of the Cholistan Desert in southern Punjab and rural areas of Mian Channu District. The

organization has expanded and has evolved into a women's support body to provide help to those who are victims of widowhood, disease and domestic violence.

Mostly, Umeed's work is focused on building up and empowering women and street children through education, skills training and programs of awareness about their own rights. UPP wants to see economic freedom where women and children are able to take decisions to have control over their own lives. UPP's activities in all districts are mostly comprises of running adult literacy training centers and educating women and children in Umeed schools, training women in their human rights and providing legal aid free of charge to women in distress.

UPP is committed to the socio-economic rights and promotion of human rights and democracy amongst the masses irrespective of caste, creed or gender. It applies its resources to breaking the unjust structures prevailing in Pakistani society. It works at grass-roots level with all those who believe in human liberation and who have committed themselves to this worthy cause.

Vision:

The vision of Umeed Partnership is to see educated, skillful and talented youth, improved gender equality, poor people liberated from all forms of slavery and oppression and human rights promoted among the oppressed masses.

Mission:

- To reach out to those who lack basic human needs with the aim of restoring dignity and respect irrespective of caste, creed or gender.
- To promote basic Human Rights and democratic processes within oppressed communities.
- To provide opportunities to young people to improve their talents, abilities and leadership qualities.

Goal:

To facilitate formal and informal education and human rights at all levels irrespective of gender.

Umeed's Focal Sectors include:

Human Rights:

- Human Rights and democratic education
- Empowerment of women and elimination of gender disparities
- Capacity enhancement of women's' groups and civil society organizations
- Research and documentation

Development:

- Promotion of entrepreneurship and development of small business skills
- Formal and non-formal education
- Socio-economic empowerment of the poor
- Assisting women in distress through free legal aid

Programs of Umeed

A. Human Rights

Forced Conversion

Umeed provides legal assistance in cases where women are abducted, raped or forced to change their religion and get into unlawful wedlock. Umeed also provides training on women's human rights and women are prepared to visit police, doctors and politicians to register their cases and to proceed to judiciary for justice.

Child Marriage

Umeed works among women and children in the most suppressed communities in the tribal areas of Balochistan and rural/slum areas of Punjab. Through awareness programs, skills training, adult education and by running schools, Umeed prepares parents and their daughters to avoid child marriage since the long term effects of an early marriage can be devastating for the girl.

Peace building

Umeed works among women through skills trainings, adult education, running schools, women human rights trainings, interactive public debates through stage performance, forming women human rights committees and women peace committees. Through these activities Umeed initiates peace building process and

dialogue of life among these women of all faiths. Umeed believes that women are the best carriers of peace and dialogue of life. If minority and majority women have good understanding among them then they could change the whole atmosphere of their homes.

Biased material in Schools curriculum

The rate of education among communities Umeed serves is the lowest in the world. One of the main reasons for this is that their children do not survive in the schools since the students from majority community ill-treat them and consider them as their enemies and unclean people. The students from the majority community study in the curriculum that Hindus are their enemies and the Christian are allied with Western powers. The students from religious minorities become more vulnerable to intolerance and violence, while marginalization of minority groups is socio-political fallout of religiously biased education. Umeed through its schools has already created an atmosphere of respect for diversity, peaceful pluralism, coexistence and human rights.

B. Education

Umeed Schools

UPP runs two middle schools for the children of poor desert communities of Cholistan desert district Bahawalpur. Both schools provide quality education to more than 300 students, both boys and girls.

Adult Education

Umeed runs 50 adult literacy centres (each centre 25–30 women) for about 1,400 illiterate women in all its operational regions. The project is ongoing and one session is of 6 months.

C. Economic Development

Skills Training for women and street children

UPP empowers women/girls and street children by providing them skills training (embroidery, sewing/tailoring and carpentry) for their economic independence

D. Youth talent development

Umeed Street Theatre

Umeed has trained local artists who perform contemporary theatre on issues relating specifically to women and children.

Umeed Sports Club

Promoting and encouraging youth talent.
