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MOHAJIR SUBNATIONALISM AND
THE MOHAJIR QAUMI MOVEMENT IN
SINDH PROVINCE, PAKISTAN



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SUMMARY:

This dissertation examines the rise of the *Mohajir* subnationalist movement in Sindh Province, Pakistan. It focusses on the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (Mohajir National Movement; MQM) - the party that has constructed a version of a *Mohajir* identity for political purposes.

The analysis begins with a critical examination of the Muslim movement in British India, which culminated in the formation of Pakistan. The political history of Pakistan up to 1993 is then examined, with particular reference to the development of subnationalist movements. There then follows a detailed appraisal of debates and theories on identity, ethnicity and nationalism.

The second section of the dissertation focusses on the Province of Sindh in southern Pakistan. It introduces the research framework and methodologies, and details the range of interviews conducted and archival and other sources consulted. The section proper examines, firstly, the construction of diverse community identities in Sindh Province, and, secondly, the MQM in terms of its political history, patterns of mobilisation, internal structure and aims and rhetoric.

The third section of the dissertation is focussed on the city of Karachi; very much the heartland of the MQM. I first examine how and why the MQM came to be the city's dominant agency in the 1980s, and how it ran a "parallel local state" in urban Sindh. I then consider the relationship between *Mohajir* subnationalism and violent civil disorder in Karachi and Hyderabad. This analysis in turn highlights certain contradictions in the policies and activities of the MQM. These contradictions are explored at length in a concluding chapter which considers the rise and fall of the MQM in the wider context of state-formation in postcolonial developing countries.

PREFACE

Thanks go to all the people who helped in the research, both in Pakistan and Britain, who are too numerous to mention individually. Special thanks go to the staff of the Quaid-i Azam Academy and the "Dawn" newspaper archives in Karachi, the "Nation" and "Viewpoint" archives in Lahore, messrs. Shahani, Sanauallah, Tanvir, Saeed, Mirza, Rehman, Majeed and others who know who they are but asked not to be named.

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Finally, special thanks to Cathrin, Dr. Stuart Corbridge, to family and friends, and to all the people in Pakistan, who made this research not only possible, but immensely rewarding. Needless to say, none of the above are responsible for any shortcomings in this dissertation, which is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work undertaken in collaboration.

NOTE:

"State" (upper case) will be used in the text to denote the national unit, or country, while "state" (lower case) refers to the system of government.

Mohajir will be italicised throughout, as it is a contentious identity in Pakistan, and is not accepted as such by many people.

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Figure 1.1: Pakistan at Independence

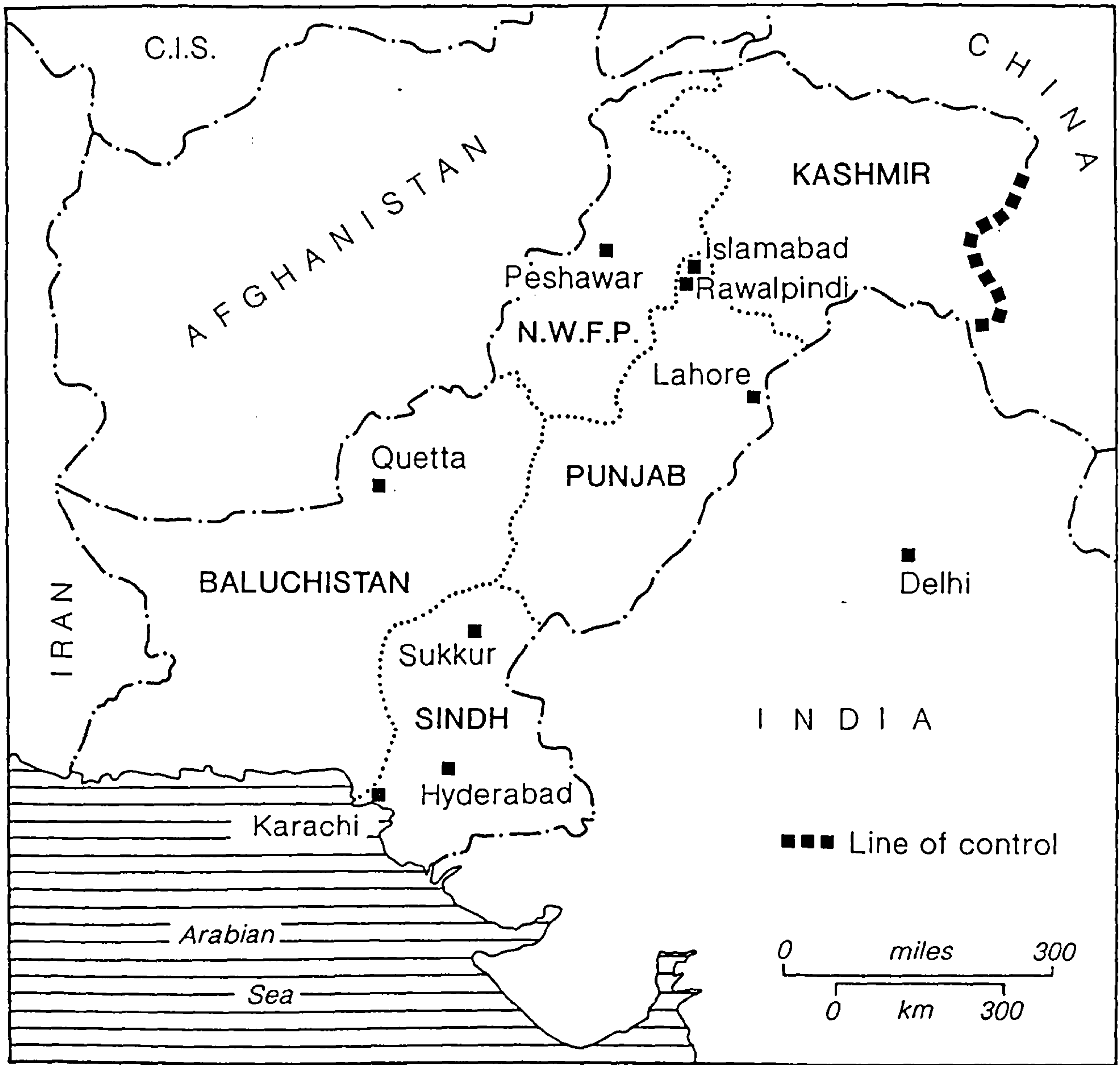


Figure 1.2: Pakistan, 1993

On 15 August 1947, the Partition of India into the two new States of India and Pakistan was officially completed. In Bengal and Punjab the murders and abductions that accompanied the Partition suggested a deep-rooted division, and the peoples of Pakistan, especially, have continued to live with a legacy of uneven economic development and fierce subnational rivalries. In many respects, the making of Pakistan has exemplified, and continues to exemplify, the problems that face so many post-colonial states in transition.

The main tasks that have faced postcolonial countries have been two-fold: on the one hand economic development, on the other hand nation-building. In Pakistan, economic performance since Independence has shown some progress, but in the years immediately following 1947 the country was not helped by a continuing invasion of political and economic refugees from India and by the prior orientation of the Pakistan economy to British colonial interests. Pakistan effectively lacked an economic infrastructure at its birth. In terms of nation-building also, Pakistan started from a weak position. The very name of the country was conceived as an acronym of the supposed major territories of Pakistan (two of which - Assam and Kashmir - would later fall within India), and as such might be seen as a lofty intellectual construction that failed to



acknowledge the ethnic situation on the ground. The fact that Bengal, or East Pakistan, was also missing from this construction is instructive and later proved to be fateful. The modern State of Pakistan was called forth in 1947 as a country with two main wings, separated by one thousand miles of potentially hostile Indian territory. Perhaps not surprisingly, given these initial conditions, the leaders of Pakistan have consistently looked to Islam as an identity which might hold the country together. Some leaders have also suggested that Urdu might serve as a unifying national language for Pakistan.

Islam continues to play an important stabilising role in Pakistan, although its cultural and political mobilisations are not without contradiction, as we shall see later in this dissertation. The idea that Pakistan might also cohere around a single language, however, has proven to be a pious hope. The prior existence in what became Pakistan of powerful regional groupings and languages, together with the very uneven development of the country after independence, more or less ensured that the process of nation-building in Pakistan would be difficult at best and impossible at worst. Clear evidence of the latter came in 1971 when East Pakistan seceded from its western masters and reinvented itself as Bangladesh. Less dramatically, the unity of what remains of Pakistan has come under threat from several of the major ethnic communities which are recognised by the Constitution as constituent parts of the country.

The communities which seem to be most reconciled to the modern State of Pakistan are the Punjabis and the Pakhtuns in the north of the country. Punjab houses the national government, and Urdu was accepted early on as the "national language" in official circles. In the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) an early movement for a "*Pakhtunistan*" dissipated through the 1950s, and the Pakhtun community is now well represented in the national government and armed forces. In the south, however, reconciliation with a national identity has been much less certain. On the border with Iran, the province of Baluchistan houses a simmering separatist movement that met with heavy military suppression through the 1970s. The Baluchi Students Organisation (BSO) was also a powerful and violent force in the University and colleges of Karachi in the 1970s, and in certain low-income housing areas in this economically vital city. Meanwhile, in the wider province of Sindh there has for many years been a strong "subnationalist" movement that rejects the central government as an oppressive "Punjabi" neo-colonialist force. The movement is strongest in the lawless rural areas and has occasionally threatened to mobilise considerable sections of the population, notably during an anti-government drive in 1983 in which some Sindhi nationalists played a part. The Sindhis have also contributed politicians to key positions in central government - notably members of the Bhutto family - but this contribution has not always been welcomed by the Punjabi elite in Pakistan.

The struggles of the Pakhtuns, Baluchis, and to a lesser extent the Sindhis, has already generated a sizeable literature (see especially Barth (1969), A.S. Ahmed (1990), Harrison (1981)), but relatively little has been written about a fifth grouping in Pakistan, which in the mid-1980s was pushing to be recognised in the Constitution as an official "fifth nationality" and which has supported an ethnic and territorial politics which might also threaten the integrity of Pakistan. This fifth "subnationality" of *Mohajirs* is largely comprised of an Urdu-speaking community concentrated in the major urban centres of Sindh province. The great majority of *Mohajirs* live in the cities of Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur. Most of the community are relatives of Muslims who migrated from Urdu-speaking districts of what became India after 1947. These early migrants were themselves known by many people, and by the state in official documents published up to 1951, as *Mohajirs*. While the community is numerically quite small, it is of great importance to the life and politics of Pakistan for two main reasons. Firstly, the fact that most *Mohajirs* live, work and own property in Karachi means that the community is located at the urban heart of Pakistan. The *Mohajir* community is small compared to the traditional subnationalities of Pakistan, but holds considerable economic power, which includes an ability to disrupt the economy of Pakistan. This power is rooted in a capacity to control particular urban spaces (notably Karachi and Hyderabad). Secondly, the rhetoric and *raison d'être* of the *Mohajir* movement

encompasses a paradoxical patriotism that both identifies with a national culture and yet spurns the claims of some other communities upon the supposed essence of Pakistan. Although spokespersons for the *Mohajir* movement - and its major political vehicle, the MQM - claim to speak for Pakistan, several of their actions have antagonised other communities which make up the nation of Pakistan. In a very real sense, the *Mohajir* movement embodies the contradictions that lie at the heart of the nation-building process in Pakistan.

This dissertation presents the first major academic study of *Mohajir* subnationalism and of the rise and fall of its main political protagonist, the MQM and its leader Altaf Hussain. The research for the dissertation was not helped by the fact that Sindh Province - and Karachi and Hyderabad cities - was sporadically racked by political and other forms of violence when I was proposing to carry out fieldwork there (in 1990 and 1991). I will return to this at the end of this chapter. In general terms, however, I arrived at a research timetable and methodology (or methodologies) which allowed me to broach three related sets of questions bearing on *Mohajir* subnationalism and the politics of the MQM.

A first set of questions concerns the construction, reconstruction and promulgation of a specific form of *Mohajir* identity through the 1970s and 1980s in urban Sindh. These

questions bear upon a set of wider debates in the development studies literature, and in the literatures relating to nationalism, ethnicity and the politics of identity in post-colonial societies (see A.D. Smith, 1983, 1991; Clapham, 1985; and Hawthorn, 1991). How, why, and in what settings do groups of men and women come to mobilise behind an ostensibly ethnic, or subnational identity? To what extent are these settings, or arenas, already produced by the activities of contending social groups (such as Sindhis and Baluchis) and by the central state itself? Does it make sense to theorise such ethnic or subnationalist movements in terms of a resource competition or resource mobilisation model, wherein various communities define themselves as contenders (or competitors) for the power and resources on offer in an arguably over-developed post-colonial state? (David Washbrook has explored this idea in the context of Tamil Nadu politics in India: Washbrook, 1989; Myron Weiner has also made it a centrepiece of his account of the "politics of scarcity in India": Weiner, 1965). Might other models work just as well, or even better? Answers to such questions obviously require a close reading of the historical geography of the *Mohajir* movement in Pakistan; they also demand that attention be paid to certain wider literatures on nationalism and identity. Pakistan is not an archetypal post-colonial polity, as no one country can claim to be, but its politics will certainly be illuminated by careful comparative study.

A second set of questions refers specifically to the MQM, and the manner in which it has championed a version of *Mohajir* identity in Sindh Province. I will examine the MQM in detail, paying attention to its origins in Karachi student politics, to its means of organisation and funding, to possible factions and schisms within the party, to its goals, to its means of recruitment and political mobilisation, to its particular relationship with the local state in urban Sindh, and to the role played by its leadership and by its one-time supremo, Altaf Hussain. This in turn means engaging with certain wider debates: for example, on questions of charisma, clientalism and neo-patrimonialism in so-called "Third World politics" (Clapham, 1985). How can we explain the rise to power in urban Sindh of the MQM in the 1980s, and its subsequent collapse since 1990? The fragmentation and virtual demise of the MQM seem to suggest that it championed a banal politics (Nandy, 1980) - a politics that said a lot about personality and a cynical lust for power, but little about ideology in a western sense. Is it necessary to oppose these models of politics in this manner? It might be that we can "explain" the rise of MQM politics in urban Sindh in "traditional" social scientific terms - its ability to fill a void in existing identity politics, capacity to make the local state work, its strong cadre structure, and so on - and yet recognise that the MQM did embody a series of contradictions (ideologically, organisationally) that later unravelled in a seemingly meaningless bout of irrationalism.

Clearly, there are important issues to address here, but always with attention focussed firstly on the empirical dynamics and contours of the *Mohajir* movement since the mid-1970s.

A third set of questions concerns geography still more directly. Why should *Mohajirs* be active as *Mohajirs* mainly in Sindh and not in Punjab (where many more migrants settled after 1947)? Why has the MQM been successful in urban Sindh and not in rural Sindh, and why in Karachi and Hyderabad above all? How and why does geography matter to an account of *Mohajir* subnationalism in Pakistan?

To answer these and other questions, I have divided the dissertation into three main Sections. These do not correspond directly to the three sets of questions just outlined, but they do provide a framework in which I can provide a sustained answer to most of the questions I have set (and which I put to my respondents).

Section 1 comprises Chapters 2 and 3 and is rather more than the traditional literature review that opens a PhD dissertation. Chapter 2 offers a largely narrative account of the origins and formation of Pakistan and the major problems the country has faced since Independence. It also offers an account of the *Mohajir* migrations to Pakistan in the 1940s and 1950s, and the emergence of a *Mohajir* sense of identity prior to its later codification by the MQM. This historical narrative allows me to offer a critical

perspective on the MQM's construction of a *Mohajir* identity; in contemporary social scientific terms, it allows me to demythologise or denaturalise the accounts that have recently been offered up as "fact" by MQM activists and officers. (I return to this theme in Sections 2 and 3 also). Chapter 3 is a complementary chapter that looks at questions of nationalism, ethnicity and identity in Western and post-colonial societies. Insofar as this chapter reflects on the South Asian experience, it does so through a consideration of the role of Islam in the making of modern Pakistan, and of Islam's relationship more widely to identity-construction and nationalism in the contemporary developing world.

Section 2, comprising Chapters 4 and 5, begins to introduce more obviously original and empirical material into the body of the dissertation. Its geographical point of focus is the Province of Sindh. Chapter 4 shows how the emergence of a *Mohajir* movement in southern Pakistan is intimately bound up with the nature and development of other community movements in the Province, and notably with the pressures exerted there by the majority Sindhi community. These pressures are apparent in the economic arena as well as in the more obviously political arena. Conflicts over economic resources (public and private) are central to the story of community politics in Sindh Province. Chapter 5 focusses on the MQM as the major promoter of a contemporary *Mohajir* politics in Sindh. I present a detailed chronology of the Movement's rise (and fall), together with an analysis of the Movement's rhetoric, internal

organisation and leadership. This chapter not only establishes the MQM as a largely urban-based pressure-group, but also begins to outline the inherently patrimonialist and seemingly paradoxical nature of the Movement's programmes and policies. The chapter draws heavily on interviews and discussions conducted in the field, and particularly those held with the most important political figures in Sindh - Altaf Hussain, his deputy Azim Fariq, and his key opponents, Benazir Bhutto, and Sindhi nationalist leader G.M. Syed. I also present a detailed analysis of English and Urdu-language party documents.

Section 3 comprises Chapters 6 and 7 and focusses my analysis firmly on the urban landscapes of Karachi and Hyderabad (and especially the former). In Chapter 6 I establish that the MQM has always been little more than a Karachi (and Hyderabad)-based pressure-group, emerging from a culture of student politics and concerned primarily with the pursuit of power in these two cities. At the same time, I show that this seemingly restricted spatial canvas has not, of itself, damaged the MQM as a political force. Indeed, the power of the MQM was very much bound up with its power to control and to script - often literally with flags and graffiti - the twin cities of Karachi and Hyderabad, and to deliver to some of its supporters the very real benefits which flow from controlling the formal and informal local states in urban Sindh. To this end I develop the concept of a parallel (local) state and I examine patterns of resource use and access in various subdivisions

of Karachi. Chapter 7 then considers the role of violence in the struggle for Karachi's formal and parallel state institutions. I examine the problem of serious civil disorder in Karachi through a detailed analysis of specific incidents and episodes of violence in the city through the 1980s and early 1990s. I also locate my case studies in the context of a slowly emerging literature on the crowd and urban violence in South Asia.

The conclusions to the dissertation are presented in Chapter 8 and I will not anticipate any more of them here. In the conclusion I also return to certain absences which necessarily mark this dissertation, given the situation that prevailed in Sindh at the time of my fieldwork. Suffice it to say that the region was on the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office's warning list for those foreign nationals living and working there at the time (a warning that was briefly given greater emphasis when the Gulf War broke out in January 1991). The extreme lawlessness of rural Sindh, together with the day-to-day violence of urban Sindh, necessarily imposed limits on the research that I was able to undertake for this dissertation. I endeavoured to overcome these problems, as I will explain later in the text. Even so, the dissertation would certainly have been prepared and researched differently in less extreme circumstances. Salman Rushdie once remarked that the telling of any one story necessarily imposes a silence on other possible stories (Rushdie, 1983). In this case, certain silences were imposed by material as much as by textual circumstances.

SECTION ONE

ISLAM, NATIONALISM AND IDENTITY IN PAKISTAN

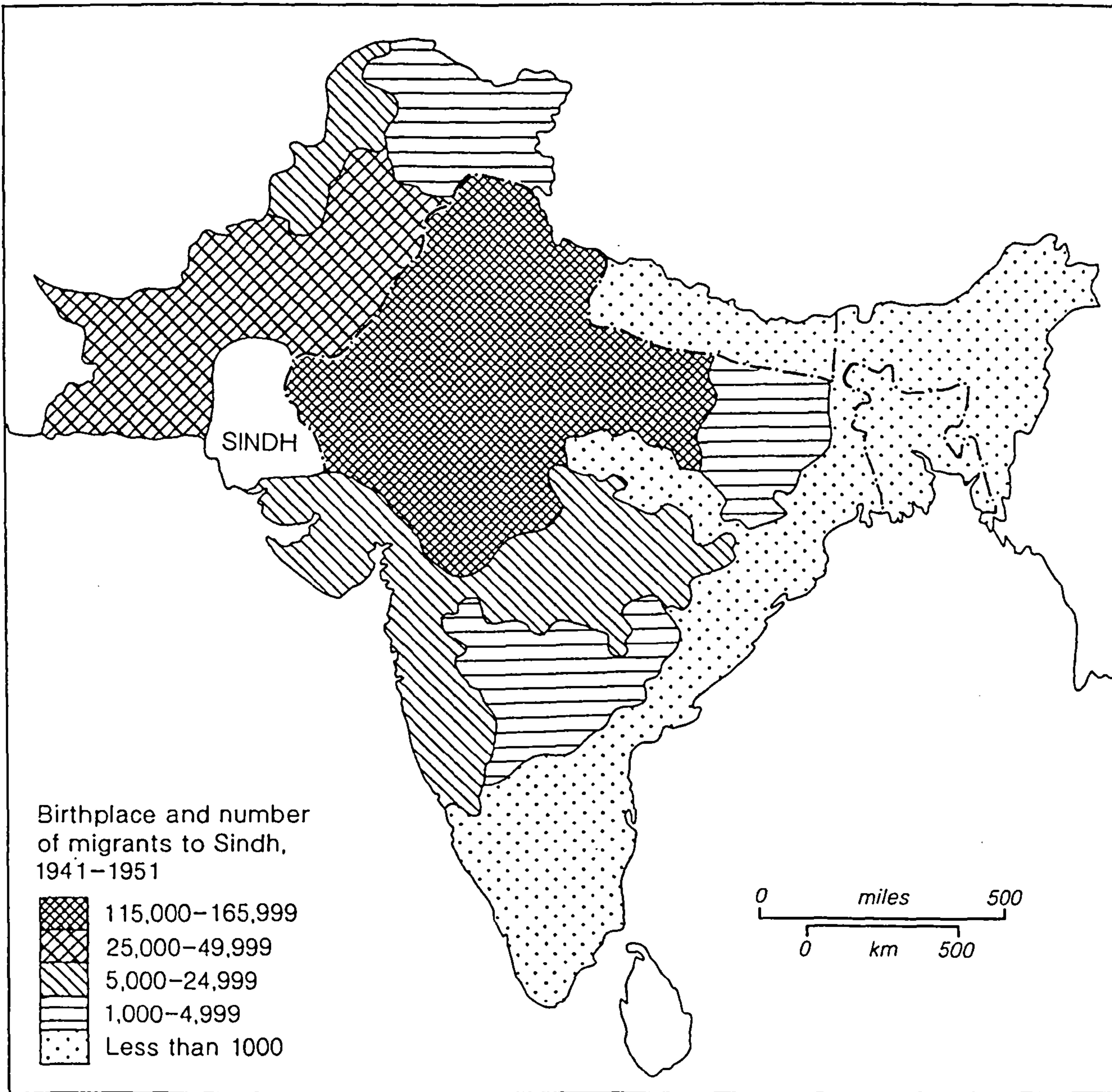


Figure 2.1: Number of migrants to Sindh, 1941-1951 by birthplace

Source: *Census of Pakistan 1951, Vol. 6, p. 66, Government of Pakistan, Karachi*

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The problems of nation-building faced by the new State of Pakistan have been highlighted not only by the secession of East Pakistan in 1971, but also by the country's continuing reversion to military rule. Between 1947 and 1992, Pakistan was under an unelected military government for 24 years. Underlying the apparent lack of legitimacy of most of Pakistan's governments has been a basic lack of consensus on the *raison d'être* of the State. This is a question that springs from the controversies of the pre-Independence period, before the concept of separate partitioned states had been presented to the population of British India. Many of Pakistan's leaders have sought legitimacy and public consensus in Islam, the religion of the great majority of Pakistanis whatever their "ethnic" affiliations. This was particularly so at the time of General Zia's regime (1977-88). Yet those leaders who wished to retain their grip on central power could only pursue Islam so far, for fear that a permanent administration run by *maulanas* [Muslim clerics] would emerge, in the style of Iran.

Other regimes, notably that of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971-77) tried to stress the cultural and ethnic diversity of Pakistan, and supposedly sought legitimacy in a decentralisation of power. But the rhetoric of decentralisation was rarely more than rhetoric and Bhutto's

government was in many ways the most centralising to date in Pakistan. Both Bhutto and Zia tried to address the problems of the unity of Pakistan, but by the 1980s it was apparent that ethnic polarisation had not been halted. Indeed, the rise of the MQM - and a fifth, *Mohajir* "subnationality" - suggests that the unity of Pakistan remains under threat.

This chapter offers a prelude to my analysis of the *Mohajir* movement in Sindh in the form of a narrative examination of the formation and history of the State of Pakistan. An analysis of the historical record is presented here in three main sections. Section 2.2 examines the rise of Muslim politics in British India and the supposed formation there of two (religious) nations. Section 2.3 reflects on the political developments that led to the Partition of the subcontinent between India and Pakistan. Section 2.4 focusses on the political experience of Pakistan since Independence in 1947, and the continuing struggle to create a sense of national identity in that country.

2.2 MUSLIM SUBNATIONALISM IN INDIA

Muslim leaders and intellectuals in British India first started forming a subnationalist policy towards the end of the nineteenth century, as British influence in the subcontinent began to effect fundamental changes in Indian society. In so doing, they were offering a reading both of the history of *Mughal* India and of the prospects for

Hindu-Muslim (communal) relations in British India. This is not the place to engage at length with this pre-history of Muslim separatist politics in British India (Robinson, 1993). It will rather suffice to make some general remarks about communalism and the early Muslim leadership as a prelude to a more extended discussion of the politics of Muslim subnationalism in British India.

Early history of "communalism"

Rivalries between Hindus and Muslims in India long preceded the arrival of the British. Freeland Abbott (1968, p.68) emphasised the ways in which the *Mughal* emperors of India treated their Muslim subjects differently to their non-Muslim subjects. Certainly, Hindus and Muslims have developed very different historical memories of the period. For the Muslims, the period of *Mughal* rule brought with it the Urdu language, the medium in which the public could communicate with the *Mughal* courts in northern India, and which borrowed heavily from Persian in vocabulary and script. This was the language, together with Persian, of a fine vernacular literature and poetry developed in the courts of the *Mughals*, in such cities as Delhi, Lucknow and Lahore (see Sadiq, 1983). The *Mughals* also brought tremendous works of architecture to the subcontinent, including the Taj Mahal monument in Agra, commissioned by Emperor Shah Jahan as a memorial for his wife, the Red Fort in Delhi, and the Badshahi Mosque and Shalimar Gardens in Lahore. All are fondly remembered, by Muslims in particular, as symbols of a powerful and

graceful period. Yet almost as powerful as these symbols was the humiliating and unceremonious end of the long *Mughal* era, which came with the banishment of Bahadur Shah Zafar from British India after the so-called "Mutiny" of 1857.

The most important issues which emerge from the *Mughal* period as far as contemporary community relations in Pakistan are concerned, revolve around the issue of local community memories of the period. I have already noted that India's Muslims have long remembered the *Mughal* period with affection, while most Hindus and Sikhs tend to recall the persecution periodically unleashed on them and their cultures by Emperors like Aurangzeb (in the late seventeenth century). In some respects, however, this picture is too broadly drawn. If we are fully to understand the rise of Muslim separatist politics in British India - and later of a *Mohajir* movement in Pakistan - we must first recognise that Muslim memories of *Mughal* India (and later, British India) varied from place to place across a huge subcontinent. A love of the *Mughal* period and the Persian/Urdu culture it produced was most evident among Muslims of central and north-west India. This relates to the location of important *Mughal* courts and buildings in such cities as Lahore, Delhi and Lucknow, which are either in what was West Pakistan, or are in the areas of origin of many important *Mohajir* leaders and followers who migrated to West Pakistan after the Partition of India. In the Muslim areas of north-east India, however, a *Mughal/Urdu* culture is less important than that of certain Bengali leaders and poets, such as Qazi Nasrul Islam, or the Hindu writer Rabindranath Tagore (M.U Memon, 1983,

p.113). I will return to the political significance of these regional differences within 'Muslim culture' later on in this chapter.

To the mass of Hindus, the *Mughals* probably always seemed physically and culturally distant, much like the British who followed them (Hardy, 1972, p.13). Hinduism calls upon more ancient traditions, and parades an apparent multitude of gods (which would be seen as idolatrous in Islam) to any number of whom temples are devoted. Urdu was used as a form of communication between the Persian-speaking *Mughal* courts and indigenous Indians in northern and central India, but was not the language of the masses. By the late nineteenth century, Hindi was emerging as the *lingua franca* of the Hindu community. Hindi is a northern-Indian language close to Urdu in structure and vocabulary, and indeed equated with Urdu by the British under the title "*Hindustani*", but which is written in a different script and borrows more heavily from Sanskrit than from Persian. Language became a source of conflict as the communities polarised at the turn of the twentieth century, as did various differences in religious ritual. Music, for example, is important to much of Hindu ritual, while it is seen as ungodly in Islam, especially in relation to religious ceremony. Hindus also revere the cow as a sacred animal, while beef is one of the most important sources of meat for Muslims. Similarly, pork and alcohol are unclean and forbidden in Islam, while both are widely used among non-Brahmin Hindus. For centuries, it seems, these factors had been largely tolerated by neighbouring communities. As conflict and bitterness grew, however, such differences became foci for attack and recrimination. Today, most people

in Pakistan take the division of the subcontinent for granted. "How could we live together", exclaimed an Urdu-speaking Muslim student to the author in Karachi, in March 1991, "when they worship the cow and we eat it?"

The British period

With the arrival of the British in India, the peoples of the subcontinent had to coexist under a new leadership. In 1835 Persian was abolished as the official language and Macauley's 1835 "Education Minute" made English the medium of all higher education in British India. European schools were established to supplement the Muslim *madrasses* [Islamic schools] and other indigenous schools, and the learning of English opened new opportunities for employment in government service. With the determined crushing of an uprising by the Third Native Cavalry in Delhi in 1857, known as the "Mutiny" (or the First War of Independence), the Muslims realised (finally) that the old *Mughal* days had ended. For the Muslims, it was a time of shock, tragedy, and depression. The poet Ghalib (1797-1868) wrote at the time: "Here there is a vast ocean of blood before me, God alone knows what more I shall have to behold" (Hardy, 1972, p.70). The Muslims had reason to fear the future as many British people blamed them for the so-called Mutiny. William Howard Russell wrote in his diary in 1860 that: "the Mohammedan element in India is that which causes us most trouble and provokes the largest share of our hostility ... They are unquestionably more dangerous

[than the Hindus] to our rule" (W. Howard Russell, 1860, pp.73-4; see also Robinson, 1993a).

As things turned out, British rule wasn't always or only a curse for the Muslims of India. Under the Queen-Empress Victoria, the British set to ruling India by means of a shifting policy of divide and rule. At times this did work to the disadvantage of some Muslim groups and there is certainly evidence to suggest that Muslims in north-west and north-east India suffered from continuing 'economic backwardness' in the British period (Brass, 1974). In the United Provinces of north-central India, however, some Muslims fared rather well, and their status was surely encouraged by British attempts to build up a loyal Muslim constituency as a counterweight to the growing community of 'Hindu' nationalists that was being championed by the Indian National Congress (founded in 1885). The British encouraged a specifically Muslim sense of identity in India by passing legislation which reserved jobs and later some Assembly Seats for individuals as members and representatives of particular religious communities. The British also encouraged the view that India was made up of two nations: a Muslim nation and a Hindu nation. The (temporary) partition of Bengal by Curzon in 1905 was one product - and sponsor - of this view (Broomfield, 1968).

Such actions on behalf of the British soon found an echo in parts of the Muslim community in India. In the second half of the nineteenth century certain influential Muslim intellectuals began to stress the importance of allegiance to the British, and of an appreciation of the educational opportunities linked to the learning of English. Societies

began to emerge, such as the Muhammadan Literary Society of Bengal, set-up in 1865, and the British Indian Association, founded in 1866 at Aligarh, United Provinces, that promoted literature and education and professed allegiance to the colonial authorities. At this time, also, two somewhat divergent elements of Muslim leadership were emerging. On the one side stood the Muslim "progressives", including the founder of the British Indian Association, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. In 1875, Sir Syed established the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, which would later become Aligarh University in 1922. On the other side stood the mainstream Islamic leadership of India, which accused Sir Syed and his Western-educated colleagues of pandering to the "un-Islamic" British authorities. The *ulama* of Medina, one of the main centres of Islamic pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia, condemned Sir Syed to death for dealing with a secular European power (Ahmed, 1988, p.127).

There was also a regional bias to an emerging Muslim leadership, with the epicentre of the 'progressives' very clearly being in the United Provinces of north-central India. By 1902 the college at Aligarh was supplying 27% annually of all Indian Muslim graduates (Zakaria, 1970, p.185). At the time of Independence, such graduates would represent a significant element of the government and bureaucracy of a new-born Pakistan. Table 2.1 shows the proportion of Aligarh graduates in the elite Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) between 1948 and 1953. The share of such graduates in the Civil Service was disproportionate to the number of northern Indian Muslims in the population of the new Pakistan. In the year 1950/51, migrants from United Provinces in India (where

Aligarh is located) accounted for less than 1.5% of the population of West Pakistan (and less than 1.0% of all Pakistan; Census of Pakistan, 1961, Vol.3, Table 9, II 303).

TABLE 2.1: Aligarh graduates in the CSP, 1948-53

<u>Year of entry into service</u>	<u>Probationers with Aligarh degrees as % of total</u>
1948	5.56
1949	10.00
1950	15.00
1951	18.18
1952	17.65
1953	15.38

Source: Annual Reports of the Pakistan Public Service Commission 1948-64, Karachi (1964), Table 8.

Community polarisation

Among the wider Indian population, there was a growing sense that a "two-nation" rift was developing in Indian society throughout the

first years of the twentieth century, notably in the form of communal rioting. One of the more dramatic episodes of such violence was the rioting in Kanpur, United Provinces in 1931, which led to the commissioning of a government enquiry on serious riots in India. The Enquiry report noted that in the decade 1921 to 1931 there had been 39 recorded serious Hindu-Muslim riots in India (Barrier, 1976, p.228). The Enquiry report also uncovered examples of individual bravery where Hindus and Muslims had tried to help and protect each other (ibid, p.232), but it seemed that a wave of Hindu-Muslim antagonism was overwhelming many local communities in this decade (Page, 1982). Communal riots may or may not date back as far as the eighteenth century, as Bayly maintains (Bayly, 1985); what is clear, however, is that such riots increased in incidence in the wake of a nascent industrialisation of India (Chakrabarty, 1989) and in line with a growing politicisation of Indian society along religious lines.

In the latter regard, it is worth noting that the much-praised *Khilafat/Non-cooperation* movement of 1920-24, in which Hindus and Muslims joined together in an anti-British drive, involved different basic motives on the part of most Muslims and Hindus. The Muslims were fighting mainly for the restoration of the Islamic seat of spiritual authority, the *Khilafa* [Caliphate] in Turkey, and their brief honeymoon with the Indian National Congress dissipated in 1924 when Kemal Ataturk abolished the Caliphate (Ali, 1967, p.20). There is evidence that the *ulama* had always opposed an alliance with Gandhi, partly because his plans for *Swaraj* [home rule] involved such provisions as allowing women

to vote (Hardy, 1972, p.195). It also bears repeating that the British administration worked hard to undermine Hindu-Muslim unity in the early twentieth century and that, to that end, the British wooed their Muslim subjects by means of guaranteed public service jobs and reserved Muslim constituencies. Against this background, and with the emergence in the late twentieth century of the aforementioned Indian National Congress, it is perhaps not surprising that a new community of Muslim politicians would emerge to champion a particular (and changing) vision of the place of Muslims within (and later without) British India. It is to a more detailed account of this history - the history of the emergence of Pakistan - that I now turn.

2.3 THE EMERGENCE OF PAKISTAN

The leader of the Muslim League after 1928, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, whose life has been analysed in detail by Stanley Wolpert (1984), is now revered as the *Quaid-i Azam* [Father of the Nation] in Pakistan, for his leading role in the forging of Pakistan. His main policy throughout the twentieth century was to secure protected power for the Muslims of India as a separate community to the Hindus and others. Although the League did not endorse a sovereignty demand until 1940, Jinnah demonstrated the manner in which he viewed the Muslims of India in the aftermath of the 1937 elections: "Organize yourselves, establish your solidarity and complete unity ... Create the feeling of an *esprit de corps*, and of comradeship among yourselves" (Wolpert, 1984, p.153). This was the time

during which the notion of a "Muslim nationality" was being transformed into a political movement, and by 1940 the Muslim League was defining this movement for the first time as a separatist one. How and why this process developed remains a matter of growing controversy.

The divergence of the two major religious communities of India led to the emergence of a variety of political groups that later jockeyed for position as it became clear that Britain would eventually relinquish power in the subcontinent. The Indian National Congress (henceforth the INC) declared on its launch in 1885 that it was a "national" party representing Indians of every community. In 1906 the Muslim League was launched (henceforth "the League") and challenged this claim, saying that it alone represented the Muslims of India. In 1927, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, formerly a member of the INC, emerged from the Bombay-based "Nationalist Party" that he headed to lead one of two factions in the Muslim League. After a period in Britain, Jinnah returned to Indian politics in 1936 to revitalise the League and to lead its emerging quest for (what would become) the State of Pakistan.

Stanley Wolpert's autobiography of Jinnah (Wolpert, 1984) supports the established view that the fight for Pakistan was a difficult one for the Muslim League, but that victory was achieved at the eleventh hour despite the continuing opposition of the INC. In 1985, however, Ayesha Jalal published another appraisal of Jinnah and the League, which together with the long-embargoed book of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1988), contributed to what has been called the "revisionist theory" of the Partition (Roy, 1990, p.385).

The orthodox view has been that the Muslim League: "was the only party to achieve what it wanted [in 1947]" (A.I. Singh, 1987, p.252). R.J Moore (Moore, 1983, p.529) has also suggested that Jinnah's work was central to both the "Pakistan Resolution" of 1940 and the Partition of India in 1947. Jalal has led a revolt against this reading of history, claiming that a Partition of India was never the real aim of Jinnah, who rather desired the creation of a federal union in which the League could exercise some power (Jalal, 1985, p.4). Instead, it was an intransigent Nehru who finally crushed the possibility of such a federal framework, which had seemed imminent at the time of the Cabinet Mission Plan of 1946 (Nehru, 1969, p.526). *Maulana* Azad, from whom Nehru assumed the full presidency of the INC in 1946, later revealed that he thought the latter's appointment a tremendous "blunder" (Roy, 1990, p.385), paving the way for a Partition that otherwise might have been avoided (ibid, p.386). Whatever the truth of this observation, it is clear that British India was divided hastily and bloodily in 1947 and that a good deal of the 'blame' for this must be shouldered by Mountbatten and his sponsors, and not just by Nehru and/or Jinnah. To see that this is so, however, we have to move backwards to come forwards.

The INC and the Muslim League in British India

The Indian National Congress (INC) was launched in Bombay in the mid-1880s. The reactions of pro-British Muslim intellectuals such as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was that the INC was a seditious movement (Zakaria,

1970, p.50). In the same year, Sir Syed launched the Muhammedan Educational Conference in Aligarh, which in turn promoted the All India Muslim League at its Dacca meeting in 1906. Hardy (1972, p.154) claims that the League sprang from a successful meeting between a group of Muslim leaders and Viceroy Lord Minto at Simla that year, in which the Muslims warned that a simple adult franchise would destroy the Muslim community at the hands of the larger Hindu community. Hardy (1972, p.158) describes the meeting in these terms:

"The Simla deputation was the outcome of a marriage of convenience between British political necessity and upper-class Muslim interests - and those of the Muslims of the United Provinces above all others."

Hardy's reading of this meeting contains within it two important judgements. Firstly, it is clear that the Muslim League was valuable to the British as a counterbalance to the rapidly growing Indian National Congress, whose rhetoric was far less pro-British than that of most Muslim intellectuals. Secondly, a major component of the League's early membership was made up of Urdu-speaking Muslims from the United Provinces. The Muslim leaders to whom the MQM now refer in their constructions of a *Mohajir* identity were thus a specific grouping of Urdu-speaking politicians and intellectuals.

The link between the Muslim League and central-northern Indian Muslims was ever a strong one. At its inaugural session in Dacca

(December 1906), a Provisional Committee was formed to frame the League's constitution. Of the 57 members of the (all-India) Committee, 13 came from the United Provinces (plus Delhi), with six of these coming from Aligarh alone (S.S Pirzada, 1969/70, pp.11-12). This compares with just six members from Punjab province, and just nine from the whole of Bengal (ibid). The dominance of League members from the United Provinces might also be guessed at from the location of League sessions held between 1906 and 1943 (see Table 2.2), which leaned heavily to UP/Delhi:

TABLE 2.2: The Location of Muslim League sessions, 1906-43

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number of sessions</u>
United Provinces	9
Delhi	6
Calcutta	7
Punjab (Lahore, Amritsar)	5
Bombay	4
Karachi	2
Nagpur (Maharashtra)	2
Ahmadabad (Gujerat)	1
Patna (Bihar)	1
Madras	1

Source: S.S. Pirzada, 1969/70; Vol.II, pp.608-9

We will also see that it was the Muslim electorate in the United Provinces that gave the heaviest endorsement of the League in the elections of 1937. These patterns indicate the specific cultural as well as political nature of the Muslim League, particularly in the use of Urdu as the party's *lingua franca*. This was the language of the Muslim intelligentsia in United Provinces, Delhi, Bihar (to a partial extent; see Bessaignet, 1960, p.22) and even Punjab. As Jalal (1985, p.2) observes, much of the political (and geographical) driving-force behind Pakistan was to be excluded from its eventual boundaries.

Among the other major Muslim players in the immediate pre-Independence period were the intellectuals of Bengal, including Sir Syed Ameer Ali. Sir Syed established a London branch of the League in 1910. There was also an important Punjabi faction of the Muslim League, which was represented by a separate wing of the party between 1927 and 1933 under Sir Mohammad Shafi (S.S Pirzada, 1969/70, p.xvi). Even at this early stage there is evidence that tensions occasionally existed between these various regional branches of Muslim leadership (Hardy, 1972, p.164). This is an important point to bear in mind when regarding future relationships between East and West Pakistan.

It was in the years immediately after 1927, when the League was experiencing damaging internal schisms, that Jinnah stepped into an important position in the party as the head of the non-Punjabi faction. At this time, Jinnah presented a plan of "14 points"², endorsed by the *Jamiat-i Ulama-i Hind* [Party of the *Ulama* of India; an Islamic party and that later became the *Jamiat-i Ulama-i Pakistan*], which called for

separate communal electorates and a federal India committed to a high degree of provincial autonomy. The report formed the basis of Muslim demands during the Round Table Conference in London starting in 1930, from which a White Paper finally emerged in 1933. Here was described a framework of Provinces in a Federation, such as came into operation in 1937, when Sindh was separated from the Bombay Presidency, and the North West Frontier Province was given full provincial status. These administrative changes were to prove important forerunners to the shape of West Pakistan.

In 1934, elections to the central Legislative Assembly were held under the Government of India Act of 1919, from which the INC emerged with 34.65% of the seats, and independent Muslims with 14.96% (Qureshi, 1987, p.71). The first major test of the relative strengths of the Muslim League and INC, however, came in the provincial elections of 1937, under the new provincial system emerging from the Round Table Conference. It is important to remember that, at this time, the manifestos of each party were united on one key issue; namely to secure *swaraj* [home-rule] for India.

1937 and after

The elections of 1937 can be described as a success for the INC and a disaster for the Muslim League (see Table 2.3). The League fell foul of regional Muslim parties and leaders, such as the Punjabi Unionists, and won just 4.4% of the total Muslim vote (Jalal, 1990, p.12).

The INC won clear majorities in five of the eleven Provinces and ultimately formed the ministries in eight, including NWFP.

TABLE 2.3: The Muslim League at the provincial elections, 1937 (Muslim seats)

<u>Legislative Assembly</u>	<u>Total Muslim seats</u>	<u>Muslim Seats won by ML</u>
Madras	28	9
Bombay	29	17
Bengal	117	35
United Provinces	64	23
Punjab	84	1
Bihar	39	-
Central Provinces and Berar	14	5
Assam	34	10
NWFP	36	-
Orissa	4	-
Sindh	33	-
TOTAL	482	100

Source: Return Showing the Results of Elections in India, 1937; Nov. 1937, Cmd. 5589, Accounts and Papers (6), Vol.XXI, pp.22ff.

NWFP, Sindh and Punjab, as Provinces inhabited by a majority of Muslims, constituted three of the Muslim League's more conspicuous failures in the elections of 1937. Meanwhile the INC, which unlike the League was standing in both Muslim reserved seats and "general" seats, won fifteen Muslim seats in NWFP, four in Bihar and two in Punjab. In United Provinces, four Muslim League delegates with "Congress leanings" won Muslim seats in addition to those shown in Table 2.3. In the huge Province of Bengal furthermore, the League failed to win a single seat among Muslims in rural areas (where the bulk of the Muslim votes were situated), winning all its 35 seats in urban constituencies. Significantly, it was in United Provinces that the Muslim League made the biggest impact among Muslims. Even at this time, the electorate in United Provinces was acting somewhat differently to those in the areas that were to become Pakistan.

The results of the 1937 elections led to a sea-change in the central policy of the League, as expressed in the Lahore session of the party in March 1940 when it was declared for the first time that nothing short of the partition of the subcontinent would be acceptable to Muslims. This shift from a demand for a federal India to a demand for separate States became known as the "Pakistan Resolution", although the specific name of the new State had not been mentioned by the Muslim League and only came into common parlance some years later³.

The seeds of separatism had been sown in the years leading up to 1940. In 1938, the Sindh provincial administration (having achieved separation from the Bombay Presidency in 1936), headed by the Muslim

League, proposed a partition of India and became the first Province to do so. I will show later on that this very event has become a bitter debating-point in modern-day Sindh, and is used by some Sindhi leaders to argue that the Province was the most enthusiastic of all the Indian Provinces in its support for the idea of Pakistan.

The poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal is widely credited with first propounding the concept of what would become Pakistan. He declared at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League in December 1930 that:

"I would like to see the Panjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India [sic]."

(M. Iqbal, Presidential Address, All India Muslim League 29 December 1930, Allahabad; in Abbott, 1968, p.163)

Seen in these terms, the principle of separation was driven by a desire not to be part of a State in which Hindus led by the INC held sway. But Iqbal's address also identified a specific geographical area of and for Muslims, the majority of whom were assumed to desire the same. A scholar from the Punjab, writing in Persian, Urdu and English, and revered today in Pakistan as one of the most important historical

figures, Iqbal made no mention of the Muslims of Bengal, among others. These people were later to form over half the population of Pakistan. This factor links Iqbal culturally to the Punjabis and Urdu-speaking *Mohajirs* of West Pakistan, rather than to the Bengalis of East Pakistan, and highlights the inherently problematical nature of the future State of Pakistan. (I will show later on that figures such as Iqbal are important to the construction of a *Mohajir* identity in a way that they are not to other Pakistani communities such as Sindhis [or indeed Bengalis]. A recent ethnic conflict in Hyderabad, Pakistan, saw a provocative erection of portraits of Iqbal and others by *Mohajir* youths at "flashpoint" sites of importance to the Sindhi community (Newline, February 1990, Karachi, p.43). Such actions are testimony both to the esteem in which Iqbal is now held by the *Mohajirs*, and the less respectful manner in which he is remembered by most Sindhis. The erection of the portraits also highlights the importance of a selective memory of pre-Independence events and personalities by contemporary ethnic activists, and the use of such historical symbols in the arena of contemporary ethnic politics in Sindh).

By the time of the Lahore Resolution of 1940, Jinnah and the Muslim League were proposing separation for six Indian Provinces; Punjab, NWFP, Sindh, Baluchistan, Bengal and Assam, the last two separated from the four others by over 1000 miles. (Significantly, the fate of Jammu and Kashmir had not been resolved). The INC, meanwhile, was launching a renewed period of anti-British agitation under a "Quit

India" banner, which rapidly led to the internment of Gandhi and many top INC ministers.

The incarceration of INC politicians allowed the Muslim League to make considerable gains. Between 1938 and 1942, the Muslim League won 46 of the 56 by-elections held in Muslim seats (S.S Pirzada, 1969/70, p.xx1). By the end of 1943, the League headed ministries in Bengal, Assam, Sindh and NWFP. The League also managed to strike an agreement with the Punjabi Unionists (a traditionally pro-British party of landowners and local notables) in the Punjab. On the back of this agreement the Muslim League effectively controlled most of the areas described (or claimed) by the Pakistan Resolution of 1940.

The negotiations and deals that led to the formation of these ministries showed that Muslim politicians across India were coalescing around the Muslim League. Between 1940 and 1941, membership of the party increased by over 26% to 112,078 (Pirzada, ibid). This was a remarkable achievement considering that the 1930 Lahore session, where Iqbal had delivered his historic address, had failed to achieve a quorum of 75 delegates (ibid, p.xvi)

The final acts

By 1944, an ex-INC member, Rajagopalachari, with British backing, was shuttling between Gandhi and Jinnah with the beginnings of a new compromise plan for Partition. This plan invited Jinnah's famous

TABLE 2.4: Results of Central Legislative Assembly elections, December 1945

<u>Party</u>	<u>% of Votes won</u>	
	<u>All seats</u>	<u>Muslim seats</u>
Indian National Congress	59.8	1.3
Muslim League	27.7	86.7
Akali Sikhs	2.1	-
Nationalist Muslims	2.8	8.9
Others	4.0	3.1

Source: Return Showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-56, Government of India Press, New Delhi, 1948, p.8

interpretation of a "truncated and moth-eaten Pakistan" (Jalal, 1990, p.19). By this time, I would argue, Pakistan had already been won, and negotiations were mainly aimed at hammering out the precise geographical description of the new States.

Yet, two more developments paved the way for the independence of India and Pakistan in August 1947. These were the elections of 1945/46 in which the electorate polarised around the two major parties, and the

TABLE 2.5: Results of provincial elections, January 1946

<u>Legislature/seats</u>		<u>Votes polled (%)</u>	
		<u>INC</u>	<u>M. League</u>
	<u>Seats</u>		
MADRAS	Total	68.3	9.6
	Muslim	0.5	93.1
BOMBAY	Total	78.9	5.3
	Muslim	2.1	93.2
BENGAL	Total	42.2	37.2
	Muslim	0.5	84.7
U.P*	Total	64.4	24.1
	Muslim	13.4	65.1
PUNJAB	Total	23.1	32.8
	Muslim	0.4	65.3
BIHAR	Total	71.3	13.7
	Muslim	5.1	73.9

(continues over)

TABLE 2.5: cont.

Legislature		Votes polled (%)	
		INC	M. League
C.P/B**	Total	72.5	5.3
	Muslim	0.9	82.3
ASSAM	Total	48.0	25.3
	Muslim	0.3	68.9
NWFP***	Total	40.1	38.9
	Muslim	38.6	41.4
ORISSA	Total	76.8	5.3
	Muslim	6.6	90.8
SINDH	Total	16.6	46.3
	Muslim	-	60.2

Source: Return Showing the Results of Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Legislatures in 1945-56, *ibid*, pp.69ff

* United Provinces; ** Central Provinces and Berar; *** North-West Frontier Province.

appointment of Admiral Mountbatten as Viceroy of India in February 1947.

At the end of 1945, elections to the central Legislative Assembly were held. The results are shown in Tables 2.4 and 2.5. The Provincial elections of January 1946 continued the pattern of the central elections, whereby the Muslim League won most of the Muslim votes, approximately 75% (Jalal, 1990, p.20), and the INC won most of the non-Muslim vote.

The stage was then set for Partition as each side strengthened its claims on the basis of these results. Even now, however, the Muslim League was frustrated in its desire to form Ministries in all of the Provinces covered by the Pakistan demand. In Punjab, most Punjabi Unionists and their supporters, who had won the elections of 1937, had by now shifted their support to the League. But the League failed to gain an absolute majority in Punjab and the Sikhs would not cooperate with the League without assurances of an independent state (of Khalistan) that could secede from a future Pakistan. Ultimately, the INC formed the Ministry in Punjab with the support of the Sikhs and others. In the NWFP, the INC won a clear majority under the Pakhtun nationalist Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Assam also fell to a clear INC majority, taking the total of INC-majority provinces to eight of eleven.

In Sindh, too, G.M. Syed split from the Muslim League on the eve of the elections to form his own group demanding the separation of Sindh. He won four seats, and thus denied the Muslim League a majority in Sindh. Failure to form a ministry led to fresh elections in December 1946 which the League finally won. In Bengal also, the League under

Suhrawardy narrowly failed to win a clear majority, but managed to form a ministry in coalition with Muslim independents (Qureshi, 1987, pp.239-42). Baluchistan did not have a provincial assembly as it was administered centrally in cooperation with tribal sardars [lords]. On the day of Independence, one of these, the Khan of Kalat, declared Independence for Baluchistan (Harrison, 1981, p.24).

These last-minute frustrations for the Muslim League leadership begin to suggest that the State of Pakistan, which was achieved just a year and a half after the elections of 1946, was incoherent and insubstantial from the beginning. Even the territory of the State was a matter for debate, and one which, it can be argued, has still not been resolved in the light of the continuing Kashmir crisis.

The British hand

By 1945/46 it became apparent that the British were willing to leave India, and were being encouraged to do so by the United States (Tomlinson, 1977). In August 1946 the colonial authorities injected a greater haste towards achieving this goal by asking Nehru to form an Interim Government, which he promptly did in September 1946. Naturally, Jinnah felt sleighted, but he eventually decided to join the government in which the future first Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Urdu-speaker Liaquat Ali Khan, was finance minister. The government's first session was then boycotted by the Muslim League over a perceived lack of representation on its benches, and the administration never functioned.

By May 1947, Lord Mountbatten had assumed the mantle of Viceroy and injected a new urgency into the proposed transfer of power in India. He presented a plan, drafted by a Hindu advisor V.P Menon, proposing a partition of the subcontinent in which Pakistan would be close to the "moth-eaten" state proposed by Rajagopalachari in 1944.

Jinnah's determination to achieve a sovereign state for the Muslims did not diminish (though see Jalal, 1985), and on 3 June 1947, after much debate, he announced the Muslim League's acceptance of Mountbatten's plan. Perhaps more surprisingly, the INC signalled its acceptance on 14 June. The sudden transition from deadlock to agreement is a matter that some historians have failed to confront, and it continues to generate a good deal of controversy. Chaudury Muhammad Ali (C.M. Ali, 1967, p.122), a Prime Minister of Pakistan in the early 1950s, claimed that Nehru finally agreed to Partition in the belief that Pakistan was an unviable concept, and would fail shortly after its birth. Ali's theory was an interesting precursor to the "revisionist" theory of the Partition of India that emerged later.

For Jinnah and the Muslim League, the problems and territorial controversies that marked the pre-Independence negotiations for Pakistan were to continue. There was to be a referendum in NWFP asking which State the province wished to join; a consultation of the *Shahi Jirga* [Assembly of Kings] in Baluchistan; and votes in some other Provincial assemblies as to which new State they wished to accede to. Orissa, Central Provinces, United Provinces and Assam, despite high votes for the Muslim League in Muslim seats (see Table 2.5 above), were to be

excluded from Pakistan. Bengal and Punjab were to be partitioned between Hindu and Muslim regions. The ensuing votes defined the nature of the new Pakistan, and on midnight of 14/15 August 1947, the two new dominions of India and Pakistan came into being.

Transition to Independence

Pakistan was born just seven years after the Lahore Resolution, at which time even the name of the proposed new State had not been adopted by the League. The new State 'for Muslims' was composed of two separate wings, and housed just over half of the Muslims of the subcontinent. Some 40 million Muslims remained within the territory of the new State of India (Davis, 1951, p.198). Most of the economic wealth and facilities of the former British India also remained in what would become the Republic of India, while the new capital and principal port of Pakistan, Karachi, was little more than a medium-sized city with few major industries.

According to the 1941 Census of India, Lahore was the largest city in what became Pakistan, and ranked fifth among the cities of India. Karachi was the twelfth largest, while Dacca, the provincial capital of East Pakistan, was only the nineteenth largest (Davis, *ibid*, p.200). As the site of West Pakistan's only major port and its only functioning Muslim League ministry at the time of Independence (Sindh), Karachi was ultimately chosen as the new capital.

The territorial conflicts and confusions continued through the first months of Independence. In the province of Kashmir a rebellion against the Indian government was encouraged by Pakistan, leading to hostilities between the two nations' armies. A ceasefire line bisecting the province was finally established in January 1949, and this broadly constitutes the border between India and Pakistan today. Meanwhile the *Nawabs* [princely chiefs] of Hyderabad and Mysore, in south-east and south-west India respectively, refused to accede to India until the army took control and forced their accession.

Perhaps the most disruptive experience of Independence, however, was the migration of large groups of people between the new States. Within West Pakistan many Sikhs and Hindus started to travel east towards India, while many thousands of Muslims were travelling in the opposite direction. In some places, such as in Bihar, West Bengal and Punjab, the migrations were accompanied by large-scale violence. Reliable figures of the number of people abducted or killed during this period are not available. The figures concerning refugee movements are also probably not very accurate, although I use Census data on such matters in this dissertation. Table 2.6 depicts the situation in the two countries by means of the 1951 Censuses of Pakistan and India. In the Table, "cross-border" migrants means those that left India for Pakistan and vice versa.

C.M Ali (C.M. Ali, 1967, p.274) estimates that nine million refugees entered West Pakistan in the ten years immediately after

TABLE 2.6: Number of Partition "migrants" in India and Pakistan, 1951^a

<u>Country</u>	<u>Number of cross-border Partition migrants</u>
INDIA	8,229,699
(West Bengal)	2,618,938
(East Punjab)	2,099,479
(United Provinces)	491,499
(Delhi)	479,744
PAKISTAN	7,415,000
(West Pakistan)*	6,706,652
(East Pakistan)	701,000
(Punjab)	5,393,308
(Sindh)	1,226,928
(Karachi)	655,811

Sources: Census of India 1951, Vol.I, Part II-A, Table D-IV;

Census of Pakistan 1961, Vol.3, West Pakistan, Table 9, II 302-5.

** Excluding areas under Deputy Commissioners and Agencies, within which there were some 11,500 migrants.*

Partition, while Tayyeb quotes an International Labour Organisation study which claims that about 7 million entered both wings of Pakistan by 1951, and that up to two million more in both countries were killed in communal genocide during the movements (Tayyeb, 1966, p.169). In Pakistan, the refugees constituted about 10% of the population by 1957 (Tayyeb, *ibid*, p.170), and in 1958 100,000 migrants were still living in self-built shanty dwellings in the city of Karachi alone (S. Ansari, lecture, 28 November 1990, Centre of South Asian Studies, Cambridge).

There are two key elements to note concerning the distribution of post-Partition migrants shown in Table 2.6. Firstly, it was the two partitioned provinces of Bengal and Punjab that saw the greatest movements of people. In Bengal, it seems that many more fled west into India than entered East Pakistan, while in Punjab, more Muslims moved to Pakistan than did non-Muslims travelling in the opposite direction. Secondly, within Pakistan, not only did the Western wing receive many more migrants than the East, but Punjab received the largest number of migrants. This is an important point to bear in mind, considering that it is among the migrant families of *Sindh* that a new *Mohajir* identity has arisen since the 1970s. (For the distribution of migrant source-areas to *Sindh* see Figure 2.1).

In relation to the movement of peoples after 1947, it is useful to examine the words of the founder of Pakistan, the "*Quaid-i Azam*", Muhammad Ali Jinnah, speaking to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan at Karachi on 11 August 1947, just days before Independence :

"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.."

(Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1989, p.46)

If we take Jinnah at his word, his statement seems to indicate a wish that Pakistan should be a broadly secular state (in the sense that its law and government would not be structured under an Islamic *shariat* plan). But herein lies a paradox. The supposed basis for Pakistan, as Jinnah repeatedly argued throughout the 1940s, was that the Muslims of India were a "nation" distinct from other "nations" in the subcontinent. The basis for this nationality could only have been the religion of Islam, since the Muslims were as diverse in language and culture across India as they were different from the Hindus and some other communities. The motivation for forming a new State in areas where Muslims were in a majority was to protect this "nationality", by enshrining it in a State where the basis for a common [religious] identity applied to all, or most, of the population. If Jinnah did not see Islam as the *raison d'être* of the new State, as the above statement suggests he did not, then he could only have pressed for a State of Pakistan as a rebuff to the political ambitions of Gandhi, Nehru and the INC.

Seen in these terms, Jinnah may have wanted to forge a separate State for Muslims in India so as to offer greater political and economic opportunities for the people in that State, but he was disingenuous to suggest that the State should be secular and loosely federal if, as he claimed, the basis for the State was a Muslim "nationality". The secular wishes expressed in the statement above, and the federal framework proposed in "Jinnah's 14 points" that formed the foundations of Independence negotiations after 1929, support the theory, voiced by Mujeeb (Mujeeb, 1970, p.410), that the real foundations of Pakistan were not to be found in Islam as such, but derived from the desire for a political framework in which a Muslim elite could exercise power. Within India, the Muslims were always in a minority compared to the Hindus, and thus faced stiff competition in business. This was particularly so in provinces such as Bengal, where Muslims were in a majority in the province as a whole, but in which the major industrial centre, Calcutta, was dominated by Hindu businesses. With the creation of a new State of 'Muslim' Pakistan, many Muslim business-people clearly hoped to benefit from a new commercial environment largely free of Hindu competition.

An "economic" theory of the creation of Pakistan, and Jinnah's position as regards the movement of Muslim capital, gains support from an analysis of Pakistan's major industries before and after Independence. In the 1940s, Jinnah worked closely with major Muslim industrialists in Bombay on a scheme for the creation of "nation-building" companies. At the time, Bombay housed India's most important concentration of Muslim-owned industry. Habib Bank, established in Bombay in 1941 and now one

of the principal banks in Pakistan, was one of the four "nation-building" companies set up with the cooperation of Jinnah (H. Papanek, 1972, p.13). Of these four companies, only one - the Rustom Cowasjee shipping line of Karachi - was already located in an area that was to become Pakistan after 1947. The other companies transferred operations from India in order to map out a new future in a largely Muslim Pakistan.

2.4 THE EXPERIENCE OF PAKISTAN

The composition of the Muslim League in pre-1947 India held important implications for the early government of Pakistan, since it was from the ranks of the League that all the central and provincial administrations up to 1955 were selected. The one exception to this was a two-month period in East Pakistan in 1954, during which an elected United Front administration held power before being dismissed by the Governor-General (Callard, 1957, p.25).

The position of Urdu-speakers within this configuration was particularly important. The first central Constituent Assembly was composed of those elected to Muslim seats in the elections of December 1945 in areas that became Pakistan. In addition to these seats, six extra "refugee" seats were added, with the members being given new constituencies in Pakistan (the final size of the Assembly was 79 members). The first Prime Minister, the East Punjabi migrant Liaquat Ali Khan, was given a constituency in East Pakistan, despite living and working in Karachi. In the Sindh Provincial Legislature, seven refugee

seats were added and "co-opted" by the Muslim League, while in Punjab those elected in the eastern half of the Province in the elections of January 1946 were entitled to seats in the assembly in Pakistan Punjab (Wright Jr., 1974, p.194). Within the Muslim League, however, newspapers reported that party elections held in April 1949 saw not a single Punjabi returned, while those from United Provinces swept most of the positions (*Nawai Waqt*, 21 April 1949, Lahore). *Nawai Waqt* also reported that such positions in the Muslim League usually signified great ease in securing import/export licences, loans, planning permission and so on (ibid).

In the economic sphere, a great deal of work was necessary in creating a new infrastructure and coping with the influx of refugees. In the East, the port of Calcutta, the major outlet to the Bay of Bengal, was now in India. Dacca was to be developed as the new provincial capital and economic hub. In the West, Karachi faced similar problems in transforming itself from a medium-sized port city to the new capital and centre of Pakistan's economic development. Most Muslim refugees, about 93%, (Tayyeb, 1966, pp.169-70) headed for the western wing of the country, while largely Urdu/Hindi-speaking migrants from Bihar and surrounding areas migrated to the more proximate eastern wing. We have seen that the western refugees settled mostly in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, with a majority in the former.

I will now present a chronology of Pakistan's political history divided into four main phases, between each of which fundamental changes in government occurred. The phases are as follows:

1. The first ten years of Pakistan, followed by the military dictatorships of Ayub and Yahya Khan (1947-71)
2. The government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971-77)
3. The military regime of General Ziaul Haq (1977-88)
4. The re-birth of civilian government following General Zia's death (1988-1993).

Period One: 1947 to 1971

With hindsight we can see that a common theme of the period 1947 to 1971 related to an evident structural weakness in the central government of Pakistan, which began its existence in Karachi. The government failed to frame a constitution until 1956 (India had a constitution by 1950), and failed to develop a representative system of parliament before power was handed over to the military regime of Ayub Khan in 1958. Although the first ten years of Independence were supposedly under some form of democracy, Jalal terms the period a "constitutional dictatorship" (Jalal, 1990, p.193) and suggests that the assumption of power by the army in 1958 was merely a continuation of an already authoritarian system. This view mirrors the wider concept of a "military-bureaucratic oligarchy" promoted by Hamza Alavi (Alavi, 1973, p.145) in relation to most "postcolonial societies". In Pakistan, the army, and to some extents the bureaucracy, were the only established institutions of state at Independence. The civil political system was far from established, especially considering the differing viewpoints on

what "Pakistan" was to mean and the hasty provincial bargainings that preceded the birth of the State. Given this background, it is not surprising that the army won the battle for central control so easily.

Pakistan's first cabinet was hand-picked by Jinnah from the ranks of the Muslim League. Some of the ministers in this cabinet faced the problem of having no constituencies within Pakistan itself, on account of their recent migration from India (Jalal, 1990, p.62). In March 1948, the Governor-General, Jinnah, addressed a rally in Dacca, and announced (in English) that the national language of Pakistan was to be Urdu. Wolpert (Wolpert, 1984, p.359) suggests that this decision unleashed "the most volatile, divisive issue in Pakistani politics". The adverse reaction to the announcement in East Pakistan cannot be underestimated. Demonstrations against the status of Urdu had started in Dacca as early as February 1948 (Taylor, 1983, p.193). On the night of the 21st February 1952, the matter claimed its first *shahed* [martyrs] in the East, as an anti-Urdu demonstration based at the University of Dacca culminated in a battle with police, during which many were killed (Ziring, 1971, p.119). Ominously, even at the time of Independence, some were describing East and West Pakistan not as one state but as "two Pakistans" (Griffiths, 1947, p.55).

Regional tensions thus made themselves felt in Pakistan immediately after Independence. It seemed as if the common fight against a prospective Hindustan and the INC had dissolved to reveal the underlying differences and conflicts between Muslims from different parts of what had become Pakistan. The struggle for Independence had

also hidden the fact that the Muslim League was hardly representative of all Pakistan. The area in which it was weakest was East Pakistan.

Meanwhile, in West Pakistan, Karachi was made a Federal Capital Area in July 1948. In this way, the city and its new constituencies were effectively removed from Sindh and were not returned to the province until the capital was moved to Lahore (and subsequently to Islamabad) after 1959. Malik Mohammad Jafar (M.M. Jafar, 1990, p.24) describes this move as "[having] far-reaching and ... quite disastrous results in the subsequent history of Pakistan, particularly with regards to the ethnic and linguistic disputes that arose in the politics of the Province of Sindh". Karachi had become physically dominated by *Mohajirs* (migrants) after Partition, and was physically and spiritually no longer a "Sindhi city" after 1948. The wider relationship between community and *zameen* [territory/land] in Sindh will be examined more closely in Chapter 3.

We have also seen that in Sindh, G.M. Syed, who is now regarded as the spiritual head of the Sindhi nationalist movement, and who was under house arrest in Karachi in the first half of 1992 after calling for the complete dismemberment of Pakistan between its constituent ethno-linguistic parts, decided on the eve of Partition to split from the mainstream Muslim League and forge his own sub-nationalist movement. Thus, Sindhi nationalism emerged simultaneously with the Independence of Pakistan. The Province has always been seen since as one of the most likely contenders for secession from Pakistan, and not least by General Zia who ordered a large-scale crackdown on an anti-government movement in rural Sindh in August 1983.

The new State of Pakistan also had to deal with other subnationalist movements after Independence. In Baluchistan, the Khan of Kalat declared Independence from Pakistan in August 1947, thus forcing Pakistan to annex the area. In December of the same year, a Baluchi member of the Constituent Assembly, Bizenjo, asked why Afghanistan and Iran should not also be amalgamated with Pakistan, since Baluchistan had only become a part of the new State on the basis of Islam (Harrison, 1981, pp.24-25). In NWFP, the former head of the Congress ministry, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was thinking more in terms of a "*Pakhtunistan*", incorporating parts of NWFP, Afghanistan and Baluchistan (where ethnic *Pakhtuns* are concentrated). In protest at the fact that the referendum on the eve of independence in NWFP only allowed two choices, between Pakistan and India, Abdul Ghaffar Khan boycotted the vote (Qureshi, 1987, pp.300-301). Two weeks after Independence, the provincial ministry that Ghaffar Khan headed was dismissed by Jinnah (Noman, 1988, p.11).

In 1955, the central government instituted the federal "One Unit" system where West Pakistan was made one province, in parallel to the single province of East Pakistan. Provincial autonomy was thus denied by the dissolution of provincial units, and West Pakistan was put on an equal footing with the more heavily populated East Pakistan. The One Unit system was a lynch-pin of the military regime of Ayub Khan that peacefully took the reins of power in 1958.

The first military regime: Ayub Khan

The period leading up to Ayub's rise to power was one in which the old Muslim League gradually reduced in influence within the government in favour of new regionalist parties and alliances. In East Pakistan the League had never been strong, largely because of the language issue. In the first Provincial Elections (held in March 1954), the League's lack of a support-base in East Pakistan resulted in its heavy defeat, with the party securing just ten of 237 seats. The United Front (headed by the Awami League) was victorious with 223 seats (Callard, 1957, p.55). This was the first public demonstration that the Muslim League was in decline in Pakistan, although Munir claims that its decline had begun long before this time and was demonstrated by the longstanding failure of the party to call an election of its executive committee (Munir, 1980, p.135).

It is important to remember that the MQM would later draw much inspiration from the personalities of the early Muslim League, and particularly that of the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan. The construction of a *Mohajir* identity in Sindh by the MQM has involved the depiction of these historical actors as "true patriots" of Pakistan, and their detractors such as G.M. Syed as *gadaron* [traitors]. Seen in these terms, the decline of the Muslim League in the first decades of Pakistan's life in many ways anticipated a gradual political alienation of the Urdu-speaking communities of urban Sindh from other communities in Pakistan.

The fall of the old guard in Pakistan was reflected in a shift of power towards the army and to political figures in Punjab, the most populous province in West Pakistan. Even before the time of Ayub's regime, the General's brother, Sardar Bahadur Khan, had been installed as the Chief Minister of NWFP (replacing Sardar Rashid) to push through the "One Unit" scheme in 1955 (Dawn, 25 July 1955, Karachi).

Meanwhile, in the powerful bureaucracy, Punjabis were beginning to become the dominant group. We have seen that migrants from United Provinces were important in the early Pakistan bureaucracy. Braibanti explains that it is impossible to pinpoint accurately how many Civil Service officers elected to transfer to the Pakistan Civil Service from that of India at Independence, but by 1966 the proportion of Pakistan's bureaucracy who had transferred from India could have been no more than 20% (Braibanti, 1966, pp.267-8). Between 1948 and 1964, Punjabis were the largest block of probationers in the elite corps of the bureaucracy, the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP), at 34.6% of the total, just ahead of East Pakistanis at 31.5% (Annual Reports of the Pakistan Public Service Commission, 1948-64, Table 8). The number of Punjabi probationers in the early 1960s was approximately twice that recorded in the early 1950s (ibid). Furthermore, while a policy was instituted in 1950 allowing for 10% of the annual CSP recruitment to be drawn from the armed forces⁵, this was never put into practise until 1960, under Ayub Khan's regime (Central Public Service Commission, 1964, p.10). By 1963, 14 army officers had been drafted into the CSP (Braibanti, 1966, p.286). Recruitment from the armed forces also favoured Punjabis, who dominate

the forces in rank and numbers. In these terms, the "military-bureaucratic oligarchy" to which Alavi refers was clearly growing in power in Pakistan and was becoming more integrated through the 1960s (Alavi, 1973, p.152).

Economically, the period was also one in which development was largely controlled by an oligarchy of investing families, most of whom in the industrial sector came to be based in Karachi, and which in the agricultural sector comprised large and long-established land-owning families. We have seen how some of the major industrial concerns transferred to Pakistan from cities like Bombay around the time of Independence. Table 2.7 lists the top twelve business houses in Pakistan's industrial hub, Karachi, in the late 1960s. The Table shows that *Memons* (from Kathiawar, north-west India), *Bohras* and *Khojas* (Shia trading communities from Gujerat, west India) and Punjabi *Chiniotis* (a *Sunni* community from Chiniot, Punjab) dominate the scene, and all but two families transferred from outside Pakistan after 1947. Importantly, while most of these industrial families migrated to Pakistan from India, they have not been successfully targeted by the MQM as major financial supporters of a *Mohajir* political presence. I discuss the reasons for this in later Chapters.

TABLE 2.7: The top twelve business-houses, 1969.

<u>Company/House</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Pre-1947 H.Q</u>
1. Dawood	Memon	Bombay
2. Habib	Khoja	Bombay
3. Adamjee	Memon	Calcutta
4. Crescent	Punjabi (Chiniot)	Delhi
5. Saigol	Punjabi (Chakwal)	Calcutta
6. Valika	Bohra	Bombay
7. Hyesons	(mixed)	Madras
8. Bawany	Memon	Rangoon
9. Amin	Punjabi	Calcutta
10. Wazirali	(mixed)	Lahore
11. Fancy	Khoja	East Africa
12. Colony	Punjabi (Chiniot)	Lahore

Source: H. Papanek, 1972, p.27

In over-all terms, the late 1950s and 1960s was marked by rapid economic growth in Pakistan (when compared to its South Asian neighbours: Burki, 1980, p.43), by a limited degree of rural economic liberalisation that was particularly effective in the Punjab, and by a period of political stability, notably in the early 1960s. (Economic gains were also boosted by the commencement of US aid to Pakistan). Burki (Burki, 1976) suggests that this era saw a shift in political power from the hands of the traditional large landowners to those of an emergent rural middle class. Alavi disagrees, claiming that the large landowners retained basic power but that the "mode of articulation" of this power changed (Alavi, 1976, pp.343-47). In Punjab, certainly, and to a more limited degree in NWFP, new axes of power were forged both by an emerging new middle class, and by older agricultural families who began to invest in industrialisation. In rural Sindh and Baluchistan, however, tribal and feudal forces retained a dominant grip on the rural economy and politics, and very little progress was made towards economic and political modernisation.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Ayub era was a growing disparity between East and West Pakistan. The seeds of this disparity were apparent before the time of Ayub's regime in terms of rates of industrial investment and development in the two wings of Pakistan. Before 1955, Rs. 167 million of government aid went to industry in East Pakistan, while Rs. 232 million went to West Pakistan. The military regime had claimed that it would reverse this trend (Tayyeb, 1966, p.147). However, it is clear that economic conditions in

West Pakistan developed more rapidly than was the case in East Pakistan throughout the 1960s. Noman (1988, p.41) claims that the difference in per capita income between West and East Pakistanis rose from +30% in 1958 to +45% in 1965.

National disintegration

The latter half of Ayub Khan's presidency saw the growth of anti-government agitations in East Pakistan, where Mujibur Rahman of the Awami League had become increasingly vocal on the matter of redressing the economic and political grievances of the East. Heavy-handed army responses followed, until full elections were held in December 1970. The Awami League said it was prepared for East Pakistan to remain in Pakistan if the new government committed itself to a serious reorganisation of the economy. The results of the elections are shown in Table 2.8.

The election results show that an east-west polarisation of voting had occurred, with the Awami League sweeping all but two seats in East Pakistan, and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto triumphing in West Pakistan. The Awami League had also become the largest single party in the whole of the country, but this did not mean that Mujibur Rahman was invited to form the new government. General Yahya Khan, who had assumed the mantle of President when Ayub voluntarily stepped down in 1969, stalled a meeting of the National Assembly, and on 25 March 1971 ordered a new military crackdown in East

Pakistan coupled with the arrest of Mujibur Rahman. The estrangement between East and West was complete.

TABLE 2.8: National Assembly seats, December 1970

<u>Party</u>	<u>Seats</u>	
	<u>W. Pak</u>	<u>E. Pak.</u>
Awami League	-	160
Pakistan People's Party (PPP)	81	-
Pakistan Muslim League (Quyum)	9	-
Council Muslim League	7	-
<i>Jamiat-i Ulama-i Pakistan</i> (JUP)	7	-
<i>Jamiat-i Ulama-i Islam</i> (JUI)	7	-
National Awami Party (NAP; Wali K)	6	-
<i>Jamaat-i Islami</i>	4	-
Pakistan Muslim League (Pagaro)	2	-
Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP)	-	1
<i>Independents</i>	15	1
TOTAL	138	162

Source: Dawn, 2 December 1970, Karachi

In the west of the country, many Pakistanis viewed the Bengalis as dangerously close to Hindus in culture. This was a view encouraged by Ayub Khan (A. Khan, 1965, p.187), and it reflected the fact that East Pakistan was around 25% non-Muslim in population, and that an archetypal Bengali identity embraces both Islam and Hinduism. Again, the ultimately irreconcilable conflict between the unitary view of Pakistan held by the Punjabi/military central government, and the concept of regional diversity held in the provinces, is evident in the way the Bangladesh situation was handled by the central government at the time.

In East Pakistan itself, the non-Bengali Muslims, many of whom had migrated from India after the Partition, and who generally supported the State of Pakistan in 1970/71, were termed inaccurately and rather derogatively "*Biharis*" by the Bengali majority. The term refers to one source of post-Partition migrants, Bihar, yet was used generally to refer to all non-Bengalis (M.U Memon, 1983, p.108). There are allegations that thousands of these people were massacred in 1971 by Bengalis, yet there can be no accurate verification of this today (Oldenburg, 1985, p.728). As the conflict escalated, the Indian army finally intervened, partly as a response to the growing tide of refugees flooding into India. The Pakistan army eventually surrendered to the Indian army in Dacca on 15 December 1971 to pave the way for the formation of Bangladesh.

The disintegration of Pakistan has been a subject of much debate. Stephen Cohen suggests that it was only the practical difficulties of Pakistan being in two parts on either side of India that led to its division (Cohen, 1986, p.302). The Bhuttos called the

situation a "tragedy" (Z.A. Bhutto, 1971). Benazir Bhutto claimed that a "united Pakistan ... died with the emergence of Bangladesh" (B. Bhutto, 1988, p.60), although neither Bhutto explained why Mujibur Rahman was never invited by President Yahya Khan or Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to head a new government, when clearly he had been the victor in the 1970 elections. Philip Oldenburg (Oldenburg, 1985, p.712) suggests that the secession was due to the fact that West Pakistanis, and particularly *Mohajirs* and Punjabis, had always equated "Pakistan" with their own wing of the country. Muhammad Umar Memon (M.U. Memon, 1983, p.123) supports this view, suggesting that there was a general lack of understanding about a national "selfhood" in West Pakistan. Many in the West did not greatly mourn the "loss" of East Pakistan; the "real" country was still intact. Much criticism has also been levelled at the operations of the Pakistan army in the run-up to secession. A special feature on the creation of Bangladesh in the Karachi monthly "Herald" in January 1992 demonstrated that the issue is still an emotional one in Pakistan, as shown by the letters to the journal published the following month (Herald, February 1992, Karachi, pp.13-14)⁶.

The Bangladesh episode also highlighted the "*Bihari* issue" in contemporary Pakistani politics. Following Independence, a large community of non-Bengali Urdu-speakers has continued to inhabit refugee camps in Bangladesh and is denied full citizenship rights there. The MQM has taken up the cause of these people, referring to them as "patriots" (of Pakistan), and demanding their "repatriation" to Pakistan. The demand is fervently opposed by Sindhi nationalists, who see it as a method of

swelling the support of the MQM in Sindh. This is another issue I will return to in later Chapters.

Period Two: 1971 to 1977

In West Pakistan, the new name of the reduced state became simply "Pakistan", in a sense justifying allegations in the East that West Pakistanis had always seen their version of the State as the dominant one. Bhutto's PPP had emerged as the largest party in West Pakistan and was invited to form a new government. The PPP proclaimed itself a left-of-centre party, practising "Islamic socialism". The party slogan was "*roti, kapra aur makan* " [bread, clothes and housing], and Bhutto claimed that wide-ranging changes would be made in Pakistan.

Yet, despite PPP rhetoric that a devolution of power to the provinces would be the order of the day, the new national Constitution drafted by the PPP government in 1973 was the most centralising to date. The 1973 Constitution contains no "provincial list" of powers, while most non-federal powers are in the "concurrent list" over which the federal government holds ultimate jurisdiction (Zafar Hassan Shah, 1983, p.160). General fears of centralisation were confirmed in 1973, when Bhutto dismissed the *Jamaat-i Ulama-i Islam* (JUI) provincial ministry in Baluchistan and accepted the subsequent resignation of the JUI-National Awami Party administration in NWFP.

With two of Pakistan's four provincial administrations antagonistic to his rule, Bhutto's administration faced fundamental

problems of legitimacy. In Baluchistan, furthermore, a subnationalist agitation led by certain tribal leaders became more openly hostile, and drew a heavy federal army response. In 1973, three Baluchi nationalists (Bizenjo, Mengal, and chairman of the Baluchistan NAP Khair Bux Marri) were jailed along with many others, so accelerating hostilities until early 1975. At the height of the battle, it is estimated that up to 80,000 federal troops were engaged in operations in Baluchistan (Harrison, 1981, p.36). Baluchi nationalism remains a persistent underlying threat to the cohesion of Pakistan. At present its most active agent is probably the Baluchi Students Organisation (BSO), which is much in evidence in Baluchi-inhabited areas of Karachi.

Bhutto certainly instituted some radical changes in Pakistan, many of which were designed to break the bureaucratic-military nexus that had dominated Pakistan since Independence. The 1973 Constitution removed many of the safeguards to employment in the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP), including those which guaranteed job tenure and protection against parallel transfers. The army also received a new panel of government ministers to regulate promotions and transfers at higher levels (Burki, 1980, p.103). Perhaps more significant was the development of the Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI), which was related not only to the expansion of Pakistan's international interests, but also to a desire in the Bhutto administration to know what the armed forces were doing behind the scenes (Herald, January 1991, Karachi, p.29). Ironically, the ISI later became closely allied to the military under General Zia.

Land reform was only partially addressed by Bhutto. It is estimated that the reforms of 1972, which set a ceiling on land holdings above which land should be "resumed" by the state, led to the resumption of just 0.01% of the total farm area in Pakistan. Furthermore, 59% of the resumed land in Punjab was among the poorest quality agriculturally and was unirrigated (A. Hussain, 1989, p.63). Wignaraja and Hussain (1989, pp.220-1) also claim that the economic growth achieved in the Bhutto era was largely in consumer goods, rather than in the heavy industries that would fashion a sound base for the economy. Noman (1988, p.83, 110) is also critical of both the industrial policy of the Bhutto government, and the later political measures that aimed to appease the rising dissent of the *ulama*. In general, Burki's (1980) analysis agrees with this criticism, though he adds that inequalities in income distribution in Pakistan worsened under Bhutto (ibid, p.166).

The political knock-on of this failure to address the gross inequalities of the rural economy in Pakistan is the continued dominance of large "feudal" landowning dynasties at all levels of politics, and particularly in Sindh Province. The "structure of control" that the British colonial state adopted in such areas as Sindh, where the population was regulated at a distance through feudal families whose wealth and limited power was maintained by the colonial rulers, saw very little change up to and beyond the 1970s.

In other areas, Bhutto made many enemies. In Karachi, where the *Jamaat-i Islami's* only major concentration of support was situated, anti-Bhutto feelings grew strong, particularly after a series of legislative

measures in the early 1970s that attempted to discriminate positively in favour of the rural areas of Sindh province. The pressure against Bhutto from *Jamaat-i Islami* in Karachi led him to take some controversial steps, ranging from superficial measures such as banning all bars and nightclubs in Pakistan, and the changing of the day of Sabbath from Sunday to Friday, to more serious moves such as declaring the *Qadianis* to be un-Islamic and a religious minority. (*Qadianis*, or "*Ahmediyyas*" believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1839-1908) was a prophet of Islam). The move encouraged bitter anti-*Qadiani* riots in Karachi, Lahore and many other cities in Pakistan (Zakaria, 1988, p.235).

The end of the first Bhutto era

It was at the end of Bhutto's government in 1978 that the All-Pakistan *Mohajir* Students' Organisation (APMSO) emerged in Karachi University. The link between the two events was not entirely coincidental. The first PPP government had instituted some fundamental changes in the power structure of Pakistan as it had existed since Independence. The bulk of the party's support lay in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, including amongst some sections of *Mohajir* industrial workers in the latter. However, within Sindh, the PPP government had instituted a tilt in the balance towards the "Sindhis" in particular. The Language Bill of 1972, which reinstated Sindhi as an official language in the province, was one of the more symbolic aspects of this shift in emphasis. The Bill certainly hit at the pride and "national vision" of

the *Mohajirs*, to whom Urdu was essential. (We have already seen how Bengali culture confronted this vision).

Perhaps more important to a process of alienation among the *Mohajir* community in the 1970s were more structural matters, and particularly the Constitution of 1973, which included a provincial "nationality"-based Quota System for federal public sector employment. The workings of the system will be examined more closely later; the key aspect of note here is the matter of further quota arrangements within each provincial quota. These differed for each province, but in Sindh the 19% federal quota was divided between "urban areas" (representing Sukkur, Hyderabad and Karachi) and "rural areas" (covering all other areas), by a 40/60 % ratio (thus giving a 7.6% quota for urban areas, and 11.4% for rural areas).

It should be noted straight away that the effects of these quota arrangements on the fortunes of the urban citizens of Sindh were more symbolic than physical. Be this as it may, the Quota system was interpreted by many as a process of "victimisation" of *Mohajirs*. The system has worked to an extent in Sindh, since rural Sindh's share of employment in the federal bureaucracy increased through the 1970s relative to that of urban Sindh (see Table 2.9). But Table 2.9 also shows that the Punjabi community was continuing its march to dominance in the bureaucracy and its progress conflicted more directly with the fortunes of the Sindh *Mohajirs*.

TABLE 2.9: Community shares of Civil Service employment, 1973 and 1983

<u>Quota Area</u>	Share of total employment (%)	
	<u>1973</u>	<u>1983</u>
Punjab/Islamabad	49.2	54.0
NWFP	10.5	13.4
Urban Sindh	30.1	17.4
Rural Sindh	3.1	5.4
Baluchistan	2.5	3.4
Northern areas/FATA*	2.6	3.6
Azad Kashmir	1.8	1.9

Source: Government of Pakistan, 1976/1984

* - *Federally Administered Tribal Areas*

It was opponents of the PPP, and particularly the main party supported by the *Mohajirs* of Sindh, the *Jamaat-i-Islami*, that led the call for the removal of Bhutto's government towards the end of the 1970s. Elections were finally held in March 1977, with the PPP standing against a diverse opposition grouping called the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), which included the Islamic parties. The elections resulted in a dramatic victory for the PPP, which emerged with 77.5% of all National Assembly seats (including 90.3% of all seats in Punjab), against 18.0% for the PNA (Burki, 1980, p.196). Indeed, the victory was

so dramatic that charges of electoral rigging were raised in many quarters and the PNA boycotted the next round of Provincial elections. The Opposition then launched an agitational movement, spearheaded by *Mohajir* supporters of the *Jaamat-i Islami* in Karachi. On the night of 4 July 1977, soldiers acting on the orders of recently-promoted Chief of Army Staff General Ziaul Haq, surrounded the Prime Minister's residence in Rawalpindi, Punjab, and placed Bhutto in "protective custody". Bhutto's daughter Benazir describes a telephone call between Zia and the astonished Prime Minister after the soldiers arrived:

"'I'm sorry Sir, I had to do it,' Zia blurts out, making no reference to the peaceful agreement just concluded. 'We have to hold you in protective custody for a while. But in ninety days I'll hold new elections. You'll be elected Prime Minister again, of course, Sir, and I'll be saluting you.'"

(Benazir Bhutto, 1988, p.92)

In 1971, the armed forces had little choice but to hand power to an elected government, after rising opposition to the Ayub regime at the end of the 1960s and the debacle on the battlefield with the Indian army in East Pakistan. But Bhutto had subsequently alienated the old power-structure in which the army had held sway. During its sabbatical from power, the army soon began to oppose Bhutto's government. Joining the

army in opposition to Bhutto were the *ulama*, who saw the encouragement of regional community identities as contravening their own conception of the *umma* of Pakistan. In Karachi, such parties as *Jamaat-i Islami* found willing critics of Bhutto in the *Mohajir* community, which had been alienated by his apparently pro-Sindhi cultural and structural policies, and to a lesser degree by the decline of *Mohajir* influence in the public sector. As on many occasions, dissent in this important city held significant implications for the fortunes of the national government, and on this occasion gave the army the excuse it needed to restore 'order' to the economic heart of Pakistan. Ironically, while Bhutto had trusted few army generals, he had promoted Zia above many of his colleagues to reward his apparent loyalty. In July 1977 he was made to realise the error of his judgement.

Period Three: 1977 to 1988

Bhutto had represented a pro-Sindhi administration at the federal centre. For this reason the *Mohajirs* may have initially welcomed the replacement of his regime by that of General Zia, a former East Punjabi who promoted a national, Islamic programme in which the unitary status of Urdu was said to be important. However, the repression of political organisations and leaders throughout the Zia years caused widespread dissent to emerge across Pakistan. This was also the period in which the MQM emerged. Many in Pakistan, such as the Punjabi academic Akmal Hussain (*interview*, 24 February 1991, Lahore), believe there is a

link between the General and the MQM, and that Zia consciously sponsored the establishment and development of the Movement in 1984. His supposed motive for doing so was to position the MQM as a counterbalance to Benazir Bhutto's Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), which had become active in Sindh after 1983. It seems certain that the MQM could not have grown so meteorically in such a climate of political suffocation without a blind-eye being turned on occasion by the central government. Whether the army actually armed and trained the Movement is another matter.

The use of "Islamisation" as a policy by the Zia regime, while stifling provincial political movements, has been interpreted by Rakisits as a method of confronting centre-province tensions by converting them into "a clash between secularism and Islamic fundamentalism" (Rakisits, 1988, p.78). Zia saw that Islam was the sphere in which a national culture could be defined, partly by turning public attention away from the charms of regionalism. A.S Ahmed (A.S. Ahmed, 1988, p.83) supported Zia's efforts to promote Urdu as a national language - where Bhutto had promoted regional languages - and argued that such a process offers great potential for Pakistan (A.S. Ahmed, 1989, p.67). Were Bhutto had enjoyed power and some "legitimacy" (Alavi, 1990, p.57), however, in the sense that he had once been elected, Zia faced a continual lack of legitimacy by failing to seek a popular mandate (ibid. p.58).

The problems of regionalism could not be wished away. In the early 1980s, dissent in Baluchistan, which even Zia himself had admitted was "ripe for seeds of subversion" (Sayeed, 1982, p.41), continued to

simmer. In Sindh, Benazir Bhutto assumed the mantle of the PPP (initially while in exile in Europe), and launched the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy [MRD] in August 1983. The MRD reached its zenith in the Sindhi-speaking rural areas of the province at this time. By the end of August 1983 the MRD claimed that the security forces had responded with 100 public floggings, over 1000 arrests, and the claiming of 60 lives (*Inqlab Sind*, Aug./Sep. 1983, London). These reports also suggest that the MRD was led by Sindhi-speakers and accompanied by a Sindhi nationalist rhetoric (*Dawn*, 17 August 1983, Karachi) that led to it being largely ignored by *Mohajirs*. Unlike in 1977, the large cities of Sukkur, Hyderabad and Karachi saw little public disturbance (*Inqlab Sind*, *ibid*). In the long run, however, the Zia regime was no more advantageous for *Mohajirs* than it was for any other community in Pakistan. As a consequence, in party-less local elections in 1985, candidates implicitly affiliated to the *Jamaat-i Islami* (who had initially been an important advisory element of Zia's regime) were routed in the urban areas of Sindh for the first time. Alavi apports the blame for this failure on the fact that "the country had had enough of Islamic fundamentalism" (Alavi, 1990, p.61)

With respect to economic development, the available evidence reflects more kindly on the Zia years. Progress was helped by political stability (in the shape of Martial Law), favourable weather conditions that boosted agricultural production in the mid-1980s (Hyman et al, 1988, 97), and the continuing influx of remittances from Pakistanis working in the Gulf countries. A not inconsiderable flow of US aid,

facilitated by Zia's pro-Mujahideen stance on the Afghan issue, also benefitted the economy substantially during the 1980s.

At the same time, however, a persistently high defence budget led investment in social projects such as health and education to remain woefully low. By 1985 only five countries in the world were spending less in per capita terms on health care than was Pakistan (Noman, 1988, p.174). In 1985 Pakistan spent 2.1% of its GNP on education, while the corresponding figure for India was 3.6% (Govt. of Pakistan, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1991, pp. 320-21). The 1980s also saw a dramatic increase in the trade of illicit drugs and weapons in Pakistan, largely as a result of the porosity of the Afghan border areas following Zia's "open-door" policy for Afghan refugees. This factor has had major implications for Karachi especially, where drugs and gun operations have expanded enormously, and where slum clearance and "regularisation" operations in Afghan areas have led to violent local conflicts. Finally, the long experience of military rule for the second time in Pakistan's history stifled the development of a national participatory political culture, and has further hampered the development of independent institutions other than the army.

I will show that by the end of the 1980s the MQM had quickly risen to become the dominant force in the major urban centres in Sindh, and particularly in Karachi. Simultaneously, Benazir Bhutto had returned to Pakistan from exile to tumultuous welcomes in many areas. For a brief period from 1985 to 1988, Zia attempted to calm demands for democracy by instituting a government headed by the Sindhi politician, Junejo. In

May 1988, however, Zia dissolved this government. Shortly afterwards, on 17 August 1988, a bomb on a military plane killed General Zia, the US ambassador to Pakistan, and many of Zia's closest advisors. The long period of military rule had come to an abrupt end, and there was little the incumbent President, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, could do but call new elections for October 1988.

The return of democracy

Benazir Bhutto and the PPP were widely tipped to usher in a new democratic era. Success almost turned to disaster, however, when the mandate for the PPP in the elections fell short of what many expected. The PPP was eleven seats short of an outright majority, with 44.9% of National Assembly seats against 26.6% for the *Islami Jamhoori Ittehad* [IJI; Islamic Democratic Alliance; a newly constructed group of anti-PPP elements, the major component being the Pakistan Muslim League]. Nevertheless, after some deliberations, Bhutto became the new Prime Minister, in coalition with the Awami National Party (ANP) of Wali Khan in NWFP, and with a hung assembly in Baluchistan headed by the *Jamhoori Watan Party* (JWP). The latter soon shifted allegiance to the opposition IJI. In Sindh, the MQM's dominance of the major urban centres led Bhutto to sign an accord with the Movement in December 1988, known as the Karachi Declaration.

The accord rapidly went sour, as did the general experience of the Bhutto administration. The Prime Minister found herself constantly

fighting the President, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, and the Chief Minister of Punjab, Nawaz Sharif. Both of these men were important figures in the Zia regime, and both were very much in place after the General's death. In a sense it was astonishing that power was ever handed to Benazir Bhutto, as Christina Lamb points out:

"Only a few months earlier it would have been an unthinkable scene. On one side sat the generals, stiff-backed and unsmiling, about to hand over the power they had enjoyed for more than half Pakistan's existence. On the other, close friends and relations of Benazir Bhutto and leading members of the Pakistan People's Party chatted and laughed ... until recently, censorship had meant that the name of Pakistan's first elected Prime Minister and founder of the PPP, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto could not be mentioned. Today his daughter was being sworn in as Prime Minister."

(Lamb, 1991, p.36)

Less than two years later the miracle came to an end, as the President announced that he was dissolving the National and Provincial Assemblies, dismissing Benazir Bhutto, and holding new elections in October 1990. The short-lived PPP government had been plagued by financial scandals surrounding prominent PPP members, and a rise in political and non-political violence in the province of Sindh. The

violence had included some nightmarish chapters in the cities of Hyderabad and Karachi, where the MQM, estranged from the PPP, was facing a resurgence in militant Sindhi nationalism aimed at *Mohajirs*. Once again, civil unrest in the key city of Karachi had assumed a significance of national proportions. Ghulam Ishaq Khan's rider to the dismissal notice to Benazir was that Bhutto, her husband Asif Ali Zardari and many other members of the PPP were to be charged with fraud, and in the case of Zardari with complicity in political intimidation and murder. Benazir Bhutto faced personal and political disaster.

It was hardly surprising that the IJI swept the new elections in October 1990, with Nawaz Sharif becoming the new Prime Minister of Pakistan. The PPP charged the alliance with massive electoral fraud, producing a lengthy White Paper entitled "How an Election was Stolen" (Pakistan Democratic Alliance, 1991, Islamabad).

By forming a nebulous coalition party, the IJI, which Alavi (Alavi, 1990, p.64) and others believe is basically an army faction and its associates in civilian clothing (The Economist, 3 December 1988, London)), the government of Nawaz Sharif headed for the first time in Pakistan a regime that nominally ran administrations in all four provinces. In Sindh, the tenuous coalition included both Sindhi nationalists and the MQM, thus defusing the Sindhi/*Mohajir* ethnic subnationalist conflict for the time being. For the MQM, violent estrangement from the PPP in 1988-90 meant that the IJI offered itself as the MQM's only viable alternative electoral partner. In the sphere of

Islam, the final adoption of a *Shariat* Bill in March 1991 was criticised by many of the *ulama* for being largely symbolic and promising no real action (interview with *Maulana* Fazlur Rehman, Herald, June 1991, p.47). The resultant debates have reopened the whole question of Pakistan's "national culture" and its relation to a "national religion".

2.5 CONCLUSIONS

The questions now being raised by the MQM relate to those faced by the State of Pakistan as a whole since 1947. The central problem is how a *community identity* is framed and presented, and how this, in turn, should relate to a *national Pakistani identity*. For *Mohajirs*, the question is particularly difficult, since the community's culture and origins are rooted in areas beyond Pakistan's frontiers. We have seen that many *Mohajirs* have confronted this problem by allying with a unitary, national programme, in which Urdu and Islam are central elements. Such a policy suits the *Mohajir* community since it offers a chance to "belong" to the national culture on at least an equal footing with other Pakistanis.

I have shown that the move towards the formation of Pakistan by the Muslim leaders of pre-Independence India involved a conflict between a unitary idealistic vision of how the State should be structured, and the demands for provincial autonomy and diversity put forward by the various regional communities that made up the actual population of Pakistan. These conflicts did not emerge fully until the State of

Pakistan was won and the twin problems of economic development and the construction of a national identity were finally confronted. The first casualty for Pakistan arising from both these problems was the secession of Bangladesh, while other subnationalist movements, including the recent growth of a *Mohajir* movement, threaten still further tensions.

Pakistan's postcolonial experience has also involved a failure to develop a sound civil political culture, as opposed to the authority of the army. Under army rule, a unitary national vision has been imposed on the population by force rather than by consensus. Zia made the most concerted effort to impose a national identity with his policies of Islamisation. But repression has given an even greater impetus to regionalist and subnationalist movements, whose leaders have little faith in the willingness and ability of Pakistan's rulers to give them a fair share of the cake. I will argue in later chapters that a lack of a democratic vocabulary in Pakistan has also made subnationalist movements more violent than might otherwise have been the case.

In many ways, Sindh Province province has served as a microcosm of these historical developments and tensions. Different views on the foundations of the State have been presented by the Sindhis on the one hand, and by the urbanised Urdu-speakers (*Mohajirs*) on the other. Fissiparous tendencies arising from this intellectual conflict have been encouraged by the actions of central government (especially the two Bhutto governments), and the *Mohajir* movement is one product of this. The physical conflict between the subnationalist communities of Sindh has called into question the original *raison d'être* of Pakistan as

a homeland for a "Muslim nationality", and threatens the very integrity of the institutions for which these subnationalist movements are nominally competing to access or control.

It is important to analyse further such questions of identity, community, nationalism and the state, both in terms of general theories and debates and with specific reference to the population of Sindh province. It is to these questions that Chapter 3 now turns.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The "Pakistan Resolution" was not known as such at its delivery in 1940, since the name of the state had not entered into common parlance in India by this time. The Resolution is perhaps more accurately referred to as the "Lahore Resolution".

2. The "Fourteen Points", drawn up by the Muslim League in December 1928, formed the basis of the League negotiating position in the following years. The points can be summarised as follows:

1. The future constitution should be federal.
2. There should be provincial autonomy.
3. All legislatures should have "adequate representation" for minorities, without reducing existing majorities.
4. Muslim representation in the Central Legislature should be at least a third of all seats.
5. Separate electorates should be continued for "communal groups", but such groups can opt to become part of the general joint electorate.
6. Territorial redistributions must not affect Muslim majorities in Punjab, Bengal and NWFP.
7. Religious freedom must be guaranteed to all.
8. Laws can only be passed with at least three-quarters majority of each community represented in regional legislatures.
9. Sindh should be separated from Bombay Presidency.
10. NWFP and Baluchistan should be made subject to the same reforms as other provinces.

11. Muslims should be given "adequate shares" in government agencies, taking regard of efficiency.

12. Safeguards for Muslim culture and institutions must be constructed.

13. All central and provincial cabinets must have at least one third of the total as Muslims.

14. The Central Legislature can only change the constitution after consulting States in the Indian Federation.

3. In 1933, a Muslim scholar at Cambridge University, Chaudury Rahmat Ali, proposed the formation of a "Pakistan" [Land of the Pure, which is also the meaning of the "*Khalistan*" proposed by Sikhs in present-day Indian Punjab] in a leaflet distributed among expatriate Indians in Cambridge, (1933; "Now or Never"; Cambridge). Ali also claimed that he had first suggested the idea as long ago as 1915 (C.R. Ali, 1947, p.119). In another publication, Ali also gave suggested separate Muslim Bengali and Deccan states, named *Bang-i Islam* and *Usmanistan* respectively (C.R. Ali, 1940). One of these is effectively a forerunner to Bangladesh. However, Ali's sphere of influence was not great in the Indian subcontinent.

4. The 1951 Census of India defined "migrants" as those born in areas that became Pakistan after 1947, who were situated in India in 1950/51 (Government of India 1951, Vol.1, Part II-A, Table D-IV).

5. Government of Pakistan, Cabinet Secretariat Branch (Establishment Branch), Resolution No. F-25/4/50 - Ests. (SEI), 8 November 1950, Karachi.

6. The sentiments of many concerning the Bangladesh affair were conveyed by the following letter, from Ishrat Hussain in Karachi, referring to a photograph of General Niazi of the Pakistan army signing the surrender documents in the presence of Indian army generals in 1971;

"The cover of your December 1991 issue pains me as I witnessed, from very close quarters, the events in the eastern wing of Pakistan. Your photo shows a proud Pakistani soldier humiliated through sheer trickery"

(Herald, February 1992, Karachi, p.13)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I examined the historical processes leading to the birth of the State of Pakistan, and the manner in which that State has been shaped since Independence. I also highlighted certain differences which emerged in the leadership of the Indian Muslim community in South Asia, and especially between the Muslim religious clergy and a more westernised political and economic intelligentsia. It was Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a member of the "progressive" intelligentsia, who ultimately gained most of the credit for forging the Independent State of Pakistan in 1947.

The differences in outlook between these schools of Muslim leadership in Pakistan raised many questions about the shape that the new State should assume. These questions revolved around the relationship between local and national identities in an ostensibly federal state structure. Jinnah had claimed that the Muslims of India ultimately deserved their own country because they constituted a "nation". Yet, after Independence, two problems confronted the new State. Firstly, it quickly became apparent that the Muslims of Pakistan are not a unitary community, a *millat*, but are rather a loose collection of regional ethnic and linguistic communities all demanding a degree of representation. Secondly, in recognition of such regional diversity,

Jinnah had laid precise conditions for the structure of the new State; namely that it should be secular in intent (in terms of tolerating religious freedom and not framing its Constitution under Islamic *Shariah*), and that it should embrace a degree of provincial autonomy. Had Jinnah been granted more than his one year of worsening health following Independence, he would have seen both these wishes denied by the power-brokers of the new Pakistan.

Chapter Two also drew attention to the changing nature of the leadership in Pakistan after Independence. We have seen that a denial of provincial autonomy and a lack of "legitimacy" in central governments helped the rise of regionalist movements, which in the case of East Pakistan culminated in the secession of Bangladesh. Since that time, Pakistan has had to grapple with important theoretical and political debates surrounding questions of Islam, secularism, regionalism and the legitimacy of central governments. In Sindh, debates on the relationship of the provincial state to the central state, and on the position of diverse community identities within a federal framework, ultimately encouraged a powerful and aggressive *Mohajir* movement to emerge, which championed the rights to representation of a "new" regional (or subnational) community identity.

In this chapter I begin to consider the emergence of *Mohajir* subnationalism in the wider context of debates on ethnicity, identity and nationalism. I argue that, historically, most debates on ethnicity, identity and nationalism embrace one or other of two polar positions, although there is an emerging common ground in between. These two

positions relate firstly to the primordial qualities of "given" ethnic communities, and secondly, to the degree of cleavage within and between "constructed" - or "situated" (A.D. Smith, 1991, p.20) - ethnic groups. There is also disagreement about the role of the state in postcolonial societies in shaping ethnic and subnationalist identities.

In the next chapter I will present my own findings from research in Sindh and appraise how my theory of community identity-formation relates to existing theories on the topic. I will argue that the *Mohajir* movement is best explained in terms of a circumstantialist account of ethnicity and identity that pays particular attention to questions of political and economic mobilisation (often for public resources) at different levels of the Pakistani state. The remainder of this chapter is split into two sections. In the first section I analyse some debates and theories on ethnicity and identity, and attempt to refer these theories to examples from community politics in Pakistan. The second section offers a partial review of the history of debates on nationalism, and analyses the interface between community politics and "national-state" formation in what is now the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

3.2 ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY

It is true to say that community identities in Pakistan, as in many postcolonial states, are far from unitary and obvious to the external observer. Ahmed suggests that the formation of Pakistan among

Muslims in India was warranted, but that "Pakistan's chronic problems - including the breakaway of Bangladesh in 1971 - are a result of its leaders failing to appreciate its ethnic compulsions" (Ahmed, 1990b, p.28). At the same time, Ahmed maintains that such compulsions need not be a problem to the Pakistani whole, provided that a policy of recognising them in a suitable way is pursued. Sadly, the formation of Bangladesh in 1971 was the final expression of the way in which a singular Muslim nationalism emerging in British India had been allowed to ride roughshod over a complex map of local and ethnic identities in what became West and East Pakistan. These underlying identities did not suddenly emerge after 1947. They had always been present under the surface (interview with Akmal Hussain, 24 February 1991, Lahore).

Ahmed's parable illustrates two aspects of identity and nationalism in Pakistan (as elsewhere) on which scholars have tended to hold differing opinions. Firstly, I would argue that there are different "levels" of identity that apply to different situations, and which can be interchangeable depending on circumstances. Thus, in some situations, a Baluchi, Sindhi or Punjabi may cheer the same national cricket team, while on other occasions regional ethnic identities will come to the fore and differentiate these communities.

The second important foundation of both identity-formation and nationalism is the notion that political exigencies and desires, and their development over time, can lead to a complex shuffling of identities. Daniel Bell suggests that such shuffling is the product of identities consisting of "multiple overlapping components" (Bell, 1975,

p.156). Thus, Muslim nationalism in the 1940s became Bengali nationalism in East Pakistan after the State of Pakistan was achieved and defined, and may undergo further, ever more localised differentiations, as still other units of government are achieved. Alavi argues that Pakistan has always been a palimpsest of various identities, including class, language, religious and territorial markers, between which community groups have shifted depending on immediate exigencies, the movement for Bangladesh again being a perfect example (Alavi, 1989, pp.223-4). In 1947 the immediate aim of the Muslim League was to achieve an independent State within the subcontinent. With this achieved, regional groups within the new State of Pakistan could reappraise their position within the country. Such has been the dilemma of Pakistan ever since.

In socio-cultural terms, Nirad Chaudhuri (Chaudhuri, 1965, p.30) identified two levels of identity in India, which he refers to as "nationality" and "citizenship". The term "Indian citizen", for example, refers to and includes a wide variety of national, religious, linguistic and other identities (as of 1993 the Indian Constitution recognises 15 official languages, while the 1971 Census identified 1652 distinct languages). Some analysts offer a related and even more generalised picture, in which "downward shifts in the central focus of ethnic identity" (Horowitz, 1975, p.135), such as the movement from Pakistan to Bengali nationalism, affected many countries around the world as they broke free from a colonial past. Horowitz suggests that processes of regional separatism in post-colonial societies will tend to progress to

ever more localised definitions, but not many scholars would agree with the teleology implicit in this proposition.

Primordialism and circumstantialism

In some cases, a search for very local ethnic identities arises from the primordialist approach to ethnicity and identity that is one extreme point in the anthropological (and other) literature. In the twentieth century, however, and particularly in Europe in the 1960s and 1970s when Marxist ideology influenced many theoretical and political writings, various circumstantialist theories of ethnicity gained in popularity. These theories directly challenge primordialist theories by suggesting that ethnic identities are the products of political mobilisations and manipulations and not just the result of some underlying "objective" factors or markers. Alavi argues that circumstantialist theories of ethnicity were dominant in academic circles by the end of the 1980s (Alavi, 1989, p.223). I will now consider these two dominant theoretical traditions before saying a word or two about various Marxist accounts of identity and ethnicity (which are broadly circumstantialist in form). I will also assess some of the contributions made to these debates from within (or with specific regard to) South Asia.

Primordialism

The primordialist account of ethnicity, or the "Dark Gods" theory as Ernest Gellner terms it (lecture; "Identity and Ethnicity", 21 November 1990, New Hall, Cambridge), has been popular with nationalist politicians as a way of naturalising a particular form of political and cultural mobilisation. As might be expected, "primordialism" suggests that ethnic identities are based on certain "primordial" givens that have applied to a community from time immemorial, and which inextricably define a person's membership of a community. Such characteristics can range from physical features, to language, religion and/or ancient customs. Primordialist theories also helped to fuel some of the racist and Orientalist ideologies that were popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as props to imperialism and colonial rule. As Said (Said, 1985) has pointed out, it was the White Man's Burden to look after, and rule, the less well equipped races and ethnic groups of Europe's colonial periphery (or "Other").

Of course, the mere existence of primordial qualities needn't encourage racist ideologies, and most anthropologists have been happy just to speak of differences in primordial traits (as opposed to ranking them as more or less good or strong). Frederik Barth, for example, presented Pakhtun society (which occupies a large area encompassing parts of Afghanistan, Iran, and western Pakistan) as an example of a society in which the defining characteristics of ethnicity relate to

cultural factors handed-down over the centuries (Barth, 1969). These factors are, broadly, adherence to Islam, belief in a relationship of lineage to *Qais* (a contemporary of Mohammad), and *Pakhtunwali* - a Pakhtun code based primarily on *gheyrat* [a complex term meaning bravery, but also ethnic loyalty and certainty in dealings with non-Pakhtuns: Edwards, 1990, p.66]. Such factors are, in a sense, diacritical features of Pakhtun societies that influence both internal Pakhtun relations and Pakhtun interactions with other communities and the external world.

The aspect of family lineage in the construction of an ethnic identity is a primordialist feature that Western theorists often discount, particularly in the metropolitan context of modern capitalist societies where families with known ancient lineages are not so evident (Gellner, 1987, p.22). However, in other societies, such as Japan, the whole nation is believed to be patrilineally related (Van der Berghe, 1981, p.16). In South Asia, too, family lineage is often an element of ethnic identity. In India, name-groups among Muslim communities such as *Qureshis* (who claim to be descended from Mohammad's *Quresh* tribe) and *Ansaris* (from the *Ansars*, who were the original supporters of Mohammad at the time of his first teachings) are codified in official documents as *biraderis* [clans/tribes]. This allows some analysts to refer to such groups as accepted ethnic communities, sometimes following specific occupations and recognisable by other defining traits. Similarly, in Pakistan, *Mirzas* by name are recognised as *Ahmeddiyyas* (or *Qadianis*);

the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed Qadiani (1839-1908), believed by some to be the latest prophet of Islam.

Circumstantialism

In contrast to primordialism, circumstantialism suggests that ethnic identities are defined not so much by ancient atavistic features of custom, or genetic factors handed-down over generations, as by a more conscious formation of community markings in response to contextual needs or pressures. In this way it differs from the seemingly more "objectivist" accounts of some primordialists. As A.D. Smith puts it:

"Belonging to an ethnic group is a matter of attitudes, perceptions and sentiments that are necessarily fleeting and mutable, varying with the particular situation of the subject. ... This makes it possible for ethnicity to be used 'instrumentally' to further individual or collective interests, particularly of competing elites who need to mobilize large followings to support their goals in the struggle for power"

(A.D. Smith, 1991, p.20).

(Smith himself favours a more historical and symbolic-cultural account of ethnicity, as do I: this will become apparent in later chapters).

Adopting such a circumstantialist approach, Alavi (Alavi,1989, pp.244-5) focusses more critically on "Sindhi" ethnic identity. He argues that the promotion of a Sindhi "nationality" has everything to do with the activities of certain Sindhi politicians, the most prominent of whom has long been G.M. Syed. Syed's "success", Alavi argues, has resulted from his attempts to define a Sindhi identity - or nation - in terms of certain "fixed", "diacritical" features such as language, common history and *zameen* [land/territory] (interview with G.M Syed, 13 March 1991, Karachi). Yet it is sometimes difficult to identify precisely where the boundaries of this identity are to be drawn. Another Sindhi nationalist leader, Dr. Hamida Khuhro, counts certain communities of Baluchis as Sindhis, by virtue of their long history of residence in Sindh and their cultural affinity to other Sindhis (interview with Tanvir Tahir of All Pakistan Newspaper Society, 16 March 1991, Karachi). In this manner, membership of the Sindhi community is related to striking "roots" in Sindh in which the Baluchis believe (although they do not generally speak Sindhi in the home environment), and which supposedly are not shared by certain other groups such as Punjabi agriculturalists (Alavi, 1989, p.244). (This is closer to A.D. Smith's historical-cultural account).

Alavi is broadly suggesting, therefore, that Sindhi nationalists cut their ethnic communities to suit their political cloth. The selective use of ancient historical markers or traits is a ploy to suggest a certain immutability in community identities (and thus a set of undisputed claims to a share of local resources and representation).

Meantime, the specific exclusion of Punjabis living among Sindhis from the Sindhi fold is a convenient socio-political strategy for Sindhi nationalists. (Alavi would seem to be taking up a position at one end of the circumstantialist spectrum).

The crucial factor influencing the definition and transformation of ethnic identity, for many circumstantialists, is that of power. Keyes (Keyes, 1981, pp.10-11) claims that in societies where access to power is codified in a stratified system of community groups, ethnicity acts as "a variable in social action", or, in other words, as a bargaining-point in community political strategies. This analysis can be applied to the history of Pakistan since 1973, when four "nationalities" (Punjabis, Sindhis, Pakhtuns and Baluchis) were designated as "official nationalities" in the Constitution. Similarly, electoral success and subsequent access to provincial or federal power may defuse the energy of ethnic movements. Washbrook cites the case of the Tamil separatist movement in India, which "appears to move in an inverse direction to the success of Dravidian [Tamil] parties in constitutional politics" (Washbrook, 1989, p.178). In Pakistan, again, it is interesting to note that after the MQM assumed some powers in provincial and federal government in November 1990, the leadership of the *Mohajir National Movement* moved to redefine the Movement as class-based in spirit and "non-ethnic". The implication is that "ethnicity" had served its purpose.

Marxism shares with circumstantialism a concern for the access of particular communities to power and resources in society. Marxism generally discounts primordial aspects of identity and any vertical

community markers that might cut across the more basic class divisions that are assumed to exist in most societies. Some Marxist scholars have even seen ethnic identities as the product of (or akin to) a "false consciousness" (Wallerstein, 1979, p.181). In Marxist terms, power is equated with access to capital. Thus, conflicts and movements that appear as outwardly ethnic in form are often thought to be underpinned by socio-economic considerations. Engineer, for example, suggests that the root of the conflict between Sikhs and Hindus in India's Punjab has very little to do with religion (at least before 1984), and can be more reasonably understood as a community political struggle to capture the benefits of the region's Green Revolution (see also Bhushan, 1984).

Early Marxist writers also tended to concentrate more on nationalism than on ethnic identity. This is particularly so in the case of the Russian leaders, Stalin and Lenin, as we shall see later. One general theme that did emerge within Marxism was that ethnic community differences are cultural in form (which is to say *not* primordial), and will gradually disappear as more fundamental - more rational - political and economic processes begin to shape modern society. Since the state largely defines these processes, it is the state (and the market) that largely defines the importance of "cultural" factors in any given society. In the USSR religion was thus proscribed by the ^{Communist Party} ..., at least at the level of decree. (The situation in Asia was only briefly alluded to by Marx and then rather superficially. The "Asiatic Mode of Production" was presented, rather condescendingly, as a "stagnant offshoot" to the core world economies arising from an ancient "tribal"

organisation: Giddens, 1981, p.7). Ironically, the collapse of the communist world in eastern Europe and western Asia at the end of the 1980s has shown that ethnic and other forms of identity (such as religion) have survived the economic and political processes of communist development, to persist as important aspects of community organisation and relations. Religion still provides a vital "imagined community" for many people in eastern Europe, as elsewhere (Anderson, 1983).

Other analysts, while not considering themselves to be Marxists as such, have also highlighted the important relationship of economic power and resources to community politics. Schermerhorn claims that increasing capitalist penetration in a society forces communities to compete together on the same political stages for limited resources (Schermerhorn, 1978, p.12). Weiner and Katzenstein amplify this point in relation to India's preferential policies, where the provision of public-sector jobs and Reserved Seats in assemblies for named - or scheduled - communities encourages political mobilisation by and within these communities to protect or extend their ascribed "niches" (Weiner and Katzenstein, 1989, p.203). Seen in these terms, ethnic politics in the developing world - as elsewhere - is underpinned by a struggle to access (or mobilise) those resources made available to different communities through the market or (more crucially) by various agencies in the public sector of the economy. Since these resources are by definition finite, Weiner has called this the "politics of scarcity"

(Weiner, 1965). The state itself becomes the primary target for ethnic and other groups pursuing scarce public goods.

Shifting identities - Other interpretations

One of the key arguments of circumstantialist ethnic theories is that a community is defined not just by its own characteristics, but also by the way in which other communities and societies perceive and treat it. This applies particularly to migrant communities (such as *Mohajirs*), whose sense of identity is greatly shaped by the actions of the host communities with whom they live (Keyes, 1981, p.16). Such interrelationships are also crucial to Ahmed's concept of "district ethnicity", which is presented as a "third way" beyond primordialist and circumstantialist theories (A.S. Ahmed, 1990b, p.29).

Ahmed discusses the example of *Hazara* ethnicity in the border region between Pakistani Punjab and North West Frontier Province. The unit that gives the area its name was imposed by the British authorities for administrative purposes. One of the key elements of the Hazara sense of identity is that the people of Hazara are not accepted as a distinct community by the major ethnic groups on either side of them, the Pakhtuns and the Punjabis. The two communities tend to amalgamate the Hazaris with the one "other" community they do recognise (Ahmed, 1990b, p.33). The result has been a cultural distancing of *Hazaras* from the two major neighbouring communities, in such a way that a Hazara identity seems strongest when the *Hazarawali* is away from home and among

strangers (ibid, p.42). Indeed, during my own fieldwork in Pakistan in Spring 1991, I discovered a huge painted slogan on a wall in Clifton, Karachi, which read (in English), "Proud to be Hazarawali!". It is interesting to note that the concept of district ethnicity involves primarily circumstantialist factors; the ethnicity referred to is created largely by external physical factors, and is consciously "used" by *Hazarawalis* in their fight with neighbouring groups for economic and political resources (ibid, p.34).

Ahmed is not alone in considering the role of neighbouring groups in the construction of group identities. Schermerhorn has presented a model of five "intergroup sequences" (or stages) as an aid to understanding questions of ethnicity and identity in South Asia. These are broadly conditions in society through which ethnic groups develop, which Schermerhorn later extended to six sequences/stages, as follows:

1. Emergence of pariahs,
2. Emergence of indigenous isolates,
3. Annexation,
4. Migration,
5. Colonisation,
6. Religious cleavage

(Schermerhorn, 1978, p.11).

Schermerhorn does not contend that this sequence is always a linear one, with groups passing neatly through each of the stages in turn. In some societies some of the stages do not apply, or do so only at certain points in history. As can be seen, the stages are structured in terms of the relationship of a group to its neighbours (and their own identities) over time. The six stages were used by Schermerhorn to classify the variety of "minority groups" in Indian society. Certain groups, such as linguistic minorities, are excluded since they are "fractioned groups of such minor size that it is nearly impossible to treat them on a societal basis" (Schermerhorn, 1978, p.14). The third stage - annexation - is not considered to apply to Indian society (ibid, p.12).

Schermerhorn's model is a useful tool in the analysis of community development, and the second stage is not inappropriate as a description of Sindhi society. This stage is defined as "where an aggregate of nonliterate people are surrounded or dominated by a literate, usually considerably urbanised, sector of the population" (Schermerhorn, 1978, p.12). Sindhi-speakers in the province do represent a largely rural-based aggregate group in the Province, with lower levels of literacy and education than their urban counterparts. While not surrounding the Sindhis, since they are smaller in number, the *Mohajirs* are largely urbanized, comparatively well-educated, and certainly account for the major part of Sindh's economic output. Of course, identity is not static over time, but is closely related to the dynamics of other social groups. Identity is also related to access to power in society, and the way in which this changes, or shifts, over time.

Muslim identity

Shifts in identity are also apparent within Islam, notwithstanding certain claims to the contrary. Mann (Mann, 1986, p.11) observes that, on the Arabian peninsula in particular, Islamic power has been unable to subvert ancient tribal organisations and conflicts. This much is true also in Afghanistan, where efforts to replace the communist regime were being hampered by ethnic conflicts between *Mujahideen* groups, despite Islam being common to all of them. In another sense, however, it was the very prize of power in Kabul, won after twelve years of battle by the rebel fighters, that forced a reappraisal of the relationship between ethnic and Islamic identifications.

In other cases, an Islamic resurgence has united antagonistic tribal groups to forge a unified "community". This was broadly the process experienced by Algerians in the long push to reject French colonialism (Gellner, 1987, p.44). Here the circumstantialist perspective would be that, in each case, the assertion of a dominant identity (Pakhtun, or Algerian Muslim) was dictated by certain political goals; the formation of a new government in one case, the uniting against an external enemy in the other.

No simple theory of ethnicity and identity-formation can relate adequately to the inter-weaving of Islamic, nationalist and ethnic identities that have surfaced in Pakistan at various times. The manner in which later subnationalist identities relate to wider Islamic identities is particularly confusing. When I asked why Karachi was

relatively quiet during Winter/Spring 1992, just months after neighbours had been attacking one another in "ethnic" violence, a Karachi taxi-driver replied that "it is because everyone is Muslim now" (meaning that Islamic "brotherhood" had overcome ethnic differences between Pakistanis).

Part of the complexity lies in the role of Islam as the *raison d'être* of the State of Pakistan. Before 1947, the *ulama* opposed nationalism as a Western intellectual invention which was fundamentally "un-Islamic" (Abbott, 1968, p.181). The *Jamaat-i Islami* of Maulana Maudoodi opposed the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan in the 1940s. Jinnah himself stated that he wanted a broadly secular state, in which religious or other identities would be held within a broader "Pakistani" identity. After furious arguments with the *ulama* (Zakaria, 1988, p.230), the rule of Ayub Khan (1958-69) did see the State become an Islamic Republic. In 1977, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto declared *Ahmediyyas* to be officially a religious minority recognised by the Constitution. In the long military regime that followed under General Ziaul Haq (1977-88), "Islamisation" became the central policy of the state. In 1991, the *Shariat Bill* (a system of Islamic law) was passed in the Assembly, making Islam not only the "official religion" of the Pakistan State, but also enshrining a specific form of Islam that excludes certain sects. Thus, the identities of "Pakistani" and "Muslim" have been equated with one another in many specific ways. In these terms, the State has been equated with a specific form of Islam. Other social groups and

communities - including the MQM - interpret matters very differently, as we shall see.

The question of Islam and its relationship to ethnicity poses many problems for Western theories and models. From a Western point of view, Muslim identity often seems paradoxical, if not opaque. Sometimes it is an additional identity to regional or national identities, as when the Pakhtun nationalist, Wali Khan, said that he had been a Pakhtun for 4,000 years, a Muslim for 1,400 years, and a Pakistani for 40 years (A.S.Ahmed: Lecture on "Identity and Ethnicity" - New Hall College, Cambridge, 7 November 1990). On other occasions, "being Muslim" serves to differentiate a community from linguistic or other communities, as is demonstrated in the former Yugoslavia. The Census of Yugoslavia used to list a bewildering number of communities, with Muslims being listed alongside Serbs, Croats, Albanians, "Others" and even "Yugoslavs" (for those who objected to being categorised under the other identities; Ramet, 1984, p.20). Such identities are signified as either relating to perceived community characteristics, or as local responses to the ("improper") naming of a community by others. In a sense, the Muslims of Yugoslavia are signifying that they are largely "different" from other groups in their social life, and thus the term "Muslim" can serve as a convenient marker where one is needed. Yet the mixing of religious and ethnic identifications makes Islam a shifting set of identities that cross various "stable" boundaries. A writer in the Soviet leaflet "*Samizdat*" described the Soviet situation in 1988 in the following terms:

"Soviet identity is too large; it is like saying one is an Asian. It is at the same time too narrow because it is limited to a specific type of socio-political organisation.....Personally I have no objection to being described as a Soviet Muslim or a Muslim citizen of the USSR. The 'Soviet' bit remains valid as long as I am associated with the Soviet state. What if I left the citizenship of the USSR? Would I suddenly evaporate? What if Uzbekistan left the USSR and chose another political system as it has the constitutional right, in theory at least? Would I cease to exist?Only the term 'Muslim' is large enough, accurate enough and, paradoxically, neutral enough to describe what we are in this corner of the world.."

(*Samizdat*, 12 March 1988; in Taberi, 1989, p.184)

Identity in Sindh

Muslim identity can, then, act as a supplement or as an alternative to other identities, depending on the social and political environment in which it is constructed. In the case of Pakistan, the strength of Muslim identity is being tested for its ability to rise above regional and other forms of cultural identity. In all the Provinces

of Pakistan there is a complex mixture of different Muslim community groups (and even some non-Muslim groups). Furthermore, the term "Muslim" does not imply a uniform religious culture; there are important differences between *Sunni* and *Shia* Muslims. In Sindh, as in Punjab, an already muddled situation before 1947 was further complicated after Independence with the arrival of Muslim migrants from India. In Sindh, these migrants usually spoke a different language to their "hosts" and presented a more obviously urban, if not urbane, culture than most Sindhis were used to. Their arrival only encouraged the regionalist ambitions of Sindhi politicians like G.M. Syed, who now freely refers to the State of Pakistan as a "fraud" (*interview*, 13 March 1992, Karachi).

Exactly how "a" *Mohajir* identity fits into this wider matrix of regional and religious identities is not easy to see at first. One of the principal demands of the MQM, which more than any organisation has acted to politicise an assumed *Mohajir* identity, has been that *Mohajirs* should be granted official "subnationality" status so that quotas for government employment can be redefined in a way that favours the inhabitants of urban areas in Sindh (a sizeable proportion of whom are *Mohajirs*). This is a case of a community mobilising to stake its claim to a share of the state's resources; a claim that Schermerhorn associates with the "indigenous isolate" stage of ethnic community formation (Schermerhorn, 1978, p.12). But the *Mohajir* identity is far more than just an economic convenience, as I will show later. My research suggests that socio-cultural factors are definitely part of the story. The Urdu language is certainly common to a majority of the people

who have supported the MQM and its nationality demands, although G.M.Syed claims that the *Mohajirs* are actually made up of a mixture of linguistic groups - including Gujeratis, Kutchis and even Tamils - and cannot therefore be considered a nationality (interview with G.M.Syed, 13 March, 1991, Karachi). A.D. Smith warns, however, against applying linguistic nationalist theories, modelled on Slavic and other European examples, to African or South Asian situations where language is not necessarily a dominant factor in identity (A.D. Smith, 1983, pp.xi-xii). De Vos (De Vos, 1975, p.15) also claims that language can act as merely a symbolic element of identity, without applying to all the members of the community. The example he cites is that of the Welsh, of whom only approximately 20% regularly use the Welsh language. G.M Syed's dismissal of *Mohajir* identity on linguistic grounds also relates to the relatively dominant role that the Sindhi language plays in Sindhi identity.

Other aspects of *Mohajir* identity are less easy to define. The "*Mohajir*" name suggests a collective experience of migration (which would apply to Afghan refugees in Baluchistan, NWFP and elsewhere who are also known locally as *Mohajirs*), although the MQM electorate is dominated by people who were born in Pakistan. The name also carries some Islamic connotations in its reference to the "first Muslim migrants", although Islamic issues are far from central to MQM ideology and the *Mohajirs* are mixed in terms of Islamic sect (most, however, are believed to be *Shias*). "*Mohajir*" also indicates a sense of rootlessness, alienation, a differentiating of oneself from those around, that compares in many ways to the manner in which Muslim identity itself is used as

an "Other" in some non-Muslim societies. The question of *Mohajir* identity is taken up at greater length in Section Two of the dissertation.

3.3 THE STATE AND NATIONALISM IN POST-COLONIAL SOCIETIES

The way in which observers have viewed the dynamics of ethnic identities in post-colonial societies has been closely related to views on the nature of the state in the postcolonial developing world. Thus, the formation of a *Mohajir* identity is one matter, but its further construction and promotion by a powerful political party eager for representation links that identity to a wider spatial interface between politics and the state. This in turn raises certain questions about the state, and about its relationship to community groups and identities and their national and sub-national ambitions. Most academics now accept that the state is not just a set of neutral institutions and political actors that sits in impartial judgement on society and which adjudicates fairly between the competing claims of different groups. States are more usually captured by one or more contending social and economic groups and made to do their bidding. To that end, states and state institutions themselves partake actively in the construction - and attempted destruction - of particular communities and even sub-nationalities. This is certainly the case in Pakistan, as we shall see in later Chapters. States are also intimately bound up with attempts to create a national identity, and nationalism, for a "given" country or "nation".

Nationalism and Europe

Much of the theoretical work on nationalism springs not from South Asia but from Europe, in terms both of its subject and object. By the nineteenth century, nationalist cultures and nation-states were forming rapidly in Europe, to a point where nationalism was accepted as a natural and inevitable process linked to industrialisation (Gellner, 1983, p.6). This was particularly so in the west, while in eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth century various Marxist theories were developed and applied to the political arena. One such theory held that capitalism would defuse nationalism, and that nationalist ideologies would become merely part of a general cultural framework.

Kedourie claims that nationalism is an ideological product of nineteenth-century Europe "with a meaning and a resonance which until the end of the eighteenth century it was far from having" (Kedourie, 1961, p.9). The ideology soon became accepted as a natural instinct of humanity that was assumed always to have been present. Seton-Watson claims that it is impossible to define the process of nationalism precisely. It is enough simply to realise that it happens, that it "existed and exists" (Seton-Watson, 1977, p.5).

But, as Gellner (1983, p.6) explains, it was not always so. Changes in society, and particularly in Europe, paved the way for the new ideology of nationalism to emerge in the nineteenth century. In economic terms, cities became superseded by nation-states as the "power-containers" of society (Giddens, 1981, p.12) through improvements and

expansion in industry and communications. Intellectually, eighteenth-century Europe experienced an Age of Enlightenment, in which a possibilist ideology emerged, founded on the belief that the universe was governed by unvarying laws of nature that needed only to be understood and codified. The end of the century also witnessed the French Revolution, in which a popular secular culture scored the first major "nationalist" victory over a European feudal dynastic regime.

By the nineteenth century such intellectual developments were accompanied by industrialisation, which in turn began to link wider populations through education and the labour-process. Here arose the opportunity for one of Mann's four "power-sources" to be extensively exercised; that of ideological power (Mann, 1986, p.11). Gellner asserts that the creation of a specific "high culture" is the secret of nationalism (Gellner, 1983, p.18). The emerging "modern" societies demanded a degree of literacy for "effective citizenship". Gellner (ibid, p.127) concludes that language (and literacy in the language) are at the heart of nationalism. Education and literacy encouraged the "invention" of national symbols such as a flag, an anthem and an emblem to which the whole nation could respond ritually (Hobsbawm, 1983, p.11). Anderson agrees in large part, and points out that education and literacy allowed nations to be "imagined" through newspapers and books (Anderson, 1983, p.30). He stresses the point, however, that it is not language itself that allowed this process, as Gellner claims, but more precisely the process of "print capitalism" (ibid, p.122). A language and its associated culture are thus the medium of nationalism, but newspapers

and books (the circulation of which expanded rapidly in tandem with industrialisation) are its *physical matter*. They allow a "nation" to store and transmit a collective memory.

We have seen that questions relating to language and identity are controversial. Many have claimed that a specific single language is a "prerequisite" for nationality status. This includes Stalin (Stalin, 1913, p.8) and Lenin (Lenin, 1964, p.396) in the case of Russia, and the Sindhi nationalist G.M Syed in Pakistan (interview with G.M. Syed, 13 March 1991, Karachi). However, in non-European examples, as elsewhere, there is a danger of a eurocentric analysis based on those nationalisms where language is and was important.

Marxist and neo-Marxist interpretations

Marxists and neo-Marxists have tended to view class as the primary structure in society, so much so that the entry on *nationalism* in the Dictionary of Marxist Thought suggests that: 'Nationalism is a subject on which Marx and Engels are commonly felt to have gone astray ... by greatly underestimating a force which was about to grow explosively' (Bottomore, 1983, p.346). Insofar as Marx and Engels did discuss nationalism they tended to condemn it and particularly so when they referred to the nationalisms of various Slav populations within the Habsburg empire (ibid.). But this was not ever the case. On other (usually later) occasions, Marx and Engels, together and separately, would support nationalist aspirations in Ireland and Poland as a

precondition for the more generalised social (class-based) progress to which they looked forward. Lenin would later take a similar line, offering his support for national liberation movements against colonial powers, but warning good socialists against a narrow-minded nationalism which blinded itself to important class cleavages and conflicts within the "nation". Stalin codified this view in his pamphlet on Marxism and the National Question, written in 1913 (ibid.). In his view, and probably in that of Lenin, 'minority nationalism could only be counteracted by a socialist pledge of full rights of self-determination' (ibid.).

Such formulations by Stalin and Lenin clearly had regard for the practical problems facing the Bolsheviks at the time of the First World War (when one "national" working class was slaughtering another "national" working class) and in the early years of the Soviet Union. Although these sorts of practical concerns would continue to inspire (or to complicate) the attempts of some Marxists to take a line on national liberation struggles, it is not clear that classical Marxism has ever properly confronted the reasons *why* men and women might lend their support - often very fervently (Anderson, 1993) - to something called a nation and the politics of nationalism. In very many cases, nationalism has been viewed by Marxists either as a pathology or a disease (see Bottomore, 1983), or as the product of specific political and economic calculations on behalf of interest groups and/or states that sought to divide and rule.

One partial exception to this generalisation is Hechter's neo-Marxist attempt to fashion a theory of ethno-regionalism on the basis

of an account of a hierarchically defined cultural division of labour (Hechter, 1973). Writing firstly about the Celtic fringe in Britain, Hechter adapted the work of Frank and others on the exploitation of peripheries by cores to argue that nationalist movements would arise in areas like Wales and Scotland which were resource peripheries for an exploitative England, but which retained (in Wales at least) cultural weapons like language to defy this exploitation and to demand rights to self-determination. Hechter's account at least addressed the "whys" of nationalism, even if it remained imprisoned in the economistic framework that has typified so much Marxist writing about politics. The main problems with Hechter's model of internal colonialism, as several critics have pointed out, is that it is empirically weak in the British context and that it fails (in this version) to predict the rise of nationalist movements in certain "richer" regions like Punjab in India and Catalonia in Spain. Hechter's model is mainly of interest for the way it challenged structuralist-functionalist theories of national social synthesis under industrialisation, and theories such as Durkheim's (Durkheim, 1964, p.187) "acculturation thesis", or Deutsch's (Deutsch, 1961, pp.493-514) model of "social mobilisation". Hechter claims that separatist movements in peripheral zones of modern industrial nations (such as the Basque movement in Spain) prove that industrialisation does not automatically create a unified national culture, a point that it is not without some resonance in modern Pakistan. It is significant, though, that Hechter's later, and more sensitive, work on nationalism and regionalist movements

moved away from Marxism in certain important respects (see Hechter and Levi, 1979).

Pluralist theories of society

On the other side of the fence stand various group-pluralist theoreticians, who view the state in multiethnic societies as an arena in which communities can bargain with one another. The main differences between pluralist theories of the state relate primarily to the element of perceived propensity to conflict in multiethnic societies. M.G. Smith and Kuper saw the problems and failures associated with nation-building in postcolonial States as relating to insurmountable "cultural incompatibilities" among sections of the population (M.G. Smith and Kuper, eds. 1969, pp.13-14). Furnivall, in a study of "Netherlands India", related such conflicts to a legacy of precolonial society, whereby independent socio-cultural groups had developed with very little contact with one another in a fundamentally "immobile" society (Furnivall, 1939, p.447).

The theory of a "plural society" was first developed by J.S. Furnivall (Furnivall, 1948) and was based on tropical colonial examples (such as Burma) in which a multiethnic society was structured around the dominance of a particular ethno-social group. M.G. Smith developed the theory further in relation to Western Europe, which he saw as emerging from feudalism into a "heterogeneous" system of "universalistic incorporation" (M.G. Smith, 1969, pp.58-9). This differs from homogeneous

societies in which the nation-state is coterminous with a single ethnic group (ibid).

Other cultural pluralists have reappraised both class and ethnicity in society, and in so doing have moved across the political spectrum towards neo-Marxist views of multiethnic States. Van den Berghe, for example, examined the ethnic political situation in Peru and Nigeria and presented an appraisal of class in community-group politics that earlier group pluralists had tended to ignore (Van den Berghe, 1978, p.162). In these terms, interest-group politics can relate to a complex combination of socio-cultural and economic considerations. The varying propensities to conflict suggested by these theories raises the question of nation-building and its problems in many multiethnic postcolonial societies. In South Asia, a wealth of theories on state structures have been encouraged by continuing postcolonial conflict between ethnic and regional communities and between these communities and the state itself.

Nationalism in South Asia

South Asian and other non-European examples do not readily fit into European theories and models of nationalism. In the subcontinent a debate emerged in the 1930s and 1940s over the relationship between "communalism" and nationalism. The former, argues Pandey, has been applied to India in particular (Pandey, 1990, p.1). The debate on communalism has been revived more recently. Alavi (Alavi, 1989, p.222)

claims that while India experiences "communalism", Pakistan suffers instead from a slightly different process termed "subnationalism".

Pandey (Pandey, 1990, p.5) contends that communalism was a term used differently by two main agencies. On the one hand the colonial state used the term to describe a "problem" endemic to the subcontinent, against which the colonial authorities were trying to battle. The Indian "nationalists", however, described communalism as their arch-enemy and blamed its rise on colonial rulers who manufactured it for political purposes (ibid, p.11). As regards the first use of the term, there is much debate as to when the "problem" emerged in India's history. Pandey (Pandey, 1990, pp.15-6) claims that it was only in the twentieth century that spatially extensive religious identifications allowed conflicts in which religion was primary rather than contingent; that is, essentially "communal" conflicts. In the case of Calcutta, too, Chakrabarty has linked communalism to the growing semi-educated jute mill labour force at the end of the nineteenth century - a labour force which could be addressed effectively by vitriolic religious leaders (Chakrabarty, 1989, p.195).

The Indian "nationalist" lobby was led by the INC which saw itself as the only progressive inter-community force in the country, and which considered "communalists" to be retrogressive (Pandey, 1990, p.241). Gandhi, for example, declared in 1922 that "we are Indians first, and Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians after" (ibid, p.233). However, Page (Page, 1981, pp.231-2) suggests that the gathering wave of communal conflicts in the twentieth century, as demonstrated in the 1931 Hindu-

Muslim riots in Kanpur, United Provinces, was submerging individual instances of inter-community cooperation, and irrevocably reinforcing the "two-nation" theory in the minds of the Muslim leadership at the time. By 1940, after the Muslim League's sovereignty resolution at the Lahore session, even Nehru was apparently starting to speak in such terms, declaring:

" ... many knots of the Hindu-Muslim problem had been merged into one knot, which could not be unravelled by ordinary methods, but would need an operation ... he [Nehru] would say one thing very frankly that he had begun to consider them [the Muslim League] and people like himself, as separate nations."

(S.R. Mehrotra, 1970, p.210)

An appraisal of nationalism in the context of Pakistan necessarily entails an analysis of the position of Islam on the matter. We have seen that in terms of "identity" and "loyalty", Islam poses difficult questions for those living within nation-state units or federations such as the former Yugoslavia or Soviet Union. The reasons underpinning such discomfort are twofold: firstly the Quran suggests, in some interpretations, that vertical tribal or "national" boundaries between Muslims should be overcome by pan-Islamism. Secondly, nationalism is viewed as a nineteenth-century European ideology, one of

the most heinous results of which, for the Islamic *ulama*, was the carving-up of the Islamic heartlands into new national units, including the State of Israel. Many of the new States emerging in the early twentieth century, were based largely on flimsy European administrative considerations. This was true of the State of Iraq, established by the British in 1920, and of Syria and Lebanon, which were formed at the same time under French rule.

Islam offers thoughts on the matter that are not always easy to interpret in "modern" terms. The *Quran* states (Surah XLIX; 13) that:

"We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another."

(M.M. Pickthall, 1977).

Ahmed (A.S. Ahmed, 1989, p.57) suggests that this can be interpreted as meaning that regional and national differences should not be elevated above cultural similarities, and that Islam should represent the ultimate definition for all communities in society. In South Asia, the progressive Muslim Aligarh school was opposed by the *dar-al ulum* [Islamic seminary] established at Deoband, United Provinces in 1867, which became the most important centre of the Indian *ulama* in the early twentieth century. Here, the Muslims of India were defined as an *ummat* [community of believers] rather than as a *millat* [nation]. The educated Muslim progressives, however, also occasionally expressed "pan-Islamic"

sentiments, as in the following statement delivered by Iqbal (1876-1938) in 1910, on the subject of Muslim nationality:

"It is not the unity of language or country that constitutes the basic principle of our nationality. It is because we all believe in a certain view of the universe and participate in the same historical tradition that we are members of the society founded by the Prophet of Islam."

(in Hardy, 1972, p.179)

On another occasion Iqbal stated that "the ideal territory for such a nation would be the whole earth." (ibid).

Iqbal and other "progressive" Muslims later put their support behind the Muslim League and the separatist call for Pakistan. The Deoband *ulama*, led by *Maulana* Madani of the *Jamaat-i Ulama-i Hind* opposed the Muslim League (Bahadur, 1977, p.38). Another important Islamic leader, *Maulana* Maudoodi, who later took his *Jamaat-i Islami* to Pakistan, condemned nationalism as an un-Islamic, Western ideology (Abbott, 1968, p.181). In 1948, Maudoodi was jailed for a year in the new Pakistan for condemning the new state as "un-Islamic" (Bahadur, ibid, p.59). Conversely, the founder of the Aligarh School, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, was also opposed by the *ulama*. The latter obtained a *fatwa*

[ordinance] condemning Sir Syed as a *fakir* [traitor]; (Zakaria, 1970, p.240).

The "nation" of Pakistan

Maudoodi's *Jamaat-i Islami* decided after 1955 to join the mainstream of Pakistani politics, and it has held an important position there ever since. The difficulties it faced in making such a decision concern the conflict between nationalism and Islam. In Pakistan the conflict is more difficult still because the founder of the State evidently did not want it to be an Islamic society in terms of the *Shariah*. The response of later leaders to this problem, notably that of General Zia, has been to suggest that Islam is and always was the central feature of the Pakistani nation, as portrayed in the 1985 Pakistan Day message from the President:

"We started the process of Islamisation nearly eight years ago in order to attain the objectives underlying the struggle for the establishment of Pakistan"

(Pakistan News, March 1985, London).

This statement requires of its audience a sense of amnesia about the formation of Pakistan and the words of Jinnah on the eve of Independence. Gellner (Gellner, 1983, p.6) contends that such "amnesia" is

essential to the construction of any nation. The General's statement was intended to legitimise the Islamisation programme, yet according to Alavi (Alavi, 1990, p.58) legitimacy was always Zia's "major problem". *Jamaat-i Islami*, who, for much of the time, stood behind Zia's Islamic programme, ultimately suffered at the hands of the electorate in the 1985 non-party elections and thereafter.

The problem with making Islam the *raison d'être* of the Pakistan nation lies in part with the nature of Islam. *Sunni* Muslims (from "*Sunnah*" - the actions of the Prophet) are believed to be in a numerical majority in Pakistan in population and in the government (although some argue that the *Shias* are in a majority there; see interview with Syed Muhammad Taqi, 13 January 1991, Karachi)². *Sunni* code states that the deeds and intentions of the Prophet were as important as his words, and that consequently modern Islamic states can be built using a modern interpretation of the Prophet's words and deeds. The *Shias*, however (from "*Shi'i*"; 'party', referring to the group of original followers who were excluded from and opposed to the first three Caliphs after Muhammad, and from the manner in which they were chosen) believe that a compromise situation between "nation-state" and Islam is not possible, especially when the *Imam* [spiritual leader] is not present on earth.

Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran (where *Shias* are in a majority) was accepted as a *Marj-a Taqleed* [Source of Imitation; or legitimate Islamic leader], and could thus be supported and followed in the Iran that he led. In Pakistan, however, the State has been framed and ruled by servants of a secular state, such as army generals, bureaucrats and

capitalist industrialists. In *shi'ite* terms, this is "illegitimate government" from which true allegiance should be withheld (Taheri, 1985, p.176). In such terms, *Shariat* Bills have usually been condemned by the *Shia* and other *ulama* in Pakistan as being little more than inadequate attempts to silence them on the issue. A notable example was the *Shariat* Bill of March 1991⁹, which was described by *Maulana* Fazlur Rehman, leader of *Jamaat-i Ulama-i Islam* (JUI) as "*aab-e zamzam* [holy water] in a bottle of whiskey" (Herald June 1991, Karachi, p.47).

The group that benefitted most from General Zia's struggle with this problem of identity in the 1980s was probably the subnationalist *Mohajir* movement. Arising in urban Sindh - the only electoral stronghold of *Jamaat-i Islami* - the MQM at once identified itself with the founders of Pakistan, who it suggested were the "only people with Pakistan in their hearts" (interview with Azim Ahmed Tariq, 13 March 1991, Karachi). Yet the MQM also declared that *Mohajirs* had promised nothing in support of Pakistan or Islam (Alavi, 1989, p.243). The group was different from "traditional" ideological subnationalities with long histories and an apparent cultural unity, such as the Sindhis or Baluchis, and some have claimed that it stands in opposition to these groups in certain key aspects (interview with Nadeem Nusrat, assistant to Altaf Hussain, 13 March 1991, Karachi). The MQM at once condemned others for failing to build a strong Pakistani nation, yet created an ethnic conflict that has threatened the integrity of the State and made the nation-building process ever more difficult.

3.4 CONCLUSIONS

I have suggested that "orthodox" theories of ethnicity or nationalism cannot easily be mapped on to the South Asian scene, particularly in the case of the *Mohajir* movement in Sindh. We have seen that Pakistan's development has been marked by an uneasy synthesis of various ethnic groups, one of which broke away in 1971 to form Bangladesh. The relationship of the *Mohajir* movement, as articulated by the MQM, to the State of Pakistan has been particularly paradoxical. The Movement's demands for official "nationality" status depended in its early phase upon a complex amalgam of pro-Pakistan sentiments and anti-Sindhi nationalist rhetoric. If the *Mohajirs* are a legitimate "nationality", they cannot be straightforwardly recognised as such in terms of language or history, although each of these factors can be made to serve a nationalist purpose.

Indeed in Sindh, the "ethnic map" comprises a complex collection of community groups. The identities of some of these groups can be termed "ethnic", yet some are more precisely religious groups (including both non-Muslim minorities and different Muslim "sects"), or linguistic communities. In some cases, political leaders have attempted to combine these groups under a broader Pakistani identity, by focussing attention on national economic or political issues. This has certainly been the intention of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). In still other cases, Islamic issues have been raised with the aim of presenting a more national forum for political debate. Yet a Muslim identity is not

entirely obvious or stable in Pakistan, and the Islamic political movement has often stumbled on the different interpretations presented by *Shias*, *Sunnis*, or smaller groups such as the *Ahmediyyas*.

Perhaps more disruptive is the manner in which many political leaders have "played the ethnic card" in the province of Sindh, and exacerbated ethnic community divisions there. This has certainly been the motive of the Sindhi nationalist movement, which has promoted the concept of an autonomous province in which the largest single ethnic group in the province, the Sindhis, would hold a clear advantage. Sindhi nationalism is well established and would seem to fit the definition of nationalism offered by Anthony Smith (and which I support): "as an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation" (A.D. Smith, 1991, p.73). My argument in the next section of this dissertation is that Sindhi nationalism has provided an important condition of existence of *Mohajir* (sub-)nationalism, and vice-versa. In Chapter 4 I will attempt to show how *Mohajirs* have formed an identity both through an account of their own history and language, and in reaction to several other ethnic and community identities in the province of Sindh; the province in which most self-proclaimed *Mohajirs* live and compete for resources. I will also say something more about the role played by the MQM in fostering this emergent sense of *Mohajir* identity or "community imagining".

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Shariah* is the code of Islamic law and government, that effectively provides a complete system of Islamic society, broadly followed by the early Caliphates, up to and including those of the Ottomans. The code is derived from the words and deeds of Muhammad, particularly as regards the organisation of the first Muslim community that he headed. Attainment of *Shariat* government in Pakistan, headed by a *Majlis-i Shoora* [Assembly of councillors; a form of which was installed during the Zia regime], is the central policy of all the Islamic parties.

2. Taqi's assertion is based on the claim that the Bengali Muslim leader, Syed Ameer Ali, once declared (before the Partition of India) that of 35 million Muslims in India, 15 million were *Shias*. Very few of these migrated to East Pakistan, while many migrated to Sindh, which, Taqi claims, is "90% *Shia*" (interview, 13 January 1991, Karachi). The view is supposedly given weight by the manner in which Benazir Bhutto (whose greatest support is in Sindh) persistently uses *Shia* rhetoric and imagery in her speeches (Taqi, *ibid*), such as that of "*Karbala*" (the battle in which Ali's son Husayn, was murdered along with many of his followers by the army of Yazid's Umayyad dynasty in 680 AD, beginning the rift between *Sunni* and *Shia* Islamic ideologies). The assertion conflicts with most theories that put *Shias* as a minority of Muslims in Pakistan, although precise figures are not available. Taylor describes the situation thus; "The total *Shia* population of Pakistan today is uncertain but it is at least 10 per cent and may be substantially more" (Taylor, 1990, p.95).

3. The *Shariat* Bill, passed in Pakistan on 16 May 1991, was a fairly tempered Bill, in which the "present parliamentary democratic system of government shall not be challenged in any court" after the Bill becomes law, and "the rights of women as enshrined in the constitution shall not be affected" (Arab News, 17 May 1991, Riyadh). A full *Shariat* system reduces the weight of women's evidence in courts, removes women's rights in divorce cases, and their rights of inheritance or custody of children in disputes, all of which are currently protected by Pakistan's Constitution (1985).

SECTION TWO

**MOHAJIR IDENTITY, THE MQM, AND
POLITICAL MOBILISATION IN SINDH PROVINCE**



FIGURE 4.1: Jatoi property, Defence district, Karachi



FIGURE 4.2: Ajrak, worn by Altaf Hussain

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout the 1980s Sindh province suffered from a deepening ethnic rift that claimed some 3,000 lives in bitter fratricidal strife (Ahmed Rashid, Independent, 18 January 1991, London). By the 1990s the animosity between the two largest communities in the province was plain to see in the areas where they came into contact. A particular site of confrontation was Hyderabad, Sindh's second city and a metropolis of around 1.3 million people (Ahmed Rashid, *ibid*).

Hyderabad has always been an important nodal point in Sindh, sitting beside the Indus River in a fertile region of the Province, just 100 kilometres from the Arabian Sea. After the Partition of India the city grew enormously with an influx of refugees from India pushing its population up from 135,000 in 1941 to 242,000 a decade later (Government of Pakistan, 1990a, p.53). The enthusiasm felt by many in Sindh in those years was great, and most hoped that the new arrivals would soon integrate with their hosts.

Yet by the 1980s, certain Sindhi nationalist leaders had begun to talk of the non-Sindhis in the province as usurpers, including the largely Urdu-speaking communities of cities such as Hyderabad. The emergence of the MQM, which held its first major

rally in Hyderabad on 31 October 1986, exacerbated the wrath of many Sindhi leaders, who recognised the influence the Movement was beginning to exercise in Hyderabad and Karachi. In Spring 1988, a Sindhi-speaking doctor, Qadir Magsi, formed a breakaway faction of the Sindhi nationalist movement which quite openly condemned not just the MQM but the *Mohajir* "community" as a whole, and which suggested that such non-Sindhis should be expelled from the province.

The real watershed in Sindh, however, occurred in the early morning of 30 September 1988. Many now consider events on that morning to have deepened irrevocably an emerging Sindhi/*Mohajir* ethnic rift. For a brief period of half an hour on that day, a coordinated campaign of bombings and shootings rocked the city of Hyderabad. The incidents all took place in districts of the city in which Urdu-speakers were prevalent. The immediate death toll was quoted in the press as 163, with many more being injured (Dawn, 2 October 1988, Karachi). A great majority of the victims were Urdu-speakers.

These incidents at once showed the levels to which militant factions of the Sindhi nationalist movement would be prepared to go, and ensured that the MQM would receive many more supporters from Urdu-speakers within the province. The incident raised the stakes of ethnic animosity and divided people in the Province almost irretrievably. Now Hyderabad displays a polarisation between Sindhi and *Mohajir* communities that extends from the tea-shops to

hospitals and schools. Ahmed Rashid, a Punjab-based journalist, described the situation in the following terms:

"Private schools have opened separate branches for Mohajirs and Sindhis, ensuring that young children will imbibe the ethnic partition. The city's many bazaars, famous for women's glass bangles, cater for one or other ethnic group. Those factories still operating hire staff according to their ethnic affiliation. Even government offices have been divided along ethnic lines. "

(Independent, 18 January 1991, London).

As Rashid describes it, the polarisation not only feeds on itself through the generations, but shatters the economic prospects of the host society. Whatever tax-breaks the government may offer, businesses will be reluctant to locate in a city where deep-rooted violence is just below the surface.

Cities such as Hyderabad have thus undergone a fundamental change in their structure, whereby cultural differences that did not previously affect daily life have become heightened to the point of producing embedded spatial differences. Violence has ensured that Sindhis living and working in the central areas of the city have now largely fled to the outer suburbs, while Urdu-

speakers have come into the centre from outlying districts and satellite towns.

This chapter analyses the nature of the "ethnic map" of contemporary Sindh. To understand why such ethnic polarisation has occurred in the province it is necessary to examine certain socio-political factors upon which community leaders have based their rhetoric. The ultimate purpose of the chapter is to focus on *Mohajir* identity in contemporary Sindh and analyse the processes that led to its formation and development. I will end the chapter by examining critically the dimensions and efficacy of a *Mohajir* identity, as presented by such agencies as the MQM.

I will argue that to understand the formation and development of *Mohajir* identity in Sindh it is necessary to consider two main sets of factors. Firstly, the success of a political movement based upon a concept of *Mohajir* identity has owed much to the actions of non-Urdu-speaking communities in the province. I have already described how developments in Sindhi nationalism were pivotal in pushing support towards the MQM, particularly in such places as Hyderabad where Urdu-speakers come into more direct contact with Sindhis than is likely to be the case in Karachi. For this reason, I will begin my analysis of identity in Sindh with a discussion of the nature of local communities other than the *Mohajirs*. This includes not only the Sindhis, but also Pakhtuns, Punjabis, and other smaller community groups in the Province.

The second factor that must underpin an understanding of *Mohajir* identity in Sindh is the relationship of a given community to the state in Pakistan. I have already suggested that conditions in Hyderabad are different to those in Karachi in certain key respects. I will argue that the nature of community identity-formation is closely related to such issues as inter-group competition for resources, and participation in administrative structures. In these terms, the nature of the local state, in Hyderabad and Karachi cities for example, forms one important arena within which identities are constructed.

Of course, local city-states are embedded in a wider provincial and federal framework in the case of Pakistan. Karachi in particular is the largest economic centre and the only major port in all of Pakistan. The nature of its economy and political structures is thus of crucial importance to the government in Islamabad. However, the Sindhi nationalist vision of an autonomous Province depends to a great extent for its feasibility upon a consideration of Karachi as a city firmly rooted within the Province. Here, I am presenting the state as an intrusive player in civil society, shaping and developing local and regional conditions for its own purposes. I will develop this theme further in Chapter 6. In this chapter, three main community identity-groups in Sindh will be described, as derived from the fruits of my primary research in combination with secondary material. These are, firstly, the Sindhis, followed by the "others" who fall into

neither Sindhi nor *Mohajir* groupings, and finally the *Mohajirs*. Before discussing these descriptions and analyses, however, it is necessary to discuss the specific methods adopted in this research, and the sources of primary material that were consulted.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology relevant to this chapter concerns three sources of material, which derive from fieldwork conducted in Pakistan in Winter/Spring 1990-1 and Winter/Spring 1991-2. Firstly, a series of long semi-structured interviews were conducted. Secondly, a number of informal individual and group discussions were undertaken, and finally extensive use was made of archives in Karachi, Lahore and London.

Fieldwork in Pakistan was heavily influenced by the law and order situation, and in particular by the dangers relating to ethnic violence in Sindh. An initial visit proposed for Summer 1990 had to be cancelled after the outbreak of serious ethnic sectarian violence in Karachi, beginning in May 1990. The visits that were undertaken were hampered by continuing violence in educational institutions in particular, which made the educational sphere largely out-of-bounds to effective research, and in a smaller way by the Gulf War in 1991, which temporarily limited movement on the advice of the British Consulate (see Appendix 1).

The largest limitation on research, however, which affected the amount of time that could be effectively spent in Pakistan, was the prevailing situation in rural Sindh. Aside from Hyderabad, Thatta and some villages on the fringe of Karachi, it was not possible to visit any towns or rural areas in Sindh outside Karachi. The operation of *dacoits* [bandits], who have shown signs recently of targeting foreigners for kidnapping', has made large areas of the province unpassable for all but the most well-guarded parties. Indeed, it would have been reckless to underestimate the dangers of travel in rural areas. While this remains the most serious handicap to research on local perceptions of the "ethnic situation" in Sindh, the matter is instructive in itself, especially in relation to the nature of the social and political environment in contemporary Sindh. More will be said on this matter in Chapter 7.

The purpose of my investigations was to develop a picture of the historical, economic, social and political processes in Sindh society, from which a politicised *Mohajir* identity emerged in the 1970s. I also examine the implications of this identity-formation for the State of Pakistan. Aside from providing details and opinions, the interviews and discussions also provide an account of community perceptions, biases and "myths", and give personal insights into some of the events and materials gained from other sources.

The Interview Survey

The long interview survey was mostly conducted in Pakistan in Winter/Spring 1990-1, although subsequent interviews were undertaken in Britain and during the second field visit in 1991-2. In total, aside from various informal discussions, 53 long interviews were undertaken. The bias of such interviews and discussions is largely qualitative rather than quantitative. In general terms, the methodology adopted was similar to that adapted by Schermerhorn in his analysis of ethnic groups in India (Schermerhorn, 1978, pp.3-4), namely:

1. The sample population of respondents comprised members of the community groups about which information on community identity was being sought, and non-members of that community,
2. Discussion was free-ranging, with each interview normally lasting between two and four hours,
3. Occasionally more than one meeting was conducted with particular respondents (these are not counted separately in the total).

The aim was to conduct a wide-ranging discussion that encompassed specific key research questions. These would either be answered in the natural course of discussion, or would be asked

directly. The purpose of such loosely-structured discussion, as opposed to rigid questionnaire techniques, was to allow a relaxed environment in which discussion could become progressively less inhibited. There are various reasons why such factors are important in research of this nature, primarily involving the sensitivity of some of the topics discussed.

Work by non-Pakistani groups and scholars on areas encompassing the *Mohajir* community in Sindh has revolved principally around studies of housing and urban development in Karachi, mostly conducted by scholars associated with the Free University of Amsterdam. Similar work within Sindh has been undertaken by the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) and the Karachi Development Agency (KDA). Work on ethnic communities has been sparse to date, perhaps because of the problems and constraints mentioned above. Almost all of the secondary work on the matter by 1993 has been conducted by journalists, including those working for "Viewpoint" or "Herald" in Pakistan, or those working for foreign television companies². The nature of this work, which necessarily has involved providing accessible "snapshots" of the ethnic situation, identified a need to conduct a detailed analysis of the processes developing in the political arena of Sindh.

In general terms, the method adopted in this research can be compared to Cantori and Benedict's "lengthy aide memoire" used to initiate and direct discussion on community perceptions in Egypt (Cantori and Benedict, 1984, p.47)³. Similarly Streefland claimed

that he adopted "loosely structured interviews" in corresponding with a Christian community in Karachi (Streefland, 1979, p.35). Door-to-door surveys in the city, such as that conducted by Peter Nientied (Nientied, 1991, p.115) were considered inappropriate in this case, due to the political and cultural sensitivity of my questions, and because Nientied's topic was more closely related to housing than to ethnic identity.

The format of the interview consisted of the presentation of the "aide memoire", and a request for assistance (see Appendix 2). This form was written in English and on a handful of occasions it was translated into Urdu by a research assistant. The assistant was enrolled through the offices of a friend of the author (for whom he worked as a Personal Assistant), and he helped with meetings wherever he could fit them around his other work. (Since many meetings were in the evening this was not usually a problem for the assistant). For meetings where various applications had to be made, the form was submitted in advance of an interview. The author also carried forms of attestation from the Department of Geography at Cambridge University to verify the nature of business where requested. In most cases such verification was not necessary, but in some instances it was important to establish with the respondent that the author was a foreign researcher with general academic aims, and not a reporter attached to any newspapers in Pakistan or elsewhere (nor indeed a member of an intelligence agency).

The nature of the topic is such that confidentiality and respect for the respondent are of paramount importance. Before any interview was conducted, the respondent was asked firstly if notes or a recording could be made, and secondly if any of the material could be cited against the name of the respondent. On two or three occasions it was requested that no notes be made or names quoted, and in such instances the interview was treated as useful solely for background information. On other occasions, the respondent asked that certain passages of the interview in particular be made "off-the-record". This applied particularly to civil servants, whose position depends on not openly disclosing any political judgements or opinions to a third party. The importance of respondent confidentiality is clear, considering that many have been beaten, intimidated or threatened in the past for being quoted about certain political subjects, not just by political activists but also by members of state security forces.

My form of request for assistance included a basic description of my project and its principal research questions. My aim was to begin a wide-ranging discussion, including general political and historical topics, into which questions could be introduced to effectively "guide" discussion where necessary. In many instances, a part of a meeting would involve a largely uninterrupted monologue from the respondent, in which many of the research issues were tackled without prompting. The purpose of the introductory form was to start discussion developing in a given

direction. The text of the form was designed to be as uncontentious as possible and thus suitable for all sides in the political arena. In a great majority of meetings, adverse reactions to the description and purpose of research did not occur, and the form provided an effective springboard for discussion. In those instances where negative reaction did occur, the resultant explanations were seen as useful in themselves, as will be explained.

The interviewing process generally involved meetings ranging from two to four hours. In order to be flexible in regard to host sensitivities, the venues and settings of interviews varied. In most cases, meetings were made on a one-to-one basis, but occasionally it was necessary to interview a respondent in the presence of other people. This usually involved secretaries, assistants or bodyguards, but sometimes also involved family members or officials. Many of the interviews, particularly those with political leaders, were conducted in English, since most respondents were at ease offering statements in this language. In some cases, however, a certain amount of translation into Urdu was necessary. As part of the ground-work for this research I have developed a basic knowledge of Urdu. However, time-constraints on gaining a fluent knowledge of the language necessitated the help of the assistant in the field in certain cases where Urdu was used. Fortunately, in most cases the assistant was needed mainly for the setting-up, conveyance to and introduction at an interview meeting.

Most meetings were held at the respondent's home or office. The hostel in which the author was staying in central Karachi was always offered as a venue, but was used as such only once. Again, flexibility was important - it was considered better to have a meeting of some sort rather than no meeting at all. In the case of members of the MQM leadership, for example, interviews were conducted in a hospital on two occasions.

The first task on arrival in the field was to arrange assistance with the setting-up of interviews, in the form of unearthing telephone contacts, negotiating for a meeting and locating the place of interview. Within the first two weeks after arrival in the field, assistance was enrolled through contacts of Pakistani friends of the author in Britain⁴. In practise, such assistance involved the use of office facilities (in the form of telephones, typing facilities, photocopiers and such like), and the help of an assistant.

Obviously, various other people met in the course of work were willing to help, primarily by suggesting suitable respondents to interview, and by offering general background information and opinions on other respondents, or on the research topic in general. It should be stressed, however, that a certain element of detachment was consciously maintained. This enabled me to meet representatives of different, and often sharply opposing factions, without the respondent knowing too much about who else had been interviewed.

The arranging of interviews took varying lengths of time and effort, depending on the nature and position of the respondent. The process of arranging a meeting with the leaders of the MQM began before departure from the U.K, in the form of dispatching details and requests for an audience through the MQM office in London. On arrival in Karachi the process was continued, and meetings with lower-cadre MQM "workers" were set up. Again, as far as the organisation of my time was concerned, flexibility was the key factor. In the sampling of the respondents, availability played a major role. Some were elusive for various reasons (such as feeling uncertain about the motives for an interview), although only one meeting was broken after having been arranged. For these reasons and others, a second visit to the field was deemed appropriate. The visit in Winter/Spring 1992 mostly yielded the required results. Many figures who had eluded contact in 1991 were interviewed, including Benazir Bhutto, and the *Naib-amir* [spiritual leader] of the *Jamaat-i Islami*, Professor Ghafoor Ahmed.

In general terms, it can be reiterated that a certain element of danger played a role in the framing of fieldwork organisation. It was important, for example, to "separate" periods of work spent with the MQM, from those spent with opposing organisations such as the PPP. Furthermore, it was important to avoid being identified with any particular organisations in the field. This was not entirely successful in practise, since an interview with Benazir Bhutto was reported the following day in

some national papers!⁵ (see Appendix 3). Furthermore, despite efforts at separation of contact with opposing organisations, an interview with Sindhi nationalist G.M Syed, and one with MQM leader Altaf Hussain, were held on the morning and afternoon of the same day. (This may not have been possible had a certain independence of movement in the field not been rigidly maintained).

Other interviews/discussions

Aside from the long interviews, a number of more informal and group discussions took place. Here, questioning was not obviously structured, and the purpose was simply to lead general discussion on opinions and feelings in a relaxed atmosphere. These meetings were invaluable in many ways, since they gave an insight into community identities, perceptions and myths, more from the view of the "common person" than from that of a political leader or analyst. It was felt that to introduce questionnaires or other such trappings of "formal research" into these meetings would have destroyed the relaxed atmosphere in which discussion was allowed to develop. These meetings were with the following:

- *Mohajir* students from Karachi University (various separate individuals and groups).
- Pakhtun and Kashmiri students from DJ College, Karachi.
- groups of *Mohajir* freight-forwarders.

- groups of *Mohajir* office clerks.
- residents in Orangi, Nazimabad, Azizabad, Mauripur, Lyari.
- members of the Sindh Graduates Association, directors of the Roshan Tara private primary school in Old Golimar, Karachi, and residents of Old Golimar.
- members of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) housing scheme in Orangi, Karachi.
- a housing officer at the Karachi Development Agency.
- groups of people visiting Altaf Hussain in *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital, Karachi.

In all these cases, notes were made during or shortly after discussion. The meetings are separated from the list of long interviews because they did not follow the same procedure and format, but in terms of the information gained they were just as valuable to the research. Because of the nature of the subject, countless other discussions were held, since everyone has been affected by the politics of subnationalism in Sindh, and everyone has a theory or opinion on it. Among *Mohajirs*, a discussion of Altaf Hussain and the MQM often occurs without prompting. Discussions with students were also important. Due to sporadic skirmishes between student groups on college campuses, which in Spring 1991 featured the *Mohajir* APMSO and the student wing of *Jamaat-i Islami*, the *Islami Jamiat-i Talaba* (IJT), the university and colleges were closed for much of the time I spent in the field.

For this reason, discussion with students and lecturers had to take place away from the campuses, sometimes in a less directed manner than I would have liked.

The structure of the survey

The sample population of the long interviews can be divided into two categories, by ethnicity and occupation. An important point in the former case is that some people reject the idea of ethnic categorisation altogether, and believe that the wholesale identification of people as belonging to ethnic groups has been at the root of the emergence of divisive subnationalist politics. For these reasons, an "Other" category was introduced into the ethnic categorisation of the sample, and was applied to those who would not readily give their ethnic identity, or whose identity was not clear.

The sample is described in Table 4.1. Clearly it is biased towards *Mohajirs* and *Sindhis* in ethnic terms, and to political figures and analysts in occupational terms. In both cases, however, these two groupings are balanced by other occupations and identities.

Table 4.2 combines the two factors depicted in Table 4.1, to show which ethnic identities relate to which occupations. My main aim in regard to respondent sampling was to select figures from various ethnic communities in the province and beyond (mainly men

TABLE 4.1: Categorisation of long interview sample

1. Ethnic categorisation

Mohajir	26
Sindhi	12
Punjabi	6
Pakhtun	1
Baluchi	1
Other (mixed, unidentifiable)	7
TOTAL	53

2. Occupational categorisation

Political leader/worker	15
Journalist/editor	13
Academic	5
Civil servant	4
Lawyer	3
Writer	3
Social services	2
Municipal worker/mayor	2
Trade Unionist	1
Archivist	1
Architect	1
Government advisor	1
Publisher	1
Surveyor	1
TOTAL	53

TABLE 4.2: Occupation by ethnic category of sample population

[M - *Mohajir*, S - Sindhi, Pu - Punjabi, Pk - Pakhtun, B - Baluchi,
O - Other]

	<u>M</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>Pu</u>	<u>Pk</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>O</u>
Political leader/worker	7	5	-	-	1	1
Journalist/editor	4	3	4	1	-	2
Academic	3	1	1	-	-	-
Civil Servant	4	-	-	-	-	-
Lawyer	1	1	-	-	-	1
Writer	3	-	-	-	-	-
Social Services	-	1	-	-	-	1
Municipal worker/mayor	2	-	-	-	-	-
Trade Unionist	-	-	-	-	-	1
Archivist	-	-	-	-	-	1
Architect	1	-	-	-	-	-
Government advisor	-	-	1	-	-	-
Publisher	1	-	-	-	-	-
Surveyor	-	1	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	26	12	6	1	1	7

given the nature of Pakistani society and politics), and to talk to people in the following groups:

- Leaders and workers of the MQM
- *Mohajir* political workers not in the MQM
- Leaders and workers of non-*Mohajir* parties
- Various *Mohajir* observers
- Various Sindhi observers
- Other observers, both in Sindh and Punjab.

The two ethnic foci were the Sindhis and the *Mohajirs*, since the ethnic conflict in Sindh has become largely a battle between elements of these two communities. (I will show in Chapter 7 that not all violence in Sindh is ethno-politically motivated). However, it was also important to speak to those outside these community groupings. In ethnic terms, this meant speaking to Punjabis, Pakhtuns and others, both in Sindh and in Punjab. Aside from these groups I also spoke to religious minority groups in Sindh, including non-Muslim groups.

Research questions

The principal research questions that emerged directly from the aide memoire can be listed as follows:

1. What does the MQM stand for, and how is it organised and funded?
2. What led the MQM to emerge and how does it mobilise supporters?
3. What constitutes a *Mohajir* identity and in what senses can it be seen as a single and stable identity?
4. What has been the social and political legacy of the MQM and its opponents for the people of Sindh?
5. What is the *Muttaheda Qaumi Movement* proposal (the proposed new name of the MQM which drops ethnic rhetoric and programmes), and will it be successful?
6. What has been the attitude of the state, and of other groups such as Sindhis, to *Mohajir* subnationalism?

Methodological problems

Inevitably, there are certain problems associated with this method of research, as with any other. Firstly, the spread of interviewing over more than a year meant that developments over time may have led to important differences in response to the questions among the respondent population. This is a problem that Casley and Lury identified in the general context of developing-world research (Casley and Lury, 1981, p.230). This factor was particularly important to the fifth principal question, concerning the *Muttaheda Qaumi Movement*. The proposed new name for the MQM was publicly stated only at the end of 1990, simultaneously with the first batch of interviewing. By 1992 the matter was a more publicly

known and debated issue, particularly since it had caused a violent split in the MQM in the summer of 1991. However, the length of interviews, and the difficulties in securing many of them, made such a temporal spread inevitable. Furthermore, since identities and perceptions themselves change and develop over time, it was illuminating to compare responses to certain questions over a period of time.

Other problems concern the narrow socio-economic banding from which most respondents are drawn. The research here focusses not only on identity, but more particularly on political *leadership* and mobilisation, as they relate to the state and to urban space. In these terms, it seemed appropriate to concentrate on the upper echelons of leadership and administration.

The physical constraints of time and resources also contributed to the socio-economic "gap" in the survey. This problem is not unique to my research. Schermerhorn observes that "To fill [such a] gap would, however, require interviewing with the aid of interpreters in many vernaculars and multiple sociolinguistic adjustments." (Schermerhorn, 1978, p.4-7). While Urdu was used in this research, a full socio-cultural analysis of the ethnic situation in Sindh would require a similar use of Sindhi, and probably also Seraiki and other languages such as Pashto and Baluchi/Brohui. It was felt that such avenues were not appropriate to an examination of political leadership and mobilisation of this

kind, ' since an emphasis on socio-political rather than cultural factors was required.

For wider popular opinions and perceptions, this research has concentrated on "archival" source data such as voting patterns (see Chapter 6). Other archival sources relevant to the study of identity in Sindh include the varied press archives which, aside from providing statements, reactions and interviews with a great variety of figures, also yield certain documents and publications which highlight the linguistic tropes and mythologies deployed by different political groups (the "rhetoric of politics"). It should be recognised that, in many instances, the press is the only documentary source of events relating to the development of ethnic relations in Sindh. The press and documentary archives of particular relevance here were those of the "Dawn" Group (which included "Herald", "The Star", and "Daily News"), "The Muslim", the "Jang" Group including "The News" in Karachi, Rawalpindi/Islamabad and Lahore, "Takbeer", "Qaumi Akbar", "Jaagd" and "Newsline" in Karachi, "Sind Observer" in Hyderabad, "The Nation", "Frontier Post", "Friday Times" and "Viewpoint" in Lahore, the personal archive of S.S.Jafri, the Khalid Shamsul Hasan Foundation, the All-Pakistan Newspaper Society and the Quaid-i Azam Academy in Karachi, and finally the facilities and archives of the Eastern Services of the BBC World Service in London.

The importance of the Lahore archives was considerable, since publications such as "Viewpoint" and "Frontier Post" (the head office of the latter being in Peshawar, NWFP) are able to comment on situations in Sindh without being subjected to the sort of local pressures that occasionally come to bear on Karachi publications. I recognise that the press is not a neutral organ, so cross-referencing of material gained from the press against interviews and official publications was always attempted. The BBC was important in this respect, less as a source of primary material than as a potential means of verification of certain matters. The importance of the BBC World Service as a source of "reliable" information to people in Pakistan should not be underestimated.

The press archives were seen as a valuable primary source. In a sense, the press often battle with official censorship and pressures and endeavour to deliver more "accurate" information than official sources. Access to press archives involved lengthy procedures of security clearance, particularly in the case of "Dawn" in Karachi.

Where it is certain that names can be attributed to quotations, this has been done, but in some cases instructions received from respondents mean that less precise attribution must be made, usually in the form of a broad occupational categorisation. Archival quotation is usually attributed to a particular publication, for example "Dawn, 30 September 1986, Karachi". All the press archives contain material not just from

their own publications, but also from those of their competitors. (The material is largely from English-language publications). It should be noted that some papers have different editions in different cities, notably "The Nation", and "The News". The specific edition is quoted wherever possible.

The prevalence of Sindhis in Karachi is not great and for this reason the city contains few Sindhi-language publications on general release. However, there are honourable exceptions, such as "Jaago" [Let's go!"] launched in the city in January 1991. From sources such as this, and from the All-Pakistan Newspaper Society (which provided press details from parts of interior Sindh to which I could not safely travel myself), and from interviews and archives, a partial analysis of Sindhi identity in contemporary Sindh can be presented.

4.3 SINDHI IDENTITY

Sindhi identity is in many ways a "traditional" ethnic identity relating to an ideological, territorial nationalism. In this way it is similar to Baluchi or Pakhtun identity and nationalism. An examination of the historical record reveals various instances of "Sindh" being considered as a distinct community within the Indian subcontinent. The Province's name is derived from that of the River Indus (once known as the *Sindhu*) which bisects its territory, from where the words *Hind* and *India*

are also believed to have originated. Around 500 B.C, the Archaemenian Shahs recorded 16 Aryan provinces, one of which was *Hindu*, with its people the *Hinduyan* (believed to be Sindh and the Sindhis; A.A Jafarey, 1981, p.65). Similarly, the ancient Sanskrit epic the *Mahabharata* describes a people called the *Sindhu* (ibid).

In British times, the Province was mainly administered as part of the Bombay Presidency. In the 1930s, a movement arose in Sindh to separate the province from the Presidency. This goal was finally achieved in 1936. Here was a forerunner to the modern Sindhi nationalist politics that G.M Syed pioneered in 1946 when he broke away from the Muslim League. Thus, ancient and contemporary history attest to the territorial distinctness of Sindh and the Sindhis.

The Sindhi respondents in the interview sample, including important nationalist leaders, defined Sindhi identity as pertaining to certain clear-cut diacritical features. The most important elements of these can be described as the Sindhi language, the convergence of community with territory, a territorial history lasting up to 5000 years, and cultural features relating to Sindhi songs and poetry and codes of dress, and an adherence to a *sufistic* tradition of Islam.

From a non-Sindhi point of view, other less sympathetic perceptions of Sindhi characteristics were expressed. These referred to an overwhelmingly rural residence and a localised

"world-view" and low propensity to travel, sometimes branded as "laziness" or lack of competitive spirit.

Language

Language is one of the five factors that Sindhi nationalist leader G.M. Syed claims is necessary for a community to qualify as a nationality (*interview*, 13 March 1991, Karachi). It is also perhaps the firmest foundation of a distinct Sindhi identity. On this specific aspect the veteran leader follows the logic of such historical figures as Lenin. The other four factors he believes are essential to nationality status are identified as territory, culture, history, and political and economic interest. In this manner, Syed can both name other communities that "qualify" for their "due rights" such as Sikhs in India or Seraikis in Pakistan, and disqualify those that should not be recognised as separate, such as *Mohajirs* (*ibid*). Similarly, a Sindhi lawyer and writer living in Karachi (*interview*, 13 February 1991, Karachi), while claiming that Sindhis are a nationality on the basis of language, history and territory, discounts other communities such as the *Mohajirs* under the same parameters, as follows:

"Never in history has migration been a basis for nationality; there should be common language, territory and so on. Urdu-speakers were only 25% of

migrants - most were Punjabis ... Gujeratis have their own language with a rich culture. How can they be part of a subnationality?

(ibid).

The respondent is here referring to the inclusion of certain Gujeratis inhabiting urban Sindh as *Mohajirs* in terms of the rhetoric of the MQM leadership. I will return to this matter later in the context of *Mohajir* identity in contemporary Sindh.

The Sindhi language, which Jethmalani described as "the primary and paramount mark of Sindhi identity" (Jethmalani, 1980, p.xi), certainly has an ancient heritage relating to the development of Sanskrit (although to some it is not clear which of the two came first; Hiranandani, 1980, pp.4-6). The language has eight main dialects, one of which is Seraiki, considered by some to be a separate language (Shackle, 1979, p.153). Given its (former) position in north-west India, Sindh acted as a frontier region between the Indian subcontinent and the Persian lands to the West. The Sindhi language can be written in *Gurumukhi*, *Nagri* and Arabic scripts. In this way, the language is quite distinct from others around it such as Urdu or Punjabi, both of which are more closely related to one another than to Sindhi.

The most important early protagonists of a Sindhi linguistic culture were the Islamic *Sufi* bards who wrote poems (*kafi*) and

songs (*sur*) in Sindhi. Heading the list of prominent poets were figures such as Sachal Samast (who was also the leading Seraiki poet; Shackle, 1981, p.252), Sayed Janullah Shah Mir of Rohri, and Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit, among many others. Sindhi poetry and songs often involved an adoration of the Prophet and of God (ibid, p.256), or recurrent themes such as a celebration of rain as a purifying force (Schimmel, 1981, p.248). The mystical *sufi* nature of the poets would also cause them to mock the orthodoxy of the Islamic *maulanas* (Hiranandani, 1980, p.32).

One of the key aspects of this poetry and music is its familiarity to many Sindhis, having passed from generation to generation by word of mouth. By the end of the eighth century, Sindhis were viewed as a distinct culture by most South Asian scholars, with music and dancing identified as integral features of Sindhi community life (Gankovsky, 1981, p.180). In many ways such activities are more closely related to Hindu culture than to the more austere Muslim cultures in other parts of northern India.

By 1843 the British had arrived in the Lower Indus, and in 1851 the first Chief Commissioner of Sindh made Sindhi compulsory for government officials in the Province. In 1853 a special committee made the *Vicholi* dialect and Arabic script standard in Sindhi education, which was compulsory at primary school level (this was opposed at the time by the Hindus, who generally used the *Nagri* script; Aziz, 1988, p.176). By 1867, the first Sindhi newspaper emerged in the Province (Aziz, *ibid.*, p.178).

Sufism

The *Sufis* not only provided a vernacular literature of central importance to Sindhi identity, but also a specifically Islamic component of Sindhi identity and culture. *Sufism* originated in Persia with Al-Hallaj of Baghdad (b.858), and has since grown to fourteen "orders", each started by a particular *Pir* [saint]. The mysticism and unorthodoxy of *Sufi* teachings and the veneration of their shrines by followers, have led the *Sufi* code to be suppressed in many Islamic societies, including Turkey and Saudi Arabia (W.C. Smith, 1957, pp.198-9). The reasons for this are that "orthodox" Islam stresses the unitary importance of "one God" and his teachings, in the form of the *Quran*. Shrines are seen as distractions from such a practice.

In Sindh, the *Qadiri* Order, founded by Abdul Qadir al-Gilani of Baghdad (d.1166; Schimmel, 1975, p.248), rose to dominance in the fifteenth century (A. Zahid Khan, 1981, p.119). The *Sufi* code is "unorthodox" in that it has a close affinity to folk culture, seeing a love of God as opposed to the strictures of the *maulanas* as the most important aspect of religion. In this it is supported by the Barelvi *ulama* in Pakistan (of which the *Jamaat-i Ulama-i Islam* (JUI) is the primary political agency in Pakistan), but is opposed by the orthodox Deobandi *ulama* characterised by *Jamaat-i Islami*. The latter believes that Islam and the state cannot be separated, and that the strictures of the *Shariat* must be the basis

for political organisation and social life. In *Sufism*, however, spiritual leadership is considered to be in a different sphere from political authority, with the latter being responsible for the organisation of the state (Ewing, 1990, p.168). In this sense, Islam is seen as being situated more in the realm of the social than the political, (which allows essentially "secular" ideological leaders such as Benazir Bhutto to be revered in Sindh).

Sufism is seen by many as central to Sindhi identity, but opinions on its precise legacy vary widely. Some see *sufism* as a potentially modernising force, through which Sindhis can respond and adapt to modern societal and political processes while still retaining allegiance to their basic Sindhi and Islamic culture (interview with Dawn journalist Haider Rizvi, 10 March 1991, Karachi). Others see the *sufistic* factor as being to the detriment of the Sindhis, in that its tolerant and flexible aspects have allowed Sindhis to be exploited by more determined outsiders (interview with Siraj-ul Haq, 13 February 1991, Karachi).

Sindhi society and "feudalism"

Muhammad Iqbal, the great poet-philosopher of the Persian and Urdu languages, was influenced culturally by aspects of *sufism*, but attacked the system of *Pirs* and shrines it spawned as "Persian mysticism" (Ewing, 1990, pp.175-6). Indeed, Sindhi society (and Punjabi society for that matter; Ahmed, 1989, p.288) still contains

extremely influential *Pirs* [ancestors of *sufi* saints] and *Sajjada-nishins* [hereditary keepers of *sufi* shrines], each with specific geographical territories of jurisdiction. In some cases, certain tribes such as the *Hurs* of Sindh are headed spiritually and politically by a certain *Pir* by birth-right. The *Pir* of Pagaro, to whom the *Hurs* are linked, represents an important political force, directing his subjects to vote for candidates he endorses in a manner that "The Herald" (Election Special Issue, Nov/Dec. 1990, p.48) describes as "Sindh's feudal politics".

The other major element in this "feudal" society are the owners of the large estates, the *waderas*, on whose land poor labourers (*haris*) work. Gankovsky estimates that at the turn of the twentieth century, almost 80% of agricultural land in Sindh was cultivated by such tenants (Gankovsky, 1981, p.180). By 1980 this figure had fallen to 44.7%, but at this time the land in neighbouring Punjab cultivated by tenants was only 36% of the total (Nabi et al., 1986, p.36). In 1960, farms of between 20 and 60 hectares in size (the dominant quintile: Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan, 1990, p.128) accounted for 52.9% of all farm land in Sindh, while farms of three hectares and less in size (the bottom quintile) accounted for just 4.3% of the agricultural land area in Sindh (I. Husain, 1981, p.210).

The size of many of the *wadera* estates is considerable. The Jatoi estate is believed to be the largest in Sindh, with estimates of its size varying from 25,000 acres (interview with economic

adviser to the Prime Minister, 21 February 1991, Islamabad) to a less believable 50,000 acres plus (interview with *Mohajir* writer G.M. Mehkri, 12 February 1991, Karachi). Figure 4.1 shows one of the various Jatoi properties in the wealthy Defence district of Karachi. Like many of Sindh's *Pirs*, the *waderas* occupy a politically important position not only by moulding the voting patterns of sections of the rural population, but also by acting as political figures themselves. In 1986, the National People's Party under Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi broke from the Pakistan People's Party of Benazir Bhutto, and headed the Combined Opposition Parties (COP) alliance against the PPP in 1989. Following the dismissal of Bhutto's government in 1990, Jatoi was appointed the interim Prime Minister until the elections three months later. In 1992, when the Chief Minister of Sindh, Jam Sadiq Ali died, Ghulam Mustapha's son Ghulam Murtaza Jatoi was presented as a candidate for his replacement (Anwer Iqbal, BBC World Service archive, 6 March 1992). This continued the family tradition of being at the centre of politics in the Province, and in the country in general.

Other major landowning families include the Khuhros, who have provided a Chief Minister of Sindh and the head of a Sindhi nationalist group, and the Bhuttos, supplying two Prime Ministers to date. Like the *Pirs*, such families often associate with whole tribes. The names of villages often portray the dynastic link; for example Mirpur Bhutto and Garhi Khuda Bakhsh Bhutto in northern Sindh. Benazir herself attests to the size of the family estate:

"Our lands, like those of other landowners in Sindh were measured in square miles, not acres. As children we loved to hear the story of the amazement of Charles Napier, the British conquerer of Sindh in 1843. 'Whose lands are these?' he repeatedly asked his driver as he toured the province. 'Bhutto's lands' came the inevitable response. 'Wake me up when we are off Bhutto's lands' he ordered."

(B. Bhutto, 1988, p.29)

The paternalistic attitude of *waderas* towards their workers is described by Bukhari:

"The landlord shelters the tenant from the unsympathetic and little understood world outside his village. He writes letters of recommendation on behalf of his tenants to the official world....It is doubtful if the tenants could manage without his help."

(Bukhari, 1981, p.197):

Others write in more critical terms of this "feudal" system of political and economic control. One *Mohajir* respondent described the historical situation in the following terms:

"When the Hindus left, some Sindhis decided to appropriate their lands and exploit the *Haris*, keep them suppressed, to keep the status quo. These *Haris* - they were just like slaves!"

(discussion with grandmother of *Mohajir* family, 16 January 1991, Karachi).

Similarly, the Karachi academic Karrar Husain claims that the *waderas* have organised against the MQM, through a fear of the modern education and political awareness that the Movement could bring to their poor tenants. In this sense, Sindhi nationalism is seen by some as a resource to divert Sindhis along an "emotional" avenue, thus maintaining the status quo (interview, 13 January 1991, Karachi). A senior economic adviser to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif offered the same account of Sindhi nationalism being used as a diversion, noting that many Sindhi nationalist leaders are large landowners themselves, such as Dr. Hamida Khuhro (Jiye Sindh Front) and Mumtaz Bhutto (Sindh National Front; interview, 21 February 1991, Islamabad).

Economic conditions

There seems no doubt that inequalities in land ownership in rural Sindh produce socio-economic conditions among the rural population that compare poorly with conditions in the urban centres

of the Province. Table 4.3 presents some provincial statistics that illustrate the urban-rural divide in Sindh.

Rates of literacy vary particularly sharply between rural and urban areas. In 1981, the literacy rate in Pakistan was estimated to be 26.17%. The average in rural areas across Pakistan was 17.33% (Male 26.24%, Female 7.33%); slightly above the level in Sindh. In Karachi meanwhile, 51.18% of the population was literate in 1981- in striking contrast to rural areas (Bureau of Statistics, Government of Sindh, 1990, p.24). Indeed in 1984-85, Karachi accounted for 59.8% of all high schools in Sindh (81.5% of girls' schools; figures supplied by Directorate of School Education, Hyderabad/Karachi, April 1991), when it officially represented just 27.4% of the Province's population in 1981 (Government of Pakistan, 1990a, pp.16,50).

The figures show not only a striking differentiation between education facilities and attainment levels in urban and rural Sindh, but also a male-female divide, whereby educational facilities in rural areas are more biased towards males than is the case in urban areas. Such a division is common throughout Pakistan, and indeed South Asia.

It seems clear from official figures on language-distribution that the majority of Sindhi-speakers in Sindh inhabit villages or small towns as opposed to cities. However, there is some dispute on population figures and ratios, and on the accuracy of some of the sources of this data. One notable Sindhi doctor and

TABLE 4.3 : Selected development statistics in Sindh (%)

	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>
Literacy (1981)	15.56	50.77
Households with drinking water source, inside (1980)	27.00	54.00
Households with stream/river as sole drinking water source (1980)	31.00	2.00
Households with electric lighting (1980)	11.00	68.00
Death rate*: (1982-3, all Pakistan)	0.18	0.14

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Government of Sindh, 1990, except;

** - Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan, 1990;*

(note: death rate per birth).

social worker claimed that there are "30 lakhs" (3 million) Sindhis in Karachi (interview, 5 March 1991, Karachi), while Dr Hamida Khuhro declares that the city of Karachi as a whole is "no larger than 60 lakhs" (interview, 14 February 1991, Karachi). The 1961

census claimed that 8.55% of Karachi district's population spoke Sindhi (Government of Pakistan, West Pakistan, 1961, Population Vol.3, iv, pp.42-3). With an estimated 1991 urban population of ten million, this would make no more than 855,000 Sindhi-speaking people in Karachi. It is impossible to be confident about such figures, especially in the light of the controversy in Sindh over the Census in 1991/92. (By 1993, Sindh's contribution to the national Census had deliberately not been completed, to avoid accusations of the distortion of ethnic proportions among the Province's population from all sides). It is interesting to note, however, that in 1989 there were 30 Sindhi-language newspapers and periodicals in circulation in Pakistan (all in the province of Sindh; Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan, 1990a, pp.370-1), while in 1991, only two of these were available in the city of Karachi (and one of which had only begun in January of that year (interview with editor of "Jaagrd", 4 March 1991, Karachi)).

External views of Sindhi identity

As already mentioned, views on Sindhi identity from outside the community are often negative, interpreting *sufistic* rural traits as evidence of indolence or a general failing in character. This highlights the degree of inter-ethnic rivalry in the Province, whereby *Mohajirs* and others will paint derogatory pictures of the Sindhis and their culture, and vice versa. Many observers suggest

that Sindhis "choose" to concentrate in rural areas. This factor is particularly important in the light of the quota debate in urban Sindh, with *Mohajirs* suggesting that places of higher education are reserved for rural Sindhi candidates, thus denying a fair share to educationally superior *Mohajir* students. This sentiment was expressed by a *Mohajir* approaching the end of her degree course at Karachi University in the following terms:

"These people have reserved places in classes. But we get angry when it turns out that they have hardly any education, when we had to slave at the exams and score over 70% to get a place. When they are in class they do nothing, or just mess around. But most of the time they are away in their villages. All they care about is their village."

(interview with Karachi University student, 15 March 1991, Karachi).

This statement indicates both a general resentment towards educational quotas (which, as will be demonstrated, is vitally important to the *Mohajir* movement), and a perception of a "village mentality" among the Sindhis. Similarly, a *Mohajir* writer not unsympathetic to the Sindhi cause claimed that "the Sindhis call the boundaries of their village *paradesh* [foreign country]"

(interview with G.M. Mehkri, 12 February 1991, Karachi). The suggestion is that while rural conditions are poor and offer fewer opportunities than urban areas, many Sindhis will choose to remain in such a society if they can since their culture is village-oriented. The student's statement also suggests that even when Sindhis are assisted in gaining access to urban opportunities through quota arrangements, many of them will reject that assistance (a sentiment also conveyed by Dr. Saleem Haider, leader of the *Mohajir Ittehad Tehrik*, in far less uncertain terms when he described the Sindhi people as "gudhan " [donkeys]; interview, 11 February 1991, Karachi).

The "discrimination thesis"

It is important to observe that Sindhi respondents disagree with the theory that they spurn urban opportunities, arguing that *Mohajirs* deny urban opportunities to Sindhis and attempt to "drive them away" from the cities. *Mohajirs* are said to drive the Sindhis away both directly, through intimidation in the spheres of employment and education, and indirectly through their control of civic amenity and utility boards under which decent facilities are withheld from Sindhi districts (discussion with various Sindhi residents of Old Golimar, Karachi, 21 January 1992). This also demonstrates the physical and psychological divide between communities in Sindh.

Indeed, the "discrimination thesis" is often identified by Sindhis as the reason that socio-economic indicators are poor among their community. This parallels a more general claim made by Weiner in the context of India, that host societies receiving economically powerful migrant communities will often stress "exploitation" factors in their politics (Weiner, 1965). The negotiator for the PPP at the time of the accord signed with the MQM in December 1988, declared quite simply that "Sindhis are the most aggrieved people of Pakistan" (interview with P.K. Shahani, 12 April 1991, Karachi). Among many Sindhis, the feeling seems to be that opportunities, and particularly those in urban areas, have been denied to them.

The Sindhis as a community identity

In the "traditional" terms that G.M. Syed declares are needed to qualify for a subnationality (interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi), the Sindhis represent one of the more readily-described community identities in Pakistan. The Sindhi language has a strong heritage distinct from other Pakistani languages, and is associated with a specific culture of songs and literature. This, in turn, is related to *sufistic* Islamic factors that are revered and enjoyed by Sindhis from the *hari* following his oxen in the field, to the *wadera* and intellectual, as the nineteenth-century British traveller Richard Burton once observed (Schimmel, 1981, p.245).

Other cultural factors, such as codes of dress, are less easy to identify as sound diacritical community features. The personal assistant to Altaf Hussain, Nadeem Nusrat, identified the *shalwar kameez* [a loose pyjama suit], brightly-coloured flat cap, and *ajrak* [a coloured shawl worn over the shoulder, or wound into a small turban by men], as Sindhi items of dress that distinguish the community from *Mohajirs* in particular (*interview*, 13 March 1991, Karachi). The *ajrak* is perhaps the most symbolic item of dress, sustaining a demand in Sindhi villages because of its particular ethnic connotation (Cousin, 1981, p.236). An example of an *ajrak* is shown in Figure 4.3, ironically around the shoulders of MQM leader Altaf Hussain (the significance of this is explained in the following chapter). The wearing of the *ajrak* is used by Altaf Hussain in this example as a method of identifying with Sindhis; a testimony to the symbolic implications of the garment.

However, as Gellner (1983, p.7) and Seton-Watson (1977, p.5) have observed, the becoming of a "nation" depends to great extent on the consensus of the community on the question of "being" a nation. Most Sindhis have rejected *Jiye Sindh's* nationalism at the ballot box and have generally voted instead for the Pakistan People's Party, an anti-provincialist "Pakistani" party. As Sindhi nationalist candidates, G.M. Syed and his colleagues have the dubious honour of never winning a seat in any election to date. This presents a dilemma for G.M Syed, in that the Sindhi electorate appears to reject his vision of the rights of the Sindhi "nation" that he wants to be independent of Pakistan. The electorate accepts both Sindhi and Pakistani components of identity, but

believes the latter to be the more imperative when choosing the form of State under which it should live and work.

4.4 PUNJABIS, PAKHTUNS AND OTHER IDENTITIES

Aside from Sindhis and *Mohajirs*, the province of Sindh is populated by other communities of varying sizes. The most significant of these are probably the Punjabis, Pakhtuns and Baluchis, although there are numerous other distinct groups such as Hindus, Christians, Cutchis, Gujeratis, Seraikis and many more.

At times, certain political parties have tried to blur the boundaries between such groups and amalgamate several identities into one. As will be described later on, this has been undertaken by the MQM with regard to *Mohajir* identity, with the motive of increasing the apparent size of the community and achieving a degree of unitary support across space. Meanwhile Baluchis have occasionally been equated with Sindhis (when residing in Sindh), and Punjabis and Pakhtuns in the province tried to forge a joint political front under the Punjabi-Pakhtun Ittehad (PPI) after 1986. The attempt failed within twelve months when the party split along ethnic lines.

Section Three will describe how the development of a *Mohajir* identity in the city of Karachi has been closely related to one of the largest communities in the metropolis after the *Mohajirs*, the Pakhtuns. These migrants from the north-west of Pakistan have occupied specific niches in the urban labour market in Sindh, which generally are not

those for which the *Mohajirs* also compete. However, conflicts have occurred over space in certain districts of the city, and over questions of "urban ownership" which are central to MQM lore (as I will later show).

Baluchis

Baluchis, like Sindhis, are often equated with their eponymous Province, particularly by subnationalists who wish to carve an autonomous or sovereign Baluchistan. Ahmed, however, differentiates Baluchi society from that of the Sindhis and simultaneously equates it with Pakhtun society by claiming that the Baluchis follow a more egalitarian tribal system than the prevailing *Sufi/Pir* society in Sindh (A.S. Ahmed, 1989b, p.288). In some respects this is true, as regards the *jirgah* [assembly of tribal elders] familiar to Pakhtuns and Baluchis. Pastner states that while egalitarianism is important to Baluchi rhetoric, however, the *wadera* is very much in a position of authority, as in Sindhi society (Pastner, 1990, p.279). S.S. Harrison, furthermore, claims that Baluchi society does in fact have a very inegalitarian basis in the form of the *sardars* [tribal chiefs] that Pakhtun society does not possess (S.S. Harrison, 1986, p.286).

For centuries, certain communities of Baluchis have been living in Sindh, and some have adopted aspects of Sindhi society such as language or dress. In some cases, they have even been involved with Sindhi nationalist politics, and there have been occasional suggestions

of a separatist alliance between Sindhi and Baluchi nationalists (S.S Harrison, 1981, p.179). When Sir Charles Napier arrived in Sindh in 1843, he found the *Talpur Mirs*, a Baluchi tribal dynasty, to be the rulers there (the *Talpurs* are still active in Sindh's politics). Today, the Khuhros are of Baluchi heritage, and Dr. Hamida Khuhro counts Baluchis resident in Sindh as Sindhis when giving estimates of the size of the Sindhi community (interview with Tanvir Tahir of All Pakistan Newspaper Society, 16 March 1991, Karachi). Many Baluchis live in Karachi, where they formed an important component of the industrial labour force before Partition (Baluchi and Brohui-speakers were just under 8% of the city's population in 1941, and were then the third largest linguistic group behind Sindhi and Gujerati-speakers; Census of India 1941, Vol. XII, pp.76-7). Now, certain districts of the city house communities of Baluchis, notably the central low-income housing district of Lyari, where the Baluchi nationalist Baloch Students' Organisation (BSO) is active and very evident. S.S Harrison estimates that in the late 1970s there were also around 3000 members of the separatist Baluchi People's Liberation Front (BPLF) dispersed throughout Sindh, including Karachi (S.S. Harrison, 1981, p.75). Other Baluchi community groups, such as *Zikri* fishermen, have settled in Karachi and its environs over the years, in this case to avoid intimidation at the hands of the *Sunni* Muslim majority in Baluchistan and rural Sindh (Pastner, 1990, p.278).

Pakhtuns

Karachi has also been a magnet for a burgeoning number of Pakhtun migrants. The Pakhtun community in the city comprises two distinct groups. The first is the community of migrants from NWFP in Pakistan, while the second is the flood of Afghan Pakhtuns who have headed for Sindh and Karachi at an accelerated rate since 1979. Hart claims that by the mid-1980s, 2.5 million Afghan refugees had entered Pakistan (Hart, 1990, p.1). Hyman, Ghayur and Kaushik (Hyman et al., 1988, p.75) meanwhile quote a Minister of Frontier Regions source, which claims that by the end of March 1988 3.48 million Afghan refugees were in Pakistan, 76,700 of whom had settled in Karachi (of these, only 26% were registered refugees; *ibid*). The flow of Afghans contributes to a steady flow of migrants into the city. Frits Selier estimated that in the mid-1980s, 150,000 new migrants joined Karachi every year. From various district surveys it was estimated that between 80% and 94% of these came from the northern provinces of Punjab and NWFP (Selier, 1991, p.5).

The official estimate of the number of Pashto-speakers in Karachi is around 9% (Herald, Election Special, October 1990, p.120), although some, such as Benazir Bhutto, claim this understates the true proportion of Pakhtuns in Karachi, "the biggest Pakhtun city in the world" (*interview*, 22 January 1992, Karachi). The basis for this statement is that low-income housing areas are likely to be the least accurately enumerated in the city and it is in these districts that the

Pakhtun migrants concentrate. As regards Sindh as a whole, 1981 Census data suggested that with just over 3% of the population of the province speaking Pashto (Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan, 1989, p.85), the great majority of the Province's Pakhtuns reside in the city of Karachi.

Within Karachi, the Pakhtuns dominate specific occupational niches, most notably transport, labouring and construction. The community is also evident in small businesses such as tea shops, ice cream houses and shoe-makers and repairers. A long discussion with a group of Pakhtun students in Karachi revealed their frustration over limited opportunities, and a suspicion that things were made worse by discrimination against the Pakhtun community (*discussion*, 25 March 1991, Karachi). One student mentioned a sports club of which he was a member, where most of the other boys were *Bohras* (a community of *Shia* traders who mostly migrated from the Gujerat coast north of Bombay, and who are consequently often counted as *Mohajirs*). The Pakhtun complained that he had always been regarded with some contempt by the boys and the masters, simply because he was not a *Bohra* (*ibid*).

The *Mohajirs* that I interviewed expressed various views on the Pakhtuns. Some were complimentary, claiming that the community is hard working (particularly compared to Sindhis) and helped to build Karachi with their labour. National Democratic Party (NDP) chief Sirdar Mazari claimed simply that "Karachi was built by the Pakhtuns" (*interview*, 13 February 1991, Karachi). Still others, however, equated the community with the drugs, arms and land businesses that have grown in the city

since the end of the 1970s. Some even suggest that the Pakhtuns are uneducated, and that their language and culture are primitive. A film review in a Karachi monthly magazine (Herald, March 1991, Karachi, p.148) described the Pakhtun film industry as "Peshawar's smut factories". Meanwhile, in a discussion with a group of *Mohajir* traders in Karachi, one respondent likened the Pashto language to the sound of pebbles rattling in a tin can (discussion, 23 April 1991, Karachi).

Mr. Shafi Khan, a prominent economist at the National Bank in Karachi (interview, 15 January 1991, Karachi) suggested that Pakhtuns have formed the major source of non-skilled labour in the city, often working on a seasonal basis with trips made and packages of money sent back to families in the north. This is similar to the patterns of seasonal labour migration made by Punjabis and Pakhtuns to areas of the Middle East, notably Dubai. This process echoes Selier's description of "circular migration" (or "repetitive mobility"), to be distinguished from "permanent" or "temporary" migration (Selier, 1991, p.1; permanent in this case implies a complete move of address to the city, while temporary migration refers to one or two isolated visits, perhaps for a single temporary work contract).

Similarly, architect and writer Arif Hasan (interview, 11 February 1991, Karachi) identifies the way in which the Pakhtuns built-up and dominate private-sector transportation in Karachi (in a manner similar to their dominance of this sector in Baluchistan province). In an earlier observation, however, a less salubrious aspect of Karachi's economy was described: after the escalation of the war in neighbouring

Afghanistan in 1979, an increasing flood of guns and heroin (grown from poppies on the mountainsides of the Frontier) found its way into Karachi, where the informal sector began operating, based in the semi-regulated slum areas of Orangi in north-west Karachi and Sohrab Goth in the north. The money from such enterprises also financed the businesses of illegally-apportioned plots of land for sale or rent and the growing semi-regulated private transport sector (Arif Hasan, Herald, December 1986, pp.9-11).

The expansion of these businesses and the pressures and violence they have entailed are interpreted by many non-Pakhtuns as being solely due to a flood of immigration from NWFP and Afghanistan. In this manner a stereotype is portrayed of the Pakhtun being a rough, uneducated person to whom drugs and guns are a way of life. Similarly, urban problems can be "explained" as resulting from unchecked Pakhtun migration. In the mid 1980s, both MQM and the Sindhi nationalists were active in propagating this opinion. For example, in December 1986, *Jiye Sindh* reacted to riots in Karachi by stating that all "outsiders" in Sindh should be repatriated, since the rioting was a direct result of an "immigration conspiracy" (Dawn, 20 December 1986, Karachi). This statement certainly referred to Pakhtuns and Afghans (ibid).

At this time the newly-emergent MQM was close to G.M. Syed and the *Jiye Sindh*. At the first major rally of the *Mohajir* Movement in Karachi, on 8 August 1986, Altaf Hussain declared that all non-*Mohajirs* and non-Sindhis should be denied residency rights in Sindh province. During the meeting, an Awami National Party (ANP)⁵ flag was lowered and

replaced by the red, green and white MQM flag (Dawn, 9 August 1986, Karachi). This was a pointed snub to the Pakhtun community of Karachi whose support is the major component of the ANP's following in Sindh.

In January 1987 Altaf Hussain presented a long list of "demands", one of which was the "early repatriation of Afghans" (Dawn, 21 January 1987, Karachi). At this time the MQM leader was in jail with other subnationalist leaders, following serious ethnic rioting in Karachi and Hyderabad. As will be described in Chapter 7, the latest episode of rioting had begun in December 1986, when the north Karachi slum area of Sohrab Goth was bulldozed in line with the government's policies to tackle the illegal trade in guns and drugs. The operation prompted retaliatory violence across the city led by Pakhtuns and Afghans, who had constituted the major ethnic groups in Sohrab Goth. This episode of unrest followed a large riot in April 1985, when a *Mohajir* schoolgirl Bushra Zaidi, had been run-down and killed by a speeding bus.

Reaction to the "Bushra Zaidi incident" indicated that many observers in Karachi were equating the city's ills, such as heavy and unregulated traffic, with the existence of a particular community of Pakhtuns in the city, who supply the majority of bus, rickshaw and taxi operations. This negative stereotyping of transport-operators permeates all levels of Karachi society. A statement in a pro-*Mohajir* Karachi evening paper reveals this, attributing the April 1985 riots to "Bushra Zaidi's cold-blooded murder under the wheels of a minibus trying to overtake another, to make its trip quicker ... and more money-yielding." (Daily News, 6 November 1986, Karachi).

The implicit stereotyping of minibus-drivers as greedy and reckless is apparent in this statement, and it is a short step to equating those drivers with a particular ethnic group. In the mid-to-late 1980s, Altaf Hussain and the MQM clearly capitalised on these sentiments, by suggesting the "repatriation of Afghans" as a panacea for the city's problems. Later in the decade these official statements changed, as the repeated ethnic riots in Karachi began to lose their anti-Pakhtun identification. A Sindh government report on the rioting in June 1990 claimed that the last major disturbance involving large groups of Pakhtuns in the Province was in December 1988 (information supplied by Government of Sindh Information Department, Karachi, April 1991). At this time the MQM was becoming estranged from Sindhi agencies such as the nationalists and the PPP.

On the ground in Karachi, however, my interview survey suggests that concerns over high immigration to the city and problems of transport, drugs and guns are still prevalent. Migration to the city was one of the main civic problems identified by the director of the Karachi Development Agency (KDA; *interview*, 12 April 1991, Karachi). Interestingly the mayor of the city, Dr. Farooq Sattar (*interview*, 26 February 1991, Karachi), who is also one of the key members of the MQM leadership, did not identify such factors as important. (This was in line with the direction of MQM policy at the time. I will return to this matter in the following chapter).

One of the reasons that the rioting of the mid-1980s became embroiled in ethnic rhetoric, is related to Pakhtun community

organisation and leadership. In Karachi, as in the Frontier region, *biraderi* [tribe/clan] relationships are paramount among Pakhtuns. While trade unionist Karamat Ali (General Secretary of Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research; *interview*, 2 February 1991, Karachi) claims that union development has worsened markedly since the emergence of such "ethnic" groups as the MQM after 1984 (a criticism levelled specifically at the MQM by many respondents), a *Mohajir* writer (*interview*, 10 February 1991, Karachi) observed that trade unions have never worked effectively in Pakistan precisely due to such vertical divisions in society as *biraderi* groups. Indeed, those working in informal housing areas (*katchi abadis*) have observed that housing associations often fail to cross ethnic lines in mixed areas; an observation made by Jan Van der Linden (*discussion*, 29 January 1992, Karachi) with respect to Ghousia Colony in Karachi. There is evidence that Pakhtuns, in particular, distance themselves from such organisations, and from official agencies in general, including banks (which has made their homes vulnerable to looting in times of rioting - Dawn, 13 January 1987, Karachi). This, as Edwards writes, is related to the tribal code of *gheyrat* [honour, bravery] in which Pakhtuns guard against the homogenising processes of modern society (in socio-cultural terms) and *shahr* [the city] (Edwards, 1990, pp.81-2).

The tribal code of undertaking retribution for perceived wrongs, furthermore, may translate into a process of repeated rioting following a particular incident. A code of revenge can also lead to viewing a *whole community* as "an other", from any member of which retribution can

be legitimately sought. This was evident, perhaps, in an incident which occurred in October/November 1986, when a clash on the Super Highway in Sohrab Goth was followed by organised Pakhtun attacks on *Bihari* localities several miles away in Orangi. (I examine this incident in more detail in Chapter 7). The basis for such attacks was believed to be revenge for an episode in the party-less elections of 1985, when a Pakhtun candidate battled unsuccessfully with a *Bihari* in an Orangi constituency, in conditions of considerable inter-ethnic acrimony (Herald, December 1986, Karachi, p.5).

However, there is some controversy as to whether *biraderi* organisation or codes such as that of retribution and revenge are really to "blame" for political or developmental problems such as weak trade unions, or the poor spatial spread of development projects. In a study of a women's project in the large *katchi abadi* of Orangi, Karachi, Verheijen noted that while there were many more *Mohajir* local organisers, termed "lane activists" (at 69% of the total in the project) than Pakhtuns, Sindhis or Baluchis (only 11% of the total activists were Pakhtuns, and just 3% were Baluchis or Sindhis), it is not at all clear why this pattern should be so (Verheijen, 1989, p.24). One assessment would be that *Mohajirs* are more receptive to grassroots development projects, but there could also be cultural elements at work. Pakhtun, Baluchi or Sindhi attitudes to women working in such projects, for example, are generally more "austere" than those of the highly urbanised *Mohajirs*. It is significant, furthermore, that the project's literature and administration is all in Urdu. Many of the non-*Mohajir* women claimed that this was a

specific deterrent to their involvement in the OPP (Verheijen, *ibid*). I will return to the OPP's relationship to the *Mohajir* community and to the MQM in Karachi in Chapter 6.

Punjabis

Punjabis were well represented in the Orangi women's project (*ibid*), which reflects the usually strong position that this community holds in Pakistan in relation to such groups as the Sindhis, Baluchis, and to a lesser extent the Pakhtuns.

Punjabis in Sindh are often regarded by Sindhi nationalists as agents of the repressive federal centre, by virtue of the federal capital and the military regime being based firmly in the Province of Punjab. As the largest "nationality" in Pakistan, Punjabis not surprisingly constitute an important community in Sindh. The Census of 1981 (the last full Census published by 1993) claimed that 7.69% of households in Sindh were Punjabi-speaking (Government of Pakistan, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1990a, p.66). Thus, by using language as a loose indication of identity, we can say that Punjabis are the third largest community group in Sindh behind Sindhis and *Mohajirs*. Indeed, there is a movement of Punjabi nationalism that holds language to be very important. Ahmad Bashir (Star, 25 April 1985, Karachi) writes that Punjabi "is the Punjab's cultural signature ... Without it the Punjabis are rootless."

By using this same parameter of language, it can be suggested that Punjabis are the second largest ethnic group in Karachi with 14% of

the city's population (Herald, Election Special, October 1990, Karachi, p.120). These figures suggest that, like the Pakhtuns, most Punjabis in Sindh mainly inhabit the city of Karachi. However, an important group has also settled in certain rural areas to undertake farming. Mahmud Mirza (in Dawn, 16 October 1986, Karachi [Jafri archive]) writes that the Hindu-dominated *zamindar* class of landlords and money-lenders came to control 60% of Sindh's agricultural land shortly before Independence. Following Partition and the exodus of many Hindus, a large proportion of such holdings transferred to migrant and Punjabi hands, aided by official regulations and statutes.

More recently, the irrigation of large areas of Sindh following the construction of Indus River barrages, has seen newly-available land pass into the hands of large Punjabi farming concerns (Dawn, *ibid*). The reason for such a process is that much of the land has been "awarded" to retiring or high-achieving members of the bureaucracy and army, most of whom were Punjabis, particularly in the Ayub Khan and Zia years of military dictatorship. To make matters worse, it is widely perceived that Punjabi landowners (and industrialists) in Sindh often import Punjabi labourers to work their land rather than employ Sindhi locals (interview with Jam Saqi, leader of the Sindh Hari Committee; Star, 8 January 1987, Karachi [Jafri archive]).

The problem is that the Sindhi nationalists' vitriolic attacks against Punjab as the seat of federal government can become a form of ethnic chauvinism directed at Punjabis in general. G.M. Syed has again raised the question of repatriation (interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi),

declaring that all those joining the Province after 1954 and not forging "roots" (specified as becoming Sindhi and calling oneself "Sindhi"; *ibid*) must either "merge" with the Sindhi identity or leave the Province. The 1954 cut-off date, in addition to the demand for an amalgamation with Sindhi culture, is certainly aimed at Punjabi industrialists, and Punjabi farmers on irrigated barrage lands (the demand also refers implicitly to "economic migrants" arriving in Sindh from India through the second half of the 1950s). As Ahmad Bashir wrote on the aftermath of the formation of the Sindh-Baluchistan-Pakhtun Front (SBPF) in 1985 (Star, 16 May 1985, Karachi [Jafri archive]), Sindhi and other subnationalist rhetoric often attacks the Punjab as a "cultural and political unit". This detracts from the fact that many ordinary Punjabis suffer the same problems as other Pakistanis (*ibid*).

In urban Sindh, Punjabi immigration appeared to accelerate in the 1980s under General Zia, when Punjabi penetration of the bureaucracy and large national business was made easier (Alavi, 1990, p.29). The rise of the Punjabis and others was principally at the expense of the *Mohajirs* (concentrated in the urban Sindh quota). Furthermore, the scale of the rise was more than percentages might suggest, since the bureaucracy greatly increased in over-all size between 1973 and 1983. Thus, the Punjab/Islamabad component in recruitment actually saw an increase of just under 77% over the ten years, to 73,736 officers (Government of Pakistan, 1976/1984).

The role of Punjabis in the expanding bureaucracy and in Karachi's growth (and in relation to the MQM's initial relationship with

Jiye Sindh), led the community to be equated with Pakhtuns in MQM rhetoric concerning usurpers of urban opportunities in Sindh. In an interview with the "Indian Expatriate" newspaper in late 1988, Altaf Hussain claimed that the penetration of Punjabi and Pakhtun business ventures into the Sindh economy "undermines the country's integrity and solidarity" (12 March 1988 [Dawn archive, Karachi]). He further suggested that such businesses should leave Sindh and invest in their own Provinces to discourage migration to Sindh (ibid). This is an argument, not without some economic logic, that is expressed also by Sindhi *Hari* [rural peasant] leader Jam Saqi (Star interview, 8 January 1987, Karachi [Jafri archive]).

Punjabis compete more directly with *Mohajirs* in urban Sindh than do the Pakhtuns or other groups, since they occupy all economic niches in the cities from *katchi-abadi* dwellers to top executives. Above all, Punjabis dominate the artisan class in Karachi; the tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, and other positions such as restaurant and hotel owners (interview with NDP chief Sirdar Mazari, 13 February 1991, Karachi). I will show that all these occupation categories are ones for which *Mohajirs* also compete in the cities of Sindh. Some of the Punjabi labour is based on circular migration (like much Pakhtun labour in Karachi), as I discovered in discussion with a small group of Punjabi printing workers in 1991, who make quarterly trips with their earnings to their families in Rawalpindi.

A more immediate worry in Karachi, however, has concerned possible large-scale "capital flight" from Karachi to Punjab (interview,

12 April 1991, Karachi). The northward flight of capital is evidenced by rising commercial property values in Punjabi cities against a stagnant market in Karachi. The matter is one of great controversy (with the Nawaz Sharif government in the 1991/92 period denying that there was any "capital flight" from Sindh; see Jam Sadiq Ali's statement in Dawn, 18 January 1992, Karachi), and its effect on Punjabi migration to Sindh is not clear. One Punjabi computer salesman in Karachi told me that whatever the ethnic troubles or economic recession in Karachi, there could never be any more attractive opportunities for work in Punjab (interview, 5 February 1992, Karachi). He claimed that this was a sentiment shared by most of his Punjabi colleagues working in the city (ibid).

In March 1987, political leaders of Sindh's Punjabis and Pakhtuns formed the Punjabi-Pakhtun Ittehad (PPI; Punjabi-Pakhtun Union), which set out its stall straight away as opposing Afghans and *Mohajirs* in Sindh. The Pakhtun secretary-general Hakik Khan Swabi declared: "*Mohajirs* whether from India or Afghanistan should be sent back to their native places" (Muslim, 10 March 1987, Karachi). The party addresses an estimated constituency of around two million Punjabis and Pakhtuns living in Karachi (Muslim, ibid), and secured 11% of the vote in the city in the October 1988 elections (Election Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad), winning one Provincial Assembly seat. In general, however, Islamic parties and the IJI achieved better results in Punjabi and Pakhtun districts of the city, and the PPI (whose Punjabi and Pakhtun wings split in January 1989 after a financial controversy; The

Nation, 2 January 1989, Lahore) remains more important as a pressure group than as an electoral force.

***Seraiki* and other identities in Sindh**

On the border between Punjab and Sindh, a *Seraiki* community is situated that promotes its own distinct language as the emblem of its identity. *Seraiki* identity is sometimes seen as part of the culture of one of the provinces on either side of it (see A.S. Ahmed's (1990b) discussion of "district ethnicity" in Chapter 3), and the language is sometimes seen as a dialect of Sindhi (such as by Daswani and Parchani, 1978, p.4). In the mid-1980s community leaders received some publicity by demanding political and administrative autonomy for their region. The movement is led by a disparate variety of small groups, headed by the *Seraiki Suba Mahaz*, who at the beginning of 1985 were calling for a *Seraiki suba* [provincel; (Dawn, 3 April 1985, Karachi).

The *Seraiki* movement has achieved the endorsement of various political figures, such as NDP chief Sirdar Mazari (Dawn, 23 October 1985, Karachi), and more recently G.M. Syed, who in January 1992 was placed under house arrest after calling for the formation of the independent States of Sindhudesh, Baluchistan, Pakhtunistan and *Seraikidesh* (Herald, February 1992, Karachi, p.24; note that nothing was said of a State for Punjabis). Despite being linked to a movement for a

concentrated on achieving recognition of the language and its culture, to which the *Sufi* poet Sachal Samast is important.

Various other identities in Sindh wish not to be allied to a subnationalist movement, but merely to be *recognised* as community identities. For non-Muslim groups, separate electorates were re-established under General Zia, in which religious minorities vote only for their own candidates in a parallel election. This reversed the previous situation of dual electorates, whereby minorities could also vote in the mainstream national and provincial elections. From discussions with minority-group members, it transpired that while some are happy to have some representation, others feel cheated, believing that the parallel minority elections have no impact on government composition or policy. One respondent claimed that in elections he felt "horrible ... like a castaway". Furthermore, the *Shariat* Bill and the stance of its main protagonist, the Deobandi *ulama* (characterised by the *Jamaat-i Islami*), are viewed as grim portents by many Christians and Hindus.

Before Partition, Hindus are believed to have constituted around 25% of Sindh's population (Census of India 1931: see Alavi, 1987, p.71). Their position was an important one, representing the bulk of the urban middle-class and elite in the province, in addition to owning much farmland (Gankovsky, 1981, p.181). Following Independence, so many Hindus left Sindh (interview with Siraj-ul Haq; 13 February 1991, Karachi) that the 1981 census recorded only 6.4% of the province's

population as Hindus (Government of Pakistan, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1990a, p.617).

In India, Hindu-Muslim "communal" violence still flares regularly (much of it deliberately provoked by political leaders), while in Sindh many claim that before Partition the Province was largely free of communal violence (Hiranandani, 1980, p.33). Since Independence however, certain instances of anti-Hindu violence have occurred in Sindh, such as in Hyderabad in May/June 1987, when Muslims attacked Hindus in retaliation for attacks on Muslims in parts of India at the time (Frontier Post, 1 June 1987, Lahore). Similarly, the *Babri Masjid* affair in India^e led to reprisal attacks on Hindus in Pakistan, as in Sukkur in November 1989 (Herald, Election Special, October 1990, Karachi, p.59).

Since Z.A. Bhutto's Second Amendment to the Constitution in 1974, the *Ahmediyya* sect of Muslims has been officially recognised as a religious minority (that is, not part of the state's definition of "Muslim"). The community is small, and over 60% live in Punjab (Herald, *ibid*, p.62). In total, the separate electorate system for minorities provides for just ten reserved seats in the 237-seat National Assembly (four Christian, four Hindu, one Parsi, one *Ahmediyya*) and offers no representation in the Senate (upper house).

Various smaller Muslim community groups are important in Sindh, many of them having migrated from the Gujarat coastal areas before Partition. These include *Memons* (Sunni Muslims), *Bohras* and *Khojas* (sub-groups of Ismaili Shias), *Gujaratis* (a general term identifying with the language), *Kathiawaris* and *Cutchis* (who also have a distinct language).

Trade brought such groups to Sindh before and after Independence (Alavi, 1987, pp.76-7). Today, such communities can be identified in Karachi and elsewhere by such features as the *Bobri Bazaar* in Saddar, central Karachi (which also testifies to the major occupational "niche" of the *Bohras* in tailoring and textiles).

It is interesting that the MQM has on occasion tried to include such groups within a *Mohajir* umbrella identity, on the basis that they originally migrated from outside Sindh. In June 1988, MQM chief Altaf Hussain addressed *Memons*, *Cutchis* and "Gujerati-speakers", and claimed that they were essentially *Mohajirs* and should ally with the MQM (Morning News, 20 June 1988, Karachi). Rebuff to such a claim came from M.S. Junejo, the President of *Cutchi Ittehad Sindh*, who denied that *Cutchis* and other groups were *Mohajirs* (Star, 10 July 1988, Karachi). This difference of opinion underscores the complex nature of the *Mohajir* identity in Sindh. Most of these smaller groups have histories of trade and other links with Sindh reaching back long before the Partition of India. In this way they cannot be equated easily with those Muslims who migrated after the Partition, and upon whom the MQM models its rhetoric and appeal, as I will show.

4.5 MOHAJIR IDENTITY

The heritage of the *Mohajir* identity as used in present-day Sindh begins in August 1947, when groups of Muslims began arriving from India in the east. The majority of such migrants who eventually settled

in Sindh came from central-northern areas of India and spoke Urdu. Thus, in the loosest terms, a prospective *Mohajir* identity can be identified with migration from India and with speaking Urdu. However, unlike Sindhi or Baluchi identities, the story is more complex than such a simple equation of diacritical community features would suggest. The question of *Mohajir* identity did not arise in and for political discourse until the 1970s, when the term was revived and applied to an ostensible community by certain Urdu-speaking political leaders.

In 1978, a group of Karachi University students revived this idea when they formed a student group, the All Pakistan *Mohajir* Students Organisation (APMSO). Six years later, the same people upgraded the group to a fully-fledged political movement, which, by 1986 had achieved the support of a striking majority of Urdu-speakers in urban Sindh. The movement is at a crossroads in 1993, with the MQM in disarray over a plan to drop the ethnic emphasis from its central programme.

An analysis of *Mohajir* identity involves a discussion of "mythology", in the sense used by Roland Barthes (Barthes, 1972, p.154), or in the sense that Geertz uses the term in his accounts of the nineteenth-century State of Bali (Geertz, 1980). That is to say, political and other communities actively mobilise a reading of local histories (and mythologies) to provide a basis for seemingly naturalised present-day political programmes (ibid, pp.14-15). For the *Mohajirs*, key foundation "myths" involve readings of the controversial and confused events following the Partition of India, when many Muslims decided to migrate to Pakistan.

However, the formation of a *Mohajir* identity lies not only with the community itself, but also with Sindhis and other Pakistani groups with whom the *Mohajirs* have joined in forming Pakistan as a whole. These groups also figure in *Mohajir* mythologies. After all, as Tayyeb explains, it was the migrants' hosts who first introduced the term to refer to the migrant community in the early years after Independence (Tayyeb, 1966, p.172). The story thus relates as much to inter-community relations and contingent processes in Pakistan, as to so-called primordial nationalist fervours. My research focusses on the manner in which a *Mohajir* identity has been presented by the All-Pakistan *Mohajir* Students Organisation (APMSO) and MQM in particular, since it is these agencies who have elevated the term onto the stage of national politics.

Early origins of the "*Mohajirs*" in Sindh

There is some confusion as to how the term "*Mohajir*" became applied to, and was registered by, the post-1947 migrants. The original Islamic meaning of the term refers to the act of migration in the name of Islam. In this manner, those fleeing the communist regime in Afghanistan in the 1980s to join the border areas of Pakistan have also been known as *Mohajirs*, and form a sizeable group in some areas such as Quetta, Baluchistan. Thus, "*Mohajir*" does not just refer to migration, but specifically to the migration of *Muslims*.

Tayyeb claims that migrants joining Punjab and Sindh after Partition were "endearingly called the 'muhajir'" (Tayyeb, 1966, p.172).

This conflicts with the views of MQM members and supporters. They claim that the Sindhi hosts continued treating the migrants as *migrants* long after their arrival, so that *Mohajir* status was retained for the community in sarcastic terms - as a denial of membership of the "Sindhi club". This might have been due either to cultural and social differences between migrant and host communities, or to the hosts' feeling of being threatened as the new migrants began to accumulate local economic resources (Tayyeb, *ibid*). There was also much controversy over the system of land and property rehabilitation for new migrants, which in Sindh involved a widely-abused system of verbal affidavits of resources "left behind" in India (*interview* with Justice Dorab Patel, 12 January 1991, Karachi). Other less endearing terms for the new arrivals abounded, such as *makkah* [a spider that continually scampers around]; (*interview* with MQM women's worker, 6 February 1991, Karachi), or, more commonly in Punjab, *tilyat* [a small bird that hops from place to place]; (*interview* with Nadeem Nusrat, Personal Assistant to Altaf Hussain, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

For MQM activists the point is that *Mohajirs* did not initially want to be seen as *Mohajirs*, but came to realise that they had little choice in the matter. MQM secretary Azim Ahmed Tariq puts it this way:

"Originally we never thought as a subnationality, just as Pakistani and Muslim. But on arrival, being a Pakistani was just a slogan, it was not in hearts and minds of people here. All these people just thought of their

province; being "son of soil" was the first thing.....

We had to join hands as a community to be accepted"

(interview, 6 February 1991, Karachi).

A similar view was expressed by Sindhi nationalist G.M. Syed, when he said that; "We have had our name for 5,000 years. Pakistan has had its name for 50 years" (interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi). In this way, identities are ranked, with the Sindhi ethnic community coming first in people's affections and the nation-state last. Furthermore, as with the Pakhtun identity, Islam is taken to be an integral part of *Mohajir* identity. This is not so true of Sindhi identity, which by relying on cultural factors such as language, can encompass other religious identities (there are a number of non-Muslims who consider themselves "Sindhis", including some Hindus in India; see Hiranandani, 1980, p.15).

The original Partition migrants from India, according to Azim Tariq, felt very differently to their hosts about the ranking of identity components when they migrated to Pakistan. They believed that identification with the State of Pakistan and Islam were paramount, and that a sub-community identity was largely irrelevant (not least because their own *zameen* [territory/land] had been left behind in India). The difference between the outlook of *Mohajirs* and that of communities originally living within the boundaries of Pakistan was demonstrated by Mumtaz Bhutto, leader of the Sindh National Front, when he claimed: "You

can't become a nation on someone else's land... The sooner they join us the sooner they can become Pakistanis. There is no room for '*Mohajir*' - you have to be one of the four" (interview, 21 June 1991, London). Here again "Pakistan" is equated with just four sub-nationalities, which in turn are equated with the "land". The migrants may have joined the population of Pakistan but *culturally* they did not really become part of the "land" on which it was situated (by virtue of not becoming absorbed by Sindhi or other local cultures). Oldenburg (1985, p.712) maintains that a similar difference in outlook was at the heart of the disintegration of Pakistan in 1971, with the *Mohajirs* considering their own version of the State to be "correct" and at odds with that held by Bengali culture (ibid, p.724).

But the root of the problem with respect to this research relates more specifically to Sindh. This is because it is in Sindh alone that a *Mohajir* political identity has emerged, despite the fact that Punjab province received many thousands more migrants from India around the time of Partition. The explanation for these different outcomes relates partly to the nature of administrative arrangements in Punjab after Partition. In Punjab, provincial laws had determined that migrants from one half of the partitioned province entering the other half would have priority over land claims and would receive full compensation for abandoned property (interview with federal Civil Service officer, 10 February 1991, Karachi). Such preferential policies in the Punjab may have encouraged a secondary flow of migration of non-Punjabis out of urban Punjab to undeveloped urban Sindh in the late 1940s (Wright, 1974,

p.195), where departing Hindus were leaving behind property and good business opportunities. Furthermore, the system of land compensation and claims in Sindh was loosely policed in comparison to the system elsewhere, in that uncontested statements were often sufficient as claims of property abandoned in India.

In Punjab, therefore, various factors aided the synthesis of migrant and host. One was the cultural affinity between the two. Others concerned local official procedures, and a shattered provincial awareness arising from the Partition of Punjab. These factors were not so applicable in Sindh, and hence the synthesis was not so easy. This explanation differs slightly from the MQM's own view, as stated by Karachi's mayor Dr. Farooq Sattar, that the urban agglomeration of migrants in Sindh, as opposed to the greater urban-rural spread in Punjab, encouraged a distinct urban culture of migrants to emerge in Sindh (interview, 26 February 1991, Karachi). The difference between urban and rural communities is important in developing societies such as Pakistan. Indeed, Clapham (Clapham, 1985, p.81) claims that such differences are the "Third World's" equivalent to class differences (see also Lipton, 1977).

It seems, therefore, that in Sindh, a physical and psychological separation of migrants from the host culture contributed to the emergence of a *Mohajir* identity. From the host society's point of view, the separation related to an adherence to "land" (in terms of history within a particular territory), that was a more important component of Sindhi identity than such factors as the new nation, Islam, or least of

all Urdu (which was not spoken indigenously within the areas that became Pakistan). In 1947, "land" had been physically and culturally severed from the life of the migrants by definition, and it could not be an important part of their identity. The sense of alienation felt by many *Mohajirs* is effectively portrayed in a poem by Fahmida Riaz, an Urdu-speaking writer who migrated from Meerut, in the United Provinces of British India, to Sindh, some years after Partition:

"Mohajir

These blue and yellow balloons
burst of their own volition.

From the heights of improbability
the shreds of rubber
like dead skin
fell so rapidly.

These lifeless rubber pieces,
where will they find a home?
They do not like the earth,
they will not merge with it.
Each pure and clean drop of water
tells them that
the stream that's sprouted from the rock

will flow its own way.

The balloons are very unhappy
with earth and water."

(Fahmida Riaz, in Mahmood Jamal, ed. and trans. 1986, p.158)

Constructing community identities

My research attempts to show that the mainstream *Mohajir* identity in contemporary Sindh is founded on three principal pillars of "myth" and identity-construction. The term "construction" is used because the term "*Mohajir*" has been consciously and rapidly elevated onto the national political stage since the mid-1980s by the MQM. Thus, while the term *Mohajir* has existed for many years in Pakistan and elsewhere in the Muslim world, it is the MQM that has developed the term into the emblem of an ethnic community, and has claimed that it alone is the creator and arbiter of the community identity.

Historically, the physical separation of communities in Sindh has involved a cultural distancing of the two major groups from one another. Sindhis can be proud and even presumptuous about their own history and the strength of their ethnic culture. But the migrants also brought with them pride in certain cultural and social achievements. Urdu is the key cultural symbol of *Mohajir* identity today. The language implies not only a noble link with the great *Mughal* emperors in whose

courts it was developed (Oldenburg, 1985, p.725), but also a special link to Pakistan itself, since the national language of the State is Urdu. The identification of a certain ethnic group with the essence of a State - and subsequent criticism of other supposedly less "loyal" groups - is not confined to Pakistan alone. Iraq offers another example, with the ruling *Ba'ath* party in Baghdad seeing other groups such as the "marsh Arabs" in the south of the country, as somehow "un-Iraqi" and thus fundamentally alien (Independent, 1 August 1992, London). In Pakistan, the crisis of 1970/71 allowed chauvinistic sentiments to be levelled by *Mohajirs* and others at the Bengalis and their culture, which was considered to be intertwined with Hinduism in form and thus "un-Pakistani" by definition (see Ayub Khan, 1965, p.187).

Identification with Pakistan is thus a central element of *Mohajir* identity. This includes not only the matter of Urdu, but also the historical factor of migration from India after the Partition. This is the second main pillar of contemporary *Mohajir* identity in Sindh. As in many "nationalist" constructions, the use of history is often highly problematic and keenly contested. Furthermore, it is important to note that the power-base of the MQM rests on people born within Pakistan, rather than their parents, who were the original *Mohajirs*. This complexity extends to the *Bihari* sub-identity, which has become an important element of MQM support in recent years. The factor supposedly uniting these people and making them *Mohajirs* is a commitment to the building of a unitary Pakistani national culture. In this sense, the *Mohajirs* also identify with the Muslim League, the *Quaid-i Azam* (Father

of the Nation], and the Pakistan movement, since a major component of the League was the Urdu-speaking contingent of northern India.

A third major element of *Mohajir* identity is that of the *mazloomiat* [oppression], which the MQM claims has been visited upon the *Mohajirs* in two ways. Firstly, it is claimed that the community has been progressively marginalised and discriminated against in Pakistan, socially, politically and economically, by other groups such as Sindhis and Punjabis. Secondly, it is claimed that the *Mohajirs* of urban Sindh have been the victims of several "massacres" in the 1980s. This claim is less easy to verify than the first. (I will return to the events on which this claim is based in Chapter 7).

Language and culture

M.U Memon claims that Urdu was the first South Asian language to produce a "novel" in the Western sense of the term (M.U. Memon, 1983, p.106). The novel was "*Umrao Jan Ada*" by Mirza Muhammad Hadi Rusva (1858-1931), about which Memon (ibid) claims:

"It would be impossible to find another novel of comparable artistic finesse and psychological depth written at that time in any of the other languages of northwestern India (Pakistan since 1947)."

This statement implies not only the cultural superiority of Urdu over other languages, but also a greater inherent "modernity" in Urdu culture. Memon (ibid) stresses the point by observing that the Progressive Literary Movement of the 1930s (which encompassed such writers as Prem Chand) wrote almost exclusively in Urdu.

Pride in Urdu culture persists in the families of most post-Partition migrants today. A senior *Mohajir* journalist with "The Star" maintained that:

"We *Mohajirs* have a different language, Urdu, a different culture, and our own 'powerful traditions' that belong to India.....We were superior, in education, culture, ways of living."

(interview, 27 January 1991, Karachi).

Muhammad Ali Jinnah instituted Urdu as Pakistan's national language in 1948. As Urdu-speakers, most *Mohajirs* had a distinct advantage over their compatriots, especially in the Civil Service where Urdu became the official language. Punjabis were also favoured since their language is not dissimilar to Urdu, and there has always been a tradition of using Urdu in educated and literary circles in Punjab. Bengalis, meanwhile, were perhaps the most disadvantaged, since their language was the furthest removed from Urdu of all the regional languages in Pakistan. The issue became an explosive one in East

Pakistan from the day of Independence, with Jinnah and other politicians, such as Khwaja Nazimuddin (Prime Minister 1951-53), repeatedly stressing that there could be no compromise on the matter of Urdu's official status (Ziring, 1971, p.112).

Urdu remains as the single national language today, with observers such as A.S Ahmed reiterating its potential as a symbol of "national identity" (A.S. Ahmed, 1989a, p.67). However, while Urdu newspapers may have the highest circulation of all newspapers in Pakistan (Memon, 1983, p.106), only 17.9% of the population of ten year-olds and above was recorded as literate in the language in 1981 (Government of Pakistan, 1987, Economic Survey 1985-86, p.17), and only 7.6% of households are "Urdu-speaking" (Government of Pakistan, 1990a, Pakistan Statistical Yearbook, p.66). (In a sense, of course, this problem can be seen as a general one of education and literacy as much as one of the choice of language, since Urdu is the medium of instruction at government schools in Pakistan).

Mohajirs have often reacted violently to efforts to diminish or alter the status of Urdu in Pakistan. The most striking example of this occurred when the Language Bill of July 1972, moved in the Sindh Provincial Assembly, instituted Sindhi as a joint official language with Urdu in the province. The Bill was immediately followed by an episode of serious civil unrest in Karachi, which effectively paralysed the city for a few days and necessitated a State of Emergency to be imposed there. The rioters claimed to be reacting to a discriminatory attack on the

Mohajir community, and were mobilised behind such slogans as the banner headline on the front page of the leading Urdu daily newspaper "*Jang*":

"Urdu ka janaza hay,
zara dhoom sey nikley!"

[This is the funeral of Urdu,
announce the funeral-procession!]

(*Jang*, 8 July 1972, Karachi [author's translation])

Once again, identification of the *Mohajirs* with the role of Urdu in the state machinery of Pakistan was invoked in the affair, as groups such as the "Karachi Citizens' Committee" declared that Z.A Bhutto was "defying the wishes of the *Quaid-i Azam*" in instituting the Bill (*Dawn*, 8 July 1972, Karachi). On 15 July, Bhutto announced that a new ordinance was being incorporated into the Bill, whereby discrimination against Urdu-speakers on the grounds of language in the public sector in Sindh would be prohibited for a grace-period of twelve years (*Dawn*, 16 July 1972, Karachi). The announcement finally brought the disturbances in urban Sindh to an end. Interestingly, Bhutto also underlined the Sindhi position on the matter, saying that while he had made accommodations for the Urdu lobby, the Bill had been democratically passed and Bhutto "could not betray his own land" (*Dawn*, 16 July, 1972). "Land" here

clearly means Sindh, and the statement thus reflects the importance of the Sindhi language to the Sindhi's sense of identity.

Historical foundations

In the following chapter I present a chronology of political mobilisations by the *Mohajir* movement in Sindh. I will argue that the first Urdu-speaking political leader openly to espouse a contemporary *Mohajir* identity in Sindh was Mahmud-ul Haq Usmani, who failed to mobilise the population of urban Sindh around this concept in the national elections of December 1970. It is interesting that many of the details of *Mohajir* identity that Usmani proposed were later adopted by the leaders of the MQM. One of the most important of these details was a selective view of Muslim political mobilisation before the Partition of India. Writing in 1987, Usmani conveyed this view in the following terms:

"That the Pakistan movement received its strength primarily from the impending fear of the majority community rather than the love of Islam as a way of life is evident from the fact that the movement had its focal centre not in the Muslim majority areas but in those areas where Muslims were in a clear minority."

(Dawn, 27 May 1987, Karachi).

This statement suggests that it was the Urdu-speaking Muslims of such areas as United and Central Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh) who showed a greater longing for Pakistan than those who eventually fell within its borders. We have seen in Chapter 2 that the results of pre-Independence elections give some credence to this theory, especially those of 1937, although it is important to note that the electorates were very small at this time because of property and other restrictions on voting.

The important point for contemporary Sindh is that the leaders of the MQM consciously link *Mohajirs* with the Muslims of central northern Indian provinces, and thus implicitly suggest that today's Urdu-speakers are still more "pro-Pakistan" than their Sindhi contemporaries. The link between the *Mohajirs* of contemporary Sindh and the Muslims of the provinces of northern India before Independence, was conveyed to me by the Secretary of the MQM, Azim Ahmed Tariq, in the following terms:

"Pakistan history involves the minority provinces of India, where the Muslims overcame a great struggle to create the country. UP [United Provinces], Aligarh etc. were the main centres of activity."

(*interview*, 6 February 1991, Karachi).

Similarly, the leader of the *Mohajir Ittehad Tehrik* [Mohajir United Movement; a small rival group to the MQM], Dr. Saleem Haider, expressed such a sentiment when he said: "other Pakistanis do not care for other Indian Muslims [now left in India] ... [but] Indian Muslims helped us get Independence!" (interview, 11 February 1991, Karachi).

The matter is hotly disputed by Sindhi nationalists and intellectuals, who point out that the Sindh Muslim League, under G.M. Syed, was the first League in India to formally adopt a Pakistan Resolution in 1938 (Syed, 1949, p.202). However, as we have seen, it was the intellectuals of the United Provinces, and notably those of the Aligarh school, that formed the most crucial element of the All India Muslim League and who directed a majority of its sessions.

A second controversial element in the historical construction of a *Mohajir* identity is the suggestion that all migrants from India made great sacrifices for Pakistan. Azim Ahmed Tariq can again comment on this matter:

"When our children apply for education they are asked where their parents come from ... in professional institutions also. We thought we had given such sacrifices ... Two million were killed in the Partition - this memory returned to us"

(interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

The boundaries between those original migrants and the current leadership of the MQM (who were all born in Pakistan after 1947), are thus blurred by the use of the term "we". In this way, the sacrifices of migration can be assumed by all *Mohajirs*. Similarly, in an interview with "Dawn" in October 1990, Altaf Hussain declared, "Let me remind you that our elders laid down their lives for the creation of this country and now it is our turn to make it strong and prosperous." (Dawn, 16 October 1990, Karachi). Here again, a direct line is drawn between the MQM, modern *Mohajirs*, and all those post-Partition migrants who left India in an atmosphere of communal violence.

For our purposes, however, it is instructive to draw a distinction between the situations compelling various groups of Muslim migrants to leave India. Of course, many of those migrants are still living in Pakistan and can offer personal insights. Professor Karrar Husain, a prominent academic in Karachi and former Governor of Quetta University, moved from Meerut College near Delhi after Partition, to Karachi, where he stayed with friends among previous migrants before finding a job and a home (interview, 13 January 1991, Karachi). The Professor claims there was no communal violence near his home at the time, and that he decided to migrate solely because he believed he would be discriminated against as a Muslim in the new India (ibid). Similarly, an elderly *Mohajir* woman described the story behind her family's post-Partition migration thus:

"We came from Bijnoor in U.P and came out of pride ...

The train journey was incredible. Sometimes there would be attacks on carriages, but mostly people were very kind, showering us with food. We had so many boiled eggs by the time we arrived!"

(interview, 16 January 1991, Karachi).

Again the declared motivation was not communal violence, but "pride" in wanting to be a part of the new Muslim state. Furthermore, some Indian Civil Service officers were transferred to Karachi with their families for work, after being given the choice of which of the two new States to serve. Braibanti recognises that it is impossible to determine exactly how many migrated, but by the mid 1960s it is likely that up to 20% of Pakistan's Federal Civil Service officers had transferred from India (Braibanti, 1966, p.267).

The 1951 Census of Pakistan used the term "*muhajir*", and defined it for the enumerators as follows:

"A *muhajir* is a person who has moved into Pakistan as a result of partition or for fear of disturbances connected therewith ... many immigrants did not make that claim, particularly those who were returning to their province of birth, or whose move was not connected with partition."

(Census of Pakistan 1951, Vol.VI, p.19,36)

Thus, in official terms, a *Mohajir* was defined as a migrant moving through Partition-related disturbances or "fear". In this way, "economic migrants", particularly those who decided to join Pakistan some years after Independence, were not *Mohajirs* according to official definitions. This refers to some 1.1 million migrants who moved to West Pakistan between 1951 and 1961; over 16% of the total migration to the western wing between Independence and 1961 (Census of Pakistan 1961, Vol.III, Table 9, pp.302-3). Indeed, by the time of the 1961 Census, the term *Mohajir* was no longer used to refer to migrants from India.

Interestingly, the official definition also suggests that the migrants from East Punjab, who were largely motivated by communal violence in moving into Pakistan, were more accurately termed *Mohajirs* than those who migrated from relatively more peaceful areas. This fact is conveniently neglected in the MQM's construction of a *Mohajir* identity in Sindh, which refers specifically to Urdu-speakers in Sindh and not generally to former East Punjabis.

It seems that communal violence was not as serious in U.P and many other northern Indian regions (from where many Sindh *Mohajirs* originated; see Table 4.4) as was the case in Punjab. This is not to say that there was no communal violence in U.P. Before Partition the province had experienced serious episodes of blood-letting and communal rioting. However, by 1947 the momentum of violence had slackened there and many

TABLE 4.4: Origins of Indian migrants to Sindh and Punjab, 1961

No. of persons born in Indian region residing in		
<u>Region of Origin</u>	<u>Sindh</u>	<u>Punjab</u>
United Provinces (and states)	367,456	77,705
Bihar, Orissa, Nepal, Sikkim and states	4,444	386
W.Bengal, Assam and states	49,316	12,433
Coorg, Madras and states, Mysore, Andeman and Nicobar islands	58,029	8,249
Bombay, Baroda, Junagadh, Munawar, West Indian states	344,943	24,398
Central Provinces, Hyderabad, Bhopal and Central India	106,174	46,264
East Punjab, Ajmer, Delhi, Rajputana and states	454,125	3,979,008
TOTALS	1,384,487	4,148,443

Source: Census of Pakistan 1961, Vol.3, West Pakistan, Karachi, Table 9.

Muslims who decided to migrate at that time did so either through a considered view of their economic prospects, or because of a wish to be part of the newly-achieved Muslim State.

In Punjab and Bihar, these motives for migration were overshadowed by the communal violence that broke out between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, which forced communities to try and move to where they might be safer. The identification with sacrifice for Pakistan would thus apply more readily to Punjab than to Sindh, yet it is in the latter where the perception has most often been raised. As Mohammad Waseem points out:

"It is indeed peculiar to hear stories of sacrifice projected from the MQM platform, which pale in the face of carnage which was let loose in Punjab. One hears less from the migrants from East Punjab about their 'sacrifices'."

(Dawn, 28 June 1990, Karachi).

It is thought that up to one million Muslims died in immediate post-Partition violence (ibid). Precise figures concerning refugee movements and casualties will probably never be available, yet it is important to differentiate between the conditions associated with migrants to Sindh and to Punjab. As Table 4.4 and Figure 4.1 show, Sindh received a sizeable proportion of migrants from the killing fields of Punjab.

Indeed, Census data such as that portrayed in Table 4.4, suggests that East Punjabi migrants were the largest single group of new arrivals in Sindh after Partition and up to 1961. However, the number of migrants entering Sindh from the central-northern provinces of India was not far short of those arriving from Punjab, while in West Punjab the vast majority of new arrivals were from East Punjab. Thus, aside from the migrants who travelled first through Punjab and then on to Sindh, the people joining Sindh from the Central Provinces would probably not have experienced the sort of violence that was being committed in Punjab.

With sacrifice assumed as a part of a *Mohajir* identity (as many of the MQM statements suggest), the obvious next step rhetorically is to claim that *Mohajirs* have somehow invested more in Pakistan than other communities and are thus "more Pakistani". On this matter we can again refer to Azim Tariq, who declared in a speech delivered on the aftermath of an MQM anti-government "Black Day" strike in Karachi, that, "Those who claim to be living here for 5,000 years did not offer any sacrifice for this land." (Dawn, 27 May 1989, Karachi). Remembering that G.M Syed often claims the Sindhi identity to be 5000 years old (interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi), it is clear to whom Tariq's statement is addressed.

Many Sindhis react angrily to the suggestion that they are somehow "less Pakistani" than the *Mohajirs*. Hameed Haroon, the Sindhi owner of the Dawn Group of newspapers, points out that before the MQM emerged the *Mohajirs* tended to support groups such as *Jamaat-i Islami*, which openly sided with non-democratic military regimes (interview, 9

February 1991, Karachi). In this sense *Mohajirs* were politically "retrogressive not progressive" (ibid). Meanwhile, the Sindh electorale has mostly sided with the PPP - a nominally democratic party with a national political agenda. Haroon stresses the importance of historical myth and perception in the construction of identities, and the manner in which this can "hide" certain other processes and influences. In this he is referring specifically to the antagonistic effect on the mood of *Mohajirs* that militant Sindh nationalism has exerted (ibid).

The MQM claims not only that the Sindh nationalists have failed to make any sacrifice for Pakistan, but that they are now working for the State's disintegration. Altaf Hussain declared in 1989 that he was fighting the *Sindhudesh* movement [the proposed name of an independent Sindh], and that *Mohajirs* were "struggling for the solidarity of Pakistan" (Dawn, 1 October 1989, Karachi). The link between *Mohajirs* and an identification with Pakistan can clearly be seen in parts of Orangi for example, where green Pakistani flags flutter above houses on the same flagpoles as those of the MQM (in a manner that is rare in non-*Mohajir* districts). The message conveyed is clearly that the MQM is at one with the State of Pakistan. Symbolism concerning loyalty to Pakistan is a powerful weapon in politics. Benazir Bhutto claims that Altaf Hussain is facing a pending charge of "flag-burning" (of a Pakistan flag) in the grounds of the *Mazar-i Quaid-i Azam* [Jinnah's tomb in Karachi] (interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi). Whatever the veracity of this incident, the charge is a loaded one because it focusses on Altaf's own claims to a greater patriotism for Pakistan.

Biharis

Loyalty to the State of Pakistan also links a *Mohajir* identity to a powerful sub-group of Urdu-speakers, the *Biharis*. The name originated in East Pakistan, where non-Bengali post-Partition migrants were referred to *en masse* as *Biharis*, since many had originated from the Urdu/Hindi-speaking province of Bihar. These people were, in a sense, the *Mohajirs* of East Pakistan.

If physical and cultural dislocation are elements of *Mohajir* identity, then *Biharis* are probably the most dislocated of all. The community formed a bloc of approximately 490,000 Muslim refugees who entered East Pakistan up to 1951 (Tayyeb, 1966, pp.169-71), again largely motivated by the dangers associated with communal genocide (as in Punjab). Like *Mohajirs* in West Pakistan, the *Biharis* identified with the "national" culture of Pakistan and differentiated themselves from the Bengali majority by virtue of speaking Urdu/Hindi. Friction between host and migrant was more immediate and more explosive in East Pakistan, however, and major *Bihari*-Bengali riots emerged in the early 1950s (O'Donnell, 1984, p.50). By the time of the imposition of Martial Law in East Pakistan in 1970, many *Biharis* were openly siding with the Pakistan army, and some formed groups of militant *razakars* (civilian militia) which aimed to hamper the actions of Bengali separatists (ibid, p.98).

The stance of the *Biharis* over the secession of East Pakistan earned them pariah status with the Bengali majority community following

the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. After the war, several thousand *Biharis* were living in camps, disenfranchised. Negotiations to move the refugees to Pakistan repeatedly stalled. In Karachi, meanwhile, there were reports that a camp of 10,000 *Biharis* were "living in circumstances allegedly worse than their compatriots in Bangladesh." (The Economist, 13 May 1972, p.15). By the 1980s, as will be demonstrated in the following chapter, the MQM was using the issue of the repatriation to Pakistan of 250,000 still "stranded" *Biharis* (whom the Movement refers to as "Pakistanis living abroad") as a principal political demand.

Notwithstanding these problems, many *Biharis* did manage to enter Sindh after 1971, and Karachi in particular. Here they have largely joined in supporting the MQM, which sometimes welcomed them with rehabilitation camps and projects. The largest concentration of *Biharis* is in Orangi, where they form a component of some 650,000 *Mohajirs* (Verheijen, 1990, p.24). The prominent banker Zia Shafi Khan (interview, 15 January 1991, Karachi) observed that the *Biharis* are a particularly "vocal" element of the *Mohajir* community. Benazir Bhutto goes further, and links the community with a wave of illegal immigration and militancy, explaining: "Through the seventies, and particularly from 1977, a new mercenary breed came in. They are violent, they have nothing but scorn for their elders" (interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi).

The PPP leader also claims that one million illegal immigrants have joined Karachi from Bangladesh between 1985 and 1990 (quoting an unspecified "Karachi University study"; *ibid*). Ironically, many of these immigrants are Bengalis, who also have become concentrated in parts of

Orangi. Poor and often without legal residency, such immigrants often get sucked into the bottom of the socio-economic pile where they find work as domestic servants or prostitutes (Newsline, December 1990, Karachi, p.94). Given this background, it is perhaps not surprising that many *Biharis* are active supporters of the politics of the MQM.

The myth of oppression

I will show in Chapter 5 that a growing perception of *Mohajir* community marginalisation in urban Sindh fed into the emergence of the *Mohajir* movement in the late 1970s. In a sense, the bedrock of the All Pakistan *Mohajir* Students Organisation (APMSO) was the everyday issue of places within colleges in the cities and opportunities for subsequent employment. The MQM similarly focussed on access to employment in its rhetoric and documents, and this, no doubt, attracted the semi-educated industrial and commercial workers of the city who have formed the bedrock of the Movement's support. In terms of party rhetoric, these matters have certainly been accorded more attention than religious or cultural factors.

In economic terms, a gradual reduction in the influence of *Mohajirs* began shortly after Independence, but it is important to set this process in the appropriate context. The point is that as harbingers of the Muslim League, which formed the first national government, and as a major component of the first federal bureaucracy (some of which transferred from India), many Muslims from central-northern India came

to Pakistan as members of a dominant community. In 1948, 55.6% of the new probationers in the elite Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) had come from parts of northern India excluding any of the Pakistan provinces or East Punjab. This compares with just 5.6% from East Pakistan, for example (Government of Pakistan, 1965, Annual Reports of the Pakistan Public Service Commission 1948-64, Table 8). It is claimed that at Partition there was just one Sindhi Indian Civil Service officer (interview with journalist and former All-India Muslim Students Federation leader, 31 January 1991, Karachi). The Sindhi lawyer Siraj-ul Haq claims that even by the late 1950s, of 32 federal secretaries in Pakistan, 19 were *Mohajirs* (interview, 13 February 1991, Karachi). Furthermore, every district officer in Sindh at this time was a non-Sindhi, and a substantial number were *Mohajirs* (interview with Civil Service officer, 10 February 1991, Karachi).

Throughout the 1950s, however, the growing preponderance of Punjabis in government entailed a diminution in the presence of *Mohajirs* in the corridors of central power. By 1963, when Ayub Khan was President, Punjabis had moved from just under 39% of the CSP intake in 1948 to over 45% (Annual Reports, *ibid*). By this time, the continuing process of land compensation for *Mohajirs* under Martial Law Regulation 84 had uncovered the fact that most of the verbal affidavits for land were fraudulent (interview with Justice Dorab Patel, 12 January 1991, Karachi). This is known to have angered Ayub Khan considerably (interview with Civil Service officer, 10 February 1991, *ibid*). The federal capital had also been moved to Punjab and it soon became

apparent that Ayub wished to shift the balance of power further away from *Mohajirs*. In 1959 a Presidential Order heralded the sacking of 37 senior civil servants, most of whom were *Mohajirs* (Burki, 1980, p.42). In the industrial sector, also, the Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation, an increasingly Punjab and Pakhtun-dominated agency, was becoming the major owner and investor in Pakistan's industry. This further diluted the national powers of *Mohajirs* as an economic community.

The Quota System

In psychological terms, however, it appears to be the legislation of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's government (1971-77) that institutionalised a marginalisation of *Mohajir* influence in the most important arms of the state. The lynch-pins of this were the Language Bill of July 1972, and the Civil Service reforms and Quota System of 1973. The latter designated quotas for federal government employment based on ascribed provincial population ratios. Within each Province there were extra arrangements to address inequalities across districts. Quotas on employment had been in place in the public sector in Pakistan since 1949, but the Z.A Bhutto government was faced with the task of redesigning the system after the breakaway of East Pakistan. By August 1973, the current system was established, the details of which are shown in Table 4.5.

TABLE 4.5: The quota system in public sector employment

<u>Area of domicile</u>	<u>Quota (%)</u>
Punjab/Islamabad	50.0
NWFP	11.5
Rural Sindh	11.4
Urban Sindh	7.6
Northern areas/FATA	4.0
Baluchistan	3.5
Azad Kashmir	2.0
<i>Merit</i>	10.0

Source: Government of Pakistan, Establishment Division, memo. no. F 8/9/72 (TRV), 31 August 1973, Islamabad.

Most importantly for the *Mohajirs*, the special arrangements in Sindh involved a 60/40% split of the overall provincial quota of 19% between rural and urban areas respectively (the latter defined as cities over 100,000 in population in 1973, which means Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur). The quotas were to apply to federal government employment, and to places in the federal Quaid-i Azam University in Islamabad. Other educational institutions can enforce their own specific systems (for example, since 1982, Dow Medical College in Karachi can only take

students with a Karachi domicile; Dawn, 2 February 1982, Karachi). Enforcement of such quotas is based on "domicile certificates", an example of a questionnaire for which is shown in Appendix 4. The importance of such documents has led to a vibrant trade in forgeries.

The quotas meant that *Mohajirs* living in Sindh's major cities (the great majority of the community) could contest a 7.6% quota of federal government jobs (in addition to 10% nationally reserved for an open merit competition).

We are concerned here with the real and perceived effects of such measures on the *Mohajir* community. The Quota System in Sindh was intended to give an extra boost to rural Sindhis, whose limited access to educational facilities put them at a distinct disadvantage when competing with urbanites for jobs and education in the state sector. Unfortunately, the measures could also be interpreted as a snub to the *Mohajirs*, not least because the population of three largest cities in Sindh is believed to have far exceeded 7.6% of the national total in and after 1973 (unofficial estimates in the early 1990s put the population of Karachi alone at around 9% of the national population). MQM secretary Azim Tariq believes that:

"These two things [Language Bill and Quota System] sparked it all off in the province. *Mohajirs* were dealt a serious blow. Questions came in every mind; why? Why rural/urban discrimination in Sindh?"

(interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

As far as the federal bureaucracy is concerned, the measures seem to have "worked". While the total employment of officers domiciled in urban Sindh has declined by 8.4% between 1973 and 1983, the number of officers domiciled in rural Sindh has increased by over three times (Government of Pakistan, 1984, Federal Government Civil Servants Census Report, January 1983, Islamabad). The key fact, however, is that in 1983 the number of officers from urban Sindh, at 23,370, was still three times greater than the number from rural Sindh (ibid).

Frustration also exists among *Mohajir* students who believe that achieving places in institutions of higher education has become increasingly difficult. One recent Karachi graduate told me that:

"When we got qualified in a subject, say medicine, and found we could not get a job as a doctor, that was it. What could we do? Shine shoes on the roadside? ... This was made worse because of domicile certificates ... If you have good 'A' levels but you don't get into Karachi University that's it. No other chances."

(discussion with *Mohajir* student, 15 February 1991, Karachi).

The domicile controversy also involves a trade in forged documentation that supposedly allows students from outside urban Sindh to gain access

to places in colleges reserved for urban-domiciled citizens. The racketeering has been conducted for years by militant ethnic student organisations who set up stalls at admissions fairs processing domicile applications. This was the climate in which the All Pakistan *Mohajir* Students Organisation (APMSO) was encouraged to grow in Karachi in 1978. The MQM also openly alleges that outsiders are stealing college places and government jobs in urban Sindh "under the cover of domicile certificates" (MQM, *Mohajir Qaumi Movement?*, undated fly-sheet, Karachi).

The problem with domicile certificates, as Appendix 4 shows, is that they "betray" the ethnic community of *Mohajirs* by recording the place of birth of the father. In a sense, they act as an "ethnic passport". Within the *Mohajir* community at more educated levels (where the battle for government jobs and higher education takes place) there clearly exists a perception that employers in the 1970s would ask questions about the origins of parents, and would act accordingly in detriment to *Mohajirs* (interview with Nadeem Nusrat, 13 March 1991, Karachi). This fact was even conceded by a Sindhi erstwhile journalist (dismissed under General Zia and now a lawyer), who claimed "the Sindhis did act stupidly, asking those questions" (interview, 13 February 1991, Karachi). The extent of this discriminatory process is impossible to determine now. The important point is that it is a part of a wider *Mohajir* mythology. MQM chief Altaf Hussain articulated this view when he claimed that the Movement is a "*Mazloom Qaumi Movement*" [national movement of "the oppressed"]; (Star, 16 August 1990, Karachi).

The irony of the "oppression" scenario projected by some *Mohajirs* is that, relative to some others in Pakistan, the community began life in the State in a strong position, equalled only by the Punjabis. Just a few miles from the cities of Karachi or Hyderabad where the MQM is based, far more economically and politically "oppressed" conditions than most urbanites experience can be found among the Sindhis. The situation is one echoed in many societies, where increasing competition for limited resources becomes orchestrated in the sphere of ethnic politics, particularly when some form of state codification of community quotas is in operation. In India, Washbrook has observed a similar relationship between state intervention in the public sector labour market, and persistent "ethnic" politics (Washbrook, 1989, p.180). The danger is that once these perceptions take root and are propagated by such agencies as the MQM, they often distort the "realities" of relative opportunities on the ground, and hamper the opportunity for a broad-based ideological politics across the population. A rhetoric of discrimination can matter more for political mobilisations around state resources than the "facts" of ethnic or community based achievements and representations.

***Mohajir* identity and class**

Although ethnic politics can often deny the development of broad-based class politics, within ethnic communities there is often a class stratification, and this applies also to the *Mohajirs*. The *Mohajir*

community ranges from *katchi abadi* dwellers, through lower middle-class workers, to high-income groups. The true power-base of the *Mohajir* movement is in the middle and lower income bands which form the bulk of the population of Karachi, and sizeable communities in Hyderabad and Sukkur.⁹ It is to these people that the MQM addresses itself quite specifically. Chapter 6 deals more extensively with who the *Mohajirs* are (or are said to be) in Karachi, and how they relate to various agencies of the local state. In the present context Table 4.6 shows a selection of *Mohajir* areas in Karachi and their likely income levels.

At 1992 rates, Rs.1,000 was approximately US\$50, and it should be noted that the average household size of the *katchi abadis* in Karachi is around seven people (*discussion* with Pervin Rehman of Orangi Pilot Project, 27 January 1992, Karachi). Thus, the socio-economic position of these *Mohajirs* is very different from middle or upper income *Mohajirs*. For purposes of comparison, the average monthly income in January 1992 of an office clerk with matriculation-level education would be around Rs.2,000 (US\$100), and a graduate assistant engineer around Rs.5,000 (US\$250).

An important question confronting communities that wish to achieve "subnationality" recognition, is whether such class differences can be subsumed within the national or subnational identity, and whether all strata of the community recognise themselves as members of the community. The feasibility of such vertical community unity depends on the use in nationalism of inclusive cultural or historic "stories". These

TABLE 4.6: Income levels of selected Mohajir districts in Karachi

<u>District</u>	<u>Mohajir</u> <u>households(%)</u>	<u>Ave. monthly</u> <u>household inc. (Rs)</u>
Chiragh Colony KA (Landhi)	83.7	750 - 1,000 (1988)
Karachi Airport Colony KA	89.1	750 - 2,000 (1988)
Orangi*	65.0	2,000 (1989)

Sources: Figures supplied by Sindh Katchi Abadis Authority, February 1992, except for

** - OPP/A.M.J Verheijen, January 1990, p.10.*

stories help to form vertical bands in society, while economic factors divide the population between horizontal strata which cut across "ethnic" and nationalist community definitions. Thus, Germany's Third Reich in the 1930s stressed the rhetoric of "*Ein Volk*" [one people], which united all Germans but separated them from neighbouring communities (Gellner, 1983, p.14).

In these terms, religion, language, or a collective historical memory can unite people without raising questions of economic differences. However, when the community identity becomes articulated by

a particular sub-nationalist party, such as the MQM, the unity of the community also depends on the political and economic programme of that party - in a sense, what the party "has to offer" its people when they rally behind an ethnic flag. For example, higher-income capital or land-owning citizens in a community could be alienated by socialist or communist party-style policies that aimed to redistribute economic power and property. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the 1990s have opened with a violent schism between sections of MQM supporters. The split has revolved around how far the party should broaden its appeal across ethnic and socio-economic boundaries.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS

Identity in Sindh involves a complex combination of the "multiple overlapping components" that Daniel Bell (Bell, 1975, p.156) believes are the essence of ethnicity. Like the Census categories in former Yugoslavia, community groups in Sindh encompass ethnic, linguistic and religious groupings. The demands made by the leadership of these groups vary from winning a simple recognition of community status, to the gaining of community autonomy or even Independence, as is demanded by certain elements of the Sindhi nationalist movement.

Many of the "ethnic" identities in Sindh, to the list of which the MQM leadership has sought to add the *Mohajirs*, are well-established and broadly recognised communities with long histories and apparently sound socio-cultural foundations. This is true of the Pakhtuns, about

whom Barth modelled a primordialist theory of ethnicity (Barth, 1969), and the Baluchis, about whom Gankovsky has written in similar terms (Gankovsky, 1982). It is also true in many respects of the Sindhis, which is a point of crucial significance in relation to the formation of a *Mohajir* identity in Sindh.

Yet even within these seemingly hard-and-fast ethnic categories, some degree of confusion over the exact boundaries of group identities emerges. Sindhi society seems to sometimes encompass certain Baluchis living in the Province, even when they speak Baluchi in their own homes (this is the view of Sindhi nationalist Hamida Khuhro, at least). Similarly, some *Mohajirs*, who the MQM and other Urdu-speaking leaders have sought to distinguish from Sindhis, are the product of mixed parentage and display features of both Sindhi and *Mohajir* society. Ahmed Rashid (Friday Times, 3-9 January 1991, Lahore) estimates that there are some 200,000 such people in the city of Hyderabad alone, upon whom great pressure has been brought to bear from all sides of the ethnic divide in the province. Clearly for these people, there can be no definitive ethnic "givens".

I have shown that all the major community identities in Sindh display some paradoxical features in their definition, but in many ways *Mohajir* identity seems particularly difficult to define. For a start, it is a very new identity in Sindh. The term was first used in the Province around the time of Partition, when migrants and refugees arrived from India. However, at this time the term was used with Islamic connotations, and referred, in official circles at least, to those who

had been compelled to move by religious persecution. Controversy and resentment quickly arose in Sindh over the motives of later migrants who came to seek better economic opportunities. This controversy heightened as it became apparent that the system of compensation for abandoned property in India was being abused by many of the new settlers in Sindh.

Yet the term *Mohajir*, particularly as used by the MQM (as I will show in the next chapter), refers specifically to the second or third generations of migrant-offspring who were born and have lived in Sindh for years. *Mohajir* identity further seems to address Urdu-speakers with a heritage in central-northern India, rather than the descendants of Punjabi migrants who formed the largest group of migrants in both Sindh and Punjab. This is the first aspect in which the identity is a problematical one. The second involves a familiar device of ethnic and nationalist constructions; that of a selective use of history. In this manner, *Mohajir* identity-construction is not dissimilar from that of Sindhī identity, which also blurs the boundaries between ancient Indus civilizations and the people who currently live beside the Indus River.

The purpose of a selective use of history in both cases is to arrogate virtues for each respective community. In the case of the Sindhīs, the link to a prehistoric civilization suggests a propensity for technological and societal advancement that predates developments in neighbouring communities. In the case of the *Mohajirs* the motives behind a selective use of history are not dissimilar, in that a certain

superiority of the community is implied by an emphasis on such factors as a beautiful language and personal sacrifice for Pakistan.

However, the way in which pre-Independence history is selectively used by the *Mohajir* leadership implies a different relationship to the State in Pakistan than is intended by Sindhi nationalists. The elements of cultural arrogance that many *Mohajir* leaders have promoted are intended to emphasise a particularly strong link to the foundations of the State of Pakistan. In a sense, *Mohajir* leaders have suggested that their people are "more Pakistani" than those around them. In this way, the *Biharis* have fallen easily under the umbrella of the *Mohajir* movement, since many of them actively supported Pakistan at a time when the State was breaking up, often at great personal danger. This is certainly the view of some Sindhi nationalists, and particularly G.M Syed who told me that he thought Pakistan was a "fraud" (interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi). Syed and his Sindhi nationalist colleagues are implying that Pakistan was only built as a coherent State through a deception and subordination of its constituent communities. We can see here the fundamental differences in "national vision" between the political leaders of the two major communities in Sindh province.

This difference in political outlook is crucial to the development of a contemporary *Mohajir* identity in Sindh. The rhetoric of the MQM as to how *Mohajir* identity is constructed will be discussed further in the following chapter, but I would argue here that the actions and words of local non-*Mohajirs* have been especially important to the

progress made by the *Mohajir* movement. Such processes of "ethnic rift" eventually gain their own momentum. In his theory of pluralist society, M.G.Smith postulated that multiethnic societies have a greater tendency for local disputes rapidly to become general inter-ethnic schisms (M.G. Smith, 1969, pp.438-9). Events such as "the Hyderabad massacre" of 1988 have shown this to be the case in Sindh.

Yet it is not just violence that has induced a sense of alienation from Sindhis among the *Mohajir* community. Certain Sindhi leaders have also promoted more subtle factors to distance Sindhis from *Mohajirs*. One of the most important factors is a bond to "land". "You can't become a nation on someone else's land" claims Mumtaz Bhutto of the SNF (interview, 21 June 1991, London). Sentiments such as these among the Sindhi leadership have served only to alienate non-Sindhis. I have shown that, in the 1970s, when central government was headed by a charismatic and powerful Sindhi, the *Mohajirs* underwent some important changes. At this time, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto more than once referred to his "people" and his "land" as Sindhis and Sindh. Given the particular relationship of the Urdu-speaking community to the central state, as I have described it, such rhetoric could only have accelerated a sense of alienation within Sindh among the *Mohajirs*.

The *Mohajir* movement has also been encouraged by economic factors. It can be argued that economic tensions in the urban areas are necessarily an important area for MQM campaigning, and in addressing these tensions the Movement draws on a socio-cultural rhetoric for legitimisation. On the one hand, administrative processes are central to

this factor. Washbrook claims that India's system of state-defined "communities" has encouraged ethnic mobilisation (Washbrook, 1989, p.180). Similarly, in Pakistan, it was the Bhutto period in the 1970s, which codified "nationalities" in relation to access to federal government employment, when the roots of the contemporary *Mohajir* movement were sown. Secondly, the nature of politics in Pakistan is such that emotive community identifications are powerful techniques for mobilising groups to chase limited resources. By the end of the 1970s, the national Islamic party *Jamaat-i Islami* was facing a crisis of confidence among its potential electorate in Sindh's cities. This was because it had failed to address the economic problems of the young working-class population of Sindh's cities, and had freely allied with military regimes such as that of Ayub Khan. A void was created into which a newly redefined concept of ethnic politics has stepped.

In these terms, the construction of a *Mohajir* identity must be closely linked with the question of political leadership. From this perspective, such an identity would be seen less as a spontaneous movement of oppressed people rising "from below", and more as a highly powerful and effective political force mobilised by Altaf Hussain and his colleagues in the mid-1980s. The justifications for such a view are many. Firstly, I will show later that the political arena into which Altaf Hussain stepped was that of a failed attempt at constructing a new political *Mohajir* identity in the early 1970s. Some of the specific policies of this earlier movement were more radical than those later followed by the MQM, but the basic concept of a contemporary *Mohajir*

identity based loosely on such factors as the Urdu language were much the same. This earlier movement won just a handful of votes in the elections of 1970.

The nature of political leadership and the policies that it adopts relate principally to the way in which the battle for state control is waged. *Jamaat-i Islami* had offered some access to representation and power through allying with the military regimes. In the first years of the Zia-ul Haq administration, *Jamaat* was the only political party granted the freedom to operate as such by the General, and acted as a close advisor to government. Yet by 1984, the party had become alienated by Zia's lack of substantial progress on the institutionalisation of Islam, and even by the lack of democracy. Meanwhile, ethnic pressure-groups were emerging, particularly in the college and university campuses where Altaf Hussain was launching the MQM. We can now turn to a more detailed analysis of the development of *Mohajir* political mobilisation under the MQM.

FOOTNOTES:

1. BBC 2, 31 July 1992; "East - Held to Ransom"

2. Channel 4 (Barraclough Carey), 14 November 1990; "Despatches - Kingmaker of Karachi".

3. The "aide memoire" is a description of research (see appendix one), that introduces the main themes of discussion and the aims of research, to initiate the interview. In this case the description was handed to the respondent in cases where English could be read, while in the quoted example of Cantori and Benedict, the "aide memoire" was retained by the interviewer, and used as a reminder of questions to be asked.

4. The assistant was recruited through the "favours for friends" principle; a strong one in South Asia. In this case, a friend and former business associate of a family in London known to the author offered assistance willingly through having been recommended by his friends in London.

5. "*Jang*", "The News" and "Dawn", 22 January 1992, Karachi.

6. The Awami National Party emerged in 1986, under the Pakhtun nationalist Wali Khan, son of the famous Frontier leader of the early twentieth century, Abdul Ghaffar Khan. The party is nominally not a nationalist one, but is heavily supported by Pakhtuns to the exclusion of other communities.

7. The bulk of the Hindus in Sindh (45%; Herald, Election Special, October 1990, Karachi, p.59) live in the arid rural district of Tharparkar in the south-east, a district that borders Rajasthan and Kathiawar in India. Sindh as a whole houses some 95% of Pakistan's Hindus, totalling around 1.4 million (Herald, *ibid*).

8. The *Babri Masjid* [Babri mosque] in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, India, was the source of a dispute with Hindu groups led by the BJP, who claimed that the mosque was sited on the birthplace of the Hindu god Rama (an incarnation of Vishnu). Militant supporters of the BJP led an assault upon the mosque in December 1992, which saw it torn down by bare hands.

9. I would have liked to conduct more formal interviews with *Mohajirs* (and others) to see how they responded to the rhetoric of the MQM (and thus to establish the Movement's true bases of support). For various reasons, this was not feasible. I was able, however, to collect information on this issue from a large number of informal interviews and discussions and from talks with journalists, activists and others. It seems clear to me that the MQM has targeted what it calls lower middle-class *Mohajir* households for particular support, along with students and other "educated people" and that such people have been especially responsive to its economic and ethnic rhetorics.



FIGURE 5.1: APMSO banner, DJ College, Karachi

ماؤں بہنوں کے نام جیل سے الطاف حسین کا تیسرا خط

سنیٹرل جیل کراچی
۱۵ دسمبر ۱۹۷۴ء

پیارے ماؤں!

جیل کی آہنی سلاخوں کے پیچھے سے آپ کا بیٹا آپ کو سلام پیش کرتا ہے۔

پیارے ماؤں!

آپ نے میرے خط کے جواب میں جس محبت و شفقت سے جوابی خطوط بھیجے ہیں، انہیں پڑھ کر مجھے شدت سے احساس ہوتا ہے کہ میری مرحوم والدہ کی کمی کو آپ کی محبتوں نے بڑی حد تک پورا کر دیا ہے اور اب نہ جانے کیوں میں اپنی ماؤں کے خطوط کا جیل میں اسی بے چینی سے انتظار کرتا ہوں جس طرح کسی بیٹے کو اپنی سگی ماں کے خط کا انتظار رہتا ہے۔ آپ کے خطوط میں، میں نے اتنی چاہت، سچائی اور محبت پائی کہ اپنی ماؤں کے ڈھیر سائے خطوط پڑھ کر میں اپنے آنسوؤں پر قابو نہ رکھ سکا۔

محترم ماؤں!

اب مجھے جیل کی ذرہ برابر بھی پرواہ نہیں ہے کیوں کہ سینکڑوں، ہزاروں مائیں اپنے الطاف بیٹے کیلئے دعا گو رہتی ہیں۔

پیارے ماؤں!

آپ نے اخبارات میں پڑھ لیا ہو گا کہ میں نے حکومت کی ہر پیشکش کو ٹھکرا دیا ہے اور مہاجر قوم کا سودا نہیں کیا اور پھر آپ جیسی پیاری پیاری محبت کرنے والی اتنی ساری مائیں ہوں تو ان ماؤں کا بیٹا کس طرح سودا کر سکتا ہے۔؟

میرے ماؤں!۔ کیا میرا یہ فیصلہ درست تھا کہ میں نے حکومت سے صاف صاف کہہ دیا کہ جب تک پونے سڑھ کا ایک ایک مہاجر رہا نہیں ہو جائے اس وقت تک میں اپنے اکیلے کی رہائی کو ہرگز ہرگز قبول نہیں کروں گا۔؟

محترم ماؤں!

اب آپ کے خطوط پڑھ کر بہت زیادہ اپنائیت محسوس ہونے لگی ہے۔ تو دل چاہتا ہے کہ اپنی ماؤں سے اپنے دل کی باتیں کرتا رہوں اور خوب ساری باتیں کروں۔



FIGURE 5.3: *MQM mazloomiat ka sambal hay*

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I explained how contemporary *Mohajir* identity in Sindh differs from the identities of other groups in the Province with longer histories of community presence. I suggested that the difference lies not only in outward community features and characteristics such as language or socio-cultural heritage, but also in the relationship of the community to the state at its various levels.

The *Mohajirs* of Sindh have a declared affinity with the State of Pakistan, from which the community appears to feel isolated within its location in the Province of Sindh. This alienation is heightened by the stance of Sindhi nationalists towards the national state, which is largely antagonistic and irreconcilable. For Sindhi political leaders the most important state structure is Sindh itself. Their aim is to effect the secession of the Province as a new State in which Sindhis are dominant.

These socio-political relationships between communities and between a community and the state help to determine the processes of identity-construction and political mobilisation in a community. Clapham has suggested that the "Third World" state is characterised by what he calls "a structure of control" over political and administrative institutions inherited from the former colonial power (Clapham, 1985,

p.39), and that "where the state provides a source of power and wealth entirely disproportionate to that available from any other organised force within society, the quest for state power takes on a pathological dimension" (ibid, p.40).

In these terms, the political leaders of a community will determine their policy with reference to that community's particular relationship to the state. I have already argued that Altaf Hussain and his colleagues consciously - and rapidly - constructed a *Mohajir* identity at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s. Before this time, the few attempts at the same goal made by leaders such as Muzaffar Hussain had suggested that there was little support among the Urdu-speakers of Sindh for a political *Mohajir* identity. Thus, the MQM has consciously been the primary agent of the contemporary *Mohajir* movement in Sindh, and has largely promoted mythologies which underpin an emergent *Mohajir* identity.

The apparent weaknesses and paradoxes of the *Mohajir* identity in Sindh that I described in the previous chapter (in terms of its temporal inconsistency) might suggest that the MQM's "ethnic" agenda was merely a strategy for winning power. However, I have also suggested that there are valid urban economic foundations for some form of "community" among the *Mohajirs* of Sindh. The question facing this chapter is how the MQM has identified and built upon this sense of community in its mobilisation of a *Mohajir* identity, and how it has directed itself towards winning power for the community. Because of the community's relationship to the state in Pakistan, power has been sought at both the

provincial and national levels. In Section Three I will focus further on the micro-level of politics in the *Mohajir* movement, and examine how important the local state in urban Sindh has been to the MQM.

In this chapter I examine the nature and development of the MQM, encompassing the party's structure, rhetoric and leadership. To examine such a Movement it is sometimes useful to adopt the terminology of contemporary developing-world political studies. With reference to elements of the MQM such as the leadership of Altaf Hussain, who was at the helm of the Movement until late 1992, it is therefore necessary to discuss charisma, described by Clapham in wider developing world contexts (Clapham, 1985, p.46), in addition to clientalism, eclecticism and aspects of political "theatre". All of these concepts are essential to the story of the MQM.

As a single political agency which claims to represent the ethnic movement of the *Mohajirs*, the MQM represents a complex combination of "movement" and "party". In many ways the MQM has failed to present a coherent political programme, preferring to rely on ethnic or vague ideological rhetoric. In many respects, the Movement can be described as secular, democratic and economically "progressive" in style, and formed on the basis of protecting and promoting the Urdu-speaking community of urban Sindh. Yet its main policies varied between three distinct phases between 1984 and 1992, and generally have been eclectic and based largely on vague promises rather than on detailed plans. Proposed principles and aims have often been at variance with actions, and a controversial involvement in violence and intimidation has

alienated many potential supporters. The student-origins of the MQM have persisted in the form of the APMSO (now the "student wing" of the MQM), and have heavily influenced both the policies and structure of the Movement to date. Finally, by once presenting itself as an "ethnic" party, the MQM has defined a finite constituency beyond which it is proving difficult to expand. In many ways, the MQM presents the sort of complexity in Third World politics that Manor claims is making orthodox political theory there seem increasingly inappropriate (Manor, 1991, p.1). This complexity will be examined in detail, and with reference to examples from elsewhere in the developing world.

This chapter presents the story of the MQM in four main sections. The first section describes the methodology used in my research to analyse the MQM, and the principal sources of primary material. The second section presents a political history of the *Mohajir* movement, from the events and developments preceding the MQM, to the rise and fall of the MQM itself - a period spanning from the launch of the party in 1984 to its virtual collapse by 1993. In the third section, the policies and ideologies of the Movement over the eight years of its rise and fall are critically examined, while the following section looks at the MQM's internal structure, including its funding and organisation, and the role of the leader, Altaf Hussain. The concluding section of the chapter places the MQM and its politics in the wider context of "polities" and political movements in postcolonial developing countries.

5.2 METHODOLOGY

The sources of primary material used for analysing *Mohajir* political mobilisation in this research are principally the interviews, less formal discussions and press archives outlined in the previous chapter. In addition to such material, this chapter utilises further important sources of primary information. The first of these sources is electoral data from the Election Commission of Pakistan (Islamabad), the Provincial Election Authority (Karachi), and the press (various). Secondly, official party statements and documents, in Urdu and English, have been examined. Aside from such sources, use is made of various discussions and observations, such as attendance at a workers' rally addressed by Altaf Hussain (*Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital, Nazimabad, Karachi, 13 March 1991), discussions with well-wishers visiting Altaf Hussain in hospital (19 January 1991, and 13 March 1991, Karachi), and tours of observation in Karachi and Hyderabad.

The party documents principally concern those of the MQM and PPP. However, interviews and discussions were held with other political parties, as follows:

- *Mohajir Qaumi Movement* (MQM)
- *Mohajir Ittehad Tehrik* (MIT)
- Pakistan People's Party (PPP)
- National Democratic Party (NDP)
- *Islami Jamhoori Ittehad* (IJI)

- *Jamaat-i Islami*
- *Jiye Sindh*
- *Jiye Sindh Front* (Khuhro Group)
- Sindh National Front (SNF)
- *Qaumi Mahaz-e Azadi* (QMA)
- Pakistan Minority Front (PMF)

In the case of the MQM and PPP, discussions were held with various leaders and members. With many of the smaller parties, however, interviews were held principally with one leader, including Sirdar Mazari (NDP), Professor Ghafoor Ahmed (*Jamaat-i Islami*), Mumtaz Bhutto (SNF) and Mairaj Mohammad Khan (QMA).

In general terms, the aim was to use a broad range of primary sources. Care was taken to obtain an appreciation of the precise language used by political actors and by MQM leaders and activists in particular. To this end, an appraisal of written Urdu was developed as part of the research programme, so that party documents in Urdu could be analysed in detail. In terms of events and details used in the chronology (section 5.3) and elsewhere, efforts were made to substantiate events and claims by using more than one documentary source where possible.

5.3 HISTORY OF MOHAJIR NATIONALISM

Period 1: 1970-78.

Dr. Mohammad Waseem (Dawn, 8 May 1990, Karachi) has attempted to chart the decline of *Mohajir* interest and power in the main organs of the state of Pakistan in the early years following Independence, in the form of a somewhat unwieldy table, reproduced here as Table 5.1. We can see that in the first period (1947-58), *Mohajirs* apparently were dominant in all sectors other than the army. During the military rule that followed, however (1958-71), *Mohajirs* became relegated to last place in politics, and by the time of General Zia's takeover in 1977, had also slipped to second place in the bureaucracy, behind Punjabis (ibid). Finally, the table also suggests that political influence has been restored to the *Mohajir* community after a period of alienation in the 1977-88 period, possibly by the MQM.

The table is not based on any firm empirical data, and it probably acts as much as one *Mohajir's* view of his community's history within Pakistan as a description of "actual" community relationships with the state over 45 years. However, certain basic points about the years of Independence for the Urdu-speaking community of Sindh are usefully made in Dr Waseem's Table. The single key factor is the element of the political alienation of the *Mohajir* community within the State of Pakistan, particularly in relation to the Punjabi community. This alienation grows from an initial position of dominant community

TABLE 5.1: Relative changes in community influence, 1947-90

[Community power ranked on a scale of 'A,B,C,0', from highest to lowest respectively; Bureaucracy, Army, Business and Politics]

<u>Community</u>	<u>Bureau'y</u>	<u>Army</u>	<u>Bus.</u>	<u>Pol.</u>
<u>1947-58</u>				
Mohajirs	A	0	A	A
Punjabis	B	A	C	B
Sindhis/Pakhtuns/Bengalis	0	0	0	C
Baluchis	0	0	0	0
<u>1958-71</u>				
Punjabis	B	A	B	B
Mohajirs	A	0	A	0
Bengalis	C	0	0	C
Pakhtuns	0	C	0	C
Sindhis	0	0	0	C
Baluchis	0	0	0	0

(TABLE 16 cont.)

1971-77

Punjabis	B	A	B	A
Mohajirs	A	O	A	O
Sindhis	C	O	O	C
Pakhtuns	O	C	O	C
Baluchis	O	O	O	C

1977-88

Punjabis	A	A	B	B
Mohajirs	B	O	A	O
Sindhis	C	O	O	C
Pakhtuns	O	C	O	C
Baluchis	O	O	O	C

1988-90

Punjabis	A	A	A	C
Mohajirs	B	O	B	C
Sindhis	C	O	O	C
Pakhtuns	O	C	O	C
Baluchis	O	O	O	C

Source: Mohammad Waseem, Dawn 8 May 1990, Karachi.

representation in the immediate post-Independence period, (in that representation of the "migrant community" in the first government of Pakistan greatly outweighed the size of this community in relation to others within the national population), and is balanced by a steady dominance of the community in other sectors such as business and bureaucracy.

It is not easy to determine the degree of representation of different communities and political groups in Pakistan before 1970, however, as the State was woefully lacking in democratic processes. The Presidential Elections of 1965 in which Ayub Khan faced Muhammad Ali Jinnah's sister Fatima, did suggest that the cities of Karachi and Dacca acted differently, in political terms, from most of the rest of Pakistan. It was in these two cities that Jinnah scored her only victories. It should be noted, however, that Ayub's "Basic Democracy" system, under which 80,000 representatives cast the final votes, was a system vulnerable to the sort of "feudal" political bargaining that operates most effectively in rural areas where *waderas*, *Pirs* and tribal chiefs hold sway. In this sense, the election of 1965 was hardly an exercise in full democracy.

In East Pakistan, in particular, popular opposition to the military regime was mounting by the end of the 1960s. In 1969, Ayub stepped down, handing the mantle of power to General Yahya Khan, who finally scheduled general elections for 1970. The results of these elections, and the political aftermath that led to the creation of

Bangladesh in 1971, have been described in Chapter 2. It is useful to focus here on what was happening in urban Sindh at this time.

Before the December 1970 elections it had already become clear in West Pakistan that the Sindhi politician Zulfikar Ali Bhutto would sweep the elections. Among the *Mohajir* community of urban Sindh, two figures stood out as vocal opponents to this prospect. One was Nawab Muzaffar Hussain, who formed the Sindh-Karachi-Punjabi-Pakhtun-*Mohajir*-Mahaz (SKMPPMM) [Sindh-Karachi-Punjabi-Pakhtun-*Mohajir*-Front] in 1970, to contest five urban constituencies in Sindh and one in Multan, Punjab, where a concentrated community of Urdu-speakers are situated (Dawn 7 December 1970, Karachi). The rhetoric of the *Mahaz* included a foreboding appraisal of Jiye Sindh, described as an "affront to the Muslims of Sindh ... a conspiracy of *Bharat* [India] and Hindus" (Dawn, 2 November 1970, Karachi). Such terminology betrayed a fear that a Bhutto administration would give a fillip to Sindhi secessionists, which, I will show, is exactly the anti-State of Pakistan "conspiracy" rhetoric deployed by the MQM after 1988. The *Mahaz* also set a precedent for the MQM by condemning both *waderas* and traditional Islamic parties, particularly *Jamaat-i Islami* (Dawn, 2 November, *ibid*).

In this way, the SKPPMM voiced some of the concerns that I demonstrated are important to *Mohajir* identity in Sindh. The most important of these is a sense of loyalty to the State of Pakistan *per se*, and in the case of the SKPPMM, an alliance with other communities in Sindh who are felt to be similarly "patriotic". Just as importantly, the

Sindhis are not only pointedly excluded from this grouping, but are portrayed as dangerous secessionists or anti-Pakistan elements.

A second notably vocal *Mohajir* leader in the early 1970s was Mahmud-ul-Haq Usmani, secretary-general of the National Awami Party (NAP), whose policy for Sindh amounted to a forthright demand for the "separation" of Karachi, Hyderabad and other areas from the Province of Sindh (Dawn, 5 July and 10 July 1972, Karachi). Usmani still lives in Sindh, although he now advocates integration in the province, acting as Convenor of the Sindh Unity Board in the late 1980s. It is interesting to note that in an article discussing *Mohajir* nationality (Dawn, 27 May 1987, Karachi), Usmani reproduces the *Mohajir* community "myth" presented in the previous chapter, namely that minority-province Muslims were at the forefront of the Pakistan movement, and that all Muslim migrants left India due to communal rioting.

In the elections of December 1970/January 1971, the PPP were victorious in West Pakistan with 61% of the vote (Burki, 1980, p.56) and formed the new Government of Pakistan (in coalition with the National Awami Party in NWFP and the JUI in Baluchistan). In Sindh, certain ethnic *Mohajir* leaders (such as Muzaffar Hussain and Usmani) again began warning of Sindhi hegemony in the Province, particularly with the passing of the Sindhi Language Bill of July 1972.

Across Sindh Province, the elections had seen the urban areas at variance again with the electoral situation elsewhere in the country. Most *Mohajir* localities were behind Islamic parties such as *Jamaat-i Islami* and *Ahle Sunnat* (Sunni Muslims; led by *Maulana Noorani* who now

TABLE 5.2: Election results 1970, Karachi

<u>Party</u>	<u>Vote (%)</u>	<u>NA Seats*</u>
PPP	27.3	2
<i>Jamaat-i Islami</i>	22.7	2
<i>Ahle Sunnat</i>	20.1	2
Ansari (Independent)	4.8	1
JUI	3.3	-
National Awami Party (Wali Khan)	1.0	-
Others/Independents	20.8	-
TOTAL	100.0	7

Source: Dawn, 9 December 1970, Karachi.

* - National Assembly.

heads the JUI, which won its only seats in Karachi. The SKMPMM achieved very little support anywhere in Sindh (or in the one seat it contested in Punjab). Meanwhile, the traditional *Mohajir* strongholds in Karachi of Liaquatabad and Nazimabad were won by the *Jamaat-i Islami*, (p. 10). Meanwhile, the traditional strongholds in Liaquatabad and Nazimabad were won by the *Jamaat-i Islami*,

with 40.6% and 36.3% of the vote respectively (seats NW 132 and 131; Dawn, 9 December, *ibid*). *Ahle Sunnat* won seats in Landhi/Korangi and Ranchore Lines area, with 36.8% and 31.8% of the vote respectively (NW 128 and 134, *ibid*). The full picture in Karachi is shown in Table 5.2.

The "pro-Urdu" lobby at the time of the 1972 Language Bill disturbances comprised the Karachi Citizens Committee, Karachi *Suba* [province] Conference (a secessionist group demanding the separation of Karachi from Sindh; Dawn, 8 July 1972, Karachi), the Karachi University Students' Union, the SKMPPMM, the All Pakistan Young *Shia Mutalbat* ["demands"] Party, the National Awami Party (*Maulana Bhashani* Group), I.H. Qureshi (former vice-chancellor of Karachi University) and various other "observers" including Syed Muhammad Taqi (editor at the time of "*Jang*").

It also seems apparent that Islamic leaders, such as *Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani* of the NAP (who achieved 3.4% of the Karachi vote in 1970, with just under 17% in the Nazimabad area; Dawn, 9 December 1970, Karachi), Professor Ghafoor Ahmed of *Jamaat-i Islami* and *Maulana Noorani* of *Ahle Sunnat*, were vocally opposed to Bhutto's Sindh-oriented regime.

Indeed, in this early phase, when *Mohajirs* were represented by various disparate groups, we see the seeds of a more galvanised *Mohajir* subnationalism being sown. The link is provided by two factors. Firstly, the specific types of groups and leaders involved, such as the student element centring on Karachi University and an openly secessionist element (represented now by the MIT), became important in the *Mohajir*

movement of the 1980s. Secondly, on occasions the rhetoric and issues raised by the "pro-Urdu" lobby were strikingly similar to those employed later by Altaf Hussain and the MQM. For example, on the eve of the 1970 elections, *Maulana Bhashani* was talking, in terms resonant with much of South Asian politics in general, of poorer people also having access to the assemblies, rather than just the "jagirdars [wealthy landowners] and industrialists" (Dawn, 29 November 1970, Karachi). Compare this sentiment with that expressed by Altaf Hussain in 1991:

"A few families have for a long time ruled this country. It is impossible for common, poor, middle class to come into politics, in Assemblies, parliament ... MQM has proved that it wants rule of 98% rather than rule of 2%"

(interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

Similarly, the All Pakistan Young *Shia Mutalbat* Party (APYSMP) was at one point calling for "compensation" to be paid by the government to victims of rioting in Karachi. I will show that this was a very familiar cry in urban Sindh after 1988. These rhetorical devices describe important aspects of the people forming - and supporting - the MQM. In particular, we can see an urbanised, populist form of rhetoric, which would seem strange coming from Sindhi nationalists, who themselves are often these wealthy landowners and "jagirdars". The *Mohajir* leaders are

thus appealing to different sentiments in the urban areas of Sindh than are voiced usually in the rural areas. I will argue that this is an important point when considering the "political void" in urban areas that the MQM successfully addressed in its early years.

The Zulfikar Ali Bhutto era was central to the intellectual foundations of *Mohajir* nationalism in establishing administrative procedures that "compartmentalised" Sindh and Pakistan society, and in promoting regional cultures such as that of the Sindhis. One of the most damaging perceptions that developed among the *Mohajir* community was that administrative procedures were being based on spurious assessments of the size of the population of urban Sindh.

The quota assigned to Sindh's urban areas was calculated by assessing the size of cities over 100,000 in population under the 1972 Census. In practice this signified the three cities of Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur. Karachi itself was assessed at 3.515 million people in 1972 (Government of Pakistan, Federal Bureau of Statistics, 1982, p.15). This would signify an average annual growth rate of the city since 1951 of 5.84%', if census figures are used. There is a claim, voiced by the *Mohajir* writer M.A. Siddiqui (interview, 26 January 1991, Karachi) that in a Sindh High Court writ in 1973 (still unheard; Herald, May 1991, p.52), the interior ministry in 1972 was proved to have ordered a deliberate under-enumeration of urban Sindh by around 12.5%. However, a growth rate of 5.8% per annum in Karachi is close to unofficial estimates of its current rate (interview with KDA director Abu Shamim Arif, 12 April 1991, Karachi). Indeed, the problem of adequate assessment

of the urban areas seems to arise later with the Martial Law authorities of General Zia. The 1981 Census suggests a 4.2% growth rate per annum in Karachi since 1972. It seems unlikely that either the birth rate, the rate of migration, or the combination of the two in urban Sindh, would have reduced so much between the 1960s/70s and 1970s/80s. In these terms, the belief in urban Sindh in the 1970s that the Quota System was based on an unfair enumeration of cities in Sindh, seems to be a plausible element of a historical "mythology" that necessarily has to base itself on uncertain details. Indeed, a charge of under-enumeration would apply more directly to the Zia period.

Again, however, the important point is how such factors are *perceived*, since nobody can know the "true" figures in such a situation (this is especially so in Pakistan, where most Censuses since Independence are believed to have been inaccurate). Furthermore, the extension of the Quota System for another ten years in 1983, based on the same original figures, ensured that the issue continued to be explosive into the 1990s. These factors are potentially effective foci for rhetorical mobilisation by political orators, and I will later show how the MQM capitalised on them.

Period 2: 1978-84

The first period had seen a sudden, yet apparently isolated, explosion of pro-*Mohajir* sentiment in Sindh's major urban areas, in 1972. The following years saw a growing opposition to the Bhutto

government in the urban areas, and particularly in urban Sindh under the leadership of *Jamaat-i Islami*. Political opposition to Bhutto did not, however, include any form of political mobilisation directed specifically at the *Mohajirs* at this time.

The second period saw the emergence of the student group APMSO in Karachi in 1978, a group which would be a direct forerunner of the MQM. Student politics have always been explosive and significant in Pakistan, as in many other developing countries, not least since all the major political parties have active and sometimes effectively semi-autonomous student wings which enact wider conflicts and clashes in the grounds of colleges and universities. Students at Dacca University had set the scene for political involvement as early as February 1952, when a demonstration against the official status of Urdu turned into a bloody confrontation with police. In Karachi, certain institutions also rose to the political forefront, including Urdu College, and Karachi University (the latter established in 1951).

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's tenure in central government ended on 5 July 1977, when Army Chief of Staff General Zia took over in Islamabad with a group of loyal federal ministers, following the elections in March 1977. The PPP had claimed to have won 77.5% of seats and 58% of the national vote in the elections (figures supplied by Election Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad, 1991), and this unleashed a popular protest by the opposition Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) who claimed the elections had been rigged.

The protest was led by the principal member of the PNA, *Jamaat-i Islami*, whose geographical focus of support ensured that popular unrest unleashed by the the PNA was largely centred on Karachi. Esposito claims that, at this time, Friday prayers and sermons in the city's mosques became highly politicised (Esposito, 1986, p.342). *Jamaat* managed to mobilise frustrated industrial workers, the unemployed and students in the major urban centres of Sindh (Akmal Hussain, 1989, p.230), where the impact of agitation on the national economy is always felt most.

In the early 1970s, the *Shia* student group APYSMP, based at the university in Karachi, had shown itself to be active and vocal at such times as the promulgation of the Language Bill. The *Mohajir* student community had been dominated up to 1978, however, by the student wing of the *Jamaat-i Islami*, the *Islami Jamiat-i Talaba* (IJT). This group confronted other groups such as the Jiye Sindh Students Federation, the People's Student Federation and the Baluchi Students' Organisation, who largely represented Sindhi and other communities. Thus, in the *Mohajir* student community an Islamic group was dominant in contrast to the ethnic groups that dominated the student populations of other communities. The importance of such student groups to the politics of developing-world countries is often far greater than the relatively limited resources available to such groups. Clapham cites the examples of Sudan and Thailand in 1964 and 1973 respectively, in which apparently strong regimes were felled by student-led movements (Clapham, 1985, p.83). In Pakistan, the size and importance of Karachi and its

educational institutions has determined that student politics exercise a considerable leverage on the general political situation, not least since the introduction of firearms to the campuses in the late 1970s.

The IJT was the least well-equipped party intellectually to deal with the burgeoning number of ethnic groups that were growing to fight for their niches in the colleges, since it was nominally an anti-regionalist "national" party. All student groups became powerful and aggressive, setting-up intimidating stalls and offices at applications fairs to trade the all-important domicile certificates. There was also an increasing resort to arms by the groups, prompted by the flood of weapons into Pakistan after the escalation of the Afghan war across the border. In August 1979, Kalashnikov rifles were brandished for the first time on the Karachi University campus, as the new Students' Union president Husain Haqqani (of the IJT, later an advisor to Nawaz Sharif) deployed an armed escort at a swearing-in ceremony (Viewpoint, 20 July 1989, Lahore).

Student life had become "ethnic-oriented" in all spheres, from admissions, to the control of canteens, bus-services and social groups (*discussion* with former Karachi University student, 27 March 1991, Karachi). It is difficult to determine why such a political process should have accelerated at this time. Sindh University academic Zafar Hassan Shah observes that the 1973 Constitution, framed under the first Bhutto government, was more centralising than that of 1962, over which Ayub Khan presided, and made no provision for a "provincial list" of powers (Zafar Hassan Shah, 1983, p.160). This centralising aspect of the

Bhutto government, which was present despite rhetoric concerning the encouragement of provincial cultures, may have inadvertently prompted a narrow regionalist politics. Another possible explanation involves the bankruptcy of Islamic politics at the end of the 1970s, over which Bhutto performed somersaults in the last months of his rule to try and calm the criticism from the *Jamaat-i Islami*-led opposition.

Among some *Mohajir* students disillusion with the way that the "national" IJT tackled the political situation in Karachi probably led in part to a group of Karachi University students forming their own "ethnic" *Mohajir* group. On 11 June 1978, Altaf Hussain, Azim Ahmed Tariq, Saleem Haider, Imran Farooq and ten others announced the formation of the APMSO. The "All Pakistan" element in the name of the group reflected the pro-Pakistan sentiments of the *Mohajirs*, yet the ethnic nature of the group's politics meant that it was firmly based in Karachi (and in Hyderabad shortly afterwards).

Many believe that the prominence of the IJT before the formation of the APMSO indicates that Altaf and others were previously members of the IJT (in addition to the common *Shia* factor; the sect that *Jamaat* principally represents). The official MQM line is that this is not the case (interview with MQM worker Syed Manzoor Yazdani, 4 December 1991, London). Indeed, the MQM will condemn Islamic "fundamentalists". One MQM women's worker claimed that "Islam has been exploited, especially by General Zia and the *Jamaat-i Islami*.....They never did anything for the people" (interview, 8 February 1991, Karachi). This reflects the way in which many *Mohajirs* became disillusioned with the

ability of the Islamic parties to address everyday problems in urban Sindh, and perhaps explains why the new ethnic approach of the APMSO was successful as a result. In the campuses, the APMSO and IJT are now enemies, often engaging in armed skirmishes. (Clashes in January/February 1991 left some students dead; see Dawn, 30 January 1991, Karachi).

The MQM leadership's ambivalent stance on the traditional Islamic parties, and its general lack of Islamic rhetoric, means that it is unlikely that Altaf Hussain and others were actually members of IJT previously (in addition to them having been too young before 1978 to be important members of any political group). The matter cannot be easily verified, however, and remains a favourite topic for speculation in urban Sindh. At the lower levels of support and membership, it seems clear that the APMSO did draw many from the ranks of the IJT (interview with Zafaryab Ahmed of "Viewpoint", 25 February 1991, Lahore), particularly so in the city of Hyderabad.

Azim Ahmed Tariq claims that *Mohajirs* felt "threatened" in educational institutions by other groups, and that they "could only stop all this by joining hands" (interview, 6 February 1991, Karachi). Altaf Hussain's personal assistant Nadeem Nusrat was more explicit in describing the problems faced at the notorious "admissions fairs", and more generally, as follows:

"Problems have included the behaviour of Sindhis in educational institutions. We are pushed around, beaten,

our documents torn, we are threatened as 'outsiders'"

(*interview*, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

While the extent of such activities as domicile-fraud is probably greatly exaggerated in the politics of Karachi's campuses, there is no doubt that most ethnic student groups have been intimidatory towards their rivals. Aside from this fact, however, there is the more fundamentally disturbing problem of limited educational opportunities. The importance of this to the perception of sampled *Mohajir* students has been described in the previous chapter. Karachi has only one general university (in addition to one small and specifically engineering "university") and no polytechnic or similar institution. Failure to achieve a place at college or university is made worse when students perceive that non-*Mohajirs* have reached university with much lower performances in exams due to regional quota arrangements (*interview* with *Mohajir* matriculation students, 8 February 1991, Karachi²). As the population of Karachi grows, Karachi University's three thousand places become ever more coveted by a swelling number of applications. The University claims that, in 1989, the ratio of suitable applications to places was at least three to one (figures supplied by Karachi University, April 1991). The frustration of students becomes worse as it becomes perceived that even with qualifications the quest for employment in Sindh is not made much easier³. Unemployment and student politics

are a potent mix in South Asia (as elsewhere), as can be seen in Kashmir and India's Jharkhand.

The rise of the APMSO in Karachi was rapid and effective, with the group soon replacing the IJT as the most influential student body in the city. The organisation also gained a reputation for militarisation and violence. A key event in the history of student politics in urban Sindh was a battle between the APMSO and the PSF at Karachi University on 8 July 1989, following the announcement of admissions for the following academic year. The battle was accompanied by the kidnapping of many PSF members (Newline, February 1990, Karachi), and the posting of an army "Rangers" unit on the University campus for the first time in its history (Viewpoint, 20 July 1989, Lahore).

The work of Altaf Hussain and Azim Tariq with the APMSO saw them expelled from Karachi University in 1980 (interview with Azim Ahmed Tariq, 13 February 1991, Karachi). The organisation survived, however, and expanded its "offices" (often located within the grounds of colleges such as DJ College, Karachi; see Figure 5.1) across Karachi and Hyderabad. Altaf Hussain left Pakistan to spend some time with family members in the United States, but returned in 1983/84 to make his next major political move.

Period 3. 1984 - 1993

As hated as the Z.A. Bhutto years and its associated measures were in the cities of Sindh, Zia's arrival in 1977 heralded little

improvement. One of his first acts was the banning of all political organisations. The Quota System, despised by many *Mohajirs*, was also extended (Viewpoint, 13 July 1989, Lahore). By 1984, the original group of fourteen founder members of APMSO had fallen broadly into two camps. First, there were those *Mohajirs* demanding the "separation" of major urban areas of Sindh, to form a new *suba* [province]. Meanwhile, some other *Mohajirs* were talking only of achieving "due rights" for their community within Sindh.

The secessionist group was led by Saleem Haider, by then a practising doctor in Karachi, who launched the *Mohajir Ittehad Tehrik* (MIT) in March 1984 (interview with Dr. Saleem Haider, 11 February 1991, Karachi). This group echoes the Karachi Suba Conference of the early 1970s, which wanted the establishment of Karachi Division as a separate Province. As Dr. Haider explained, "we are working on the bifurcation of the province; only this will solve the problems" (ibid). The MIT incorporates a fair amount of ethnic chauvinism directed at the Sindhis, who Dr. Haider describes as *gudhan* [donkeys; ibid].

However, Haider failed to enrol many of the former APMSO leaders into the MIT, while Altaf Hussain and Azim Ahmed Tariq were more successful in attracting members to their organisation. Syed Muhammad Taqi, erstwhile editor of *Jang* and observer at the "pro-Urdu" lobby in July 1972, claims that in early 1984 Altaf Hussain came to him, as a senior intellectual *Mohajir* figure in Karachi, for advice on the nature of a new political movement (interview with S.M. Taqi, 13 January 1991, Karachi). At this time, Altaf was thinking along the lines of an

ethnic *Mohajir* forum (ibid) and Saleem Haider's moves in March may have made up his mind. Five days later, on 18 March 1984, the MQM was launched. While Altaf had lobbied influential *Mohajir* intellectuals in Karachi such as Taqi, he decided to build a "grassroots" party among the working classes and students of urban Sindh. In the early days, much of the groundwork was done by Altaf, Tariq and others, who went from door to door in Karachi seeking interest and financial support (interview with sub-editor of "The Star", Osman Yami, 27 January 1991, Karachi). By 1986 the work had born fruit, and the Movement became recognised as an established political party in urban Sindh (despite the fact that political parties were officially illegal at this time).

I would argue that the subsequent political chronology of the MQM can usefully be examined with reference to three main phases, between each of which significant developments in the Movement occurred.

MQM: Early Phase; 1984-88

The early phase of MQM development is marked by a relatively rapid rise of the Movement to political "hegemony" in urban Sindh. The rhetoric of the Movement at this time was largely "ethnic", in that it condemned immigration into Sindh, particularly by Afghan refugees. The MQM projected the *Mohajirs* as a "subnationality" alongside the Sindhis (that is, allied to the Sindhis in policy but not in terms of their identity). It also demanded that the *Mohajir* community be officially recognised in the Constitution as a "nationality" of Pakistan. After

1985, large-scale rioting began to emerge in Karachi, principally between Pakhtuns and *Mohajirs* (the latter often incorporating *Biharis*). With this development, the MQM emerged as an avowedly ethnic force supporting the *Biharis* and *Mohajirs* against "attacks", and condemning the government and police for fomenting the violence. As a result, Altaf Hussain and some of his colleagues were imprisoned twice in Karachi Jail for stirring-up ethnic tensions. In terms of policy, as I will show later, the MQM in this period appeared as little more than an ethnic "pressure-group".

The first months of the Movement involved intensive lobbying for support and donations by Altaf Hussain and his colleagues among the population in Karachi, from the large *Memon* and *Khoja* business-houses such as Dawood, Habib and Adamjee, to the skilled and semi-skilled *Mohajir* industrial and commercial labour in Nazimabad, Liaquatabad and elsewhere. Writing in "Dawn", Anmer Mooraj claimed that few *Mohajir* intellectuals were willing to listen at this time, because "Altaf Hussain was regarded as little more than a lemon tea Bolshevik with a faintly diabolical air" (Dawn, 2 February 1990, Karachi). Similarly the "Star" sub-editor, Osman Yami, explained that he thought Altaf was just a "showboy" at first, without any durability or sincerity. Now, Yami claims he is "like a younger brother to me" (interview, 27 January 1991, Karachi).

The rapid rise of the Movement meant that two years after its launch, the MQM was addressing large rallies in the heart of Karachi and Hyderabad, and in 1987 it was returned as the largest single party in

Karachi after the Local Bodies elections (with 29.5% of the vote, and 46.6% of councillor seats in the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation; figures supplied by Provincial Election Authority, Karachi; and KMC, Karachi, 1991). The rise of the party in Karachi can be considered somewhat "meteoric", since the wider environment was one of political suppression under the Zia regime.

This fact has led many to suggest that the MQM received illicit state patronage to create further disunity in the politics of Sindh. Such theories are largely speculative and revolve around two scenarios. The first involves *Jamaat-i Islami*. Initially close to Zia and his policies of "Islamisation", *Jamaat* was by the mid-1980s becoming estranged from the military regime over the pace of the Islamisation programme, and over various specific issues such as a ban on student unions in 1984 (interview with Sirdar Mazari, 13 February 1991, Karachi). It is reputed that the Governor of Sindh at the time, Justice Qadeeruddin, admitted later that funds had been channelled to the MQM from the army for the purpose of defusing *Jamaat-i Islami* in its stronghold of urban Sindh. (See Viewpoint, 26 July 1990, Lahore; and Justice Dorab Patel [interview, 12 January 1991, Karachi] who claims to have personally witnessed Qadeeruddin's "confession").

A second scenario concerns the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), led by Benazir Bhutto's PPP, which in August 1983 achieved a substantial display of public support in rural areas of Sindh with its protests against the military government. Aside from the PPP, various Sindhi nationalist and political figures such as Mumtaz Bhutto

and Ghulam Mustapha Jatoi were prominent in the MRD (*Inqlab Sind*, 21 August 1983, London). The Zia regime responded heavily and aggressively to the movement. Some are of the opinion that when the MQM emerged on the scene a year later, it was fostered as a movement that could defuse the support of the MRD by acting as a political counterbalance in the urban areas of the Province (*interview with Mairaj Mohammad Khan of the QMA*, 17 January 1991, Karachi).

Such accounts imply either the complete planning and construction of the MQM by the Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI; *interview with Akmal Hussain*, 24 February 1991, Lahore), or a turning-of-a-blind-eye as the MQM developed and at a time when other groups, such as the PPP, were being heavily suppressed (*interview with Mohajir publisher*, 16 January 1991, Karachi). Interestingly, the MQM's own line is that Zia had nothing to do with the formation of the Movement (*interview with MQM women's worker*, 6 February 1991, Karachi; this could be a denial of covert processes for obvious political reasons).

The idea of a *Mohajir* nationalist movement was certainly not "created" in 1984; the existence of earlier groups, especially the APMSO in which Altaf Hussain played a pioneering role, proves that a *Mohajir* political identity of sorts had developed some time earlier. Furthermore, without access to classified material on extremely sensitive issues, it is impossible to either confirm or deny the theories of army involvement (such a source was not available to this researcher). It seems clear, however, that the Zia regime created many divisions in Pakistan society as it attempted to frame a "government" line on Islam. Partisan action

on the part of the authorities helped to exacerbate such divisions. In the Karachi riots of November 1986 most student groups were forcibly disarmed by the police, while the IJT and Muslim Students Federation were not (Viewpoint, 6 November 1986, Lahore). Similarly, there are numerous reports of the law and order agencies acting half-heartedly in several instances. In the former case, an example can be cited of an attack in a *Bihari* locality of Orangi in December 1986, during which the police are accused of failing to arrive on the scene until eight hours had passed, by which time twenty people had died (Herald, December 1986, Karachi, p.6). In other cases, the army is accused of acting rapidly and brutally, such as in the Afghan area of Bangash Colony in January 1987 (Dawn, 13 January 1987, Karachi). In many instances such inconsistencies might relate to the fear or inexperience of the police (who are often armed less powerfully than their foes), but the problem is that their actions may become perceived as a form of ethnic partisanship.

Interestingly, some claim that the MQM was suppressed by Zia along with all other political groups at this time (interview with Nasreen Jaleel, 6 February 1991, Karachi). Indeed, Altaf Hussain was jailed twice during the Zia years (December 1986 - January 1987, and August 1987 - January 1988, when he was moved to Civil Hospital, Karachi, for kidney treatment). At one point in 1987, 32 "civil disorder" charges were filed against him (Dawn, 28 September 1987, Karachi). Significantly, internment in Karachi Jail did not seem to limit Altaf Hussain's ability to deliver statements and comments, as newspaper reports of the time testify. At any rate, whatever the precise

involvement of the army in the formation of the MQM, the Movement soon was established as an autonomous political agency.

Before 1986, the APMSO retained a highly influential position in *Mohajir* politics in urban Sindh, at a time when instances of large-scale civil disturbances were emerging in Karachi. The "Bushra Zaidi incident" in April 1985, saw sustained rioting in which the APMSO played a key role by organising an unruly demonstration at the funeral of the stricken schoolgirl (Tambiah, 1990, p.749). On 8 August 1986, however, the MQM-proper achieved its first major display of public support at a large rally in Nishtar Park, central Karachi. The park is a favourite venue for political meetings, since it is situated in the heart of the city, just a few hundred yards from the huge tomb of the *Quaid-i Azam*. It was to be the scene of many MQM rallies after 1986.

At the August 1986 rally the tone of the early period of the MQM was clearly set. The rally emphasised the "subnationality" nature of *Mohajirs* alongside Sindhis⁴, and the unity of the two against "outsiders", namely Afghans, Pakhtuns and Punjabis (Dawn, 9 August 1986). The issue of the *Biharis* was also raised at the rally by Altaf Hussain in the following terms:

"Let not the East Pakistan tragedy be repeated. The *Biharis* rendered great sacrifices for Pakistan, but they are still not wanted in the country while the army has been safe back home. Should anything happen again, guard your houses."

(Dawn, 9 August, *ibid*; italics added).

Here, the position of the *Biharis* in East Pakistan, fighting separatists, is obliquely compared to the assumed position of the *Mohajirs* in Sindh, should another [Sindhi] separatist movement gain a foothold in Pakistan. The "repatriation" of the *Biharis* to Pakistan from Bangladesh has been one of the more continuous MQM issues, and one in regard to which conspicuously little had been achieved by 1993. We can see, however, that in this rhetoric concerning patriotism and anti-secessionism, the MQM is attempting to appeal to an aspect of *Mohajir* identity that I identified in the previous chapter. The MQM also correctly gauged that *Biharis* would support such "Pakistan nationalist" sentiments, given their own relationship to the Bengali majority community in the former East Pakistan.

This issue also highlights a seeming paradox in the rhetoric of the MQM in this early phase, which characterises the particular relationship of the Movement to the state in Pakistan. On the one hand, Altaf Hussain was declaring his solidarity with Sindhi compatriots, while on the other hand, Sindhi nationalists and separatists were roundly condemned as anti-Pakistan forces. The complexity of this matter was "resolved" shortly afterwards, when the MQM became more avowedly anti-Sindhi. In these terms, the MQM was initially attempting to reconcile a relationship with the provincial state, which encompassed the politics of the largest ethnic group in the Province, with a particular allegiance to the central state.

As I will show later in my discussion of the MQM's rhetoric and ideology, the rich have been excluded explicitly from the Movement's definition of the *Mohajir* community, for being *ijaradarriya* [monopolists; *ibid*]. As discussed in the previous chapter, in relation to vertical community solidarity, this political rhetoric creates a paradoxical exclusion of certain potential *Mohajirs* from the political community as portrayed by the MQM. The factor became more significant in the later period of the Movement, and may have contributed indirectly to a split in the party after 1991. (It is probably the case that the funding of the Movement also suffered over this matter).

A particular quality of the August 1986 rally that the MQM has been keen to highlight concerns the discipline and organisation of the meeting. The Movement describes the rally in the following terms:

"It had started raining from the evening of 6th August
.....but from the morning of 8th August scores of suzukis,
trucks and motor cycles carrying *Mohajir* youth in very
large numbers had made the beeline for the Nishtar Park.
Rain could not dampen their spirits and people were amazed
to see lacs of *Mohajir* youth gather in and around the park,
in streets and on rooftops motionless, sitting in pouring
rain, listening to the speech of their *Quaid* Altaf Hussain
with rapt attention [*sic*]."

(MQM, 1990b (i), pp.6-7; italics added)

The somewhat sinister discipline of such rallies, in which Altaf Hussain exercises considerable control over the crowd⁵, has been repeated often since this rally. The first major Hyderabad meeting came shortly afterwards, and displayed important similarities to the first Karachi rally in that it was characterised by a preponderance of young males, many of whom were well-armed (Nation, 6 November 1986, Lahore).

The MQM claims that such large gatherings demonstrate the principle of *Mohajir ittehad* [unity]; (although attendance figures, and thus the proportion of the community appearing at such rallies, are notoriously difficult to verify). The MQM set out straight away to show that it alone was the sole representative of the *Mohajirs*. Such a claim was occasionally weakened by events, such as those of early 1987, when violence flared between supporters of the MQM and those of the MIT in Karachi (Star, 5 April 1987, Karachi). Since this time the latter has maintained a rather low profile in the city, but has undoubtedly commanded some secret support. The main difference between the groups is that the MQM were close to *Jiye Sindh* in the early phase as "fellow subnationalists", while the MIT are totally opposed to working with Sindh nationalists. Another small group, the *Mohajir Rabita Council* [Mohajir Coordination Council] has remained as a small front with a policy to "support and supplement the MQM" (Ishtiaq Azhar, president of MRC; Herald, September 1990, Karachi, p.50). The group has only briefly indulged in electoral politics on its own account (in Hyderabad in the National Assembly elections of 1988), and is generally supported by the MQM as a useful source of publicity.

The 31 October 1986 rally in Hyderabad was indirectly the catalyst for another feature of the early MQM period, namely the occurrence of large-scale civil disturbances, mostly centring on the city of Karachi. The Bushra Zaidi incident was the first in a series of riots that became characterised by their spread from a specific incident, such as a clash between bus-passengers and transporters (in the case of the November 1986 rioting), to sustained and bloody ethnic rioting. Such disturbances largely involved *Mohajirs* (often specifically incorporating *Biharis*) and Pakhtuns. The dynamics of such rioting are discussed more fully in Chapter 7, but it is useful here to examine the associated rhetoric. The *Bihari* factor was important in these incidents of unrest, particularly since many of the later inter-ethnic reprisals occurred in parts of Orangi where the *Bihari* community lives in close proximity to the Pakhtuns.

The rhetoric of the MQM leadership at this time was very much directed at "Afghans", who were claimed to be at the root of the unrest, both directly and through being involved in the illicit drugs, arms, land and transport "mafias" that bring their own pressures to bear on the city of Karachi. In January 1987 the MQM "demanded" the repatriation of Afghans living in Sindh (Dawn, 21 January 1987, Karachi). Days later, in a statement following his release from a first period in jail, Altaf Hussain declared that if Pakistan can keep and "feed" Afghans, then it should bring "its own people" from Bangladesh (Muslim, 24 January 1987, Karachi). Here we see a linkage of the *Bihari* and Afghan issues which is characteristic of MQM rhetoric, and the issuing of statements from jail.

(See Figure 5.2, showing an MQM document of December 1987, entitled "Altaf Hussain's third letter from jail to the mothers and sisters" - an emotional document referring to the incarceration of numerous *Mohajir* men in Karachi Jail). Interestingly, much MQM malice at this time was directed at the police in Sindh, who were perceived to be drawn predominantly from the Punjabi and Pakhtun communities in the Province. Table 5.3 provides an analysis of "attacks" claimed to have been inflicted on *Mohajirs*. The incidents between 1986 and the end of 1987 reported in the document frequently protest at police action, in terms of "indiscriminate firing", beating, and rape. The police element is linked to an ethnic grievance, with the Movement claiming that *Mohajirs* are discriminated against in police recruitment (MQM, 1990c).

In October 1988 the MQM faced the impending national and provincial elections by producing its most public manifesto to date, the "Charter of Resolution". The full text of the charter can be found in Appendix 7. It is interesting to note that among the 25 points, eight dealt with "local preference"^s, two with the confinement and repatriation of Afghans, and one with the "repatriation" of *Biharis* (MQM, 1988a). These points faithfully mirror the sentiments of the early period. After 1988 however, changes occurred that saw a redefinition of the term "local" by the MQM.

TABLE 5.3: MQM Record of Attacks on Mohajirs, 1986-1988

<u>Attack launched by</u>	<u>No. of cases</u>
Police	8
Unidentified attackers/"unknown miscreants"	7
"Drug mafia"	2

Source: MQM, 1990a, pp7-11.

MQM: Middle Phase; 1988-90

The second major period of MQM development was characterised by a significant change in its relationship with the Sindhi community. The change was prompted not only by important developments within Sindhi nationalism, but also by the failure of a short-lived agreement with the new PPP government that was installed after the elections of October 1988. It was in this period also that the MQM reached its electoral zenith, over the two rounds of elections in 1988 and 1990. In essence, the Movement's outward rhetoric remained essentially that of an ethnic pressure-group at this time, but its animosity became rapidly directed towards the Sindhi compatriots of the *Mohajirs* rather than the Pakhtuns or other migrants into Sindh. Finally, the second period saw a rise in the significance of the MQM's second major bastion of support; the city

of Hyderabad and other smaller towns, where events increasingly came to influence the policy of the central MQM leadership based in Karachi. (I discuss the spatial and structural organisation of the Movement in a later section).

In Summer 1988 a new strain of militant Sindhi nationalism emerged, in part under a new splinter group, the Jiye Sindh Progressive Party (JSPP) led by Dr. Qadir Magsi. Dr. Magsi aligned himself firmly against the MQM and *Mohajirs*. It is believed that the JSPP was involved in the 30 September 1988 bombing campaign in Hyderabad that killed around 250 people, most of them *Mohajirs* (Viewpoint, 24 May 1990, Lahore). The violence of such attacks and their blatantly ethnic sectarian nature only served to hasten the alienation of many *Mohajir* citizens in Sindh from their Sindhi neighbours.

Outside of Karachi, *Mohajir* communities live in relatively small concentrations, surrounded by Sindhi people. Here, *Mohajirs* and Sindhis compete directly for resources. By 1988 there was some evidence that an "ethnic rift" was developing in such cities as Sukkur and Hyderabad, whereby sectarian violence was polarising the two communities.

The transformation of the MQM in this period can be illustrated in part by the difference between the *Mohajir* community in Karachi and that elsewhere. In Hyderabad, the *Mohajir* community is physically concentrated in the central urban area, and particularly in the *Pucca Qila* Fort district. Sindhis meanwhile concentrate in suburban districts such as Qasimabad, and the semi-rural environs of the city. The polarisation between the two communities is considerable. The two

central urban constituencies are National Assembly seats (NAs) 168 and 169. In the 1988 elections, the MQM won these seats with 73.17% and 68.60% of the vote respectively, with the former supplying the new mayor of the city, Aftab Ahmed Shaikh (Election Commission of Pakistan, 1988, Vol.III, pp.52-3). All the surrounding constituencies were won comfortably by the PPP. On the ground, spatial polarisation exists between the communities, not only in terms of housing districts, but also in terms of schools, restaurants, and even hospitals. With each sectarian attack or reprisal the polarisation exacerbates as people flee certain districts.

Within this spatial configuration, certain key nodes of conflict recur. One is *Haider Chowk* on the edge of the city centre; a *chowk* [square] that commemorates Haider Bux Jatoi, a revered historical figure of Sindhī *Hari* politics. The square has acted as a symbolic focus for nationalist regalia and conflict. In May 1988, youths supporting the MQM erected pictures in the square of figures important to Urdu heritage, such as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (the founder of Aligarh University), Liaquat Ali Khan (the first Prime Minister of Pakistan) and Altaf Hussain (Star, 8 May 1988, Karachi). The action was a symbolic rebuff for the Sindhis, with whom MQM youths had clashed a month before (ibid), and it provoked further ethnic sectarian conflict. Each successive incident increased the level of physical and psychological polarisation in the city.

While the MQM is by far the most important *Mohajir* agency in Hyderabad, other less moderate *Mohajir* leaders receive support there in a way that they do not in Karachi. Dr. Saleem Haider of the MIT for

example, contested the two central National Assembly seats of Hyderabad in 1988, when he did not stand in Karachi. (His greatest vote, however, was 1.7% in NA 169; Election Commission of Pakistan, 1988, vol.III, p.53). Furthermore, in 1988, *Maulana Wasi Mazhar Nadvi* of the MRC made in Hyderabad the Council's only independent foray into electoral competition. However, after winning just 0.4% of the vote across the two seats contested, the *Maulana* has since retired from electoral politics (Election Commission; *ibid*).

The importance of such figures in the day-to-day life of Hyderabad is greater than election performance alone would suggest. *Maulana Wasi Mazhar Nadvi* runs a popular Urdu weekly paper in the city, which has been openly advocating a separate *Mohajir "suba"* [province]; (Newline, February 1990, Karachi, p.44). Such figures occupy an important position alongside the the MQM in Hyderabad's politics, while in Karachi the MQM is totally dominant in *Mohajir* politics. Similarly on the Sindhi side of politics in Hyderabad, there is evidence that extreme nationalists such as Dr. Qadir Magsi have a following, particularly among Sindhi youth (Herald, June 1990, Karachi, p.50(c)). In elections, however, the PPP is dominant in the major Sindhi districts of Hyderabad, as it is throughout most parts of Sindh.

In Sukkur, also, a bitter ethnic divide has developed between the small urban concentration of *Mohajirs* (mostly traders and owners of small businesses) and the surrounding Sindhi community. Here also scattered incidents of ethnic sectarian violence were emerging by early 1988, before this form of violence had reached the streets in Karachi

far to the South (see incidents in Dawn, 26 April 1988, Karachi). The MQM's penetration of political life in Sukkur has not so far been spectacular. The Movement's one candidate standing for the National Assembly in the city in the October 1990 elections received just seven votes (Nazur Mohammad, NA 151; Election Commission of Pakistan, 1990. Vol II, p.69), while traditional pre-1980s *Mohajir* candidates such as *Maulana* Noorani of the JUP were more popular (ibid). The Provincial Assembly elections were more encouraging, with the MQM candidate Syed Saleem Shaukat achieving 46.7% of the vote in one of the six seats, and narrowly losing to the PDA candidate (Election Commission, ibid, p.309). In general terms, these figures support the theory that MQM support and influence among *Mohajirs* decline with distance northwards from Karachi.

In effect, the everyday reality of *Mohajir/Sindhi* competition, conflict and polarisation in Sukkur is closer to the situation in Hyderabad and smaller towns than to that in Karachi. An example of this was presented on 8/9 February 1991, when an incident of murder and ethnic reprisal flared in Sukkur (Dawn, 9 February 1991, Karachi) at a time when Karachi and Hyderabad had been relatively free of such incidents for some time (the incident is analysed further in Chapter 7).

The growth of the *Mohajir/Sindhi* ethnic "rift" through 1988 in the interior of Sindh found its way into the metropolis of Karachi after the September 1988 bombing in Hyderabad. The Summer of 1988 had seen repeated *Mohajir/Sindhi* clashes emerging, especially in Hyderabad (Morning News, 20 June 1988, Karachi), accompanied by such vitriolic

Sindhi rhetoric as the *Pir* of Pagaro's suggestion that all *Mohajirs* should leave Sindh (ibid). Altaf Hussain meanwhile continued to stress the "joint struggle" of *Mohajirs* and Sindhis against the *jagirdari* system, notably at a large women's rally in Karachi (Daily News, 16 July 1988, Karachi). Even so, after the September bombing, sectarian reprisals against Sindhis began to emerge in parts of Karachi, such as Landhi and Liaquatabad. Altaf Hussain's immediate reaction was again to blame the "police" (Dawn, 2 October 1988, Karachi). On the ground, however, it seemed that the large-scale riots of the 1980s were disappearing, to be replaced by sudden ethnic sectarian attacks and reprisals among the affected peoples of Karachi.

Of most immediate concern was the holding of new elections in October 1988, following the sudden assassination of General Zia and many of his colleagues in August 1988 (the assassination, despite various theories, remains a mystery in 1993). The experience of the Zia years had been bitter enough for Altaf Hussain to condemn Nawaz Sharif (the Chief Minister of Punjab under Zia) and his Pakistan Muslim League (PML) for having "treated the MQM as separatists in the pay of India" (Frontier Post, 22 November 1988, Lahore). As I have shown, the suggested slur on the MQM's patriotism is designed to strike a chord with *Mohajir* supporters, to whom this aspect is important to community identity. Following the elections, the MQM began - ironically - to enter into negotiations on an accord with the new PPP government. The election results for Sindh are shown in Table 5.4.

Nationally, the MQM achieved just 5.2% of the vote compared to

TABLE 5.4: Election results 1988, National Assembly, Sindh.

<u>Party</u>	<u>Vote %</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Seats (%)</u>
PPP	46.54	31	67.40
MQM	25.00	13	28.30
IJI	11.32	-	0.00

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan, 1988, vols II, III.

the PPP's 38.7% (Herald, Election 90 Special Issue, p.9). This discrepancy of support (which is underpinned by the MQM's ethnic stance), shows how much the MQM, in its ethnic subnationalist form, has been inextricably tied-into a politics of alliance-building in Pakistan in its quest for substantial political power. In the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, the MQM was also some way behind the PPP, but its preponderance in the economically and politically vital large urban centres meant that some form of agreement between the two largest parties in the Province seemed wise for both sides. Benazir Bhutto knows the significance of the MQM's dominance of Karachi, and she explained to me that the MQM can use this power to "paralyse the whole of Pakistan" (interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi). The PDA leader's appraisal of the MQM does not seem misplaced, since Azim Ahmed Tariq boasted on the completion of a protest strike in Karachi in 1989, that:

"We could have stopped everything, not only in Sindh but in the entire country, if we wanted. The economy would have come to a halt, and the wheel of industry would have been jammed."

(Dawn, 27 May 1989, Karachi).

In this statement we see a clear recognition by the MQM of the importance of the city of Karachi, and the way in which this position can be exploited by the Movement. In the following chapter I examine the city of Karachi and its institutions in more detail, and examine the importance the MQM has placed on winning control of these urban institutions.

On 2 December 1988 the Chief Minister of Sindh and President of the Sindh PPP, Syed Qaim Ali Shah, and MQM Chairman Azim Ahmed Tariq signed an accord entitled the Karachi Declaration, in which 59 points were agreed. The full text of the accord is shown in Appendix 5. Table 5.5 shows a break-down of the main areas under which the 59 points fell.

The large number of points in the accord make it an extremely unwieldy document. It is interesting to note that while some long-standing *Mohajir* issues such as the Quota System and the necessity for a proper Census were low on the agenda, education remained the most important factor, reflecting the APMSO origins of the MQM. Indeed, it was over one of the education points⁷ that strains appeared just weeks after

the signing of the accord, when MQM secretary-general Dr. Imran Farooq accused the PPP of breach of agreement (Nation, 24 December 1988, Karachi). Another interesting element of the accord was that, unlike the Charter of Resolution of November 1988, there was no demand for *Mohajirs* to be recognised as a nationality. This demand had proved fruitless, possibly under the pressure of members of the central government in Islamabad (I will show later that an alliance with the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) necessitated the dropping of the nationality demand).

In the months after the signing of the accord a rift developed between the PPP and the MQM, in tandem with a grim exacerbation of ethnic conflict throughout Sindh. For its part, the MQM made a series of vague and unlikely demands that could not readily be fulfilled. Among the most contentious were a call for a review of all "political victimisation" cases filed after July 1977 (the seizure of government by General Zia, point 56), and a demand for "compensation" for "all persons who have suffered in different unwarranted attacks at various localities" (point 57; see Appendix 5).

On the side of the PPP it seems that even more unscrupulous motives were at work. The accord was necessary politically to placate the urban areas of Sindh, but some of those close to the PPP leadership at the time, notably the PPP negotiator P.K. Shahani, believe that the party never intended to honour the main points of the agreement (interview, 12 February 1991, Karachi). The MQM quickly came to this conclusion also, and began to exert considerable pressure on the

TABLE 5.5: Issues in the Karachi Declaration of December 1988.

<u>Heading</u>	<u>No. of points</u>
Higher education	10
Local preference in Sindh employment	8
Miscellaneous administrative issues	8
Law and order/justice	6
Urban issues	5
Government efficiency/democracy	5
General economic problems	4
National culture	4
Health	4
Unity in Sindh	2
Census/quotas	2
Repatriation	1

Source: Information Department, Government of Sindh, 1989.

government in the ensuing months.

By March 1989, shooting attacks in Karachi and Hyderabad, often launched by masked youths on motorcycles or in cars, and often claiming innocent people as victims, were becoming all too familiar (Pakistan Times, 22 March 1989, Lahore). By May 1989, the MQM was beginning to

hold public protest rallies, condemning the government for failing to control law and order, and for indiscriminately arresting *Mohajirs* (Star, 21 May 1989, Karachi). On 26 May 1989, the MQM conducted a "Black Day" strike against the government, which it claimed was highly successful (Nation, 27 May 1989, Lahore). On this day, Karachi awoke to countless black flags and banners hanging from businesses and homes sympathetic to the MQM (Nation, *ibid*). The incidents of violence that followed are too numerous to mention individually. By this time, the MQM had also begun to hold negotiations with the opposition IJI, headed by Nawaz Sharif, leading to an agreement of formal alliance between the MQM and IJI in October 1989.

After the Summer of 1989, MQM rhetoric came to resemble that of *Mohajir* leaders in the early 1970s in its warnings of an underground movement for *Sindhudesh*. In September 1989, Altaf Hussain made a now famous statement that "as long as one *Mohajir* is alive, *Sindhudesh* will never be realised" (Leader, 18 September 1989, Karachi). In this manner, the PPP government of Benazir Bhutto was equated with the separatist movement, while the MQM were termed "pro-Pakistan". Thus, Altaf Hussain described one of his first meetings with the opposition leader Nawaz Sharif, on 30 May 1989, as a "meeting between two patriots" (Dawn, 31 May 1989, Karachi). Here, again, we see an emulation of the "loyal community myth" discussed in the previous chapter. Such rhetoric has evident appeal among the *Mohajirs* of Sindh.

In its negotiations with the government, the MQM was pushing certain points relating to greater involvement and autonomy for itself

in the affairs of urban Sindh (see Appendix 6). In February 1989, specific controversial matters were under discussion, such as a demand for the release of all MQM workers arrested to date (Information Department, Government of Sindh, 1989, p.19), on the assumption that they were arrested spuriously. The demand was implausible, and contravened point 10 in the Karachi Declaration, which states that "No one can claim to be outside the bounds or the rule of the law" (ibid, p.2; see Appendix 5). Benazir Bhutto speaks bitterly of this demand now:

"I refused to meet ethnic leaders; Altaf Hussain, G.M. Syed. We only do ideological politics, not ethnic politics. Then later we said 'O.K.', we will sign an accord with you. All they wanted was to get their people out of jail. They managed this and started destabilising the province."

(interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi).

Another demand under discussion in February 1989 and the ensuing months was the issue of the *Biharis* (to whom the MQM referred as "Pakistanis living abroad"; see point 34 of the Karachi declaration). Again, such a population shift would be problematic for a country that has enough problems catering for its existing population, and it seems hardly surprising that nothing could be delivered on the matter.

Such difficulties in the relationship between the PPP and MQM proved insurmountable. On 23 October 1989 the accord was formally broken, according to Altaf Hussain over a failure to resolve the *Bihari* issue (Dawn, 23 October 1989, Karachi). Less than 24 hours later the MQM signed a new accord of 17 points with the IJI, in which "repatriation" of *Biharis*, of whom there were said to be 250,000 (Frontier Post, 26 October 1989, Karachi), was more explicitly discussed.

Accompanying the "crossing of the floor" by the MQM was a change in rhetoric from the days of the Movement's inception, whereby Punjabis and Pakhtuns were now heralded as the allies of *Mohajirs*, and Sindhis (or more precisely *Sindhudesh*) were defined as the enemy. In October 1989 Altaf Hussain criticised the PPP for creating a rift between *Mohajirs* and Punjabis, and claimed that the latter had "put their labour to turn the land of Sindh into a productive one" (Muslim, 26 October 1989, Karachi). Not long afterwards, the MQM leader made a direct appeal to Pakhtuns and Punjabis to "join the MQM in its struggle, and to thwart *Sindhudesh*" (Dawn, 16 November 1989, Karachi). Such rhetoric was almost a complete reversal of that deployed in the August 1986 rally.

The MQM's estrangement from the PPP was complete and soon everything was being blamed on Benazir Bhutto. In November 1989, for example, the belief that the MQM was implicitly working for a bifurcation of Sindh (a goal that the PPP leader attributes to "certain elements" within the movement; interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi) was

dismissed by Altaf Hussain as a "rumour" circulated by the "PPP's disinformation cell" (Morning News, 28 November 1989, Karachi).

On 26 January 1990, the Combined Opposition Parties (COP) held a huge rally at the grounds surrounding the tomb of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. A bizarre argument broke out with BBC Radio's Urdu Service over the size of the audience, which pro-MQM sources put at between 26 lakhs (2.6 million; Daily News, 27 January 1990, Karachi) and Altaf Hussain's absurd figure of 60 lakhs (6 million; Newslite, February 1990, Karachi, p.33)⁹. Just over a week later, the MQM called another paralysing strike in Karachi and Hyderabad, in the middle of a government-called "week of solidarity" for the Muslims of Kashmir. The strike was dubbed "Black Wednesday" by the press (Dawn, 9 February 1990, Karachi) on account of the ethnic violence which accompanied it. The violence is thought to have claimed around 40 lives (Star, 8 February 1990, Karachi).

The pressure continued in April as Altaf Hussain launched a "fast unto death" to protest the "killing of *Mohajirs*" (Daily News, 9 April 1990, Karachi). When the fast ended five days later, after talks with the COP leaders and the Chief Minister of Sindh, Altaf finally redefined his demand for the release of all arrested *Mohajirs* to a call for the "arrest of all murderers" (Dawn, 15 April 1990, Karachi). This change of stance demonstrated the importance of the COP in "refining" the ethnic stance of the MQM, relating to the fact that the COP (which can be equated effectively with the IJI of 1990 onwards) included anti-ethnic "national" parties such as the Pakistan Muslim League and the *Jamaat-i Islami* (who the MQM had previously considered enemies).

The fundamental change in the rhetoric of the MQM at this time also demonstrates the important relationship Altaf Hussain was forging with the IJI, which allowed him to achieve representation in the central government with the elections of 1990. A cynical assessment of this relationship would suggest that the MQM was little more than a vehicle for Altaf Hussain and his colleagues to gain power in the central state. However, I have shown that the MQM capitalised on an existing political void in urban Sindh, and mobilised - with striking success in the early years - around social and intellectual factors that struck chords in the Urdu-speaking community. In particular, the MQM had claimed to be addressing questions of employment, resource mobilisation and identity. The apparent paradox presented by the changes of central ideology in the MQM relate more precisely to the pressures of operating an ethnic-based movement within a mixed and diverse polity. The dropping of the ethnic stance by the MQM was a response to the necessities of political alliance that are synonymous with winning a share in central power in Pakistan. In so doing, however, the MQM seemed to drop its initial *raison d'être* in the eyes of many *Mohajirs*, and thus damaged the essential *legitimacy* of the Movement by 1990. The fact that this was felt by many supporters was demonstrated by the manner in which factionalism has emerged in the MQM following the alliance of the MQM with the IJI. The result has been the formation of a separate wing of the party, which is fundamentally hostile towards the remaining central core of the MQM.

May 1990 saw an incident that served finally to sever the PPP and the MQM into bitterly opposed camps. The "truth" of the "*Pucca Qila* incident" will probably never be known, since each side makes wildly contrasting claims, but the basic sequence of events seems to have been as follows:

- On 27 May 1990, the police moved into the *Pucca Qila* Fort area of Hyderabad, as part of an operation to recover a suspected cache of illegal arms.

- The police encountered a demonstration by women complaining that water to the area had been cut off.

- Firing broke out; the MQM view is that the police fired indiscriminately on the women. The police complain that snipers on rooftops began firing at their party and the police retaliated.

- The army suddenly moved in, to enthusiastic welcome by the *Mohajirs* in *Pucca Qila*, while the police dispersed (reputedly to the enthusiastic reception of Sindhis in the suburbs of the city).

- A wave of violence followed in Karachi, involving both clashes with the police, and individual murders, mostly of Sindhis.

Among the many mysteries of the *Fucca Qila* operation is the timing of the demonstration by the women, and the fact that it was supplied with printed portraits of General Zia to be waved aloft (Herald, June 1990, p.33). Another disturbing aspect was the sudden intervention of the army, and the way it was welcomed by crowds of *Mohajirs*. Meanwhile, the departing police were garlanded by Sindhis at the outskirts of the city (ibid), thus suggesting that even the law enforcement agencies had become ethnically polarised.

The MQM description of the incident, as described in a letter to Amnesty International, is as follows:

"It all started when the police surrounded Pucka Qila in Hyderabad and opened fire indiscriminately killing over 40 people including women and children and wounding hundreds.....*Mohajir* women came out with copies of the Holy Quran (Holy Book of the Muslims) over their heads appealing to the police to stop the massacre. They were in turn shot and killed and the pages of the Holy Book lay scattered all over the ground.....On the 28th May 1990 another 30 people were killed and more than 200 injured in their renewed attacks in Karachi by an extremely prejudiced faction of the police, rangers and PPP's terrorists [sic]."

(MQM, ref: 1414/5/90, 29 May 1990, italics added).

The tone of the letter claims that firstly all the killings in Hyderabad and those that followed in Karachi were committed by PPP agencies, and secondly that the PPP was supporting the formation of *Sindhudesh*. Altaf Hussain claims that the police "shouted slogans of *Jeay-Sindh* and *Sindhu-Desh*" (ibid) as they engaged in the operation. However, many question-marks surround the incident. The Inspector General of Police in Hyderabad (a Pakhtun), for example, has been quoted in Sindhi newspapers as denying that water was cut off before the incident in *Pucca Qila* (Viewpoint, 7 June 1990, Lahore). Furthermore, while the MQM claims that at least 60 people were killed within hours of the start of the disturbances (MQM letter to Amnesty International, ibid), the Inspector General of Police claimed that only 40 new graves had appeared in the city four days after the event, some of which must have been the result of natural deaths (Viewpoint, 26 July 1990, Lahore). Benazir Bhutto, meanwhile, refers us to the official enquiry conducted after the incident, which concluded late in 1990 that only five people had been killed in the incident (interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi).

What is certain is that *Pucca Qila* worsened the ethnic hatred in Sindh and gave a new lease of life to violence in Karachi. Further misery ensued on 15 July 1990 when a series of bomb blasts in Hyderabad, and on a train leaving Karachi, killed over 30 people (Dawn, 16 July 1990, Karachi). The general level of violence was accompanied by largely non-political crime, as the law-enforcement agencies lost their grip on the province. Through 1990, there were 76 reported kidnappings for ransom in Karachi alone, 42 of those between August (when the Bhutto

government was dismissed for failing to control law and order, amongst other charges) and October, when the new elections were held (Herald, January 1991, Karachi, p.83).

The worsening situation helped to precipitate the dismissal of Bhutto's government in August 1990. The MQM approached the ensuing elections with a strikingly non-ethnic rhetoric. Altaf Hussain claimed that the MQM was becoming a "*Mazloom Qaumi Movement*" [National Movement of the "Oppressed"] and that its policy was for the "uplift of the people who are being exploited for last 40 years" (Star, 16 August 1990, Karachi).

MQM Late Phase: 1990-92.

The 1990 elections saw a dramatic surge in the fortunes of the IJI coalition, including a further improvement in the MQM vote over that of 1988 and the installation of a new government at the centre and in the provinces. The Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA, the largest component of which is the PPP⁹) has claimed electoral malpractise (PDA, 1991), but the result stands. The details of the results are shown in Table 5.6.

We can see that the PDA's national vote barely changed, falling from 38.7% in 1988 (PPP) to 36.83% in 1990. In the Sindh Provincial Assembly, the PDA vote also dropped to 35.46% from 45.23% (PPP) in 1988 (Election Commission of Pakistan, 1990, Vol. II; 1988, Vol. II), but the PDA remained the largest single party. Only an alliance of anti-PDA

TABLE 5.6: National/Provincial election results, 1990.

<u>Party</u>	<u>Vote (%)</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Seats (%)</u>
<u>National Assembly seats, PAKISTAN</u>			
IJI	37.37	106	51.21
PDA	36.83	44	21.26
MQM	5.54	15	7.25
<u>National Assembly seats, SINDH</u>			
PDA	41.80	23	56.10
MQM	26.82	15	36.59
IJI	8.81	3	7.32
<u>Provincial Assembly seats, SINDH</u>			
PDA	35.46	46	46.0
MQM	28.94	28	28.0
IJI	8.46	6	6.0
SNA (HJ)*	1.44	1	1.0

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan, 1990, Vol. II.

* - *Sindh National Alliance, (Hamid Jatoi Group).*

could deny Benazir Bhutto the Sindh government. The alliance was masterminded by Jam Sadiq Ali, a controversial PPP dissident, who encouraged the MQM to sit in coalition with Sindhi and Pakhtun nationalists (the SNA and ANP), Islamic parties (namely *Jamaat-i Islami*, part of IJI) and other remnants of the Zia era.

The price that Altaf Hussain paid to deny Benazir Bhutto power was described in the following terms:

"They started to say, 'broaden the MQM - don't limit it just to *Mohajirs*'. That's why we started to address all downtrodden people of Pakistan. In future we will launch '*Muttaheda Qaumi Movement*'."

(*interview*, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

The ambiguous "they" refers to the IJI government with whom the MQM has been able to hold office, as a close advisor to the Prime Minister explained (*interview*, 21 February 1991, Islamabad). It seems that the MQM's move away from strident ethnic politics was part of its bargain with the IJI. This factor caused some embarrassment shortly after the signing of the MQM-IJI accord in October 1989. In December 1988, Mian Zahid Sarfraz of the IJI told reporters that the MQM had dropped its nationality demand (*Dawn*, 11 December 1989, Karachi). Less than 24 hours later, Azim Ahmed Tariq announced that Sarfraz "was either labouring under a delusion or ... his statement had been misrepresented

by the press" (Dawn, 12 December 1989, Karachi). By March 1990 however, Altaf Hussain was telling the press that the Movement would no longer "insist" on recognition of *Mohajirs* as a nationality (Frontier Post, 2 March 1990, Lahore). The brief confusion could mark the fact that Azim Tariq was not as willing to denounce the "ethnic stance" as the IJI had hoped. By early 1993, however, Azim Tariq was heading Altaf Hussain's part of the broken MQM, while other leaders were leading a rival "pro-ethnic" faction of the MQM.

The explanation for the MQM's ethnic stance in earlier times was given by the party leader, when he was asked why the name and purpose of the MQM had so far been restricted to just *Mohajirs*:

"The answer is if you want to do something for the betterment of the people, you will first start from your own home, your own locality, and where you live. Only when you have achieved that goal in your area will you spread to other areas."

(Nation, 19 January 1990, Lahore).

Here we see the proposed sequence of events that would lead to the *Muttaheda Qaumi Movement*, as described by Altaf Hussain (interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi):

1. The MQM proves that it is a "new political phenomenon" in Pakistan by placing young, "middle-class" representatives in the Assemblies, and by conducting its work in a disciplined and scrupulous manner, avoiding all bribery, scandal and "horse-trading".

2. Representatives from *mazloomi* [oppressed] communities in other parts of Pakistan who are not adequately represented by the existing political structure, organise themselves and approach the MQM to negotiate an alliance.

3. The *Muttaheda Qaumi Movement* is launched formally, composed of groups in all provinces following the same disciplined code as the MQM, to contest for the rights of the *gharibon* [downtrodden] in a national forum.

I have shown that as far as the MQM is concerned, the first of these phases has been effectively completed, since the Movement has achieved a large mandate in *Mohajir* areas. By 1993 the MQM held every National Assembly seat but one in Karachi, and both of the urban seats in Hyderabad. The MQM has also placed representatives not only in the Provincial and National Assemblies, but in the Senate (upper house of parliament), and in key civic agencies. MQM workers claim that the second phase is now well underway, with community representatives approaching Altaf Hussain from other provinces (*discussion with MQM administrative secretary, 19 January 1991, Karachi*). To emphasise this

broadening of MQM appeal across communities, I was continually told by advisors, workers and Assembly ministers of the MQM during a visit to Altaf Hussain in *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital, Nazimabad (19 January 1991), that floods of non-*Mohajirs* had been coming to visit the stricken leader in his hospital bed. I was shown a long queue of people hoping to see the MQM leader, and told:

"All these visitors are generally poor people.....There are not just *Mohajirs* here but others - Punjabis and *Pathans* [Pakhtuns]. Altaf cares for these people - that's why they come."

(discussion with MQM technical advisor, 19 January 1991, Karachi).

Judging by the dress of the visitors, however, and the manner in which those randomly selected from the queue could usually speak Urdu, it seems clear that much as the Movement might like otherwise, very few non-*Mohajirs* would associate with the MQM, and few would venture beyond armed MQM guards into such a shrine to the Movement as the *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital has become on occasions. In these terms, the suggestion that large groups of non-*Mohajirs* support the Movement is probably another element of political "mythology".

The implementation of the *Muttaheda Qaumi Movement* programme led to serious internal differences in the MQM. Altaf Hussain was in hospital in January, nominally for "myalgia", although a second visit

came at the end of February, the purpose of which was the subject of many rumours. "Herald" magazine claimed to have "hospital sources" that said the leader had been poisoned (March 1991, Karachi). This particular explanation may be apocryphal, but there is no denying the fact that the *Muttaheda* scheme has exposed violent differences within the Movement. "As you know," explained Altaf Hussain from his hospital bed, "we have some problems at the moment" (interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

The rift exposed a "dissident group" within the MQM leadership, who wanted to retain the original militant *Mohajir* subnationalist policy and also were opposed to broadening the base of the Movement beyond *Mohajirs*. The dissident group involved nine MQM members, headed by Bader Iqbal (MPA and provincial transport minister), Aamir Khan and Afaq Ahmed (joint secretaries of the MQM). "Dawn" (1 March 1991, Karachi) linked the subsequent resignation of these figures to the suspension in February of APMSO secretary-general Shahid Qureshi, suggesting that he was also a supporter of the dissident faction. Other sources suggested that the controversy had arisen over cases of corruption, possibly involving the late Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali (Frontier Post, 4 March 1991, Lahore).

The incident caused some bad publicity for the MQM, particularly when Bader Iqbal claimed that his resignation on 20 February had been obtained "under duress" (Dawn, 5 March 1991, Karachi). Following the incident all 27 MQM MPAs handed in their resignations to Sindh Assembly speaker Razique Khan to show that the MQM should not be seen to be party to scandal or intrigue. The resignations were rejected, but four

MPAs involved with the dissident group in addition to two MNAs were subsequently sacked by the MQM (Herald, March 1991, Karachi, p.47). The purge involved the complete dissolution of the "Zone A" Committee of the MQM (Karachi East; Landhi, Korangi, Shah Faisal Colony and Malir; Dawn, 8 March 1991, Karachi).

Open reporting of the split, and various speculative theories in the press, led to another bout of press intimidation in March 1991. For a few days it seemed as if the violence had returned to Karachi as newspaper distributors were threatened, bundles of newspapers were stolen or burnt, a journalist was severely beaten, and the offices of the Urdu daily "*Takbeer*" suffered an arson attack. Altaf Hussain freely accused other groups such as *Jamaat-i Islami* and the PPP of being involved in the incidents (ibid, p.24). This was despite the fact that he had announced boycotts of "Herald", "*Takbeer*", "Dawn" and "The Star" newspapers (*Qaumi Akbar*, 16 March 1991, Karachi; and *Star*, 20 March 91, Karachi), and received a delegation of the All Pakistan Newspaper Society (APNS) and Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) at the *Markaz* [headquarters] in Azizabad which was followed by an abrupt cessation of the violence (Herald, April 1991, Karachi, p.25). The APMSO also tried to turn the internal split to the MQM's advantage, claiming that the Movement was the only political force in Pakistan to follow strict codes of "accountability" (Dawn, 12 March 1991, Karachi).

The dissidents' return to Karachi in July 1992 led to gun-battles between rival members of the Movement in Karachi East, until army units were dispatched to end the fighting. The operation has not

only marked a loss of patience on behalf of the army for the MQM, but has also exposed elements of militarisation and violence within the MQM that the Movement has always denied, such as the use of *kbels* [subterranean torture chambers] and hidden stocks of arms.

The internal problems have left the MQM in a state of limbo since March 1991, with Altaf Hussain continuing to spend much time either in *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital or in London. With its position as largest single party in the provincial administration of Sindh, furthermore, arrests and resignations have led the Sindh ministry also to be somewhat in limbo, a situation only partially resolved by the dismissal of the national and all provincial ministries in July 1993 pending new elections in October of that year. Meanwhile, tame newspaper articles headed "By our staff reporter" have repeatedly expressed the sentiments of the Movement's central leadership, such as the following:

"He [Altaf Hussain] said MQM was a patriotic party which had been raising its voice for the rights of poor and the suppressed people of the country without discrimination."

(The News, 23 January 1992, Karachi).

Similarly, the leader was quoted as saying:

"The days are approaching fast when all Punjabis,

Pakhtuns, Sindhis, *Mohajirs* and Baluchis will unitedly
end the exploitation once for all"

(Dawn, 23 January 1992, Karachi).

By 1992, such an expansion into a party for oppressed people of Pakistan, whatever their ethnic community, was the policy proposal of the central core of the leadership headed by Altaf Hussain and Azim Tariq. Meanwhile, the dissident MQM group, calling itself the *Haqiqi* Group ["genuine" group¹⁰] has become a semi-permanent feature, based principally in Islamabad in the manner of an administration in exile. Here, it has close relations with the MRC (whose leader, Ishtiaq Azhar, sits in the Senate in the capital), and makes frequent public statements, such as a condemnation of G.M. Syed's plans for "*Sindhudesh*" (The News, 20 January 1992, Karachi). Such language closely echoes that of the days of violence in Karachi and Hyderabad between 1988 and 1990.

The two factions of the MQM can broadly be equated with the difference between the Movement in its early days, and the Movement after the politics of alliance was undertaken in order to win political representation at other levels. That large numbers of *Mohajirs* in Karachi support the "dissidents", to the point where they are willing to take up arms against their former colleagues, reiterates the point that there is a constituency for the ethnic, subnationalist politics presented by the MQM at its outset. This constituency clearly still feels the alienation - and violent reaction - that a larger *Mohajir* community

appeared to feel through the 1970s and 1980s. In Hyderabad, furthermore, the conspicuous lack of a split in the party structure or among its supporters suggests that the majority of *Mohajirs* in Hyderabad feel differently to the supporters of the dissidents in Karachi. Alternatively, loyalty to Altaf Hussain and his proposals may be stronger in Hyderabad than the will to protect the early policies of ethnic *Mohajir* activism. The depth of the split will be tested for the first time in the elections of 7 October 1993.

The most recent developments for the MQM have thus been extremely damaging. Altaf Hussain left for London, in Autumn 1991, where he remains as of mid-1993. The strength of the dissidents will depend on the support they can gain from either the existing MQM, or from the IJI government, which has allowed the MQM to hold provincial and national office since 1990. It is not inconceivable that some sort of *rapprochement* can be engineered, although in 1992 this did not seem likely given the violence of the confrontations in Karachi between supporters of the opposing factions. Meanwhile, Azim Tariq reluctantly heads what is left of Altaf Hussain's MQM, which has been severely undermined by the apparent retirement of its *Quaid*. Worst of all for Tariq, the crucial battle for favour with the important institutions of the central state is being won by the *Haqiqi* group, who clearly command the support of the army and its related intelligence directorates (Herald, January 1993, Karachi, p.60). Since the army is the most powerful institution in the State of Pakistan, this relationship will prove very important for the "dissident" MQM.

The split in the MQM highlights its ambiguous nature, which in turn relates to the demands imposed by winning real power in Pakistan. The MQM has fluctuated between being a "movement" and a "party". Initially, the MQM was very much the former, concentrating on its "ethnic" rhetoric. Altaf Hussain's *Muttaheda* proposal indicates that he wishes the MQM to move towards the status a political party proper. The complexity of the problem, and the emergence of the internal schism, relate in part to the fundamental shifts and apparent confusions of MQM policy and programme over the years. The split has also highlighted the political needs, and grievances, of some of those who have rallied to the *Mohajir* flag. Those needs and grievances have involved a complex combination of physical problems relating to unemployment, education or access to resources and representation, with cultural and social factors such as a sense of "ethnic" assertiveness. In these terms, the *Mohajir* community of Sindh has been shown, politically at least, to be far from a unitary and monolithic community.

5.4 POLICY AND IDEOLOGY OF THE MQM

The MQM has failed to develop a consistent ideology over time; indeed, there have been several reversals of policy or fundamental changes of direction. Clapham remarks that this is not unusual in developing-world politics - indeed it could be said to be an integral part of countries where Western-style ideological politics is not strong (Clapham, 1985, pp.79-80). I would argue that the reason ethnic political

groups seem to change their spots so readily in the political arena relates to the fact that ethnic communities themselves are not monolithic, but are "fluid" (Clapham, *ibid*, p.80). A politics mobilising "ethnic groups", therefore, must exercise a "... clientalist politics expressed through the medium of ethnicity", if it is to maintain any form of unity and coherence (*ibid*). In other words, the policy of ethnic groups must be fully responsive to changes and developments in the communities they represent. When a party or movement aims to interface with other community and political groups in order to gain access to power, the bargaining and trade-offs that constitute a clientalist politics become ever more complex. (Clapham defines "clientalism" as a system of securing wider political support within the framework of a "fragile" state and a considerable socio-economic gap between political patrons and the majority of the client population; Clapham, 1985, pp.54-7. I would argue that the MQM attempts this in its politics by stressing the importance of the local [urban] state, and by holding out to its supporters [clients] the prospect of employment and/or other rewards in this patron-controlled political arena).

The major policies and aims presented by the MQM can be analysed in the context of the three major chronological periods in the Movement's development. My argument is that during the first two periods, the MQM acted principally as an ethnic pressure-group. The change between these two periods primarily involved the object of opposition within an overarching ethnic rhetoric. The third period saw a more fundamental shift in the *raison d'être* of the Movement, whereby a

fundamental transformation from "movement" to "party" was claimed to be underway. The following are broadly the three periods of policy, derived from the dominant rhetoric delivered by the party during each period:

- Period 1, 1984-88; ethnic assertion of *Mohajirs* (including demand for nationality recognition), battling the "discrimination of *Mohajirs*", parallel status to Sindhis as a subnationality, opposition to immigrants into urban Sindh other than *Biharis*, including suggestions for "repatriation".

- Period 2, 1988-90; pro-Pakistan, and subsequent "thwarting of *Sindhudesh*"; claims of "massacres" being committed in Sindh, violent estrangement from the PPP, which the MQM claims is tantamount to a Sindhi nationalist agency. Much talk of "martyrs", wrongful imprisonment of *Mohajirs*, and demands for "compensation" from the government.

- Period 3, 1990-1992; *Muttaheda Qaumi Movement*, pro-poor, confronting feudalism, creating "real democracy", "realism and practicalism". Emergence of dissident *Haqiqi Group*, whose policy is a return to that of period one above.

Rhetoric has been more forthcoming than detailed manifestos in the history of the MQM. The rhetoric is delivered principally in pamphlets and sheets in Urdu issued from MQM offices around Karachi and Hyderabad, and more recently from a so-called "*Mohajir academy*" in

Liaquatabad (which appears to be little more than a printing press). Before 1988, these documents, in addition to press interviews and statements, conveyed the ideas of the Movement, without presenting any detailed economic, social or political programme as such. A key factor of the Movement's policy, which makes the MQM very much a "movement", is the value placed on the words and thoughts of the *Quaid*, Altaf Hussain. When pressing for details of party policy over time, I was continually referred to newspaper and television interviews given by Altaf Hussain, and pamphlets issued under his name. These were seen as an adequate source of central MQM policy over time, and in this way the Movement was effectively equated with its leader.

In November 1988, the MQM produced the 25-point *Qarardad-e Maqasid* [Charter of Resolutions] in preparation for the general elections of 15 November. This was the first detailed "manifesto" of the Movement in both English and Urdu. A month later the Charter was followed by the Karachi Declaration of 59 points; the accord between the MQM and PPP. By 1991, these documents were considered by the MQM to be out of date, although a new formal manifesto has not yet been prepared (*interview with MQM worker, 6 February 1991, Karachi*).

The two documents of 1988 indicate the "Movement's" failure to present a detailed programme. The Charter of Resolution, for example, concentrated either on "local preference" issues for urban Sindh, or on very specific and somewhat trivial matters. For example, point 17 suggests that the postal tariff for India should be brought into line with that of other neighbouring countries (see Appendix 7). The Charter

suggested a parochial vision rooted principally in Karachi, while the Declaration dealt with broader issues in a vague manner, as shown by point 5:

"Pakistan Peoples Party and Mohajir Qaumi Movement stand for the rights of all oppressed people and different segments of the society."

(see Appendix 5).

Here we see the beginnings of the wider vision that has become encapsulated in the *Muttaheda Qaumi Movement* idea, yet the rhetoric hardly delivers precise details of how the vision is to be won. The grand sentiments were somewhat negated by a perspective on Sindh and no further. Indeed, of the 59 points of the Declaration, 20 deal specifically with Sindh.

The rhetoric of Urdu

The Urdu documents provide an appreciation of the "language" of the Movement, and of the changes in rhetoric over time. Here again there is a tendency for dramatic and grand vocabulary to be more prominent than hard details. This matter is an interesting one, relating to the poetic and literary heritage of the Urdu language, around which *Mohajir* society is partly structured.

I argued in the previous chapter that the notion of *Mohajir* ethnicity conveyed by the MQM involves a specific Urdu heritage. This relates to a northern Indian *Mughal* history, to which such figures as Iqbal were important both in his capacity as a poet and as a protagonist of Muslim autonomy in India. The nuances of such an Urdu heritage are displayed in the Urdu party literature of the MQM.

In the first period, *qaumiat* [nationality] was a recurrent theme. "*Mohajir Qaumiat aur Zameen*" [*Mohajir* nationality and territory] by MQM secretary-general Dr. Imran Farooq, explains the importance of language and other factors to land or territory. There follows an appraisal of how such features underpin *Mohajir* nationality. In this way, an implicit comparison is made to Sindhi identity, to which *zameen* is far more important. The document shows that the early period of the Movement's development involved in-depth analysis of the "nationality" question, and the nature of *Mohajir* identity and community. The first edition of this document was published in October 1986, when 1,000 copies were printed. By April 1988, 5,000 copies of the third edition were being printed, rising to 10,000 by January 1989 with the fourth edition (MQM, January 1989).

A postscript to the fourth edition by Altaf Hussain stresses the importance of *taqat* [power] and *ittehad* [unity], both important to the Movement in the light of internal differences within the MQM, and rival *Mohajir* organisations. The postscript explains:

"In the world the only nations that progress and

achieve respect are those who have strength; the weak and confused nations always suffer destruction and disgrace. The strength of the nation depends on the unity of kindred spirits, and if a part of *Mohajir* territory is lost and our riches depleted, it will be necessary for our powers to be united on one platform, and your strength will serve as an example."

(Altaf Hussain, MQM, January 1989, author's translation).

Taqat relates to the contentious aspect of militarisation in the *Mohajir* movement, beginning with the APMSO in the late 1970s. Some argue that the movement had no choice but to be militant and strong, to avoid the *tabahi aur zillat* [destruction and disgrace] that would have resulted from existing rival groups being well-armed (interview with minority leader, 1 March 1991, Karachi). The MQM's policy on arms is closer to that of the United States, where citizens have the right to carry firearms and licences are readily issued, than to that of Britain, where the granting of licences is very restricted. Because of a history of British colonialism the British policy prevails generally in Pakistan. Point 3 of the Charter of Resolution demands that the issuing of arms licences be made as easy as the granting of television or radio licences (Appendix 7).

The importance of *ittehad* under the MQM banner is repeatedly stressed in party documents and statements. The following extract explains the policy:

"*MOHAJIR CONSENSUS*:

We believe that a serviceable *Mohajir* unity and a strong foundation will inevitably deliver the prize of an agreement and consensus within the *Mohajir* community."

(MQM, (undated) "*Hum aur hamarey sooch*"; [Us and our Ideas]; author's translation)

The *yakjharti* [consensus] sought by the MQM is a unanimous vote for the Movement. Large rallies aim to display effectively such a unity to the outside world. In a rather more sinister light, the intimidation of rival groups such as MIT or JUP in Karachi and Hyderabad by armed supporters of the MQM in the early years of the Movement, such that the MIT has not dared to hold a rally in Karachi since 1987, might also achieve the goal of suggesting that the MQM is the one representative of *Mohajirs*. I have suggested, however, that the continuing existence of these rival groups, in addition to the emergence of factionalism within the MQM, suggest that there is not complete consensus among *Mohajirs* on the MQM's status as undisputed leader of the community.

The stressing of importance of strength and unity relates to the perceived pressures exerted on the *Mohajirs*, which are described by the MQM in the following terms:

"Mohajir: The first generation has been buried in this land, the second has grown into its youth, and the third-born have still not been accepted as 'sons of the soil'.

Mohajir: Under the quota system and domicile, the sanctuary of admissions and government and semi-government positions has been removed from them.

Mohajir: Even in their big areas of residence their due rights have been taken away."

(MQM, (undated), "*Mohajir Qaumi Movement?*"; author's translation).

The *mazlūm*ist of *Mohajirs* is explained in physical and psychological terms. Firstly, the Sindhi hosts of the community are claimed still not to have "accepted" the *Mohajirs*, which has served as a defining force in the emergence of the *Mohajir* identity in itself. In these terms, the MQM is claiming that such contingent processes in community identity construction, such as the approach of neighbour communities, are of great importance. Again, this theory reminds us of such work as Akbar Ahmed's on "district ethnicity" (A.S. Ahmed, 1990b). It is also interesting to note that the MQM's statement above makes a

connection between the original post-Partition Muslim migrants, and the Urdu-speakers of contemporary Sindh, by identifying the two groups as merely generations in the same "community". Thus, as discussed in the previous chapter, the temporal boundaries between *Mohajirs* are so blurred that the term *Mohajir* can be appropriated for present-day Urdu-speakers.

Secondly, the physical factor of public-sector employment and admissions to higher education is cited, whereby non-locals are accused of stealing jobs and places "under the Quota System and domicile" (either through the general unfairness of the Quota System, or through clandestine domicile arrangements). These grievances are bound-up with the conditions of society in the local urban state in Karachi and Hyderabad, which encompass the operation of clandestine syndicate organisations or "mafias", with whom the MQM has waged a battle for local power (I will return to the local urban state in Karachi in Section Three of the dissertation). Finally, an interesting reference is made to "land", not in the sense of *zameen* as the Sindhi leaders would say, but merely in the sense of *ābādi ke bāse*: 'ilaqā [big areas of residence]. Thus, by concentrating physically in urban Sindh, the *Mohajirs* can claim to be owed certain special rights (*huqūq*) in those areas. This is an interesting connection of community with geographical boundaries (albeit vague, unspecified ones), that becomes significant in the context of policies for the partition in Sindh (which some strands of the *Mohajir* movement, such as the MIT, support).

The term "sons of the soil" is a familiar one across Asia, which perhaps explains why it is written in Urdu and then translated into English in the above document. In Malaysia, the Malays have used exactly the same term ("*bhumiputra*"; Weiner, 1978, p.16) to differentiate themselves from supposedly less loyal communities (by virtue of a shorter history of settlement in Malaysia) such as the Chinese. In India, Weiner has analysed how the term is used widely in ethnic politics (Weiner, 1978). In Sindh, "sons of the soil" was a familiar and contentious term in the 1970s, when friction grew between the *Mohajirs* and the supposedly pro-Sindhi Bhutto government. At the time of the Language Bill, Bhutto referred to himself as a "son of the soil", and explained that as a consequence he could "not betray his own land" (Dawn, 16 July 1972, Karachi). Here, Bhutto was clearly referring to Sindh, and was making a classicly Sindhi nationalist connection between the "land" of the province and Sindhi culture in particular. Such statements clearly alienated the *Mohajir* community.

The poetic use of Urdu in the description of such matters is aptly displayed in the document shown in Figure 5.4, which describes the denial of *huqooq* to *Mohajirs* as "*MQM mazloomiat ka sambal hay*" [The MQM has flowered from oppression]; (MQM, February 1989). Here, *sambal* is difficult to translate, broadly meaning "flower", but a specific type of flower. The word brings a romantic, poetic sense to political discourse, which might seem unusual to the European observer. The MQM's statement, printed on a map of Pakistan (including all of Jammu and Kashmir) reflects two of the themes that the MQM has raised fairly continuously.

Firstly, the Movement is presented as "pro-Pakistan" (within which disputed Muslim areas such as Kashmir and Jammu are assumed to belong to Pakistan), and, secondly, the Movement is assumed to be battling valiantly against oppression.

The turning-point towards a *Muttaheda Qaumi Movement* in the late 1980s involved an extension of the concept of *mazloomiat* from the *Mohajir* community to the peoples of Pakistan as a whole, as implied in the above document. The rhetoric of this latest phase of MQM development is portrayed in an "interview" with Altaf Hussain dated September 1990, printed at the "*Mohajir Academy*" in Liaquatabad (which seemed to have started operation around late 1988). The document, of which 2,500 were printed, claims simply "*Hum nay gharibon ka sar kucha kiya hai*" [We have made the downtrodden hold their heads in pride]; (MQM, September 1990). Here, the emphasis in the rhetoric clearly shifts away from the *Mohajirs* and the various oppressions they are said to have suffered, to the *gharibon* [downtrodden, destitute] of Pakistan in general. The new phase involves a battle-cry against "feudals" and *ijaradarriya* [monopolists, big businesses]. This change of emphasis in the rhetoric has led to the schism of 1991 between Altaf and his immediate supporters, and those who wish to assert the rights of *Mohajirs* alone and pursue the concept of *qaumiat* [nationality].

Ideology and eclecticism

Since 1990 the MQM has also claimed to be following a "new" doctrine termed "Realism and Practicalism". This was one of the main themes raised in author's second meeting with Altaf Hussain (13 March 1991, *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital, Karachi), and it is modelled on the changing broad ideologies of the late twentieth century, notably the collapse of communist states. In 1991, an MQM press conference explained in detail the philosophy of Realism and Practicalism (MQM, 1991a), the main points of which are as follows:

1. All major political ideologies have changed over time.
2. Within certain political philosophies, different systems are necessary for different places; for example Mao's form of Marxism for China. Culture, values, environment and so on vary across space and time.
3. The world had two main political philosophies; capitalism and socialism. It would be wrong to totally reject both.
4. Socialism's failing is that it ignores "human nature", thus workers are de-motivated.
5. In capitalism, greed accumulates, and *nauzobillah* [self-sanctification] becomes prevalent. Also, the rich capitalist countries at the UN gain veto rights, while the 40 Muslim countries have none.
6. In Pakistan, feudalism is prevalent and the "priveleged class" rules the country.

7. Fundamentally similar Asian countries such as South Korea or Malaysia have shown great development since Independence.

8. Feudalism and capitalism are linked through the bureaucracy.

9. The MQM wants to "end the rule of the 2%, and create the rule of 98%" (ibid, pp.2-10), that is, to end the rule of feudalism.

The "philosophy" attempts to confront Pakistan's particular problem of "feudalism" in which waderas and bureaucrats hold central power, while noting the perceived failures of socialism (inefficiency) and capitalism (western hegemony and greed). Thus, while much of the MQM's philosophy sounds vague and populist, in terms of overturning the elite and putting capital and political representation into the hands of ordinary Pakistanis, the aim is to work within the bounds of "capitalism" and democracy. It is interesting that Islam is rarely mentioned by the MQM, except occasionally in condemnation of traditional Islamic political parties.

In this way, the MQM can be described as an avowedly secular party, like the PPP, in separating religious affairs from the political sphere. In another interpretation, held by former *Jang* editor S.M. Taqi, the MQM deliberately avoids religious issues and rhetoric to avoid splitting its audience along sectarian lines (interview, 13 January 1991, Karachi).

However, the deliberately eclectic nature of Realism and Practicalism leaves the philosophy open to charges of lack of clarity and incisiveness. The greatest failing of the philosophy is the fact that

the MQM has become a coalition member of the IJI. The Movement therefore stands alongside *waderas* and *Pirs* such as the Jatois of the NPP (the largest land-owning dynasty in Sindh), religious parties, and industrialists, bureaucrats and technocrats of the Zia era. The IJI, and its principal component the PML, symbolises the traditional power structure that Altaf Hussain claims to want to overturn. The sole purpose of such a paradoxical alliance is to deny power to the hated PPP.

In these terms, the lack of legitimacy of the MQM as a true *movement* is transparent. While the populist rhetoric has garnered the support of many "ordinary" citizens on the streets, the MQM's alliance with feudal landowners, Islamic groups, former ministers of the Zia regime and the pro-army Pakistan Muslim League (PML) has clearly shown that access to power in the central and local state has been the primary concern of the MQM leadership.

I would argue that there are two ways to see these somersaults in policy by the MQM, depending again on whether the state is seen as a passive political actor, or as an active political arena. In the former case, the MQM's approach to policy formation could be seen as little more than a cynical attempt to frame a deliberately flexible and non-committal ideology that is aimed solely at the winning of personal power. With the state taken as an active agency, the changes in MQM policy over time reflect the demands imposed by the necessities of alliance in contemporary Pakistan's political system. With the aim of winning power and representation, the policy and ideology of a

political movement must respond to the pressures and demands of the principal axes of power in the state. In Pakistan in 1990, the key to power for the MQM was represented by the Islamic Democratic Alliance (IJI) - a collection of bureaucratic, clerical, landowning and ex-army forces.

But an alliance with these forces has been rejected by a major part of the MQM's constituency in urban Sindh, leading to factionalism. I would argue that this process points to the nature of the political void that exists in Sindh's urban areas, and more importantly, to the way that this void has continued to exist through and possibly beyond the life of the MQM.

The MQM, "democracy" and the press

A notion of "democracy" is important to the MQM, and is enshrined in both the Karachi Declaration of December 1988 (points 1 and 3; Appendix 5), and more obliquely in the Charter of Resolution (points 9 and 10; Appendix 7). However, some of the policies of the Movement have been at variance with a Western view of democracy, which largely supports the freedom of the press. Press intimidation has now been openly undertaken by the MQM on four occasions; in June 1987 (boycott of "Jang"), June 1989 ("Jang" again with a one-day boycott), January 1990 ("Qaumi Akbar" offices occupied by MQM militants for five days) and March 1991 (boycott of "Takbeer", "Herald", "Dawn" and "The

Star"). I will describe these episodes, and then offer my analysis of the political processes they represent.

The "*Qaumi Akbar*" episode followed Altaf Hussain taking a dislike to the amount of coverage the MQM was receiving (Dawn, 14 January 1990, Karachi), and the lifting of the boycott was followed by a particularly distasteful episode in which the newspaper printed a picture on the front page for five consecutive days of its editor bowing before Altaf Hussain (Herald, April 1991, Karachi, p.28). In these terms, Altaf Hussain's powers of control over Karachi's institutions such as newspapers were conveyed powerfully to the public.

The March 1991 episode was as a result of reports in the press about the internal split in the MQM. The boycotts and violence in March had followed a grim warning in the form of an infamous letter to the "Herald" magazine, from the Senator and President of the Mohajir Rabita Council (MRC) in February 1991. The letter stated:

"This is to bring to your notice the constantly abusive and misleading articles being published in both Herald and Newline about the MQM.

To hurt and violate the sentiments of the urban population of Sindh can result in serious repercussions for the press with a bias against the MQM. Remember that journalists' excesses are committed through their pens, while the public has other means at its disposal."

(Herald, February 1991, Karachi, p.11).

A proof of the letter had been shown to the author prior to its despatch by an MQM women's worker, Nasreen Jaleel. When asked if the Movement should not be able to accept some criticism on occasion, Jaleel replied "the press always comments on the bad points - we have to make them point out the good things we are doing also" (interview, 24 January 1991, Karachi). Jaleel thus shows that despite denials of complicity in press intimidation, at least some members of the Movement feel that it is a justifiable policy. As a result of the stance of the MQM on this matter, symbolic projects like "cleanliness weeks" have gained a great importance for the press, who risk chastisement or worse if they fail to report on the events to the MQM's liking.

The result has been a generally effective intimidation of the Karachi press since 1986. The editor of a leading English-language daily revealed to me that most published articles on the MQM are either handed to the newspaper complete by the Movement (in the case of the Urdu newspapers), or the newspaper is "advised" on what to write (more common with the English newspapers, which have a smaller circulation; *discussion* with the editor of a major Karachi daily newspaper, 20 January 1992, Karachi). Unfortunately, such intimidation of the media, which is hardly democratic, is also followed by the state in general, which has a Ministry of Information and an official "media policy".

"Herald" again came under fire at the end of 1991, when it published a feature on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) under the

heading "Kidnapping, extortion, torture, rape..... Can the CIA under the Jam-Marwat Combine get away with anything ?" (Herald, October 1991, Karachi). Copies of the magazine were forcibly confiscated from distributors in Karachi on publication (PPP, 1992a, p.39). Because the MQM is a member of the ruling IJI coalition, this episode showed a sinister linkage between MQM-sponsored intimidation and the central state. The matter also demonstrated the power of political leadership over the perpetrators of the violence on the streets. On this occasion, the thugs were acting against an article criticising the government rather than the MQM directly. The episode also highlighted the importance of the reverse relationship between the central government and the MQM. By allying with the Movement, the IJI has been able to exercise a strict control on the explosive urban areas of Sindh. Many leaders have learnt to their cost the dangers of losing such control in Karachi in particular.

These episodes highlight several important elements of society in metropolitan Pakistan. Firstly, the MQM was defining its own notion of democracy when attacking the press, which revolved around forcibly changing the balance of selected news towards what the Movement itself felt was important and should be presented to the public. In political terms, therefore, the episodes underlined the patrimonialist nature of MQM politics, in that Altaf and his immediate colleagues decided - and enforced - their definition of important information and how it was disseminated in the public domain.

Secondly, some of the episodes also highlighted a socio-cultural differentiation between sections of the *Mohajir* community in Karachi, which can almost be described as a class differentiation. I am referring in particular to the attacks on the English-language publications such as "Dawn" and "Herald". These attacks were conducted on newspapers that are disseminated among a fairly small segment of the population (those who regularly use English), and which are little read among the real powerbase of MQM support, which I will demonstrate in the following chapter is concentrated in the semi-educated industrial and commercial workforce. The hostility of the attacks suggested a rejection of the Urdu-speakers who work for and read these publications, and thus, in a sense, their exclusion from the *Mohajir* community as defined by the MQM.

The attacks on English-language publications can thus be distinguished from those on the Urdu papers, which were aimed at actually influencing and/or impressing the actual supporters of the MQM, and underlining to them the nature of the battle for the institutions of the local state that was being waged by the Movement. Interestingly, there is a dividing line between the attacks on Urdu papers, and those on English ones, falling around the end of 1990. I would argue that this dividing line corresponds with the time that the MQM won major representation at all levels following alliance with the IJI, and thus reflects the fact that the Movement thought much of the battle in the cities, for its own support at least, had been won by this time.

The secessionist dimension

An accusation often levelled at the MQM is that it is trying illicitly to effect an administrative or other form of separation of Karachi and/or Hyderabad from Sindh province. Several observers have claimed the existence of some sort of "hidden hand" working in Sindh, or a "hidden agenda" of the MQM. Jam Saqi, leader of the Sindh *Hari* Committee, claims that the MQM is working to achieve "free port" status for Karachi, like that of the city of Hong Kong (Newsline, February 1990, p.46). This is a theory held also by a prominent academic at Quaid-i Azam University, Islamabad (interview, 18 February 1991, Islamabad). Benazir Bhutto, meanwhile, claims that "certain elements within the MQM" are working for a division of the province (interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi), while the leader of the Punjabi faction of the PPI, Ghulam Sarwar Awan, accuses the MQM as a whole of working for this goal (Muslim, 16 February 1990, Karachi).

However, MIT chief Dr. Saleem Haider claims that the fact that Altaf Hussain did *not* want a division of Sindh was the very reason that the MIT was formed by Haider, with the express purpose of partition (interview, 11 February 1991, Karachi). The matter is clearly another one about which there is a lack of unanimity within the MQM. Altaf Hussain and the *Muttaheda* faction do have their sights set on a broader leadership within a united Pakistan. However, the emergence of the *Haqiqi Group*, and their serious differences with Altaf, in addition to the words of Dr. Saleem Haider of the MIT, suggest that it could be the dissidents

of the MQM who are the "hidden hand" wanting an ethnic division of the province. Seen thus, the matter of secession could be the one that best defines the two major strands of the *Mohajir* movement.

The mayor of Hyderabad, Aitab Ahmed Sheikh, has hinted at an "administrative separation" of Sindhis and *Mohajirs* (Herald, June 1990, Karachi, p.48). Similarly, Karachi mayor Dr. Farooq Sattar described the situation as follows:

"Karachi is the lifeline of the country, the economic giant of the country, so it cannot be seen in limited terms; it needs to have federal and 'special' status as well as provincial status."

(interview, 26 February 1991, Karachi).

The mayor suggested such experiments as autonomous local bodies, an idea revived in principle in 1979 but yet to be fully effected (ibid). Such a policy echoes the designation of Karachi as the Federal Capital Area in 1948, which was not revoked until 1958. Dr. Sattar and his supporters may be thinking along the lines of a similar designation of "special status" for Karachi now.

It does seem, therefore, that an "administrative separation" of Karachi, and possibly Hyderabad, from the affairs and government of Sindh province, is on the MQM's agenda. A less moderate vision is occasionally suggested by some *Mohajirs*. In New Delhi, the Sunday Mail

(29 February 1992) reported that a "mounting movement" in Pakistan was suggesting a state of *Mohajiristan*", comprising not only parts of urban Sindh but Jammu and Kashmir, and all of Punjab; *Tass*, 29 February 1992, BBC WS archive). Such a proposal echoes that of NAP secretary-general Mahmud-ul Haq Usmani in 1972, who proposed making Karachi division a "*Muhajiristan*" (*Dawn*, 5 July 1972, Karachi; as we have seen, Usmani gained very little popular support for his ideas at the time). In contemporary Pakistan, the idea is not thought to amount to anything more than an obscure intellectual vision (*interview with Zafar Abbas of Herald*, 4 March 1992, Karachi).

Thus since 1991, the MQM has split, its leader is in self-imposed exile in London, and a general crisis has blighted the immediate future of the Movement. The tensions that led to the schism have many foundations, but one may be the centralised, secretive and relatively undemocratic nature of the Movement's internal structure. It is useful to examine this structure up to the split in March 1991.

5.5 MQM - INTERNAL STRUCTURE

The structure of the MQM is not dissimilar to that of the pre-1957 *Jamaat-i Islami*. The similarity lies in the upper leadership (based on *Maulana Maudoodi's* concept of an Islamic state; Bahadur, 1977, p.142), whereby the *Amir* [ruler/commander], heads a single *Majlis-i Shoora* [assembly of councillors], with a *Qayyam* [secretary-general] as immediate second-in-command. After 1957, a second Executive Council

(*Majlis-i Amla*) was instituted, to democratise the internal workings of the party.

In the MQM, the *Quaid-i Tebrik* [leader of the movement] stands immediately above the Chairman (Azim Ahmed Tariq) and Secretary-General (Dr. Imran Farooq), who are part of the single executive council; the *Markaz* [headquarters/office].

The *Quaid* and the *Markaz* represent the central body of the MQM, and comprise the long-serving original founders of the APMSO and MQM (excepting three of the original APMSO team). Like a centralised state, all final decisions ultimately rest with the *Markaz*. Appointments and expulsions in lower committees are made at the discretion of the *Markaz*, whose own composition ultimately rests with the *Quaid* (the dissidents were initially expelled from the Movement by the *Markaz*, before they set-up the *Haqiqi Group*). Occasionally, an entire local committee can be expelled by the *Markaz*, and the committee administered from the centre. As far as is known, this has only happened once, in March 1991, when the Zone 'A' committee (comprising four sectors in Karachi East) was dismissed over the dissident issue. The Zone's party administration was then assumed by the *Markaz* pending re-selection of officers (Dawn, 8 March 1991, Karachi), rather like Martial Law or a State of Emergency in a state.

The day-to-day functioning of the Movement is very centralised, in that once a week the secretaries or representatives of all committees from Zones down to Units, meet with the *Markaz* in Azizabad. Here matters are discussed and nominations for new Unit members or complaints about

existing members raised. Where necessary the *Markaz* makes final decisions on such matters. Holding of office in the Movement is not easy and begins at councillor, sub-committee or Unit level, after stringent conditions of *Mohajir* identity, including "discipline" and complete dedication to the Movement, are satisfied.

The composition of the *Markaz* (before the split) is believed not to have changed since the inception of the movement. The *Markaz* is situated in the middle-income residential district of Azizabad (Karachi Central), adjacent to Altaf Hussain's house. There are many ways in which the MQM operates and appears as a form of "secondary state", and one is the manner in which "going to Azizabad" is used to mean meeting the MQM, as if this were the capital of the State. Even the elected members of the MQM - the MNAs and MPAs - are answerable to the *Markaz*, and they can be expelled from the MQM by the *Markaz* causing the vacancy of their seat (this happened with a group of MQM MPAs during the emergence of the dissident issue in 1991, who were expelled from the MQM by the *Markaz* despite their resignation papers having been refused by the Speaker of the Provincial Assembly). In these terms, the the functioning of the MQM while in power is also very centralised around the *Quaid/Markaz* structure.

MQM wings

Below the *Markaz*, the Movement is structured on two levels: Firstly there are the horizontal "committees" based on spatial

delimitations of urban areas, starting with the Zones (five in Karachi, one in Hyderabad), followed by the Units. Secondly, the spatial organisation is structured vertically between six "committees" and "wings", which are as follows; roughly in order of size²:

- MQM Labour wing
- Student wing (APMSO)
- MQM Women's wing
- *Khidmat-i Khalq* [People's Service] Committee
- Medical Committee
- Legal Aid Committee

Of these groups the Labour wing is the largest. The wing is divided into sub-groups between major employers, such as the large national banks, and acts essentially as a *Mohajir* trade union. The wing wields a considerable influence in the local politics of such cities as Karachi, where it is effectively the dominant labour syndicate. In February 1992 controversy broke out at the Pakistan Steel works in the city where the labour wing is the largest union. A former-army general had been appointed as the new chairman of the works and had ordered many redundancies, leading to a bitter dispute with the MQM labour wing who threatened to make the "trouble spill onto the streets" (interview with Zafar Abbas of "Herald", 4 March 1992, Karachi).

The student wing of the MQM was described as such by a *Markaz* secretary (discussion, 14 March 1991, Karachi), although sometimes the

links between the APMSO and MQM have been deliberately understated. In March 1990, a hostage amnesty in the presence of representatives of the press saw the APMSO release eighteen hostages in exchange for nine held by the PSF (Frontier Post, 9 April 1990, Lahore). The exchange led Altaf Hussain to make the embarrassing claim that links between the APMSO and MQM were weak:

"The MQM has never held anybody hostage and never has it released anybody. It was APMSO which is an independent and sovereign body."

(Frontier Post, 9 March 1990, Lahore).

However, the MQM does usually describe the APMSO as a "student wing" of the parent movement, on the same level as the women's wing and workers' wing, for example (*interview with Nadeem Nusrat, 13 March 1991, Karachi*). Furthermore, the MQM appears to have control over appointments and expulsions in the APMSO, as it demonstrated in February 1991 by suspending the organisation's general secretary Shahid Qureshi for one year (Dawn, 28 February 1991, Karachi). The newspaper report, originating from an official MQM release, hinted that the expulsion was evidence of "internal differences" between the MQM and APMSO.

The situation seems to be that "student wings" in Pakistan are occasionally involved in violent incidents that put political pressure on their parent bodies. Altaf Hussain's denial of responsibility for APMSO

actions above (Frontier Post, 9 March, *ibid.*) conflicts with the general climate of solidarity between the organisations. Azim Tariq, for example, recently described the APMSO as the MQM's "training organisation" (Dawn, 4 February 1991, Karachi). Tension between parent political party and student body is not restricted to the MQM, furthermore. The PSF, for example, recently claimed that the PPP was trying to abolish its Karachi office, and asserted its independence from the strictures of the People's Party (Dawn, 3 February 1991, Karachi).

The women's wing is the smallest of the "wings", and has set up its units more slowly than the others. However it is now an important element of the Movement, and it achieved a publicity-coup on 15 July 1988 when it staged a large rally, addressed by Altaf Hussain, at Nishtar Park, Karachi (MQM, 1990b, p.ii). The ideology of the women's wing is basically the same as that of the Movement as a whole. However, while some MQM women are MPAs, and the women work as enthusiastically as their male colleagues within the Movement, it is thought there are no (and as far as is known, there cannot be) women in the central *Markaz*. Nevertheless, the women's wing is one of the MQM's more progressive features, at least within the general context of politics in Pakistan.

A structure incorporating such "wings" is similar to the nature of other political parties in Pakistan, such as the *Jamaat-i Islami* with its "fronts". The importance of women in administration and representation in the MQM differs from the Islamic parties, however, (while the Islamic parties have women's "wings", the women cannot

represent the parties in office) and is more closely related to the situation in the secular PPP.

MQM Committees

Of the committees, the *Khidmat-i Khalq* is probably the most important. It began as part of the APMSO in 1979 to aid incoming *Bihari* refugees in a camp at Majeed Colony, Landhi, and became a founding component of the MQM in 1984 (MQM, 1990c). The rise in its expenditure through the 1980s is illustrated in Table 5.7. The MQM claims that funding comes from donations from members and supporters (interviews with MQM workers, 6 February 1991, Karachi; and 4 December 1991, London), including donations from sympathisers in Saudi Arabia, USA and Britain, from door-to-door collections in Pakistan, and from money-raising events such as bazaars and competitions (ibid). The question of funding again impinges on the shady area of the MQM's illicit involvement with the army and the ISI, and again nothing can be said for certain on this matter. Many people feel that the resources displayed by the Movement, particularly in arms, so soon after its creation, point to a "hidden source" of assistance (interviews, 4 March 1991 and February 1991).

As can be seen from Table 5.7, the committee now has considerable resources at its disposal, and it has acted as the major emergency service at times of disaster in Karachi and Hyderabad, such as after a bomb-blast in a busy bazaar in the central Saddar district of

TABLE 5.7: Khidmat-i Khalq expenditure, selected years 1978-90

<u>Year</u>	<u>Expend.(Rs.)</u>	<u>Major Projects</u>
1978/79	37,000	Reception of <i>Biharis</i>
1988/89	27,900,000	<i>Muft Bazar</i> (Free market); Rs.21.6m distributed in goods
1989/90	23,400,000	"Refugee rehabilitation" (Rs.8m); bloodbank/ ambulances/hearses (Rs.8.1m)

Source: MQM, 1990c.

Karachi in July 1987 (discussion with Pakhtun student, 15 April 1991, Karachi). However, through being affiliated to the MQM, most of the work conducted by all the committees such as the *Khidmat-i Khalq*, Medical and Legal Aid Committees, has been among communities of *Mohajirs* rather than among the population at large. This is the irony of welfare groups affiliated to ethnic movements, in that the work they conduct deliberately excludes certain sectors of the population.

Furthermore, much of the *Khidmat-i Khalq* work can best be described as symbolic, and some projects such as the cheap *Eid* markets¹³ are not appreciated by everyone (former traders of the *Eid* markets complain of being undercut in price and pushed out of business by the *Khidmat-i Khalq* bazaars; discussion with group of Punjabi traders, 25 March 1991, Karachi).

The following are some of the more symbolic projects that have been undertaken by the *Khidmat-i Khalq* Committee up to 1990:

- September 1988; *Hafta-i Satai*; [literally "seven-day week"; meaning a mass cleaning, painting and decorating campaign in Karachi]
- April 1989; cheap *Eid* bazaars.
- 9/10 June 1989; *Muft bazar* ["free bazaar"]; goods collected in Karachi and donated to poor families.
- October 1989; second *Hafta-i Satai*.

As discussed in the context of press intimidation, such projects as these take on an importance far greater than they would normally seem to command. The MQM maintains that the press prefer to report only negative and damaging news about the Movement (see Muslim, 29 June 1987, Karachi), and use the little coverage accorded to these symbolic *Khidmat-i Khalq* ventures as evidence.

The MQM and secrecy

In general, the MQM is a secretive and self-conscious organisation that does not easily allow information about itself to be released. One Punjab journalist complained about the Movement:

"Its members do not act maturely; they won't give interviews, don't chat, there's never any 'off-the-record' discussion, they never invite anyone to their homes. It's fascistic."

(*interview with freelance journalist, 24 February 1991, Lahore*).

Before I was able to interview any of the MQM leadership, the Movement insisted that references and guarantees be given, that testified to the fact that I was a university researcher and not a spy or journalist. An MQM administrative secretary explained why this process was deemed necessary:

"Up to now we have not released any literature in English. We are afraid of saboteurs - people who will find out the weaknesses and exploit them; like social organisations. That is why we have to establish you are just working for a university. There have been instances of sabotage, but I cannot give details."

(discussion, 19 January 1991, Karachi).

The MQM speak consistently of "conspiracy" (see Muslim, 30 December 1989, Karachi; or Dawn, 7 March 1991, Karachi) and "disinformation cells" (Morning News, 28 November 1989, Karachi), claiming that this is the explanation for any instances of the MQM being implicated in violence (Dawn, 28 November 1989, Karachi). The secretive and suspicious nature of the MQM, has prompted a variety of theories as to its origins and full sources of funding.

Internal tensions

Within the Movement, differences have occurred not only within the main Karachi MQM in 1991/92, but also on occasion between the Movement in Karachi and in Hyderabad. As discussed earlier, *Mohajir* politics in the latter city are generally more anti-Sindhi, and effectively more "militantly ethnic" than in Karachi; in many ways they are closer to the dissident *Haqiqi Group* MQM and the rival MIT (although a stronger devotion to the *Quaid* has ensured that the dissidents have not been widely supported in Hyderabad). Again, differences are hardly reported freely in the media, but strains have occasionally been evident. In July 1990, following bomb blasts in Hyderabad in *Mohajir* localities, several sectarian reprisals instantly followed, including the murder of six Sindhi youths in Latif Bhitai Hospital, Hyderabad, by *Mohajir* militants. The "Frontier Post" (25 July 1990, Lahore) reported that the

Hyderabad APMSO then plotted a general terrorist attack on Sindhi students in the city, scheduled for five days after the blast. This led to a serious disagreement with the Karachi MQM, who by then wanted to move away from such ethnic sectarian tactics.

Within Hyderabad, the militant faction, headed by a group called *Iqbal Ladla* is strong and prominent. The MQM mayor of Hyderabad, Aftab Ahmed Shaikh, evidently faced serious difficulties with the Karachi leadership over how to handle this faction, and briefly left for the United States in some controversy in August 1990 (Herald, January 1991, Karachi, pp.120-1). The emergence of the dissident *Haqiqi Group* in 1991 has reopened such internal tensions in the Movement.

Quaid-i Tehrik

The leadership status of Altaf Hussain is of central importance to the MQM, and unites the whole of the Movement, including the breakaway dissident group. In some ways this is similar to the situation prevailing in Sindhi nationalism, where G.M Syed is accepted as leader by all the various nationalist groups and factions. However, Altaf Hussain does not command the support of the MIT, and in this way his leadership among the *Mohajir* political community is not as great as is G.M Syed's among the Sindhis. In another aspect, Altaf Hussain is similar to Gandhi, who never held a post in the Indian National Congress but was accepted as one of its key leaders. Within the MQM, the position of Altaf Hussain is similarly detached. He holds no formal office in the

Movement, and contests no positions in the Assemblies (Azim Ahmed Tariq used to say he would do the same, but has since run for Senator; Herald, March 1991, Karachi, p.65).

In this way Altaf's position differs from that of the *Amir* of *Jamaat-i Islami* (who undergoes an election every five years by a ballot of members), and the "Co-chairperson" position of Benazir Bhutto, who has held National Assembly seats and can be subject nominally to re-election or removal procedures. As discussed, Bhutto claims that Altaf Hussain does not hold office because he has a pending conviction for "flag-burning" (interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi). Whatever the truth of this, the position of the *Quaid* and the lack of official procedures for his election, reflect the manner in which the MQM is more a "movement" than a "party". In these terms, Altaf is an ethnic leader rather than a party chief, claiming to represent the whole *Mohajir* community.

The symbolic importance of the *Quaid* in Karachi can be seen in the various large pictures of Altaf Hussain around the city (the relationship of the Movement to urban space, including images of Altaf, is discussed in Chapter 6). The importance of reverence of the *Quaid* among most MQM supporters is crucial. Visits to *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital displayed the relationship between supporters and Altaf Hussain. As the *Quaid* lay in bed, a constant stream of well-wishers queued to see him. Filing past his bed, many started crying as they briefly held his hand, while Altaf touched their heads, in the manner of a religious leader. One group of men brought a pair of goats to the bedside, for the *Quaid* to

perform "sadqa" [the Muslim act of blessing a family through touching their animals' heads]. In this sense in particular, many MQM supporters see Altaf as a leader in spiritual and religious as well as ethnic terms. His authority is felt to cover all areas of life. Meanwhile, among the lines of queuing visitors, a group of young women explained:

"We are praying for him, that he will quickly recover.

We are not afraid - our leader will care for us. We are prepared to die for him if it is necessary."

(discussion, 19 January 1991, Karachi).

The value of this statement is contentious, since the women's words were translated from Urdu by an MQM worker, and there was certainly a sense of "playing to the gallery". However the "cult of the leader" is clearly important to the MQM. In March 1991, Altaf Hussain's second stay in hospital of the year was accompanied by rumours of an attempt on his life. Much of the city of Karachi, and particularly the *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital, became garlanded with banners stressing allegiance to the leader and death to the *ghadaron* [traitors]. The uniform nature of many of these banners - with white script on pink canvas - suggested an official MQM printing source.

In these terms, charismatic power seems to be very much the cord that held the MQM together until the split. Clapham suggests that a notion of charismatic authority in the developing-world was developed by

many analysts in relation to particular national leaders in the immediate post-war Independence years (Clapham, 1985, pp.46-7). In many new States emerging at this time, leaders shaped the process of nation-building by attempting to equate the institutions of the state with their own personal ideology. On a much smaller scale, the MQM gives the impression that its own "local state" is synonymous with the words and deeds of the Movement's leader, Altaf Hussain. However, Clapham also observes that events overtook the concept of charismatic authority in the developing world by the 1960s, with such episodes as the overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah by the Ghanaians in 1966 (Clapham, 1985, p.47). Similarly again, the abrupt appearance of fissures within the MQM after late 1991, with one faction declaring total opposition to Altaf Hussain while claiming to be the "true" core of the Movement, suggests that Altaf's charismatic authority over the MQM is not as all-embracing as it might seem.

The potential symbolic and moral pitfall in the *Quaid's* position is that he can start to seem like a *Pir*. The spiritual and general social authority invested in him by some supporters suggests just this status. This is an image the MQM does not want to propagate given its "anti-feudal" rhetoric. As a consequence, "middle-class" values are frequently stressed. Until his exile in late 1991, Altaf Hussain took pride in the fact that he still lived in his modest Azizabad residence, explaining:

"I live in a small house - 120 yards in area. The
leaders of Pakistan - they all have much bigger houses,

big bangalows, 1,000s of yards!"

(interview, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

In the same interview, Altaf claimed that Dr. Farooq Sattar was "lower middle-class", and had been placed into a position of power (as Karachi mayor and MNA) in a manner rarely seen before in Pakistani politics (ibid).

Thus, Altaf Hussain faces a difficult juggling act in heading a grass-roots movement opposed to "feudal" structures, yet being revered as the "*Pir* of Karachi" (Frontier Post, 25 July 1990, Lahore). The situation has been complicated since the split of 1991. It is not clear what procedures would be enacted in the MQM were the *Quaid* to be fully removed from politics. Nor is it clear at this stage how far the dissidents still respect Altaf's over-arching *Quaid* status (his exile abroad suggests that many want him permanently removed from the scene). In many ways, the limbo in which Altaf Hussain finds himself in 1992/93 symbolises that of the Movement as a whole.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

In the last chapter I described the chronology of *Mohajir* identity-construction in Sindh, and the way in which the community relates to others in the province. I established that one of the most important elements of contemporary *Mohajir* identity in Sindh is the

manner in which the experiences of *some* post-Partition migrants from India to Pakistan are assumed as an integral element of the psyche of *all* contemporary Urdu-speakers of Sindh, most of whom are second or third generations of Urdu-speaking families based permanently within Pakistan.

In this chapter I have attempted to show how that Urdu-speaking political leadership has shaped the construction of a *Mohajir* political identity. The first step in the chronology of the contemporary identity is the 1970s, when a small Urdu-speaking intelligentsia in Karachi developed a concept of a political *Mohajir* identity. The concept received very little public support in the elections of 1970.

The leadership of Altaf Hussain and his immediate colleagues was more pivotal in the shaping of a contemporary *Mohajir* identity in Sindh, and in the political mobilisation of this identity. The success of the Movement has related in large part to the political and oratorical skills of these community leaders, and they have been rewarded with increased representation of the *Mohajir* community, and more importantly of the MQM, in all levels of power, from the local to the national.

I have suggested that the importance of this element of leadership in the *Mohajir* movement might cause the MQM to be seen as vehicle for personal power and little more. This might refer particularly to the patrimonialism of Altaf Hussain, both towards the MQM (whose virtual collapse has coincided with the exile of Altaf) and towards the political environment of Sindh in general. This interpretation is given some credence by the problematic nature of *Mohajir* identity, upon which

the MQM was based at its launch. Many of the MQM's opponents (such as G.M. Syed and Benazir Bhutto) have suggested that a fundamental weakness in the concept of a *Mohajir* identity has plagued the MQM with an essential lack of legitimacy.

I have argued that in other parts of South Asia, ethnic political agencies have often been viewed as emotive vehicles for launching certain leaders into power. Manor has argued that the waxing and waning of the ethnic component in Tamil politics has followed the relative fortunes of Dravidian political parties in India (Manor, 1983, p.90). In Pakistan, I have shown that Altaf's decision to ally with the IJI in 1990 and thus ensure a share in provincial and national government after the elections in October of that year, necessitated a fundamental change in the rhetoric and policy of the MQM away from ethnic politics. Alliance with the IJI also entailed sitting beside those agencies in government against whom the MQM had previously claimed to be valiantly battling.

My appraisal of the MQM, however, suggests that it is more than just a political vehicle for Altaf Hussain, and that the seemingly paradoxical somersaults in policy over the years reflect the fragmented and problematic nature of politics in Pakistan (and indeed in many multicultural postcolonial States). An examination of the chronology of the *Mohajir* movement, and particularly the political developments in urban Sindh before the emergence of Altaf Hussain, suggest that there was a "real" political void among the urban Urdu-speaking electorate of the Province, upon which Altaf was later to capitalise. One of the early

expressions of this sense of lacking political voice in Sindh's cities was the Language Bill riots of July 1972. The rhetoric used at this time by the Urdu-speaking leaders appealed to basic elements of *Mohajir* identity (such as a view of history around the time of the Partition of India), which the MQM was later to use to great effect.

One of the important political grievances at this time in urban Sindh involved the relationship between *Mohajirs* and the central state. Many Urdu-speakers feel a particularly important affinity to the national State of Pakistan, as a result of their history and heritage. The central government of Zia during the 1980s, meanwhile, probably looked to the political constituency of urban Sindh as a bulwark against the worrying aspects of the Sindhi-led Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). Apart from inflicting a significant economic impact on Punjab, whose lifeline to the port of Karachi ran through the areas engulfed in the 1983 "uprising" (see the *Muslim*, 3 October 1983, Lahore), the MRD was supported principally by the Sindhis (Rakisits, 1988, p86), and thus began to look not dissimilar to a Sindhi nationalist movement.

These fears of a nationalist awakening were felt in Karachi also, which wished not to be severed from the rest of Pakistan. Altaf Hussain effectively tapped these fears in his first rallies in the city in 1985, in which he delivered powerful valiant "siege-mentality" rhetoric. There seems little doubt that he received a good degree of patronage from the army and the Zia regime for adopting such a stance. Meanwhile, worsening terrorist violence under some strands of the Sindhi

nationalist movement through the later 1980s saw the MQM well-placed to take the victims of such violence under its wing.

Yet secession was not the only fear in urban Sindh at this time. At the level of the local state, the 1980s saw important developments for the worst. In such cities as Karachi, a rapid growth, rising unemployment and the degradation of the physical environment in the shape of unregulated traffic and slum housing were bringing their own pressures to bear. These pressures began to manifest themselves in organised crime and murderous rioting. The central state was distant and unaccountable in the disturbances, and seemed unable to offer any solutions to the problems. It is likely that sheer fear, particularly in such districts as Orangi where brutal ethnic violence between *Mohajirs* and Pakhtuns was beginning to emerge, helped to rally people behind the MQM. The rhetoric of the Movement at this time tapped into this fear, by aggressively confronting rivals, and speaking of a liberalisation of arms licenses and the repatriation of Pakhtuns and Afghans.

The mobilisation of the MQM around these fears and tensions led to the achievement of "real" power and representation by 1990, in the form of seats at local, provincial and national levels. Power had also meant near-somersaults in MQM policy, however. I have shown that the dropping of the demand for nationality recognition for *Mohajirs* was at the bidding of the IJI, who subsequently admitted the MQM as coalition partners in 1990. The acquiescence of Altaf Hussain on this matter placed pressures on the loyalty of large sections of the MQM, finally erupting into a factionalism which has threatened to split the Movement

irrevocably. The violent reaction by some *Mohajirs* against the charismatic and patrimonialist leadership of Altaf Hussain has both shown the depth of the political void in urban areas of Sindh, and highlighted the fact that the MQM has failed to fill this void after seeming to mobilise the electorate so effectively.

I would argue, however, that it is conditions in the local state, and particularly in that of Karachi, that have really shaped the nature of the MQM. It is here that tangible achievements have been made by the Movement. In the city of Karachi, the MQM has grown to operate essentially as a "secondary state" to the official authorities, exercising a grip on the press and even on the law and order situation in some circumstances, and organising spatially across the city with powerful district "units".

The next Section focusses on the local urban state in Sindh, and particularly on Karachi, the heartland of the *Mohajir* movement. I will describe the two elements of political development in Karachi through the 1980s and early 1990s that have been central to the rise (and fall) of the MQM. Firstly, I examine the geographical and structural organisation of the city. In Chapter 6 I will establish who the supporters of the MQM are in Karachi, which spatial and socio-economic niches they occupy, and how they have allowed the MQM to shape life and administration in the metropolis. In the following chapter I examine the development of serious civil violence in the city through the 1980s, and argue that the MQM's battle for control of the urban space has entailed a growing "crisis of civil society".

FOOTNOTES.

1. The growth rate is calculated by projection from the 1961 census figure over a period of eleven years.
2. These complaints came from two female *Mohajir* matriculation students, who claimed that they had been denied places in Karachi University despite achieving over 60% in the entrance exams (*discussion*, 16 January 1991, Karachi).
3. It is possible that urban unemployment among semi-educated and industrial, commercial and clerical workers (who, as I will argue, form the backbone of the MQM's support in Karachi) was rising through the 1980s in Sindh's cities, and that this fed into the appeal of the MQM's rhetoric in this period, particularly in relation to "repatriation" of urban immigrants and securing jobs and education for "locals". Obtaining figures for such a pattern proved inherently difficult in the field, however. Official unemployment figures are very deceptive since they fail to recognise "underemployment", and do not include women in the statistics (since women are not considered to ever "work"). The 1981 Census considered that 4.65% of all males in Karachi were "looking for work", yet 17.57% were included in the ill-defined category of "others" (Government of Pakistan, Statistics Division, 1983). Official data for the post-1981 period were not available at the time of fieldwork. However, several civic officials (notably the KDA director Abu Shamim Arif) told me that unemployment worsened in Karachi throughout the 1980s and that this directly fed into urban "frustration". For a discussion of this factor in relation to Karachi, see Van der Linden and Selier, 1991, p.169).

4. At the Nishtar Park rally, Altaf Hussain called for *Mohajirs* to be recognised as a "subnationality", as a reward for recognising the Sindhis as such (Dawn, 9 August 1986, Karachi). The *Quaid* was holding amicable meetings with G.M Syed at this time.

5. A documentary on British television in November 1990 showed a scene from the 14 July 1988 MQM rally of women in Nishtar Park when Altaf Hussain demanded that the vast chattering crowd be silent after the count of three. The crowd promptly obeyed (Channel 4/Barraclough Carey, 14 November 1990).

6. The issues of local preference in the Charter of Resolution involve domicile certificates, police recruitment, investment, voting rights, the census, admissions to education, health and housing facilities and a sales tax - see Appendix 7.

7. The argument involved a charge by Dr. Imran Farooq that the government was planning to reduce the number of seats in Karachi Medical College (Nation, 24 December 1988, Karachi).

8. On the evening of the rally, the BBC Urdu Service had reported on the event, claiming the attendance to be 50,000. The following day, after angry protests by the MQM, the BBC apologised and revised its figure to between 1.5 and 3 million (BBC WS Archive, 26/7 January 1990, London; and Newline, February 1990, Karachi, p.33).

9. The PDA is a curious alliance, thought to be designed to prevent the PPP from appearing isolated. It is composed of four elements. First is the PPP, whose chief, Benazir Bhutto, is also leader of the Alliance. The second component is a small

faction of the Muslim League, headed by Malik Qasim, which failed to win any seats in 1988. The third component is the *Shia* Islamic group, *Tehrik-i Nifaz-i Jafaria* of Allama Sajid Naqvi, which also failed to win any seats in 1988. The final component is Air Marshal Asghar Khan's *Tehrik-i Istiklal*. Asghar Khan was paradoxically a key figure in the PNA that unseated Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1977, organising large rallies in Punjab. Electorally, the party is also an inconsequential one. Thus, in terms of electoral statistics, the PDA can be equated with its primary component, the PPP.

10. *Haqiqi* means "genuine" in a "biological" or primordial ethnic sense, for example "*haqiqa bhai*" ["blood" brother] and "*haqiqi baihan*" ["blood" sister]. The term is not uncommon in Pakistan for dissident factions who claim to be preserving the original purpose of their party.

11. The "Jam-Marwat Combine" refers to the former Chief Minister of Sindh, Jam Sadiq Ali, and the Home Secretary of the Sindh government, Irfanullah Marwat (son-in-law of the President of Pakistan, Ghulam Ishaq Khan). The PDA accuse these men of working together to use all means, fair and foul, to intimidate and destabilise the PDA, including mass arrests of workers and candidates in the Alliance.

12. As is the case with many aspects of the MQM, the exact size of the wings is either not known or not available to external researchers. In relative terms, the Labour wing is the largest (in numbers of members), followed by the APMSO and women's wing respectively (*interview* with Nadeem Nusrat of MQM, 13 March 1991, Karachi).

13. *Eid* is the celebration at the end of the month of *Ramazan*, in which the fast is broken with feasts and gatherings. *Eid* bazaars raising money for the poor are traditional at this time, selling gifts such as the skins of animals slaughtered ritually for the feasts.

SECTION THREE:

MOHAJIRS AND SPACE: URBANISM, VIOLENCE AND THE STATE

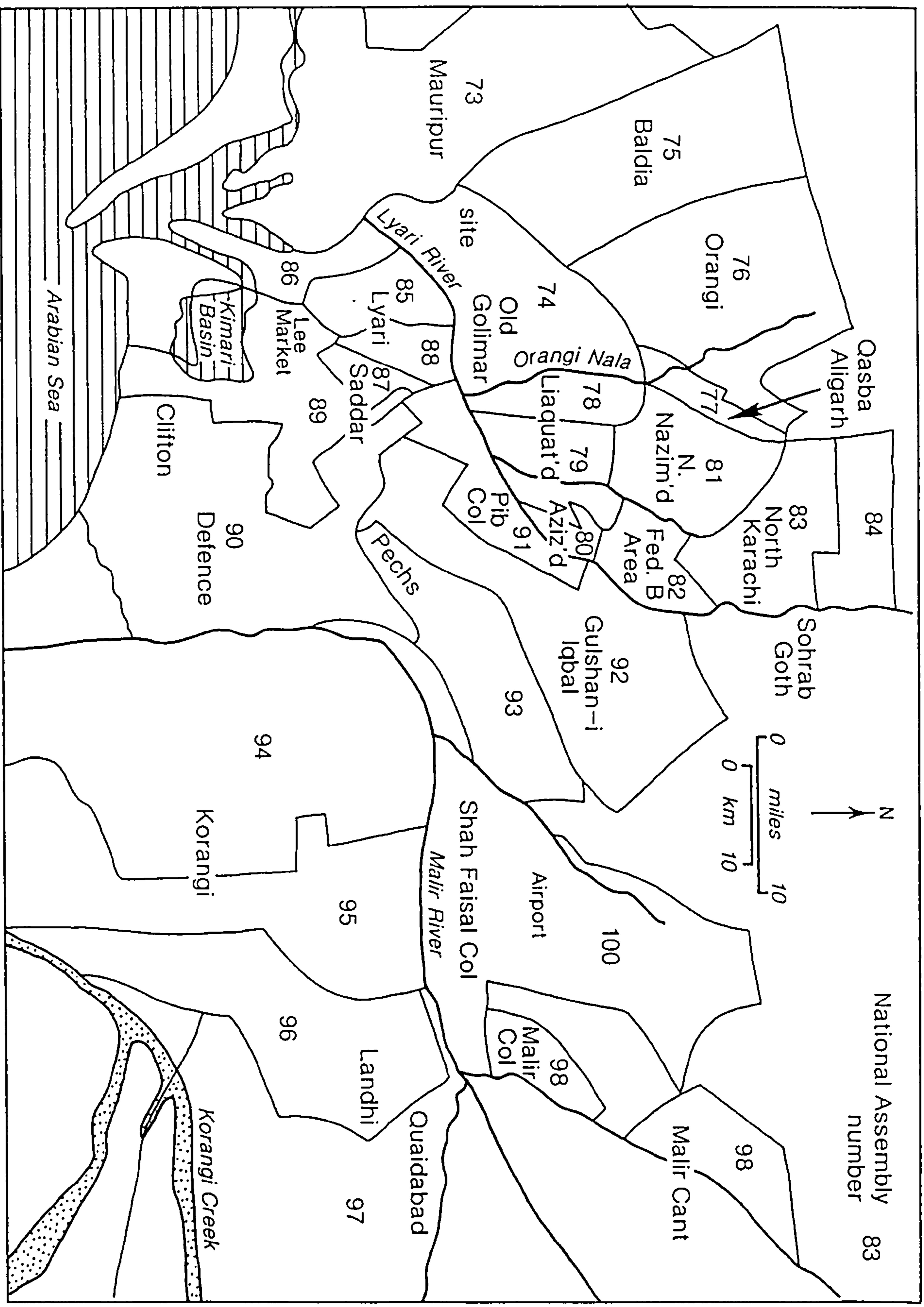


Figure 6.1: Karachi, by National Assembly seats

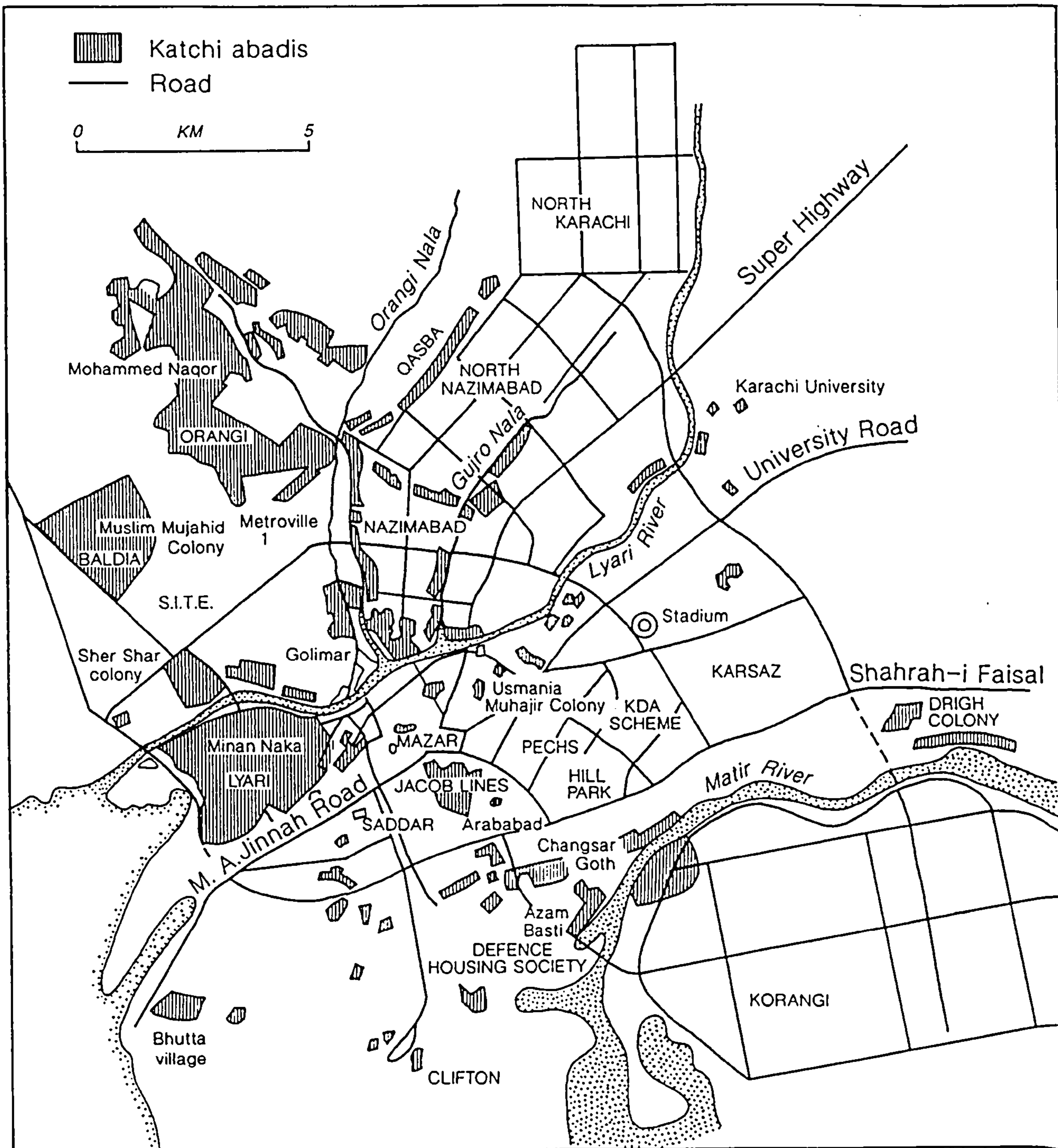


Figure 6.2: Katchi abadis in Karachi, 1983

Source: O. Van der Linden, 1983; in Schoorl, Van der Linden and Yap, eds. 1983, p. 41



FIGURE 6.2: New apartment blocks, Sohrah Goth, Karachi

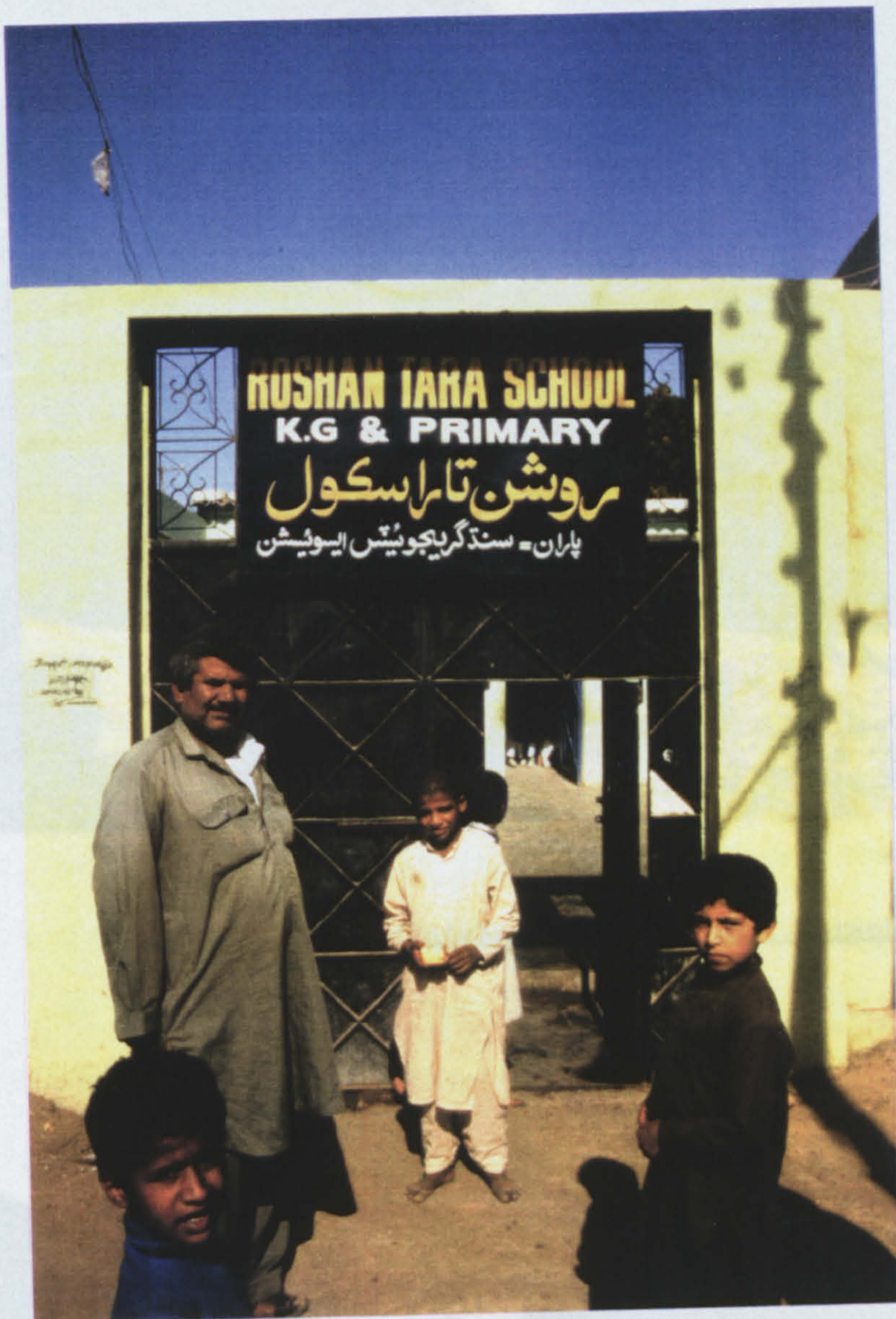


FIGURE 6.3: Roshan Tara School, Golimar, Karachi



levels, the strata in which the Movement has always been most powerful
and has made **FIGURE 6.4: Unfinished road, Golimar, Karachi**



FIGURE 6.5: Portrait of Altaf Hussain on post office, Nazimabad, Karachi

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter I suggested that the seemingly paradoxical and sometimes "banal" actions and proclamations of the MQM were related in large part to the demands imposed by the political system in a multi-cultural postcolonial State such as Pakistan. At the end of the chapter I also suggested that, for all the manoeuvres and bargains the MQM conducted to achieved representation at provincial and national levels, the forum in which the Movement has always been most powerful and has made its real gains is the local-level urban state.

In this Section I narrow the focus further onto urban Sindh, and particularly to the city of Karachi. There is little doubt that the MQM and its electorate are physically and spiritually concentrated in Karachi and Hyderabad. The Movement has contested very few seats in elections outside these cities, and has never contested a seat outside Sindh. Within this configuration, the metropolis of Karachi is both the birthplace and the heartland of the MQM, and the economic heart of Pakistan as a whole. In this Chapter I will examine how the nature of the local state in Karachi, and particular socio-political conditions in the city, have been central to the development of the *Mohajir* movement.

The Chapter comprises three main sections. The first section offers an overview of the city of Karachi, in terms of its history, and

social, economic and political structure. Central to the city's history and development is the important position it has held as Pakistan's most important economic centre and initially as the Federal Capital. Against this backdrop, the specific position occupied by the *Mohajirs* and the MQM in Karachi is then appraised. The original emphasis of the Movement on ethnic politics has occasioned a constant reference to the environments of urban Sindh. Significantly, 13 of the 25 points in the Charter of Resolution of November 1988 (see Appendix 7) dealt with matters relating to Sindh, while 8 of the points in the Karachi Declaration (Appendix 5) also dealt with local-preference demands in Sindh. It can be argued that the problems that the MQM has experienced in transforming an "ethnic movement" into a non-ethnic "political party" have been a partial result of this local outlook.

In the case of Karachi, however, a parochial concern simultaneously endows a political movement with national significance. Karachi is not just a large Pakistani city, but the largest city and only major port in the country. Repeatedly, the fortunes of governments have soured when the citizens of Karachi have taken to the streets against them. Such a fate was suffered by the governments of Ayub Khan in 1969, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1977, and Benazir Bhutto to a large extent in 1988. In the case of Benazir, the President moved to dismiss the government only when civil order worsened in Karachi, despite the fact that the surrounding rural areas had seen a spiralling level of violence for many years.

Thus, the MQM's concentration in Karachi has given the Movement a particular significance for the power-brokers of the state in Pakistan. As in most large developing-world cities, however, "urban power" relates to two often opposing axes. The second main section of this chapter examines the nature of the local state in Karachi, and the position within this political configuration that the MQM has occupied. On the one hand there are the representatives of the state - the urban administrations and civic bodies that constitute the "formal sector" of society and economy. On the other side there stands the "informal sector", which both fills-in the shortfalls of the state in relation to urban development, and which creates a powerful secondary society intertwined with crime and unauthorised businesses. Between these two sectors the police often play an ambiguous role. It will be argued that the MQM has gradually "taken control" of the formal sector of urban power in Karachi, but in so doing has faced violent confrontation with other power-brokers in the city.

The ramifications of achieving "control" in Karachi are particularly significant for the state in Pakistan. Given Karachi's importance, success in central government has increasingly come to depend on winning the favour of the MQM and its supporters in Karachi (at least before the party's collapse in 1992). Yet the bargain carries a price - in many ways the MQM has acted as a "secondary state" in the city, imposing its dictates with the force of violence, and a sinister regulation of the press. Perhaps worse than this are the rumours that certain elements of the *Mobajir* movement would like to see Karachi made

into a separate *suba* [province]. Such a separation would have far-reaching consequences for the fortunes of the rest of Pakistan.

The third section of the chapter examines the process of ethnic particularisation across space in Karachi. As part of this discussion, it is appropriate to examine conditions in Sindh's - and the MQM's - second city, Hyderabad. Here, the worsening of inter-community relations that the MQM effectively exacerbated through the second half of the 1980s, has created a bitterly divided and violent city. In Karachi, the proportions of various ethnic communities are different, yet I will argue that inter-community cooperation has worsened in a manner similar to the situation prevailing in Hyderabad and elsewhere.

I examine the outward expression of community polarisation within the urban space in Sindh by focussing on the symbolic constructions and occupations of space, and the impact of the MQM on the physical and visual environment in different parts of the city. I will also show that urban development projects in different parts of Karachi highlight certain barriers to inter-community cooperation. These are the physical expressions of community polarisation in urban Pakistan, and in this chapter I will examine the socio-economic and political processes and structures that lie behind this polarisation in Karachi. First, however, it is appropriate to examine the methods I have used to map ethnic and socio-political distributions in the city.

6.2 METHODOLOGY

Mapping ethnic community distributions in Karachi using Census data is difficult and possibly inappropriate. I will show later on that economic data from the Census or civic agencies cannot readily be related to patterns of ethnic community distribution. Indeed, the controversy over the 1992 Census in Sindh' relates to a feeling on both sides of the Sindhi/*Mohajir* ethnic divide that official accounts of ethnic distribution in the Province have always been distorted and that no government can be trusted to be neutral on the matter. In the light of this, I have tried to map ethnic community distributions in Karachi using a mixture of my own observations of visual markers in the city and an adapted spatial map of local electoral units. Some necessary words of warning on the use of electoral data in Pakistan, principally concerning charges of voting irregularities, will be sounded later on.

Again, much of the primary material accessed for this chapter is derived from the personal interviews, discussions and press archives that formed a major element of source material for the previous chapters. The meetings of particular relevance to this chapter were those with the Mayor of Karachi Dr. Farooq Sattar, the director and officers of the Karachi Development Agency (KDA), officers of the Sindh Karachi Katchi Abadis Association (KAA), members of the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) and various discussions with community workers and residents in different parts of the city of Karachi. In addition to such

interviews, several further sources specific to this and the next chapter were used.

The first of these sources are the electoral statistics covering the period since the rise of the MQM, comprising the Local Bodies Elections of 1987 in Sindh, and Provincial/National Elections 1988 and 1990 (results, voting patterns, registered voters and general associated statistics). Between 1977 and 1987 there were no elections in Pakistan other than Zia's non-party elections of 1985. These were boycotted by the leading opposition party, the PPP, and were thereby rendered unrepresentative. Indeed, the elections of 1977 were themselves clouded by charges of rigging and irregularities in the light of the comprehensive nature of the PPP's victory. It is widely considered in Pakistan that the 1970 elections were the only relatively "fair" polls to have been held in the country up to 1993.

The second major primary source I use in this chapter to map distributions of communities in Karachi comprises a variety of different distribution surveys ² concerning the following:

- Land values (residential)
- Government institutions of higher education
- Government hospitals, clinics, dispensaries
- Wage patterns and levels of occupation
- General economic statistics such as literacy, educational attendance and employment data.

To complement these distribution surveys, the results of the following surveys were also used to develop a detailed picture of socio-economic organisation in Karachi:

- Commission of Enquiry into Karachi Affairs (COEKA), 1986, 1989
- Specific observation/interview surveys in Orangi Town, Old Golimar, Sohrab Goth, Nazimabad, Mauripur.

The ease of collection of information varied from the purchasing or photocopying of material, to lengthy lobbying of agencies and supervised analysis of material on site, or primary material collection in the field (principally involving observation and interview tours around Karachi). The offices contacted in this data collection process were numerous, but principally comprised the urban council for Karachi; the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), the development wing of the urban administration; the Karachi Development Agency (KDA), the government body concerned with unregulated urban development; the *Katchi Abadi* Association (KAA), the Survey of Pakistan (which is the official source of mapping in the city), the Election Commission of Pakistan in Islamabad, the Provincial Election Authority in Karachi, the Orangi Pilot Project, Karachi, the Sindh Graduates Association, Karachi, the Bureau of Statistics, Karachi, and finally the Federal Bureau of Statistics in Islamabad.

When deciding on a suitable spatial framework to use in mapping distributions in the city of Karachi, I found that various systems had been used in the past. One of the more obvious was the KDA's system of "analysis zones" (58 zones used in land-use surveys of 1970 and 1985). However, this system is not very useful for my purposes, since the zones cannot be related easily to data on population and community groups. Consequently, I decided to map out a new spatial framework based on the Provincial Assembly seats in the city, which were instituted by the amended Delimitation of Constituencies Ordinance of 20 July 1988. This framework comprises 28 units, across four "zones" (East, West, South, Central), which were used in the provincial elections of both 1988 and 1990. The constituencies are based on combinations of 198 KMC "units", in addition to military lands, known as "cantonments" (which are under the jurisdiction of the provincial government rather than the city administration). The provincial constituency framework was considered to offer a greater degree of detail than that of National Assembly seats (of which there are 13 in Karachi, also based on KMC units). The main advantage of such a political framework is that districts of the city can be related to political processes since 1987, and so can throw light on ethnic distributions in a way that other approaches cannot.

Formulating a suitable map of the KMC units and electoral constituencies, proved to be a very difficult operation², but probable ethnic community distributions and their development spatially over time, could ultimately be mapped against a framework of electoral constituencies. With such a spatial-political framework established, a

second aim was to develop a picture of socio-economic distributions in the city by community, to see where the *Mohajirs* and other groups fit into the urban environment. In this regard, it was also interesting to "test" for patterns of correlation between the political and ethnic character of urban districts and levels of socio-economic development. The need to undertake such a survey arises from the way in which community leaders and residents in the city will claim that their areas are especially disadvantaged or underdeveloped. The MQM, particularly in its earlier phases, would often make this claim about the *Mohajir* community in general (Indian Expatriate, 12 March 1988, [Dawn archive]). Similarly, Sindhi residents of Old Golimar told me that their district was deliberately deprived of basic facilities like water, sewerage systems, employment, health and education by the MQM-dominated urban administration (*discussions* with residents of Old Golimar, 21 January 1992, Karachi). A comparison of local community grievances with the distribution of services in the city also conveys some details on the nature and extent of cross-community mobility and cooperation in the city. One method I have used in analysing the validity of such claims involves a mapping of selected government facilities (in this case health and education provision) against "political community" distributions.

The reason that government facilities are sampled in particular relates to the fact that claims of discrimination are usually directed at the state in general. The authorities are perceived to be responsible for basic service provision. In many cases, private schools and clinics are

established to fill the shortfalls, as in the case of the Roshan Tara school in Old Golimar. The spatial patterns of these facilities are sometimes difficult to interpret, since on the one hand they seem to indicate a perceived shortfall in local state service provisions, yet on the other hand they can also indicate a level of wealth or community "power" in a district whereby reasonable public-sector services can be supplemented. In these terms, wealthier districts will have both more public and more private facilities than the poorer districts. Furthermore, the provision of private facilities under the aegis of ethnic or political organisations can demonstrate the "secondary state" nature of such organisations, whereby the organisations effectively play the role of an urban administration and provider of facilities for their own localised electorates. In Karachi, it is inevitably the MQM that displays the bulk of such symbolic "power" in the urban environment. Thus, a close analysis of the relative provision of state and private facilities in the city reveals much about the internal dynamics of the urban environment.

Obviously there are notes of caution to be made with regard to such a methodology. Firstly, a clear delineation of urban districts is often difficult. For example, a district with seemingly poor facilities may border one with better facilities and there will be some mobility between the two. Secondly, the mapping of social and ethnic communities across space using voting patterns and party performance across space is subject to the complication that the votes for some parties can be

ethnically heterogeneous. Areas that vote heavily for the PPP are not necessarily inhabited mostly by Sindhis.

Two points can be made in defence against such charges. Firstly, it is apparent that ethnic polarisation in Karachi became entrenched throughout the 1980s. Sindhis in a Sindhi area would not readily interact with a heavily *Mohajir*-populated area in the city, even if the two communities were spatially proximate. This is partly due to the strength of vertical community definitions in Pakistan society such as *biraderi* [tribe/clan] factors, but it is also due to the growth of ethnic conflicts in the city from the mid-1980s onwards. It is true that such polarisation is more stark in cities such as Hyderabad and Sukkur, but similar patterns do apply in Karachi.

Secondly, it can be argued that the ethnic stance of the MQM would mean that it has received very few non-*Mohajir* votes to date, while social pressures within the *Mohajir* community have probably deepened the encompassing nature of the *Mohajir*-MQM vote. The same process has happened with such groups as the ANP and PPI with respect to the Pakhtun community. Even the nominally non-ethnic PPP receives a clear majority of its votes in Karachi and elsewhere from the Sindhis and Baluchis. I will argue that, increasingly, violence and recrimination have led Pakistan's party politics to become ethnically-oriented and polarised.

6.3 THE CITY OF KARACHI

The area that is now central Karachi began life as a walled district beside the Lyari estuary, established by Hindu merchants in 1729. Just over a hundred years later, in 1839, Saddar Bazaar was established to the north-east of the walled city. In 1843, the British arrived under Lord Napier, and colonised the walled district. Interaction between the two settlements developed, and the British soon began to build in Saddar. In 1885, a horse-drawn tramway was completed, linking the bazaar area of Saddar with the walled settlement (Herald, February 1993, Karachi, p.66).

By the time of the Census of 1941, Karachi's population was 387,000, making it the second largest urban centre in what would later become West Pakistan, behind Lahore at 672,000 (Government of Pakistan, 1990a, pp.49-50). At this time, just over 31% of the population of Karachi city and its immediate rural environs were Hindus (Census of India 1941, Vol.XII, p.28), a higher proportion than prevailed in Lahore, where under 27% were Hindus (Census of India 1941, Vol.VI, p.32). In other ways, also, Karachi was a fairly cosmopolitan city in the immediate pre-Independence period. Table 6.1 shows the relative proportions of languages spoken among the literate community in the city at the time of the 1941 Census, compared to the situation at the same time in Hyderabad and Sindh as a whole (including the Khairpur district which later became part of Sindh province).

TABLE 6.1: Relative proportions of languages spoken in Sindh, Hyderabad and Karachi, 1941

Language	% of total		
	<u>Sindh</u>	<u>Karachi</u>	<u>Hyderabad</u>
Sindhi	72.1	57.3	75.5
Baluchi	6.0	7.6	2.8
Seraiki	6.0	0.4	8.1
Gujerati	3.0	10.5	4.0
Rajastani	2.6	1.0	2.8
Punjabi	1.9	4.2	0.9
Kachi	1.2	4.7	1.5
Urdu	1.1	4.2	1.0
<i>Others</i>	6.1	10.1	3.4

Source: Census of India 1941, Vol.XII, Sind, pp.76-7

Table 6.1 shows that Karachi differed in its socio-cultural composition before Independence both from Hyderabad, and from the rest of Sindh. Although Sindhis were the largest community throughout the province, in Karachi there was also a sizeable community of Gujerati-speakers, many of whom were Hindus, and whose roots were in the north-west Indian coastal areas around Bombay. There were also more Urdu-

speakers in Karachi than was the norm in Sindh, although Table 6.1 shows that they were not a major community in the city. The "Others" column refers to such languages as Brohui, which is the second major language in the Baluch community behind Baluchi, Pashto, "Western Hindi", "Hindustani" and other Indian languages (Census of India, *ibid*). In these languages, also, Karachi was more amply represented than were other parts of Sindh. Karachi was a fairly cosmopolitan city at this time compared to other towns in Sindh, and particularly compared to Hyderabad, which conformed more closely to patterns throughout the rest of the Province of Sindh.

Growth and development of Karachi after Independence

For Karachi, the emergence of Independent Pakistan entailed a tremendous influx of Muslim refugees from India and from northern parts of Pakistan. Table 6.2 provides some details on migration to the city from 1947 to 1961. The Table shows that the city received a steady flow of migrants from India and Pakistan in the first decade after Independence, with a majority of migrants coming from within Pakistan after 1951. The considerable amount of immediate post-Partition migration from India can also be seen.

TABLE 6.2: Post-Partition migration to Karachi, 1947-61

<u>Period</u>	Migrants from <u>India*</u>	Migrants from <u>Pakistan**</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1947-51	655,811	153,400	809,211
1951-61	182,862	737,923	920,785

Sources: Calculated from Census of Pakistan 1951, Vol.1, p.45; Census of Pakistan 1961, Vol.3, pp.136-7,304-5

** - Plus other parts of subcontinent*

*** - Including East Pakistan. Note: all figures exclude migration from Kashmir. 1947-51 for Karachi City only, thereafter for Karachi Division.*

Housing

The Karachi administration was faced with a considerable task in housing and employing the new migrants to the city. In the years following Independence, three forms of urban development were undertaken to address the situation. Firstly, in some areas of the city the government built complete dwellings or business units, such as "Shoe-

makers Colony" in Nazimabad, where 250 units were provided by the Pakistan Refugee Rehabilitation Finance Corporation. In Aurangabad, 3000 units were built and leased on hire-purchase terms (Government of Pakistan, 1952, pp.14-18).

In most other cases, the federal government made land and core services such as roads and water available for migrants to build their own houses, either independently or via "Cooperative Housing Associations". This was the case with the Pakistan Employees' Cooperative Housing Society (PECHS), where 3000 plots were made available by 1952 (ibid, p.34). In Nazimabad, 1000 acres were set aside for migrants to build their own homes, and core roads, two schools, one dispensary, one maternity home and a post office were provided (ibid, p.3). Pictures of the schemes in the government documentation of the time (ibid) show that the landscape of the city was changing radically, with large semi-arid spaces becoming new urban districts. Not all the housing was basic either, with sumptuous villas and apartment-blocks being built in such areas as the Government Employees' Cooperative Housing Society district (ibid, pp.35-9). Table 6.3 describes the extent of the government rehabilitation schemes underway by 1952.

The growing scale of Karachi's housing problems soon led to the illegal subdivision of land - the third major form of new settlement in the city. Baldia Township in the west of the city was the first major example of a district growing by subdivision. Its emergence reflected the failure of government schemes to keep up with the demand for housing (Wahab, 1991, p.300). By the end of the 1950s many of the early

TABLE 6.3: Government refugee rehabilitation schemes, Karachi, 1952

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Projected number of plots</u>
Lalukhet Quarters (Liaquatabad)	10,700
Drigh Village Colony	8,627
Nazimabad	6,000
Pak. Employees Cooperative Housing Society	3,000
Aurangabad	3,000
Pir Ilahi Bux Colony	2,500
Model Colony	2,250
Bihar Colony	900
Shoe-makers Colony	250
Landhi Artisan Colony	100
Union Cooperative Housing Society	n/a
Government Employees Cooperative Housing Society	n/a
Rizvia Cooperative Housing Society Ltd.	n/a

Source: Government of Pakistan, 1952, pp.1-50.

migrants to the city had still not been adequately housed. A survey in 1959 found 120,000 families without proper shelter, with 55% living in *jhuggis* [straw and reed-matting structures] (Yap, 1991, p.82).

After 1965, Orangi Town joined Baldia as a large new *katchi abadi* on the city's western periphery. Ayub Khan's rule (1958-69) saw some renewed attempts to shift city-centre squatters to new "townships" in Korangi to the east, and North Karachi to the north, but lack of proximity to employment in the city-centre made such schemes unattractive (Meyerink, 1983, p.15).

In the 1970s, government housing schemes received a further boost with the "Metroville" projects, undertaken by the KDA with UN assistance. The plan was to develop four extensive "site and service" schemes, encompassing up to 40,000 plots, with associated employment, health, education and finance projects (KDA, 1974, p.338). The plots involved a "wet core" (single wall with water outlet), around which houses could be built.

The Metroville projects have been extremely disappointing. Metroville II was used in part to house refugee families from Bangladesh, but this is reputed by Nientied and Van der Linden to be the only instance in which the target socio-economic group was reached by the Metroville schemes (Nientied and Van der Linden, 1991, p.353). The latest phase, Metroville IV, has not progressed beyond the planning stage, and the land was encroached upon in the mid-1980s by illegal squatter housing (Nientied, 1987, p.132).

The only detailed map of Karachi's *katchi abadis* was produced by Jan Van der Linden in 1983 (see Figure 6.1), since which time such settlements have developed further. The Sindh *Katchi Abadis* Authority (KAA) itself admits to not having a complete map of the settlements

TABLE 6.4: Katchi abadis in Karachi and Hyderabad, 1988.

	No. of KA <u>settlements</u>	Area <u>(acres)</u>	Estimated <u>population*</u>	% total city <u>population*</u>
Karachi	539	15,569	2,670,000	34.5
Hyderabad	457	6,362	720,000	23.6

Source: Figures supplied by Sindh KAA, January 1992.

** - Based on population projections from the 1981 Census.*

(interview with KAA officer, 27 January 1992, Karachi), but estimates that the overall situation in Karachi and Hyderabad is similar to that depicted in Table 6.4. The figure for Karachi broadly agrees with a KDA land use survey in 1985, which found just over 10,968 acres of city land to be occupied by *katcha* dwellings [self-built insubstantial structures; 16.7% of residential land] or *semi-pucca* buildings [self-built structures using more substantial materials such as concrete or stone blocks; 83.3% of land] (KDA, 1985).

In contemporary Karachi, the *katchi abadis* fall into three broad categories. Firstly, there are large suburban districts with established quarters and *pucca* or *semi-pucca* housing, such as Baldia and Orangi.

Secondly, there are the small "infill" colonies on portions of vacant land such as river banks, railway or industrial land, often with *katcha* housing. Examples are Bhutta Goth, Shireen Jinnah Colony or Drigh Colony. Thirdly, the city also has older pre-1950 city-centre quarters, such as Lyari and Golimar. These are not strictly *katchi abadis* in every case, since they often involve dwellings on legally apportioned land. However, it is useful to examine such districts in conjunction with the other *katchi abadis*, due to their low-income and irregular nature.

Employment

Given such rapid expansion in the years following Independence, Karachi quickly grew from being the second largest urban centre in West Pakistan, to being by far the largest city in the country. The rate of growth in Karachi meant that promotion to first position had taken place by the time of the Census of 1951 (Government of Pakistan, 1990a, p.51).

With such an influx of people, the character and function of the city obviously underwent some changes. These developments can be portrayed in terms of the changing structure of employment in the city, as shown in Table 6.6 (which uses a simple government classification of employment modes).

The Table underlines the fact that, since Independence, patterns of occupation in Karachi Division (which includes the immediate rural fringe of the city) have altered fundamentally. It is interesting to note

TABLE 6.6: Changes in modes of employment, Karachi, 1941-81

<u>Mode of Employment</u>	% of labour force (over 10 years of age)	
	<u>1941</u>	<u>1981</u>
Owners of agricultural land	8.9	2.6
Transport	3.3	10.5
Manufacturing	9.8	20.1
Construction labourers	11.3	4.8
Shops/retail	5.8	19.8
Government clerical workers	15.9	17.9
Agricultural labourers	27.0	6.3
<i>Others</i>	18.0	18.0

Source: Census of India 1941, Vol.XII, Sind, pp.69-70;

Government of Pakistan, July 1983, p.18.

that the proportion of total workers in the city made up of "government clerical workers" has remained fairly constant and now constitutes the third largest employment category in the city, or possibly the second largest if employees in state offices of other sectors (such as public-

sector manufacturing or transport) are taken into account. In 1941, Karachi Division also comprised large rural areas, in which many *haris* lived. In the city, there were a sizeable number of landowners, and a large community of labourers to undertake construction work in the expanding city. In the decades following Independence, the city's industrial and commercial sector expanded considerably, with manufacturing and retailing (including hotels and restaurants) now constituting the largest sectors of employment in the city. Table 6.6 emphasises the fact that Karachi has developed from a medium-sized city into a large industrial and commercial centre.

I have suggested that the growth of Karachi increased its dominance as an urban centre relative to others in Pakistan. In many respects this is true, and the city's position as the sole international sea-port has ensured that its economic dominance will remain for the foreseeable future. There have been efforts to combat the concentration of import-export activity in Karachi. Dry-dock facilities in the rail terminals of Lahore and Faisalabad in Punjab, and efforts to attract investment for new port developments in eastern Baluchistan such as Hub, have signalled new attempts at decentralisation. To date, however, these projects have made very little impact on the dominance of Karachi as a port.

Table 6.7 indicates the economic position that Karachi holds in relation to Sindh, and Pakistan as a whole, by documenting the concentration in the city of selected economic activities. The Table shows that Karachi holds a position in the economy of Pakistan that far

TABLE 6.7: Concentration of economic activity in Karachi: Population, manufacturing, house building finance and banking in Karachi, Sindh and Pakistan, 1981-89

<u>Parameter</u>	% in Karachi of total in:	
	<u>Sindh</u>	<u>Pakistan</u>
Population	27.4	6.2
Working population (age 10 and above)	26.0	5.9
Manufacturing (1984-85):		
Number of reported establishments	71.5	27.0
Annual value of production added	76.0	39.9
House Building Finance Corporation:		
Value of total loans sanctioned (1987-88)	65.7	27.3
Banking clearing houses:		
Total value of cheques cleared (1989)	n/a	61.9

Source: Government of Pakistan, 1990a, pp.12,16,50,185,189,251;

Government of Sindh 1990, pp.140,276

outweighs the proportion of the national population inhabiting the city. In Sindh, the city is dominant in most non-agricultural sectors of the economy, accounting for approximately three-quarters of all manufacturing industry in the Province. In banking, the city holds an even more central role in the economy, handling nearly two thirds of all Pakistan's banking transactions.

This economic dominance obviously holds implications for local politics. Because of the central role that the port and industry of Karachi occupy in the national economy, local political leaders in the city have realised that the stability of the regime in Islamabad depends to a great extent on the smooth functioning of Karachi. In these terms, episodes such as that of December 1987, when rioting around the access routes to Karachi docks was so bad that the port was completely closed for several days, have placed a considerable premium on the importance of winning *political control* in Karachi. Thus, Clapham's characterisation of the developing-world state as an interlocking network of controlling institutions (Clapham, 1985, p.39), can be extended in the case of Pakistan to a state in which the winning of control in certain *local* political environments can hold the key to maintaining power in the *national* state as a whole. It is perhaps for this reason that the army decided to intervene in the MQM's internal crisis in Karachi only when the violence between factions there began to spill onto the streets, in such districts as the Korangi industrial area in the east of the city.

Spatial patterns of settlement

I have suggested in previous chapters that the growth of the *Mohajir* movement in Sindh has been accompanied by an increasing level of ethnic polarisation in the Province, which in cities like Hyderabad has resulted in a stark ethno-spatial differentiation of homes and work-places. In Karachi, the proportions of ethnic groups are different from the bipolar Sindh/Mohajir situation that prevails in Hyderabad, yet ethnic "ghettoisation" is still evident.

The director of the Karachi Development Agency (KDA), Abu Shamim Arif (interview, 12 April 1991, Karachi), claims that a considerable degree of ethnic ghettoisation has occurred in the development of Karachi, but that "it is difficult to form policies to tackle this. It's difficult to 'homogenise' the city" (ibid). The patterns of settlement of new migrants in Karachi cannot be "shaped" easily by the agencies of the state. A glance at any map of the city illustrates the effects of ethnic ghettoisation. Districts display such names as *Pathan* Colony, *Baloch* Colony, *Sarhad* [Frontier] Colony, and so on. Discussions with various residents of Karachi suggest that the process of ghettoisation specifically relates to urban migration, which in turn is shaped by the family, culture and language of incoming migrants. The situation is illustrated by the story of Karachi academic Karrar Husain, who migrated to Karachi from Meerut in United Provinces shortly after Independence, and obtained a job and lodgings with the help of

previously-migrated friends and family-members (interview, 13 January 1991, Karachi).

Such a maintenance of community links, relating to the importance of the family in South Asian culture (whereby any relative has an unspoken right to lodge with others where necessary), inevitably leads to a spatial process of community agglomeration. This was certainly the case with the post-Partition Urdu-speaking migrants who moved to Sindh after 1947. Similarly, later migrants from other parts of Pakistan have usually found in Karachi a city whose dominant language and culture is not their own, and they derive comfort and protection from settling within areas of their own culture. This is particularly so of the Pakhtun migrants, for two reasons. Firstly, the Pakhtuns have usually received little Urdu instruction before arrival in Karachi (most primary education in NWFP is in Pashto). Secondly, they will usually maintain *biraderi* [tribe/clan] links from the Frontier, whereby even intra-Pakhtun tribal groups are differentiated socially and spatially.

Such patterns of association may be consciously maintained by the nature of the migration to Karachi. "Circular" migrants, for example, usually consisting of single males who make regular trips to their families in the Frontier or Punjab with saved earnings, may feel that their semi-permanent status in Karachi removes the incentive to become fully integrated into urban society. Furthermore, much migrant labour in the city is organised by another key broker of the informal economy; the employment-agent known as the *thekedari*. In the three-way process between worker, *thekedari* and employer (the latter two of whom are often

former migrants from northern areas themselves), maintenance of cultural links is important, including the arrangement of lodgings by the *thekedari*. Finally, there is evidence that, in the rented sector (which in *katchi abadis* is thought to account for only about 10% of housing; Wahab, 1991, p.314), landlords will often only rent to individuals or families of their own ethnic community (ibid, p.304). These processes, whereby the ethnic origins and culture of migrants are maintained and emulated in the city by agents and employers, translate into patterns of ethnic concentration.

On the subject of ethnic particularism it is necessary to mention again the impact of violence and retribution on ethnic polarisation. Many residents in Old Golimar, some of whom I encountered by chance in the street, claim that since 1988 they have abandoned residence in *Mohajir*-dominated areas such as Nazimabad and moved to the largely Sindhi/Baluchi districts of Old Golimar or Lyari "for protection" (*discussions*, 21 January 1991, Karachi). Such people have often abandoned property and livelihoods in the process, but claim they can "never go back" (ibid). In this way, a spatial and psychological polarisation of communities occurs, whereby youngsters brought up in one area receive acrimonious appraisals of neighbouring communities which cannot easily be contested by the experience or physical contact with members of those communities.

The MQM also claims that, after 1988, ethnic violence in Sindh was leading to large movements of *Mohajirs* out of more rural areas into the cities of Hyderabad or Karachi, where "reception camps" were

arranged. In June 1990, MQM Secretary-General Dr. Imran Farooq put the number of such rural migrants settling in Karachi in the first six months of the year at 15,000 (Dawn, 26 June 1990, Karachi). 5000 of these were said to be accommodated in reception camps (ibid). To quantify such local migration is an inherently problematic exercise, and there may well be a degree of exaggeration in the MQM's statistics. In September 1989, the National Assembly in Islamabad held a debate as to whether such an exodus from rural Sindh was occurring at all (Dawn, 28 September 1989, Karachi). Yet the personal accounts of residents in Old Golimar (discussions, ibid), or citizens in Hyderabad⁴, do support the notion that a process of spatial ethnic polarisation has been occurring in Sindh.

The *Mohajirs* and the socio-economic organisation of districts in Karachi

Such processes of ethnic concentration and polarisation have led to a particular ethno-spatial distribution in Karachi. During the course of fieldwork in Winter/Spring of 1991 and Winter/Spring of 1992, I undertook various spatial surveys to determine the nature of the "ethnic map" in the city, and to establish exactly where the *Mohajirs* fit into the picture.

Income

I would argue that it is useful to first examine the socio-economic position of communities in Karachi and elsewhere on the basis of a three-tier income classification, comprising low, medium and high incomes. Many analyses have adopted such a framework, including the Karachi Development Agency (KDA), which assigned the incomes shown in Table 6.9 to a three-tier socio-economic model, in a study of visitors to Karachi's coastal zone conducted in 1988. Greater precision is not always possible.

The categorisation in Table 6.9 provides a useful indication of broad income groups in the city. In 1988 (when the data was collected), Rs.3,000 would be equivalent to approximately US\$150. Government figures suggest that the average household size in Karachi in the mid-1980s was 6.4 persons (COEKA, 1986, pp.5, 7).

Individual salaries are often difficult to determine as data typically relates to household incomes, particularly where whole families are engaged in a single set of related activities. Examples of such a situation would be family workshops, with members of the household engaged in stitching, repairing, printing and such like. Similarly, construction and industrial labouring is often undertaken by all the able members of a family. At 1989 prices the *Katchi Abadis* Association recorded a typical household labouring income in Karachi *katchi abadis* of around Rs. 500 to 1,000 per month (figures supplied by KAA, February 1992).

TABLE 6.9: Income Groups; KDA Study

<u>Income group</u>	<u>Household monthly income (Rs.)*</u>
LOW	Less than 3,000
MEDIUM	3,000 - 10,000
HIGH	10,000 and above

Source: KDA "Coastal Zone Development Study", December 1989.

* - *As at mid-1988.*

The three-tier income framework shown in Table 6.9 can be usefully compared to an occupation and income survey I conducted in the city in 1991 and 1992. Examples of the occupations I selected for comparison are shown in Table 6.10. The table shows that a middle-income family would typically be involved in such occupations as shopkeeper, office clerk or industrial worker, in each case with more than one member of the family contributing to the household income. Low-income families are more likely to be engaged in general labouring, hawking, sewing or similar activities.

TABLE 6.10: Selected occupations and incomes, 1991/92

<u>Income group</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Monthly salary (Rs.)</u>
LOW	<i>Thallawala</i>	
	[push-cart vendor]	300 - 800
	Seamstress	200 - 600
	Shop assistant	500 - 900
	Labourer	200 - 500
MIDDLE	Shopkeeper	1,000 - 2,000
	Driver	900 - 1,800
	Office clerk	1,000 - 2,000
	Industrial worker	800 - 1,500
	Manager of textile workshop	3,000 - 6,000
HIGH	Engineer (graduate)	4,000 - 10,000
	Marketing manager	20,000 and above

Sources: OPP, KAA, discussions (various) and press (various).

Land

During fieldwork in 1991 and 1992 I also undertook a detailed survey of residential land values across Karachi, to determine the economic patterns of housing development in the city across space. The broad results of the survey were not surprising. The most expensive residential land in Karachi is that close to, and/or with good connections to the commercial centre of the city (the high-income suburbs of Clifton and Defence also stand out as islands of high-cost land). Thus in the central Saddar - M.A. Jinnah Road - Chundigarh Road area, residential plots were reportedly selling in early 1992 at Rs.10,000 to 15,000 per square yard. Generally speaking, as distance increases from the hub of the city, residential land values decline, to Rs.600 per square yard in Federal 'B' area, and to Rs.350 per square yard in North Karachi for example. Table 6.11 shows examples of districts in Karachi within each of the three residential land-price categories of low, medium and high⁵.

Regarding this matter, two important anomalies must be borne in mind. Firstly, the influence on land values of proximity to economic activity sometimes leads to poor quality old or recently encroached slum housing to occupy land of a relatively high value. This is notably the case within the old district of Lyari, where land for residential plots is Rs.1,000 per square yard, equivalent to that in PECHS or Jacob Lines, but where conditions of housing and density of population are not equivalent to the latter. The high value relates to the area's great

TABLE 6.11: Economic distribution of districts in Karachi by residential land values

<u>Category</u>	<u>Rs./sq. yd. (1992)</u>	<u>Districts*</u>
LOW	150 - 350	Baldia, Qasba, Orangi, Mauripur, Landhi, Bhit, Korangi.
MIDDLE	400 - 750	Nazimabad, N.Nazimabad, Liaquatabad, Malir, Federal 'B' Area.
HIGH	800 - 3,000	PECHS, Gulshan-i Iqbal, Clifton, Defence.

Source: Land-value survey, February 1992, with assistance of Shahani Associates Chartered Surveyors

* - Selected districts.

proximity to both the city centre and to the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE). At around 100 plots per hectare, the density of Lyari is nearly ten times that of Defence, for example, while residential land

values in the latter are just twice that of Iyari (Meyerink, 1983, pp.20-26).

The second anomaly concerns various other local variations, such as spatial relations to transport nodes, or to suburban sources of employment. On this matter, the surveyor and former PPP technocrat P.K. Shahani is developing a theory of "curfew-propensity areas" in Karachi (interview, 28 January 1992, Karachi). Here, certain districts that have been particularly prone to curfew imposition at times of unrest have seen a drop in land values of up to 30%, while relatively curfew-free areas have enjoyed real land-value rises of 10% to 15% in the last three years (ibid).

The impact of curfew-propensity is shown in Table 6.12, where the distorting effect on land values that curfews have imposed in selected districts of the city is also assessed. The Table is concerned with the period from the beginning of 1983 to the end of the first quarter of 1989, and assesses for each district the proportion of that time that a particular district spent under curfew compared to the total amount of curfew imposition throughout Karachi in the same period. The purpose of the Table is to show how often some districts were suffering civil unrest in the 1983-89 period, and to offer a rough assessment of how much of an impact this will have on the district's land and property values. The concentration of unrest around certain specific districts can then be estimated, although, as will be discussed later, curfew imposition does not always equate with levels of unrest in a particular district.

TABLE 6.12: Curfews in selected districts 1983 - April 1989
and "curfew-propensity"

<u>District</u>	<u>Curfew days/ part-days*</u>	<u>% of total curf. period*</u>	<u>Curfew propensity</u>
Shah Faisal Colony	315	74.3	HIGH
Nazimabad	237	55.9	HIGH
Orangi	216	50.9	HIGH
Liaquatabad	202	47.6	HIGH
New Karachi	29	6.8	LOW
PIB Colony	23	5.4	LOW
Qasba Colony	17	4.0	LOW
Lyari	0	0.0	LOW

Source: * - COEKA, *Implementation Review, 1989, pp.9iv-vii.*

Curfew imposition is extremely injurious to economic activity and quality of life and will obviously have a negative impact on the value of areas perceived to be prone to its imposition. The variations in curfew likelihood and length relate to a complex variety of factors. Low-income "slum" areas like Lyari and Qasba may escape declarations of curfew by virtue of being areas of low official and police presence,

while areas such as Nazimabad are far better policed. P.K. Shahani claims that the factor of curfew propensity is now well established in the land and property market (interview, 28 January 1992, Karachi). Thus, while the absolute figures in Table 6.12 will change quickly, their values relative to one another will remain relatively constant.

Political patterns and community distribution

I will show that the power-base of the MQM in Karachi is concentrated in certain middle-income districts of Central and East Zones, while the non-MQM vote is mostly concentrated in the low-income areas of Karachi East, West and South. Within this broad framework, the picture of socio-economic distribution in the city establishes not only where the MQM's *Mohajirs* live, but exactly in which positions within the urban economy they are concentrated. The power-base of the MQM is constituted by the Urdu-speaking shopkeepers, industrial workers and office-clerks. I will also show that such patterns of community distribution in the urban space are reflected in the distribution of visual symbols and community markers - the emblems of different political and ethnic groups.

I have shown that the KDA prefers to avoid studies of the city that record "ethnic" distributions (interview with Abu Shamim Arif, 12 April 1991, Karachi), and as a result the economic data supplied by such agencies as the KDA cannot readily be equated with socio-cultural or political patterns. For this reason, I adopt in this research a method of

analysis of electoral data in the city, concerning the general elections of 1988 and 1990 (in combination with the Local Bodies elections of 1987). This method provides not only an appropriate spatial framework of "units" in the city, namely the 28 Provincial Assembly seats, but also a method of linking the economic data of those districts with political processes through to the end of the 1980s.

Although the ethnic affiliation of each voter is not recorded, it can be argued that the organisation of most political parties in Pakistan is structured along ethnic lines. The names, rhetoric and leadership of many parties ensure that voters of a particular ethnic group are embraced, while those of certain other groups are excluded. This is particularly so in the case of the MQM. Despite developments at the turn of the 1990s, the formative years of the Movement involved a tremendous ethnic exclusivity of words and policy directed first at Afghans, Pakhtuns and to a lesser extent Punjabis, and then later at Sindhis. This means that very few non-*Mohajirs* will be ready to join its ranks. Ironically, Altaf Hussain's attempts to move away from a solely ethnic politics after 1991 have led to a violent rift in the MQM, all of which supports the contention that the electorate in Sindh has polarised ethnically to a great extent.

The MQM is not the only party pursuing hardline ethnic policies. The PPI was formed in 1987 with the express intention of catering for two of the communities living in Sindh excluded from the MQM's constituency (Muslim, 10 March 1987, Karachi). The results of the 1990 elections showed a further ethnic differentiation within the PPI's ranks,

as its Punjabi and Pakhtun wings split into two distinct groups. The former group, led by Malik Ghulam Sarwar Awan, achieved a significant vote in just two seats (namely the east Lyari area and the central commercial district, and *katchi abadis* around the Kimari Basin (PS 89 and 90, South Zone)). The pattern of votes for Sarwar Awan reflects the heavily Punjabi nature of those districts in which he made a substantial showing.

The Awami National Party was formed in 1986 by merging the National Democratic Party (NDP), the *Awami Tehrik* of Sindhi nationalist Rasul Bux Palejo, and the Pakistan National Party (PNP) of Baloch nationalist Mir Ghaus Bux Bizenjo (BBC WS, SAS 1-8-86). However, dissent among its ranks led to splits almost immediately (Herald Election Special, October 1990, p.23), and by 1989 the ANP comprised a small group headed by Pakhtun nationalist and leftist Wali Khan, son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan who had called for a *Pakhtunistan* at the time of the Partition. By virtue of its leadership and its electoral success in Pakhtun areas of the city, the ANP in Karachi can be seen as a primarily Pakhtun party. For example, in the last election there was no significant showing for the ANP in *Mohajir*-dominated Central Zone, while the party concentrated in West Zone (notably the *katchi abadis* of Baldia and Qasba), and isolated Pakhtun areas, such as *katchi abadis* in eastern Landhi, and parts of Lyari. The emergence of the PPI has not made a serious dent in the ANP following.

Obviously there are parties that embrace followers of all ethnic groups and that endeavour not to be seen as ethnic parties. We have seen

that Benazir Bhutto and the PDA fall into this camp, with Bhutto claiming that "we don't do ethnic politics" (interview, 22 January 1992, Karachi). Similarly, the IJI is nominally a "national" party (in both rhetoric and composition, fielding candidates in all four provinces). Table 6.13 shows the Provincial Assembly vote in Karachi in 1988 and 1990. The Table shows that the PDA/PPP vote declined in South Zone between 1988 and 1990. The IJI does not seem to have benefitted from this, since its vote remained stable, while the MQM, PPI (Punjabi component) and ANP all increased their vote, suggesting an ethnically mixed group of PPP deserters. A desertion from such national parties, and the spatial concentrations of votes in their former strongholds, suggest a gradual process of ethnic polarisation in the political arena.

From Table 6.13 it can be seen that the PDA was least in evidence in Central Zone, while in South Zone, where the major concentration of Karachi Sindhis live (within the urban area), the PDA was the largest party in 1988. Such an ethnic correlation is also suggested by a preponderance of PPP slogans and symbols (including the red, black and green tricolour, and the arrow - the PPP's voting symbol⁵) in Sindhi areas such as Lyari, but not elsewhere. In rural Sindh, furthermore, the PPP is clearly the most popular party among the Sindhi electorate.

The data in Table 6.13 provide three useful pointers to the spatial organisation of the city. Firstly, East Zone is the most heavily populated in the city, and thus provides the largest zonal share of the vote. Secondly, between the elections of 1988 and 1990, the MQM vote

TABLE 6.13: Vote* in Karachi, 1988 and 1990, by Zone.

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Vote as % of</u>		<u>Vote as % of</u>	
		<u>Zone vote</u>		<u>city vote</u>	
		<u>1988</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1990</u>
WEST	MQM	48.01	59.69	8.47	10.45
	PPP/PDA	21.13	19.77	3.72	3.46
	PPI	10.35	0.02***	1.82	0.00
	ANP	7.92	5.71	1.40	1.00
	IJI	6.56	10.01	1.16	1.75
CENTRAL	MQM	81.14	92.10	22.63	26.15
	PPP/PDA	7.91	2.07	2.21	0.59
	IJI	6.52	4.86	1.82	1.38
	PPI	1.83	0.01**	0.51	0.00
SOUTH	PPP/PDA	39.87	36.30	7.81	5.91
	MQM	31.73	44.20	6.21	7.21
	IJI	6.79	6.69	1.33	1.09
	PPI	3.91	4.05***	0.77	0.66
	ANP	1.76	2.58	0.34	0.42
EAST	MQM	62.34	73.07	21.75	27.61
	PPP/PDA	17.09	16.48	5.96	6.23
	PPI	6.54	0.09**	2.28	0.04
	IJI	5.18	7.11	1.81	2.69

Source: Calculations derived from figures supplied by Provincial Election Authority, Karachi

** - Total valid vote; ** - Pakhtun component only following split;*

**** - Punjabi component (92.3% of PPI vote in Zone), plus Pakhtun component.*

increased considerably throughout the city. The PPP/PDA vote remained relatively stable apart from in Central Zone, while the PPI support collapsed, principally due to a split between the Punjabi and Pakhtun wings of the party. The IJI seems to have been the main beneficiary of this shift in Pakhtun and Punjabi votes. Thirdly, Central Zone is clearly the heartland of the MQM vote, and strikingly so in 1990. This represents the middle-income *Mohajir* districts of Nazimabad, Liaquatabad, Azizabad, Federal 'E' Area and North Karachi. East Zone is the next most important MQM area, although there is a sizeable element of PPP support here, particularly in Malir Colony and Cantonment and parts of Landhi. Only in South Zone is the MQM vote balanced by that for other parties. In 1988 the PPP was the largest single party in this Zone.

The nature of the MQM heartlands in terms of facilities and development are conterminous with the middle-income character of such districts as I have described them. In Chapter 5 I discussed notions of "mythology" in political rhetoric, whereby the claims of political leaders often fail to convince in the face of perceived "realities" on the ground. In Karachi, the distribution of the *Mohajirs* within the city highlights how claims of discrimination and economic repression promoted by the MQM are another important element of political mythology. By virtue of residing in middle-income districts, the *Mohajirs* not surprisingly have better facilities at their disposal than many of their neighbours. I will also show that political patronage by the agencies of the local state is important for the development of

facilities in local urban communities. The rise to dominance of the MQM in these agencies through the 1980s, in conjunction with the ethnic particularism of Pakistan's politics, have ensured that the poorest non-*Mohajir* districts in the city have faced the greatest battle for local upgrading.

In the course of fieldwork in Karachi, I undertook a survey of public-sector higher education and health facilities. One of the main reasons these facilities were selected was that they figure prominently in party rhetoric concerning levels of amenities (particularly higher education in the case of the MQM). Health facilities are one of the more basic amenities, and a lack or abundance of clinics, hospitals or dispensaries can suggest much about the general economic profile of districts.

The distribution of the two sets of facilities by zone is shown in Table 6.14. We can see that in terms of these two parameters, Central Zone fares best, with allocations of higher education and health facilities in the public sector exceeding its "population proportion". East and South Zones achieve close to parity between their population proportions and facilities while West Zone is strikingly underserved, containing just one college and two hospitals. Notwithstanding MQM rhetoric, facilities are worst in the parts of the city where the MQM does least well.

TABLE 6.14: Distribution of two public-sector facilities by Zone, Karachi 1991

Zone	Proportion of Pop'n*	Higher education		Health facilities	
		No.	%	No.	%
WEST	14.98	1	1.96	2	2.50
CENTRAL	24.67	18	35.29	31	38.75
SOUTH	25.68	12	23.53	23	28.75
EAST	34.67	20	39.22	24	30.00

Source: Survey conducted with the assistance of the Survey of Pakistan, Karachi.

** Proportions calculated from 1981 Census of Pakistan*

Electoral malpractice

The use of electoral data pertaining to Karachi or elsewhere in Pakistan should be accompanied by a warning on the issue of possible electoral malpractice, especially with regard to the election of 1990. The polls were observed by two external delegations; a party from the National Democratic Institute (NDI) based in the United States, and a French delegation of the International Federation of Human Rights. While

the former group came to the conclusion that the elections were largely fair (Nation, 31 October 1990, Lahore), the French group observed localised irregularities that, it claimed, cast doubt on the whole electoral process (Nation, *ibid*). The PDA combined such observations with its own findings to produce a White Paper entitled "How an Election was Stolen" (PDA, 1991).

The specific charges differ across the 70 NA seats claimed to have been "rigged", but in Karachi the main problem seemed to have been a suspiciously large increase in voter registration in particular seats following the previous elections. Particular questions surround the 13.6% increase in registered votes in NA 188 (Central Zone, Federal 'B' Area to North Karachi) and the 16.2% increase in NA 195 (East Zone, Landhi; PDA, 1991, p.242). The possible impact of this factor on the Provincial Assembly constituencies is examined in Table 6.15. The Table depicts a wide variation in voter registration between the seats won by the PDA and MQM in 1990 (together accounting for all the city's seats), in a way that a simple average does not fully convey. Thus, while most PDA seats (four of the six won) saw a registration increase since 1988 of less than 4%, only one of the 22 seats won by the MQM fell into this category. The highest single increase went to the MQM in PS 83 (Central Zone, Federal 'B' Area) which saw an increase in registered voters since 1988 of 16.76%. In this seat, the MQM won with 90.06% of the vote, up from 83.9% of the vote in 1988 despite an overall decline in voter turnout between the two polls of just under 7% (Election Commission, *ibid*).

TABLE 6.15: Voter registration increases, Karachi PA seats, 1988-90

<u>Winning Party</u>	<u>Range of increase in seats won (%)</u>
PDA	0.97 to 14.03
MQM	3.86 to 16.76

Percentage of seats won with increase over 4%

PDA	33.33
MQM	95.45

Average registration increase per seat (%)

PDA	5.12
MQM	8.24

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan, 1988 and 1990.

The PDA charge is that the MQM organises registration of under-age voters with false documents to vote for the Movement (PDA, 1991, p.242). This is the same as the charge levelled at the MQM by PPI chief Sarwar Awan after the 1988 elections (Nation, 31 December 1988, Lahore).

It also seems evident that an element of fear and intimidation was at work in Karachi. The French observer team recorded the presence of armed police at polling stations during the vote in NA 191 (South Zone; Muslim, 31 October 1990, Karachi), which may have affected the vote for the deposed PPP. The PDA also charges that MQM officers were evident inside and outside several polling stations during the vote (PDA, *ibid*, p.242).

In these terms, electoral data can only be used if such pitfalls as electoral malpractice are borne in mind. The discrepancies in voter registration figures may of course relate to little more than enthusiastic organisation in some areas, against apathy in some others. As for the PDA, it should be noted that two of its six Provincial Assembly seats in Karachi in 1990 were among those with very high voter registration increases: PS 97 (East Zone; beginning of rural area east of Landhi) registered a 14.03% increase in registered voters since 1988 (and a 30.54% increase in the PDA vote over that for the PPP in 1988), while PS 98 (East Zone; Malir Colony and Cantonment) saw an 11.2% increase in registered voters, with a 33.35% rise in the PPP/PDA vote (Election Commission, *ibid* - the MQM vote increased 27.3% and 35.44% in these two seats respectively). Thus, if the large increases in registration do represent electoral fraud, the MQM is not the only guilty party. The subject has since been swept under the carpet, as the IJI government has shown no sign of establishing a review of the results.

6.4 THE LOCAL STATE IN KARACHI

Despite the complications surrounding the use of electoral data, I would argue that spatial patterns of voting in Karachi over the last two elections provide a relatively accurate indication of the distribution of political communities in the city. The data also underlines the fact that politics in Karachi and Pakistan have become inherently "ethnic", particularly as regards the MQM and similar groups such as the PPI.

This ethnic particularisation has had an impact on the spatial spread of economic development across Karachi. The manner in which development and ethnicity are interwoven in the city concerns the nature of the local state, in both the formal and informal sectors, and the positions occupied by various communities within the state apparatus. The MQM has played a particularly important role within the configuration of the local state in Karachi in two ways. Firstly, it has increasingly come to dominate the official government agencies, and has orchestrated the policies of those agencies accordingly. Secondly, the Movement has established a form of "secondary state" in many areas, whereby it has provided its own projects and administration independently of any official arm of the state. To understand these processes, it is useful to analyse the nature of the local state in Karachi.

The concept of the "state" at the local level in a city such as Karachi involves various government and non-government agencies, the

boundaries between which are not always clear. Probably the most obvious agency of the state in the city is the official urban administration, which, as in many cities, is structured around a variety of institutions that do not always display effective coordination. Aside from the municipal government, however, Karachi also hosts a large and influential informal sector of land developers, organised criminal gangs and unregulated businesses of one form or another. A bridge between these two sectors of the local state is formed by corrupt workers in the formal sector, who cooperate with the informal sector through coercion, or a desire to supplement wages. Special mention in this respect must be made of the city's police force, which in many localised examples forms a bridge between different sectors of the local state.

The city of Karachi had a municipal government as early as 1852, just nine years after the British arrived in Sindh (Hashmi, 1983, p.31). This administration began to develop for the first time a complete urban programme for Karachi after establishing that epidemics in the city originated from conditions in the old walled slum housing areas on the Lyari river (Meyerink, 1983, p.25).

During the time of Ayub Khan's government, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) was structured on a half-elected and half government-appointed basis until 1971, when the Bhutto government reinstated its fully-elected status. The councillors in the Corporation are elected in the Local Bodies elections, held in Sindh every five years since December 1972. The total size of the KMC currently stands at 204 councillors. These councillors are divided between the city's four Zones,

with 34 in Karachi West, 46 in Karachi South, 56 in Karachi Central and 68 in Karachi East. The number of councillors per Zone broadly mirrors the distribution of Karachi's population. Before 1987 there were just three Zones (West, East and South), after which time Central Zone was detached from West. The last Local Bodies elections before fieldwork was conducted in the city were held in December 1987.

With pressures mounting on the administration of the rapidly-growing city, the Karachi Development Agency was established in 1957 to develop areas of land for housing, and pass them to the jurisdiction of the KMC. Thus, all "legal" land in the city is effectively administered by the KDA in the first instance. However, coordination between the two government agencies has not been smooth, and the KDA effectively maintains municipal committee status in many of the areas it developed, notably in *Gulshan-i Iqbal* in the north-east of the city (where the KDA has built its impressive headquarters). In this capacity, the KDA also exercises jurisdiction over the utility boards in some districts.

Urban utilities basically involve electricity, sewerage, water and transport. The relevant government bodies dealing with these are the Karachi Electricity Supply Corporation (KESC), The Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) and the Karachi Transport Corporation (KTC). Each of these is a semi-autonomous government body with a partnership relationship to the KMC and KDA. Members of these bodies are not elected, but appointed with some degree of jurisdiction exercised by the provincial government. The KTC is the least significant, in terms of size, since the private transport sector is far larger than the public

transport system, with the KTC accounting for just 6.4% of buses on the city's roads in 1986 (COEKA, 1986, p.74).

Karachi, like many developing-world cities, faces problems of adequate utility supply. In 1986, the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) claimed that the demand per capita for piped water in the city exceeded production by just under 15 per cent (COEKA, 1986, p.131). The shortfall is expected to rise over the years, as the rate of population growth in the city exceeds the rate at which the water supply can be improved and increased. By the year 2000, the Board estimates that the shortfall in water production will be equivalent to 54.4 per cent of the demand for water (figures supplied by KWSB, April 1991). In sewerage, there is a similar problem of treatment facilities failing to keep pace with demand. In 1986, the KWSB claimed that it could treat only 18.5 per cent of the daily production of sewage in the city (COEKA, 1986, p.132). The implications of this large shortfall for health and welfare in the city are obvious.

By the end of the 1980s, water was the largest problem area in terms of utility supply in the city - piped water was available to just over 47 per cent of homes in *katchi abadi* areas in 1989 (COEKA, Implementation Review, 1989, p.9xi). Energy has been less of a problem, with electricity available to 73 per cent of homes in the same areas, and gas available to 32.3 per cent of *katchi abadi* homes (ibid). Certainly, life in Karachi does not seem to entail the sort of persistent power-cuts that occur in other cities in Pakistan, such as Lahore or Rawalpindi.

It is interesting to note that the Federal Commission of Enquiry into Karachi Affairs of 1986 (COEKA), which is yet to be put on public release, observed a degree of public frustration at the lack of coordination between these government agencies (ibid, 1986, p.98). The MQM has addressed this factor as a major urban problem, which it claims would be solved by a centralisation of powers under an over-arching KMC.

Since the Local Bodies Elections of 1987, all the government civic agencies in Karachi have experienced a growing preponderance of *Mohajirs* sympathetic to the MQM in their workforce. These polls determined the composition of councillors and officers in the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) - the principal agency of general urban development. The details of the results are shown in Table 6.16.

Commensurate with general electoral and other political data, the Local Bodies election results of 1987 show that Central Zone is very much dominated by the MQM, while the Movement is weakest in South Zone. The decline of the Islamic parties *Jamaat-i Ulama-i Pakistan* (JUP) and *Jamaat-i Islami* (JI) from their previous strength in *Mohajir* districts was also highlighted by the 1987 elections.

The councillors are in effect the immediate government representatives at the *mohallah* [urban district] level, charged with liaising with businesses and residents in their areas and negotiating their requirements at the KMC. Often there is a link between community grievances over standards of facilities in a particular area and the political affiliation of the councillor in that area. In Old Golimar for example, some residents complain that 1987 marked a change for the

TABLE 6.16: Local Bodies Elections, KMC Councillors, 1987

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Tot.</u>	<u>MQM</u>	<u>PPP</u>	<u>PML</u>	<u>JI</u>	<u>JUP</u>	<u>PPI</u>	<u>Others</u>
West	34	10	7	7	2	-	1	7
South	46	6	10	11	5	3	-	11
Central	56	44	3	1	1	1	-	6
East	68	35	6	5	10	-	3	9
<i>Total</i>	204	95	26	24	18	4	4	33

Source: Figures supplied by Provincial Election Authority, Karachi, February 1992.

worse in the level of attention accorded to the area by the KMC. However, those in Noor Muhammad Goth in the north of the area specifically blame their councillor, the Baluchi Murad Asif, for failing to make any effort to work with local people (interviews, 21 January 1992, Karachi).

The success of councillors obviously varies considerably between individual cases. OPP board-member Arif Hasan claims that in the riots of December 1986, Hanifabad *mohallah* and its surrounds in Orangi were relatively quiet due to the tremendous community work of councillor Mohammad Ahmed. In neighbouring Pathan and Frontier Colonies, meanwhile,

councillors Sherzada Khan and Ishaq Khan were unable (or unwilling) to persuade certain residents not to become involved in the violence (interview, 11 February 1991, Karachi). This suggests that localised political conditions can be important in determining the spread of ethnic violence, and that political leadership is thus an integral element of community identity-formation, expression and management.

However, there is a general perception in the city that councillors are in an influential "middleman" position, by means of which they frequently become involved in bribery and extortion. This is the view of Jan Van der Linden (interview, 29 January 1992, Karachi), who further stated that in most *katchi abadis* in the city non-*Mohajirs* do not trust *Mohajir* councillors (the largest group in the city) adequately to represent their interests, for ethnic reasons (ibid).

Since the 1987 elections, the KMC has been largely dominated by the MQM (who represent just under 47% of the councillors and held most of the executive positions, including the mayor, as of the first half of 1993). The Movement also accounts for 50% of the councillors in the Hyderabad Metropolitan Corporation (figures supplied by HMC, April 1991). In Karachi, MQM dominance has run through to the other non-elected civic agencies such as the KDA, KWSB and KESC. Precise figures are not available (the KDA stresses that it is not interested in ethnic delineations; interview with KDA director, 11 April 1991, Karachi), but a housing officer in the KDA assured me that the Authority was dominated by MQM sympathisers (interview, 28 January 1992, Karachi). His claim is supported by the manner in which the KDA headquarters in *Gulshan-i*

Iqbal is liberally decorated with posters, slogans and colours depicting Altaf Hussain and the MQM. Again, the symbolic ambitions of the Movement with regard to urban space strikes a somewhat sinister note, particularly in the context of a civic agency that is meant to serve all Karachiites in a neutral manner.

This growing preponderance of MQM-sympathisers on the staff of the civic agencies in Karachi leads many in non-*Mohajir* areas to complain that they have been badly treated by the urban administration since 1987. Lyari is a constant source of such complaints, which relate even to matters beyond death:

"There is a graveyard owned by a Baloch, but MQM have taken over.....You see other areas - they have all the facilities. Every civic agency is 80% MQM and they cry that they have no jobs!"

(*discussion*, 10 February 1992, Karachi [translation by research assistant]).

Here we can see a recognition of the position that discrimination and repression play in the general political mythology presented by the MQM, in this case from the point of view of a non-*Mohajir*. Indeed it is the non-*Mohajir* communities in the city that feel they have a real grievance when it comes to amenity supply. Incidents like that of August 1988, in which faults at a KWSB pumping station in west Karachi led to some

streets in Lyari being flooded with sewage (Dawn, 7 August 1988, Karachi), serve only to strengthen theories of community victimisation by the civic authorities.

The MQM meanwhile has repeatedly stressed an interest in centralising all civic agencies under the KMC, which at present would give the Movement an even stronger grip on the city administration due to its preponderance in the Corporation. The Mayor, Dr. Farooq Sattar, claimed this was an essential policy in the interests of "efficiency" and giving Karachi "special status" (interview, 26 February 1991, Karachi). The Karachi Declaration of December 1988 resulted in part from a list of "negotiating points" of various urgency presented by the MQM. One of the key elements of these points was the issue of administrative centralisation in Karachi. Here can be seen a linkage of the MQM's centralisation policies with the possible implicit goal of achieving administrative or other "separation" of parts of urban Sindh from the Provincial administration. Under the list of "further demands" in the Karachi Declaration negotiations with the PPP government of 1988/89, were two broad points concerning administrative centralisation:

1. The powers of the KMC, and Hyderabad and Sukkur Municipal Corporations should be extended, and the KDA "and other civic agencies" should be "made subordinate to the KMC".
2. In Hyderabad the HMC should also assume the powers of all civic agencies. The processes of centralisation would allow Sindh's cities to:

".....get rid of multiple agencies, resultant mis-management and over-lapping of jurisdiction on disputes as to the responsibilities of various agencies and a truly uniform one umbrella system [sic]."

(Government of Sindh, Information Department, 1989, p.15)

The MQM also wanted the KMC mayor to be the chairman of KDA's governing body, "by virtue of his august office" (Chairman's Note, 27 May 1989, Government of Sindh, *ibid*, p.21). This had not been formally achieved by 1993. Meanwhile, pro-MQM publications, such as "The Promise" magazine have even proposed the formation of an MQM police force, called a "Razakar force"⁷ (The Promise; October 1991, Karachi, p.13). The MQM in turn has suggested that the existing Karachi police force should be brought under the control of the KMC (Daily News, 27 January 1990, Karachi). Such moves would further anger residents of non-*Mohajir* districts, who already feel that the MQM dominates civic agencies through personnel sympathetic to the Movement.

In these terms, those fearful of an underground movement for some form of "partition" in Sindh, are not placated by the MQM's policies of striving for complete dominance of the administration of urban Sindh. Here again, the Movement can be seen as a form of "secondary state", in that it aims to assume complete administrative powers within particular geographical boundaries, including jurisdiction over law and order. In this aim there lies a possibly sinister intention,

relating to the violence and militarisation of the Movement over recent years. Thus, the position of non-*Mohajirs* within a proposed MQM "state" would be unclear, much as is the case with the position of non-Sindhis under the concept of *Sindhudesh*. Non-*Mohajirs* in urban Sindh are not seen as "clients" in terms of the MQM's clientalist politics.

The Police

The Karachi police force often forms one of the important links between the local authorities and unregulated development or business in the city. The force has also been a source of controversy in terms of the relative jurisdiction of government bodies. The MQM has had a difficult, and at times argumentative relationship with the police, particularly under the Benazir Bhutto government of 1988-90. At this time the Movement viewed the police largely as an anti-*Mohajir* arm of state oppression (*Mohajirs* in the Sindh police force, especially outside Karachi, are believed to be heavily outnumbered by Sindhis). The police service is structured around four districts in Karachi (three before 1987) following the KMC "zones". The total workforce at the end of the 1980s was 15,397, composed of Karachi Police (12,390), traffic police (2,076), and "Eagle" and "Hawk" squads⁵ (931); (COEKA, Implementation Review, 1989, p.8).

The police have been in an increasingly difficult position in Karachi, and are reputed to be in a state of poor morale in the face of low pay and the increasing use of sophisticated weaponry by criminals

in the city (COEKA, 1986, p.53). Certainly the size of the force in Karachi does not compare favourably with other South Asian cities. In Delhi, for example, a city purportedly not much larger than Karachi (COEKA, Implementation Review, 1989, p.9), the police force includes around 22,000 constables (Tambiah, 1990, p.747). This compares with Karachi's 12,000 (COEKA, Implementation Review, 1989, p.8).

Public perceptions of the police, however, are often negative. This emerged during various discussions with *Mohajir* students and traders in Karachi, and with a Pakhtun student whose parents were pushing for him to join the service (*discussions, various, Karachi*). Opinions emerging from these discussions echo the findings of the COEKA in 1986 and 1989, in their own analysis of letters to civic authorities and complaints registered at police stations. Instances of political partisanship, physical abuse of detainees and the public at large, and sporadic and indiscriminate use of violence appear to have considerably lowered public confidence in the police in recent years. There is also a perception, particularly among the *Mohajirs* I interviewed, that many higher-ranking officers in Karachi are involved behind-the-scenes in unregulated private transport or other operations. This is thought to account for the variability of police action after instances of reckless driving, accidents or other incidents (*discussion with Mohajir family, 16 January 1991, Karachi*). The obvious motivation for police officers in Karachi to become involved in corruption is to supplement pay. In the mid-1980s, a Karachi constable's pay was 1065 Rupees (approximately US\$53) per month (COEKA, 1986, p.161). This compares with the average

salary of a shopkeeper, driver or office clerk; a comparison that many police officers feel is unsatisfactory given the considerable danger and stress they must often face in the course of their work.

TABLE 6.17: MQM Report on police in Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur and Larkana Divisions, 1989

<u>Ethnic Group</u>	<u>No. executive positions*</u>
Sindhi	10
Pakhtun	4
Punjabi	4
<i>Mohajir</i>	3

Source: MQM, 1989c

* - District Superintendent to Provincial Inspector General.

The ambivalent attitude of many *Mohajirs* towards the police is reflected in MQM policy on the matter. I noted in Chapter 5 that the Movement blamed most of the "attacks" claimed to have been inflicted on *Mohajirs* up to 1988 on the police. However, the MQM specifically links hostility towards the police with an ethnic issue, focussing on supposedly discriminatory recruitment into the police. Table 6.17 depicts MQM data on the recruitment of different ethnic groups into the Sindh

police. The situation in Karachi is considered to be particularly poor, since of 58 Senior Higher Officers (SHOs) in the city in 1989, only nine were *Mohajirs*, while three of the four Senior Superintendents and the Division Inspector General were claimed to be either Punjabis or Pakhtuns (MQM, 1990c).

In some ways, the MQM's grievance could reflect general urban attitudes towards the police, who are often seen to be ineffective, partisan and corrupt in many locations in South Asia and elsewhere. Tambiah points to partisan action by the police in the Delhi rioting of 1984 (Tambiah, 1990, p. 747), and suggests that the police were seen as sympathetic towards the Pakhtuns in Karachi's ethnic rioting of 1986 (ibid, p.749). Such actions, claims Tambiah (ibid, p.752), are not surprising when one considers that the police are part of the community, and often are members of opposing ethnic groups themselves. Police officers have to live among the people they find themselves facing across the barricades.

The role of such agencies in urban violence will be examined at length in the following chapter. Interestingly, the response of the MQM to perceived injustice at the hands of the police in Sindh has been to suggest that the service should come under the control of the civic agencies that the Movement dominates, and principally under the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC). The Movement's argument is that this would make the police force more accountable to the city's urban administration and more efficient. It goes without saying, however, that such a demand - or argument - also relates to the MQM's desire to

control the key agencies of the local state in Karachi, including the agencies of law and order.

The informal sector of the state

I have shown that the rapid growth of Karachi, particularly after the post-Partition influx of migrants from India and other parts of Pakistan, meant that the central government lost control of urban development in the city at an early stage. This has allowed an important informal sector to develop in Karachi. The commodity in which brokers of this sector trade is principally land, although transport, finance, drugs, arms and other clandestine businesses are also part of the informal sector.

I will show in the following chapter that a view has developed among some commentators that most of the large riots of the mid-1980s in Karachi were orchestrated by "mafias" in the informal sector of the city's economy. Engineer suggests that a focus on such "anti-social elements", as opposed to fundamental economic determinants, should not be entertained by "serious social scientists" (Engineer, 1989, p.205). Less "foundationalist" writers, however, including Akmal Hussain (A. Hussain, 1987, p.2), Hamza Alavi (Alavi, 1989, p.245) and Arif Hasan (Herald, December 1986, Karachi, p.11) have all paid due (and proper) attention to the roles played by identifiable "mafia" (or criminal) groups in fomenting civil disturbances in Sindh in order to develop an

"ethnic smokescreen" for clandestine activities in drugs and arms (Arit Hasan, Herald, January 1987, p.45).

Whatever the situation with regard to urban violence, there has been a growth of powerful and dangerous businesses in the informal sector in Karachi, trading drugs, arms, land and transport operations. A corollary of such businesses are activities such as "bonded labour" supply⁹, protection rackets and extortion. In many ways, the land and transport businesses have expanded to fill the gaps left by the official state in utility provision. KDA development of residential areas has been too slow and inappropriate to cope with the rate of migration to the city, while the KTC has resoundingly failed to supply sufficient public transport.

Added to such factors is a special relationship between the metropolis of Karachi and conditions in the NWFP border regions. The relationship principally concerns the two commodities that accelerated in importance towards the end of the 1970s. Firstly, Afghanistan and the border area with Pakistan has become one of the largest areas of heroin production in the world. Lack of state regulation in the crop-growing regions during the civil war in Afghanistan, coupled with the tremendous profits to be gained from producing opium, have allowed large illicit drug businesses to flourish in these areas. Increasingly, these businesses have used Karachi as their principal international outlet, since it is the nearest large international sea and air-port, and because there are important community links between the businesses in the border regions and traffickers in Karachi.

Secondly, since the late 1970s, Pakistan's pro-*Mujahideen* policy has encouraged a flood of arms into Karachi, both supplied by the West and captured from the communist forces (characterised by the ubiquitous *Kalashnikov* automatic rifle). Such arms have become an important commodity in Pakistan, where student groups, political parties and criminal elements have raced to equip themselves with guns in a hostile political environment.

In Karachi, the clandestine business in such commodities has focussed on semi-regulated slum areas, where it can operate with relative impunity. Often there seems to be a connection with Pakhtun districts, due to the Frontier origins of much of the drugs and arms in the city. However, it is important not to equate criminal fraternities with Pakhtuns in general - a connection that Wali Khan notes is made all too often (Herald, January 1987, Karachi, p.43).

Government responses to these problems have been clumsy and inadequate. In December 1986, "Operation Clean-up" involved the bulldozing of slum bazaars and housing in Sohrab Goth, ostensibly to seize drugs and arms. At the end of the first day, 150 kilograms of assorted drugs, five pistols and two rifles were recovered (Amenah Azam Ali, Herald, January 1987, Karachi, p.39). This was at the expense of widespread displacement of families, only some of whom were re-housed in new apartment blocks (see Figure 6.2). The operation also marked the beginning of some of the worst rioting the city has seen.

The operation resoundingly failed to tackle the illegal elements of the informal economy in Karachi. From the mid-1970s to 1988, the

"mafias" had come to exercise a dominant influence on the city's law and order situation. The private transport sector had been partially regulated during the time of the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto government, through a strict limiting of route permits, but the system was relaxed after Bhutto's overthrow. In the land sector meanwhile, *dallals* [developers] have been the key agents of informal sector development. The founder of the OPP, Akhter Hameed Khan, describes the *dallals* in the following terms:

"Dallals have performed the functions of KDA. They have acquired land, developed, subdivided and allotted it. Further they have arranged supply of water and transport and police protection."

(Akhter Hameed Khan, August 1990, p.4; italics added).

The OPP sees the *dallals*, in addition to the *thallas* who provide building materials, credit and advice, as positive agents in the economy, facilitating development where the state has failed. However, Arif Hasan has observed a change in the power of *dallals* (Herald, December 1986, Karachi, p.11). Previously they could only perform their duties by paying regular bribes to councillors and the local police. Now, with a greater flow of money from such avenues as the drugs trade, some *dallals* have been able to buy land outright with large lump sums, and subsequently sub-let the land or develop it on their own terms, assuming powers as

landlords that they previously did not enjoy (ibid). Their uneasy and often fraudulent linkages with government bodies have occasionally been exposed. In September 1989 the much-reported "Clifton plot scandal", exposed a high-ranking KDA official illegally selling land to *dallals* at 1000 rupees per square yard, well below the legal market value (Daily News, 21 September 1989, Karachi). This example demonstrates the important links of corruption between the formal and informal sectors of the state in a city such as Karachi.

The MQM, as the dominant force in the civic agencies of Karachi since 1987, has experienced an uneasy relationship with the informal sector. The MQM's negotiating points with the PPP government in late 1988 involved the land market in particular. The Charter of Resolution did not mention the issue, but point 15 of the Karachi Declaration (see Appendix 5) deals with "land grabbing" by "middlemen". The "Chairman's note" of May 1989 returns to this issue in terms of "encroachment" (illegal occupation of vacant land by squatters, often organised by *dallals*) with specific reference to *Gulshan-i Iqbal* in Karachi East (Government of Sindh, Information Department, 1989, p.22).

The problem for the MQM is that agents of the informal economy act as a parallel force to the official state in *katchi abadis*, and as such pose a threat to the MQM's grip on the city administration. The response of the Movement seems to be to confront the corruption of government officers in civic agencies, and to increase the power of those agencies over land development relative to the informal sector. The fact of the matter seems to be, however, according to discussions

with various residents across the city (*Mohajirs* and otherwise), that MQM councillors are just as prone to fixing matters in the official machinery in return for bribes as are those representing other parties.

The informal sector and the shaping of urban development

Until 1978, the rapidly growing *katchi abadis* such as Orangi (whose development accelerated after 1972 with an influx of *Biharis* from Bangladesh; OPP, February 1991, p.2) were not even recognised by the central state, until the Zia regime enacted a Martial Law Order in which all *katchi abadis* on safe land before 1 January 1978 would be "regularised" (Van der Linden, Meijer and Nientied, 1991, p.69). In 1985, the cut-off date for regularisable *katchi abadis* was extended to 23 March 1985. By this date, the federal Karachi Special Development Programme (KSDP) was just beginning work, and ultimately would address only a third of the inhabitants in pre-1978 districts (COEKA, 1986, p.51). The importance of federal government recognition of a district is great, however, not least in the aspect of security of tenure, which encourages inhabitants of lower-income housing to upgrade their residences.

The technically illegal status of many districts means that the government's role in development is minimal and the districts remain either underserved, or local organisations develop an infrastructure and facilities. Thikri, on the south-west fringes of the city, provides an example of the former case, while Orangi is an example of the latter.

Thikri is a *katchi abadi* inhabited mostly by Baluchis, and characterised by *katcha* and *semi-pucca* housing with poor facilities. With no government assistance and no effective community organisation, the district differs considerably from parts of Orangi, where the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) has been effective in advising and assisting community projects. Table 6.18 presents a comparison of selected development statistics for Orangi and Thikri.

Conditions in Thikri fall somewhere between "urban" and "rural" conditions, and are generally closer to the latter in terms of housing and sanitation. An OPP team visiting Thikri found a high propensity among interviewees to blame the government for poor conditions and lack of facilities (OPP, November 1991, p.4). In Orangi, meanwhile, the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Orangi Pilot Project has conducted projects to organise health, education, family planning, housing, sanitation and employment. As Peter Nientied observed, such community organisation is convenient for the government, which is relieved of the need to provide assistance and facilities itself (Nientied, 1991, p.145).

Non-state development in parts of Orangi has been impressive. The OPP's education project began in 1986 and is charged with maintaining and improving the 509 private primary and secondary schools that existed in Orangi by 1990 (OPP, August 1990, p.16). All of these were apparently established "without any assistance from the Directorate of Education" (Akhter Hameed Khan, OPP, April 1991, p.3). As a result, the general level of literacy in Orangi, at around 60% of males and 50% of

TABLE 6.18: Selected indices of development in Orangi and Thikri

	Orangi (OPP area)	Thikri
Lanes with underground sewerage (%)	95.75	1.21
Average number of rooms per household	2.13	1.56
Children immunised (% under-fives)	88.60	41.54
Current education attendance;		
-male all ages (%)*	26.00	13.30
-female all ages (%)*	25.30	10.20
Literacy (10 years and above) - male (%)*	61.79	37.39
- female (%)*	53.02	25.42

Sources: OPP, November 1991

** Government of Pakistan, Statistics Division, July 1983.*

females (see Table 6.18) is similar to the average for the city as a whole.

Other low-income housing areas have also increasingly relied on private organisation for the development of facilities. Lyari, for example, differs from Orangi by being an older and more centrally-located low-income housing area, nominally under the jurisdiction of the government. Old Golimar, on the north-east fringe of Lyari in West Zone,

is a largely Sindhi and Baluchi district. The area is served by two government schools (one primary, one middle) in which over-crowding is great, and there are few facilities such as toilets or fians (Star, 31 May 1990, Karachi).

A private organisation, the Sindh Graduate Association (SGA), established a private primary school, the "*Roshan Tara School*" in 1985 (see Figure 6.3). Here, unlike in the government schools, the students pay a nominal fee of Rs.20 per month, which includes provision of a uniform and materials, although around 20 of the 161 pupils in January 1992 were exempt from fees (interview with Ghulam Hussain of SGA, 21 January 1992, Karachi). The school provides tuition in Urdu, Sindhi and English, while government schools use only Urdu. Local residents claim that about 80% of children in the area do not attend school, however, because of work commitments, or because they cannot afford the fees at the Roshan Tara (interview, 21 January 1992, Karachi). The boys shown standing outside the gate in Figure 6.3, for example, cannot attend the school.

Residents also claim that they are neglected by the government in other ways. High on the list of complaints is water (the supply of which is extremely sporadic, sometimes only flowing for one or two hours per day), followed by unemployment, sporadic electricity supply, overcrowding and general developmental neglect. The area has no health dispensary. The author was also shown an arterial road in the area that had not been developed beyond the rough foundations stage, apparently for over eight months (see Figure 6.4). No motor vehicles can use the

road, and people falling ill in the surrounding lanes can only be moved by stretcher to the main Manghopir Road.

These selected examples of conditions in different parts of Karachi show that a non-governmental organisation can play an important role in the shaping of local development. The stark differences in development between the parts of Orangi in which the OPP has been working, and other districts in Karachi such as Thikri or Lyari, testify to the differences in the relationship with urban civic agencies that these districts enjoy. In particular, the relationship between these districts and the MQM, which has come to dominate the urban civic agencies, in part shapes the levels of facilities and development in any given district. Some largely symbolic acts have occasionally underlined the important relationship between the MQM and certain *mohallahs* in Karachi. An OPP document of April 1991 shows photographs of the MQM mayor Farooq Sattar being given a detailed presentation of the OPP's work in Orangi (OPP, April 1991, p.8). Indeed, the Project leaders emphasised to me that relations with the MQM-dominated KMC were good (interview with Perveen Rehman, 15 February 1992, Karachi).

Such visits by the mayor of Karachi would not occur in Lyari or Thikri. It is unfortunate that the OPP has been unable to replicate its work effectively in these non-*Mohajir* dominated communities in the city. Although the OPP has undertaken a "Village Program" in selected rural areas of Sindh (OPP, April 1991, p.17), projects outside of Orangi have not effectively addressed non-*Mohajir* inhabited districts. One of the few projects undertaken by the OPP outside of Karachi, for example, was

located in Urdu-speaking districts of Sukkur city (ibid, p.7). It is true that non-*Mohajir* communities in Karachi have not been able to develop organisations within their own communities, along the lines of the OPP, to the same extent as the *Mohajirs* of Orangi, and have tended to look instead to the local government for help. I would argue, however, that the OPP has been given an unfair advantage over the efforts of other communities in the city through its particularly favourable relationship with the urban administration dominated by the MQM.

6.5 ETHNIC POLARISATION

I have argued that the visit of Dr. Farooq Sattar to the OPP underlined the important relationship between *Mohajirs* in Orangi and the local state. The manner in which the MQM's dominance of the local state has shaped urban development in Karachi in terms of the patronage towards such community organisations reflects an institutionalisation of ethnic divisions in the city. I have suggested that the transposition of voting patterns onto a spatial framework of Karachi can describe with accuracy the pattern of ethnic distribution in the local urban space. The apparent lack of mobility between districts that was discovered in various personal discussions in the city, even when facilities in a neighbouring area are much better, serves to strengthen a sense of this correlation. I would argue that the process of ethnic polarisation in the city is both reflected and reinforced by the *symbolic* power of the MQM.

I have suggested that political graffiti, colours, slogans and party symbols are important elements of the urban space in Karachi. For the MQM, this means the red, green and white tricolour (echoing the red, green and black colours of the older PPP), often depicted in the shape of a *patang* [kite] - the MQM's voting symbol. The choice of symbol has a cultural significance. In Punjab and parts of northern India, the flying of home-made kites during holiday periods, and particularly in Spring, is a common practice. In southern districts such as Sindh or Baluchistan, the practice is not common, however. The *patang* marks a cultural link with northern India and Punjab rather than with Sindh.

Another common symbol of the MQM is the portrait of Altaf Hussain, whose importance as *Quaid* of the Movement has been described in the previous chapter. (This feature also reflects the importance of personalities in the politics of South Asia in general). Figure 6.5 shows an example of a portrait, in this case on the front of a Post Office in Nazimabad. This particular example displays many interesting features. The portrait itself shows the tricolour upon which is emblazoned the distinctive "*Mohajir!*" slogan. Just above is a flag of Pakistan, suggesting a loyal link between the MQM and the "nation". The fact that the portrait is erected on a Post Office is also significant, reflecting the links between the MQM and the *formal sector* of the urban administration in particular. In the background are the long apartment blocks distinctive of much of the housing in Nazimabad, Liaquatabad, Azizabad and surrounding districts of Central Zone. Finally, as the photograph was taken at the time of the split in the MQM, the Post

Office is also draped with a banner declaring loyalty to Altaf Hussain and demanding "accountability" of the *ghadaron* [traitors]. This is a powerful visual symbol of the socio-political environment in Karachi in the first half of 1991.

The preponderance of such MQM symbols in the city seems to be in direct proportion to the *Mohajir* nature of the district in question. Thus the middle-income *mohallahs* of Central Zone show a wealth of portraits and colours, not least in Nazimabad. Burns Road, a *Mohajir* dominated commercial district in central Karachi shows a particular concentration of portraits, flags, *patangs* and other regalia, some of which are very elaborate with coloured electric lighting and sturdy moorings.

Conversely, in non-MQM areas, the lack of such symbols is offset by the regalia of other parties and agencies. Pakhtun areas, such as Benares Chowk and parts of Orangi, often display the flags and colours of the ANP, PPI, *Jamaat-i Ulama-i Islam* (a party popular among Afghans) or the rising *Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party* (PKMAP - the Pakhtun People's Workers' Party - a seemingly paradoxical blend of ethnic and socialist rhetoric). During fieldwork in 1992, the busy traffic interchange in the middle of Benares Chowk was overlooked by a large portrait of Wali Khan, against the black, red and white tricolour of the ANP (echoing the use of portraits of Altaf Hussain in other areas). Similarly, in Sindhi and Baluchi areas, such as Lyari or various *katchi abadis*, the dominant symbolism is often that of the PPP, in terms of the

tricolour, portraits of members of the Bhutto family, depictions of an arrow (the party's voting symbol), or simply "PPP" graffiti.

The location of such visual imagery is important. Benares Chowk is a particularly significant physical and symbolic interchange, as Chapter 7 will describe in the context of urban violence in Karachi. The *chowk* owes its importance to its position as a narrow interchange between Nazimabad and the Pakhtun-dominated gateway of Orangi. A similar location is *Haider Chowk* in Hyderabad, which is not only an important traffic interchange (such that blocking the square commands considerable attention), but also recalls in its name Haider Bux Jatoi, an important historical figure in Sindhi politics. The emotional charge of such an image has been powerful on many occasions, when ethnic conflict between Sindhis and *Mohajirs* in Hyderabad has centred on the square.

Symbolism associated with the split in the MQM in 1991/92 was very prevalent in Karachi during both periods of fieldwork. During the controversies, *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital in Nazimabad emerged as another important symbolic node, this time on behalf of the *Mohajirs*. Altaf Hussain's various periods in the hospital were accompanied by the increasing transformation of the building into a sort of shrine for the *Quaid*. Not only were the outer walls draped with huge banners and tricolours, daubed with slogans stressing allegiance to Altaf, celebrations of *Mohajir* ethnicity and warnings to *gadaron* [traitors], but admittance to the hospital during the leader's stay became restricted to one gate. Here, all visitors were stopped and searched by MQM workers

equipped with guns and two-way radios. In this way, the MQM had effectively "taken control" of this public amenity. Such control extended to Altaf Hussain addressing large rallies within the grounds of the hospital, overlooked by armed workers on the rooftops and balconies of the buildings surrounding the complex. (I attended such a rally, for *Mohajir* bank workers, on 13 March 1991). This phenomenon, in which a public amenity begins to resemble an MQM office, extends to the situation in the KDA headquarters since 1987, as described earlier. The situation is extremely intimidating for non-*Mohajirs*, many of whom feel that they no longer dare to visit such places as *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital (*discussions* with residents of Old Golimar, 21 January 1992, Karachi).

It has been suggested that the MQM amounts to a type of "secondary state" in Karachi, in that its own organisation and members have frequently served as the dominant administrative body in the city. In August 1988, for example, the *Mohajir*-dominated Zonal Municipal Committee of East Zone declared that the official language of the Zone was Urdu (*Dawn*, 4 August 1988, Karachi). The move was largely symbolic, in that the Committee had no authority to effect such legislation, yet it both characterised the MQM's assumption of symbolic power in the city, and intimidated sections of non-*Mohajirs* in the districts under the Committee's jurisdiction.

In other ways, the Movement has made more legitimate and permanent transformations of Karachi's environment. Duncan notes how Sri Lankans changed the street-names of Kandy after Independence to project a vision of Sinhala nationalism (Duncan, 1989, p.197). In Beijing,

meanwhile, communist symbolism was inserted into the ancient imperial origins of Tianenmen Square with the construction of the tomb of Mao Zedong (Wagner, 1991, p.137). Similarly, the British used specific architectural forms such as Western classical designs or the construction of churches to symbolise their penetration and control of the Indian environment (Metcalf, 1989, p.7).

Unlike Hyderabad or other towns in Sindh, Karachi contains very few symbols of Sindhi society in streetnames, monuments or buildings. But as the city grew rapidly after the Partition of India, it did come to reflect Indian Muslim figures important to *Mohajir* lore. M.A Jinnah road, for example, is the principle commercial spine road of central Karachi. Looking north along the road from the city-centre, the skyline is dominated by the enormous tomb of the *Quaid-i Azam*. Similarly, the northern suburb of Lalukhet was renamed "Liaquatabad" in 1951 by the then federal administration in the city, after the assassination of Pakistan's first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. The names of other streets and districts reflect figures important to the *Mohajir* heritage in particular, such as *Sharah-i Ghalib* [Ghalib Street], recalling the great nineteenth and twentieth century poet of the Urdu language, *Gulshan-i Iqbal* [Iqbal Quarters], or Jehangir Road in PECHS or *Shahrah-i Noorjahan* in North Nazimabad, which both recall *Mughal* emperors.

The MQM has continued this process in its own terms. At the beginning of 1992, the mayor Dr. Farooq Sattar announced that the Goharabad *katchi abadi* was to be renamed "*Gulshan-i Altaf*", after the leader of the MQM (The News, 20 January 1992, Karachi). The move

reflects a desire to demonstrate the symbolic dominance of the Karachi environment by the MQM, and was accompanied by a paternalistic statement from the MQM provincial transport minister Hashim Ali:

"He [Ali] said that the injustice meted out to the people of Goharabad in the past has been rectified by the *Haq Parast* leadership."

(The News, *ibid*; italics added).

Here can be seen the characteristic "injustice" rhetoric of the MQM, which I have suggested is essential to MQM "mythology" in terms of the construction of a *Mohajir* identity. Furthermore, the use of the term "rectified" suggests a sense of *control* over the socio-political environment, which by the early 1990s the MQM felt it could express, using the language of its own rhetoric and constructed "mythology". It is also interesting to note that the MQM are identified in this example as the *Haq Parasts* [Seekers of Truth/Justice], a name which combines well with an "injustice" vocabulary¹⁰.

I have argued that the socio-political environment in Karachi and elsewhere in Pakistan is riven by ethnic polarisation. Community grievances concerning such matters as civic amenity supply and quality are all too often articulated by a loose affiliation of ethnic political groups. In December 1988, for example, "Dawn" reported that complaints about poor facilities in the city were being conveyed separately by the

Baloch Qaumi Movement [Baluchi National Movement], the *Pakhtunkhwa Milli Ittehad* [the United Pakhtun Workers], the *Pakhtun Awami Tehrik* [the Pakhtun People's Party], the United Baloch Federation, and others (Dawn, 16 December 1988, Karachi). In the wider political arena it has been argued that votes for such parties as the ANP, PPI, MQM and to some extents the PPP, can be related to the distribution of ethnic groups in the city. This increasingly "ethnic" nature of Pakistan's politics has been reflected in a powerful visual symbolism on the ground. Thus, the "territory" of a particular ethnic group is marked by graffiti, party colours, portraits of political personalities and so on, much as graffiti in cities in the West marks the territories of "gangs" (see Ley and Cybriwsky, 1984, p.495). At times of crisis or excitement, such as an election or an internal party controversy, the amount and impact of such visual symbolism - or symbolic violence - seems to increase.

In the case of the MQM, the "markers" on the ground also convey the power of the Movement in the city, not only in terms of the dominance of civic agencies but also as regards press and other intimidation. The symbolism of this power is reflected in the erection of MQM regalia on official buildings like Post Offices, hospitals, or government offices. Such processes also imply a limit on inter-community mobilisation. A hospital bedecked in MQM banners is threatening to a non-*Mohajir* both visually, and physically in the treatment that the visitor might receive within. Mobility between amenities across districts is hampered by the growing ethnic particularisation of the socio-political environment, and the visual symbolism of communities on

the ground serves only to emphasise the ethnic particularisation. The parallel with Belfast or Beirut, where community polarisation and associated symbolism in the urban space are evident, hardly needs to be stressed.

6.6 CONCLUSIONS

Although the MQM has become the largest single body in the Hyderabad Municipal Council since 1987, and is represented by the city's mayor Aftab Ahmed Shaikh, the Movement is not able to assert complete control in this city since there is a sizeable non-*Mohajir* constituency under its jurisdiction. In symbolic terms, furthermore, Hyderabad has always been important to Sindhi society. After Karachi, it is the largest city in the Province, and was the provincial capital between 1948 and 1958 (when Karachi was the Federal capital). I have shown that Karachi differs from Hyderabad in certain key respects.

This chapter has sought to establish, firstly, the political, economic and social development of Karachi since Independence. I have established that the city has always held a unique position within the State of Pakistan, both culturally, and economically. The economic dominance of the city within Pakistan has given Karachi a national significance, which in many ways fills the gap left by the removal of the seat of central government during the 1950s to Punjab Province. The continuing dominance of the city within Pakistan, maintained through the years by heavy immigration from within and beyond Pakistan, has ensured

that control over the city's major institutions will give a political movement in Karachi the right to bargain directly with the central government in Islamabad.

In the second main section of the chapter, I analysed how the *Mohajir* community, as defined by the MQM, fits into the political, economic and social organisation of the city of Karachi. I have identified spatial concentrations in Central and East Zones, and an occupational concentration in the semi-educated commercial, industrial and artisan categories of employment. Such patterns of community distribution, I have argued, are supported by the manner in which society in Karachi has become ethnically polarised. Symbolic markers on the ground effectively portray this polarisation, such that ethnic communities identify their territories in a manner not dissimilar to urban "gangs" in Western cities. The overwhelming picture, demonstrated by the ubiquity of Altaf Hussain's face and the MQM tricolour, is the MQM's physical dominance of most of the urban space of Karachi.

The final main section of the chapter suggested that the local state in Karachi can be broken down into three axes - the formal sector of the state, the informal sector, and a form of MQM "secondary state", which combines elements of both. Since 1987, the MQM has held a dominant grip on the formal sector of urban power in terms of a growing concentration in the civic agencies starting with the KMC. In a sense, the battle with the PPP government through 1989-90 was about real administrative power being accorded to the MQM in its strongholds in urban Sindh. Because of the position of Karachi within the national

economy, the battle had national repercussions. The PPP ultimately lost the battle when the President, seated in Islamabad, decided to win peace in Pakistan's economic heart by dismissing the PPP government at provincial and national levels.

The informal sector in Karachi is constituted by lucrative and powerful businesses, which operate alongside community projects that aim to fill the gaps left by the official state in such areas as housing and employment. These projects include "Non-Government Organisations", which have official recognition. The most powerful of these is the Orangi Pilot Project, although here again the work is conducted principally among *Mohajirs* and *Biharis* in parts of Orangi. The OPP enjoys good relations with the MQM, which, I have suggested, helps to explain its position as the only significant and effective community developmental project in Karachi. This is where the "secondary state" developed by the MQM in Karachi intersects between the formal and informal sectors of society in the city.

I have argued that the informal sector in Karachi is made more powerful and explosive than is the case in many other cities by the injection of drugs and arms money. Here, the MQM faces a threat - the power of the Movement lies primarily in the "official" agencies of the local state, which form the backbone of its "secondary state". The MQM's response has been a call for the powers of those agencies to be strengthened and centralised, to strengthen the formal sector of administration and thus increase the MQM's grip on the whole city. The battle between the MQM and the urban "mafias" reached a zenith in the

horrific riots after 1986, which I will examine in more detail in the following chapter.

Yet the nature of the local state in Karachi, as in all developing-world cities, is not a situation of two neatly compartmentalised axes of power, the formal and the informal. Firstly, the boundary between the formal and informal sectors is notoriously blurred, and corruption and bribery form a bridge between these sectors. The bridge is constituted by a variety of actors in the urban arena. Councillors, members of utility boards and the KDA, and any government servants who can circumvent the tortuously slow and inefficient procedures of planning and development in the city, tend to form one of the most significant links between formal and informal sectors. The motives driving government workers to such acts include a desire to supplement wages with bribes or backhand payments, a loyalty to family or community requirements and demands, or a response to a genuine demand among the population for a more efficient system of planning and development.

Certainly, linkages between the formal and informal sectors have been noted in most developing-world societies, in both economic and political terms. In Kenya, the International Labour Office actually recommended the strengthening of such links as a policy to improve the economy (ILO, 1972, pp.228-31). In Mexico, meanwhile, effective access to political patronage either through bribery, community links or vote-bargaining has been seen to correlate with the levels of services a low-income housing area will enjoy (Gilbert and Gugler, 1981, p.94). In

cynical, political terms, winning votes for the MQM was almost certainly on the Mayor's mind when he visited the OPP areas of Orangi (see above) - a visit to Lyari or Thikri would not achieve any such gains for the MQM. In administrative terms, the Federal Government of Pakistan itself identified an extreme dissatisfaction with the levels and quality of service offered by civic agencies in Karachi in 1985/86, and thus by inference identified a demand for unofficial processes that circumvented direct access with such government offices (COEKA, 1986, p.22).

In the same study, the Federal Commission also identified a deep-rooted belief among the urban citizens it interviewed that the police force in Karachi was riddled with corruption, notably with respect to the enforcement of traffic standards and the granting of route permits for private transport operators (ibid, p.72). The police form another important linkage between informal and formal sectors of the state in the city of Karachi. I have shown that the issues here also are common to many developing-world societies, not least in South Asia. Bayart, in a general analysis of contemporary studies of Third World politics, describes the "politics of the belly" in Cameroon, as corruption there has come to be known (Bayart, 1991, p.65). Clapham expands on the metaphor of eating by recalling a scene in a novel by the Ghanaian writer, Ayi Kwei Armah (Clapham, 1985, p.53). In this scene, a policeman manning a roadblock in the immediate aftermath of the overthrow of the corrupt regime of Kwame Nkrumah, points to his mouth as travellers try to pass, to indicate that a bribe is needed before he will do his duty. The message is that everyday realities, whatever the

nature of wider political aspects, lead many police to become corrupt in developing-world cities. This relates not only to inadequate wages in relation to difficult working conditions, but also to the fact that the police are closely integrated into the communities in which they work, and inevitably become involved themselves in the processes and demands relating to the informal sector of the economy.

The second way in which the boundaries between formal and informal sectors of the local urban state are blurred, is the manner in which the MQM has increasingly constituted a "secondary state" parallel to the official state. I have shown that since the municipal elections of 1987, the MQM has grown not only to physically dominate the staff in civic agencies, headed by the large elected body of local councillors, the KMC, but has also gained the confidence to physically and symbolically assume public amenities under the banner of the MQM. In the first respect, despite noble proclamations of accountability and integrity, my own discussions with people on the ground have suggested that MQM councillors are as liable as anyone else to act in a partisan manner, and to use their positions of administrative power to extract bribes for any positive action. This is hardly surprising, given my account of police corruption. Also, the developmental neglect of certain districts in the city antipathetic to the MQM, in sharp contrast to conditions in neighbouring areas where the Movement is heavily supported, suggests that the MQM adopts the principle of political patronage for services in its running of the civic agencies.

Secondly, the MQM has increasingly transformed public amenities and facilities into MQM holdings. The most striking examples are probably the APMSO-dominated colleges and the university, which portray a physical dominance by *Mohajirs* sympathetic to the MQM with the draping of huge tricolours and banners over the college buildings. DJ College, in the centre of Karachi, even holds an official APMSO office within its playground. Another fine example of such processes was the transformation of *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital through 1991 into Altaf Hussain's personal residence. At this time, entrance to the hospital was regulated by armed MQM guards - a situation hardly reassuring for those communities who have been on the receiving end of the Movement's wrath. Again, the outside of the hospital displayed, in dramatic terms, the process that was underway.

I would argue that to fashion administration and development in the city of Karachi in the form of the structure and organisation of the MQM, is a fine example of patrimonialist politics in the contemporary developing world. The ability of Altaf Hussain and his colleagues to shape the city (or the *Mohajir* areas at least), into both symbols of "patriotic" community development and MQM *zameen*, to the extent of starting to rename districts after members of the MQM or physically forcing the local press to print what the MQM wanted, has been achieved after a long battle to win administrative dominance in the city. In the national and provincial political arenas, a failure to effectively address matters outside of Karachi or Hyderabad have led the MQM to be somewhat ineffectual. Conditions in Karachi, however, show

that the Movement is very much an effective force in the local urban state.

The "battle for control" in Karachi started to spill into the streets in the mid-1980s, and the MQM played an increasingly pivotal role in this battle. The deployment of the army in Karachi since June 1992 has exposed the violence and militarism behind the scenes of the MQM, which always seemed apparent in the spiralling urban violence of the latter half of the 1980s. In the following chapter I will examine this crisis of civil order in Karachi in terms of its relationship to the MQM, and to the wider fabric of society in Pakistan as a whole.

FOOTNOTES:

1. As discussed in Chapter 4, the 1991 Census for Sindh Province had still not been completed by mid-1993, in part because of claims made by the MQM and others that the provincial government Census officials could not be trusted to be impartial on the enumeration of ethnic proportions in the Province. (The MQM and MIT leadership have suggested, without any reliable data of their own, that Sindhis are now actually outweighed by non-Sindhis in the Province).

2. The distribution surveys were conducted with the assistance of P.K. Shahani Associates Chartered Surveyors, and the Survey of Pakistan.

3. The Provincial Election Authority supplied a list of the delimitations of provincial and national seats in the city, but did not have an accurate map of the relevant KMC units. At the KMC itself, there was just one master-map of the units, situated literally on the drawing board with the units shown in ink lines. After many discussions with KMC officers, it was finally decided to dispatch an assistant with the rolled master-copy to a photocopying shop in a bazaar.

4. A British television documentary (BBC 2, 12 April 1990) examined the processes of ethnic polarisation in Hyderabad, where Sindhis living in the city centre are moving to outer northern and western suburbs such as Qasimabad, while *Mohajirs* are moving in from such suburbs to Latifabad in the south or Pucca Qila in the city-centre. The

programme also focussed on the problems of those with mixed marriages, who in some cases were being intimidated by both sides of the ethnic divide.

5. The land values are per square yard, for open residential plots, for January/February 1992.

6. Like many Asian countries, Pakistan adopts a system of party symbols during elections to assist illiterate voters. Most parties have retained their original symbols over several elections as these become familiar to the voters. The MQM symbol is a kite, the IJI's a bicycle, the PPP's an arrow and so on.

7. The term "*razakar force*" was used to describe the *Bihari* vigilante groups that fought with Bengali secessionists in the run-up to the formation of Bangladesh, and use of the term here suggests a possible *Bihari* link with the writer.

8. The Eagle and Hawk squads are special semi-military police units, with jurisdiction over anti-terrorist and serious crime matters.

9. Bonded labour (*bhatta mazdoor*) exists in many parts of Pakistan today, including the notorious brick kilns of Punjab. Where poor families owe a debt to a particular employer or landlord, they can "repay" the debt by engaging the whole family in labour remunerated only with board or lodging for a certain period. In this way, the family is made dependent on the employer by debt. The process can become an inexorable cycle from which families can never break free, since they never earn any money with which they could go elsewhere. The process also accounts for low school attendance in

certain areas (see Herald, October 1990, Karachi, p.59). Recently there has been some evidence of the debt of such families being "bought" by employers in Karachi (that is transferred to new creditors), and the families "imported" from northern areas to continue their wageless work in the city (Arif Hasan claims that much Pakhtun labour in the clandestine businesses of Karachi is "imported bonded labour", which has no civil or union rights; Herald, December 1986, p.13).

10. "*Haq Parast*" [Seeker of Justice/Truth] was the "codename" adopted by MQM candidates during the Zia regime, when political parties were banned (other parties undertook similar measures). According to the Movement, the name has been retained at post-Zia election times, as the public have become familiar with the term (*interview* with MQM worker, 6 February 1991, Karachi).



FIGURE 7.1: Bus interchange, Super Highway, Sohrab Goth, Karachi



FIGURE 7.2: View of South Avenue, SITE, Karachi



FIGURE 7.3: View of South Avenue, SITE, Karachi



FIGURE 7.5: Banares Chowk, Karachi

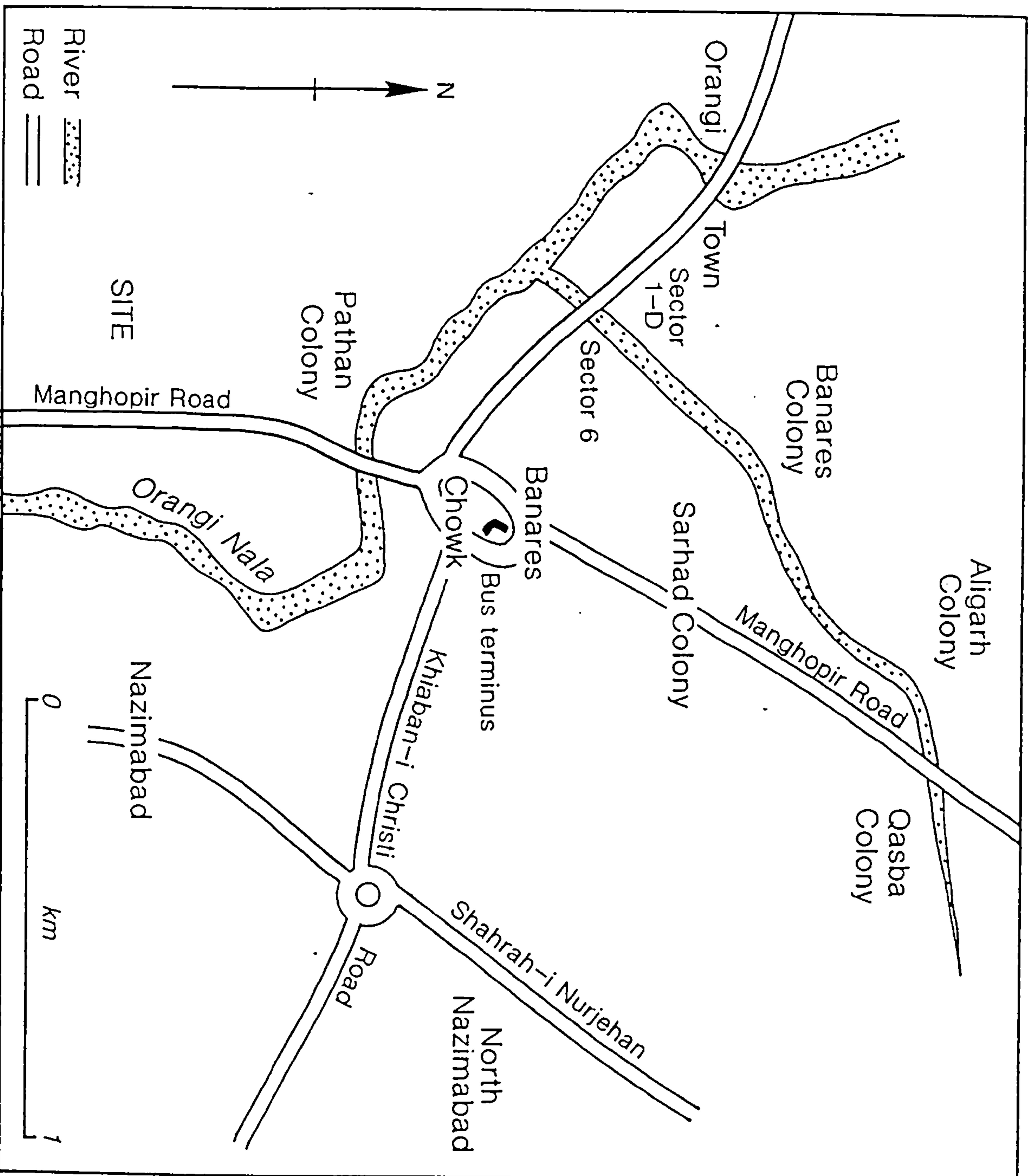


Figure 7.4: Banares Chowk Orangi, Karachi

CHAPTER SEVEN THE MOHAJIR MOVEMENT, THE MQM AND URBAN VIOLENCE
IN SINDH

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Section of the dissertation is to examine the *Mohajir* movement in contemporary Sindh from a "micro-level" perspective within Karachi city. In the previous chapter I looked at the ways in which the MQM has sought to control the political economy of the local state in Karachi. In this chapter I examine the often contradictory relationships between the MQM, political violence and civil disorder in urban Sindh (and especially Karachi). I will argue that interaction with, and control of civil disorder in Karachi and Hyderabad, were important defining features of the rise of the *Mohajir* movement under the MQM in the 1980s.

The previous chapter touched on some of the issues relating to the political geography of Karachi that have had an impact on the development of civil disorder in the city. I will return in this chapter to the relationship between civil society and official institutions in the city, including the police, which I suggested in the previous chapter has been characterised by a considerable degree of public "frustration". From investigations conducted in the second half of the 1980s, the Federal Government of Pakistan uncovered profound problems of accountability, confidence and efficiency in many civic agencies in

Karachi in the mid-1980s. It is interesting that the legal process was also claimed to suffer from these problems, such that many people have begun to feel that they must take the law into their own hands (COEKA, 1986, p.20).

In the informal sector of the state in Karachi, powerful "mafia" groups equipped with abundant firepower have almost certainly capitalised on such feelings of frustration among the urban population, and have contributed to an increasingly anarchic and dangerous environment in the city. Perhaps more obviously, the MQM has also capitalised on such feelings among the Urdu-speaking people of Karachi, and notably among the largely "*Bihari*" communities of Orangi *katchi abadi*, to whom a powerful secondary state is appealing since they live on the margins of the formal state. I will argue that, in the latter half of the 1980s, the MQM deliberately tapped into this explosive atmosphere in Karachi, and translated it into electoral success for the Movement in 1988 and 1990. The success was at the price of serious civil disorder in many instances.

While widespread disturbances occurred in Karachi in 1965 and 1972, the riots that began to emerge in Karachi in the mid 1980s were unique in many ways. The first major episode was the infamous "Bushra Zaidi" riot of April 1985. The disturbances spread beyond the initial point of focus to engulf many parts of the city in "ethnic" violence, continuing sporadically for over a week. The "spark" had been a traffic accident in which a *Mohajir* secondary-school pupil, Bushra Zaidi, was run-over and killed by a bus. In the hours and days that followed, it

seemed as if a hidden reserve of anger and violence had been tapped. In Orangi, Pakhtuns and *Biharis* battled with one another in an ostensibly "ethnic" conflict, while elsewhere in the city, taxis, buses and rickshaws were attacked and used to build burning barricades on the streets. Throughout the episode, the police acted unpredictably, sometimes tear-gassing or firing upon angry crowds, and at other times failing to respond to an incident until it was too late.

The "Bushra Zaidi incident" proved to be just the first of a new wave of large-scale urban disturbances to hit Karachi. At times, Sindh's second largest city, Hyderabad, also suffered bouts of violence. Since late 1990, the two cities have been relatively peaceful, although, it will be argued, the conditions for unrest have hardly changed.

Urban violence in Sindh encompasses a complex combination of incidents and processes, from "ethnic rioting", to the spilling-over of a bazaar dispute, to basic crime. Sometimes the various processes seem unconnected. Certainly, some local-specific factors determine the precise nature and development of the incidents of violence, such as the recurrence of particular geographical "nodes" of violence and conflict. I will argue, however, that there are underlying processes linking many such incidents, relating both to the battle for the control of Karachi city and to the nature of the local-level state in the city (see Chapter 6).

The rest of this chapter is organised as follows. Methodological issues are discussed in section 7.2. In section 7.3 I examine various debates on the nature and significance of urban violence, particularly in

South Asia. Section 7.4 presents a critical analysis of the chronology of major civil disturbances in Karachi. I will argue that the latter half of the 1980s saw a qualitative shift in the pattern of violence - and in the MQM's role in relation to civil disorder. In Section 7.5 I focus further on the differing modes of civil violence in Karachi's history, and attempt to expose some of the underlying political and societal processes at work. The final section of the chapter presents my concluding comments on how civil violence has developed in Karachi over the years, and the role played by the MQM within this pattern of development.

7.2 METHODOLOGY

Violence in Sindh indirectly played a major role in the planning of this research by causing an initial research visit to be postponed in the Summer of 1990, and by shaping and to some extent limiting subsequent visits to the field. Society in Sindh is affected by two forms of violence and each of these shaped my research methodology.

Firstly, most rural areas of Sindh are severely disturbed by the operation of *dacoits* [bandits], whose activities in kidnapping, murder, extortion, protection and political intimidation make large areas of the province essentially out-of-bounds, certainly after dark. The bandits work for the highest bidder, and become involved in disputes between landowners and industrialists, or in extorting protection money from landlords by intimidating the *baris* and villagers on their lands. The

scale and danger of such violence is open to interpretation. The government of Nawaz Sharif repeatedly said that the situation was under control (The News, 20 February 1991, Rawalpindi). Obviously, the government has had every reason to say this, as they wish to convince industry that there are no dangers to investment in rural areas or small towns in the Province (as former Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali stressed in January 1992; Dawn, 18 January 1992, Karachi).

By contrast, most unofficial sources state that the situation in rural Sindh is as chaotic as ever. "Herald" magazine reported that in the first two months of 1991 there were 3000 reported cases of kidnapping in the province, and probably many more unreported cases (March 1991, Karachi, p.33). The tendency has been to suggest that much of the violence and crime is politically motivated, but it seems that this would account for only a small portion of the total number of incidents. The acceleration of violence, particularly in Karachi, between the time that Benazir Bhutto's administration was dismissed in August 1990 and when the new authorities were installed in November (when the police and army were in a limbo period in terms of major operations and planning), suggests a more basic link to the powers of the law enforcement agencies, whoever they might serve politically (Herald, January 1991, Karachi, p.84). In general, it seems likely most bandits are motivated by money. This was suggested by a British television documentary on banditry in rural Sindh in mid-1992 (BBC2, "East", 31 July 1992).

Dacoits, however, are largely a phenomenon of rural Sindh, where they can operate most effectively in the difficult terrain, and especially in the *bela* [forest] areas around the Indus River. Since 1985, the major Sindh cities of Karachi and Hyderabad have seen two different forms of violence. The first, particularly concerning Karachi, involves the 1985-88 period, during which many large "ethnic riots" occurred. These involved a complex set of interactions between Pakhtuns, *Mohajirs* and police. After 1988, however, a more continuous wave of ethnic-sectarian conflict began to take hold, this time originating largely in Hyderabad (and to some extent Sukkur) and spreading to Karachi, principally in the form of sectarian reprisals for terrorist attacks. This form of violence became more "politicised" than the first, in that it was presented as a sectarian battle between *Mohajirs*, represented by the MQM, and Sindhis, represented by Jiye Sindh and the PPP provincial and national government. The difference between the two major periods of urban violence mirrors differences in the socio-political environment in Karachi on the one hand, and Hyderabad, Sukkur and other towns on the other. The differences are also reflected in the fact that while Karachi seems to have been relatively free of ethnic sectarian violence since late 1990, Hyderabad and Sukkur have not been so peaceful.

My research was necessarily conducted with an eye to violence and civil disorder in rural and urban areas of Sindh. Rural violence meant that, on the recommendation of several sources, not least the British Foreign Office (see Appendix 1), first-hand investigation of the position of the *Mohajir* movement and "identity" in smaller towns and

villages had to be abandoned. An initial postponement of fieldwork in May/June 1990 because of serious ethnic violence in Karachi also placed a pressure on time in the second half of the PhD research period. At this time I had to consider abandoning the research in its current form in the event of such widespread violence continuing unabated for any length of time.

It was recognised, however, that violence is unfortunately an integral part of life in many parts of Pakistan where the central state's day-to-day jurisdiction is thin. I will also argue that an element of violence has been central to the development of the contemporary *Mohajir* movement in Sindh, both in terms of an ethnic cleavage with Sindhi society, and of the battle for control by the MQM in the urban areas. In this respect, my research accepted the danger of violence as a mirror to the topics I was investigating.

The sources of primary material for this section of the dissertation are similar to those used in previous chapters, namely interviews and discussions, and press and other archival material. Special mention should also be made of certain official documents, and in particular the Federal Government Commission of Enquiry into Karachi Affairs (henceforth COEKA), launched in March 1986 following the occurrence of several riots in the metropolis. It is interesting to note that the findings and recommendations of the Commission had not been put on general public release by 1993 because of the sensitive issues under discussion. However, full details were obtained for this research of the original document of 1986, and of the first Implementation Review

in 1989. All these sources are in one sense "secondary", in that the author was not present at any incidences of violence. This is important, as a violent episode is probably more likely to be distorted in recollections after the event than is a less charged event. I will show how this was the case with the *Pucca Qila* incident of May 1990, which became something of a turning-point in the political battle between the MQM and the central and provincial PPP government at the turn of the 1990s. For these reasons, efforts were always made to cross-reference details obtained from one source with others from the press, archives, official documentation and personal communications, wherever possible.

7.3 URBAN VIOLENCE - ISSUES AND DEBATES

It was within an existing arena of sectarian, criminal and general civil violence that the relatively new category of "ethnic" violence emerged in the mid-1980s. After an incident of violence, people look for explanations as to what is happening, and these are not always readily forthcoming.

Although the reasons for urban violence offered by such agencies as the police, the government or the press can be shrouded in confusingly simplistic generalisations, details on the place and nature of the disturbances and the nature of the people involved allow us to glimpse the underlying dynamics of violence. The seemingly paradoxical nature of "ethnic rioting" in Karachi since 1985 raises many questions.

Zia Mohyeddin, an expatriate Pakistani writer in Britain, reacted to the reports of the riots of December 1986 with the following words:

"Like many of you, I was stunned by the events of December 1986. It was a carnage, the likes of which had not happened since the holocaust of 1947. Amazing motives were assigned. I was told it was an ethnic problem. 'Ethnic', I said in disbelief. 'Ethnic problems are problems we have to deal with in America and England'"

(Zia Mohyeddin, 1988, p.195)

The sudden explosion of large "ethnic riots" after 1985 was in many ways as bewildering as the sudden calm that has descended on the city of Karachi since the elections of November 1990 (broken seriously only by a terrorist bomb in the centre of the city in November 1991', and by internal MQM conflict in 1991/92).

To examine the internal dynamics of a riot and thus to attempt to understand what prompts it, many observers have turned to the better-documented episodes of serious civil disorder in history. In practice, this has tended to involve extensive analysis of pre- and early industrial disturbances in Europe, or the urban riots in the metropolitan West in the latter half of the twentieth century. Here, some historians have attempted to identify the "faces in the crowd", as did

E.P. Thompson (Thompson, 1978). In South Asia, Stanley Tambiah (Tambiah, 1986, 1990) and Asghar Ali Engineer (Engineer, 1989) have examined various more recent violent episodes in Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka, while in Pakistan Akmal Hussain (A. Hussain, 1987, 1988) has examined rioting in Karachi in terms of certain wider theories of violence in postcolonial society. Different approaches to riots and rioters have developed in terms of the generality or specificity of examples of violence, that relate both to political viewpoints and to the development of general paradigms in the social sciences. Debates have focussed in particular on group-action "rioting", and have oscillated between ascribing primary importance to local-specific factors or to a wider socio-political awareness and motivations.

Violence and the Crowd

In the context of European history, the "crowd" involved in a violent incident has been read in two different ways. On the one hand are scholars such as J.M. Thompson and Michelot, who viewed crowds like those of the French Revolution as "le peuple", or a group of politically conscious individuals embarking upon a particular predetermined course of action. On the other side stood such historians as Burke and Taine, who viewed rioting crowds more as "the mob", or an unruly collection of opportunists rioting to reinforce a culture of criminality (after G. Rudé, 1981, p.7-8).

The political difference in these two theories of the crowd is reflected in the language adopted by the state when reacting to violent episodes. Where a riot is directed at the ruling government, the crowd is often a "mob", a collection of criminals with little or no political consciousness. In Pakistan this approach was reflected in the press reports of the July 1972 Language Bill riots in Karachi. After 11 July, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto invoked the Defence of Pakistan Rules, in which newspaper reports on the violence had to be issued under police censorship. The language of such reports referred to rioters as "miscreants" (Dawn, 12 July 1972, Karachi) or "roving groups of urchins" (Dawn, 15 July 1972, Karachi), and to the riots as "sectional clashes" (Dawn, 12 July 1972) or "minor incidents" (Dawn, 15 July 1972). In other situations, the description of incidents is in more positive and sympathetic terms, particularly where a newspaper itself is opposed to some or all of the policies of the government, or if it is discussing issues outside of Pakistan with which it feels sympathy, such as the actions of Muslims in Kashmir against the Indian state.

In December 1986, "Dawn" echoed Zia Mohyeddin in describing the largest riot ever to strike Karachi as "carnage", although a report by Zaffar Abbas ended with the words;

"The government knows the root causes of the problem, and its failure in providing basic amenities, and solving major problems like those of unemployment and transport."

(Dawn, 24 December 1986, Karachi)

Here, the riot, or "problem", is described not as the action of a "mob", but as the response of politically conscious "people" protesting at the government's handling of such issues as employment and amenity supply. The way in which the violence is interpreted depends on the position of the analyst, whether it is from the point of view of the state, or of a citizen protesting at perceived failures of the state authorities in addressing economic problems.

In some instances the individuals in a crowd can be identified, as in incidences of arrest by the police. In Europe, historians have used police records to examine the type of people involved in disturbances. This allowed George Rude to summarise of disturbances in eighteenth-century France and England that it was "exceptional" for slum-dwellers, vagrants or intellectuals and professionals to be involved in riots. The rioters here were rather the "lower-order" working masses (Rudé, 1981, p.204). In late twentieth century Karachi, police records are a problematic source for scholars. Since obtaining such data directly from the police is extremely difficult, details have to be collected through the filter of the press or official governments reports, which are far from unbiased or apolitical. On occasions, however, the nature of arrested people is mentioned in terms that identify them as predominantly male, and mostly young (sometimes no more than teenagers or occasionally even younger). Such broad details can be gleaned, for example, from the use of the word "urchins" (Dawn, 15 July 1972,

Karachi). In some cases, the politicisation of student groups has also led them to be involved in certain stages of the outbreak of violent incidents, notably in the disturbance that followed the running-down of the female student Bushra Zaidi in Nazimabad, April 1985 (Tambiah, 1990, p.749).

The "spark"

The involvement of a student organisation in one stage of the development of the Bushra Zaidi riot supports Tambiah's assertion that urban riots in South Asia are not "fickle, momentary" affairs, but are rooted in wider underlying societal processes involving a search for justice (Tambiah, 1990, p.751). Indeed, the "spontaneity" of a disturbance is another aspect over which debates have developed. The issue relates to whether the crowd is seen as an entity in itself, acting independently of the individual consciousnesses of its members, or whether it is the predetermined actions of individuals which dictate the action of a crowd. This factor also relates to the question of political leadership and its effect on rioting groups.

Waddington, Jones and Crichton identified two theoretical approaches that have been used in studies of crowd action (Waddington et al., 1989). On the one hand is the "structural-functionalist" school that influenced most of the social sciences in the 1960s (and less so the 1970s). Smelser equated individual behaviour with collective

behaviour, and identified riots as being one of the results of the interplay of underlying societal structures beyond the control of any individual (Smelser, 1962, p.23). Thus, violence erupts at points of "weakness" in the structures of society (Waddington, Jones and Chrichter, 1989, p.7). Although disclaiming a structural-functionalist approach, Castells also once questioned the extent of individual action in the structures of the urban system (Castells, 1976, p.7). Structural Marxism has not generally had much to say about agency or consciousness.

Smelser identified a model of collective disturbance in which a linear pattern of events is followed, leading from "structural strain" through "precipitating factors" and ultimately to "social control" (Smelser, 1962, after Waddington et al., 1989, p.173). Waddington, Jones and Chrichter (ibid), on the other hand, follow a less precise line, claiming that individual riots revolve around specific "flashpoints" relating to the context in hand. In their view, a disturbance does not repeatedly follow a single linear development but can occur at various levels, termed structural, ideological, cultural, contextual, situational, and interactional (Waddington et al., 1989, p.157). Each level involves a different course of development and ultimate abatement, and involves an interplay of various forms of language and group perception.

These differences in theoretical approach relate to the perceived "spontaneity" of crowd action. In Britain, the Scarman Report following the Brixton riot of 1981 repeatedly referred to the "spark" of a disturbance, the specific catalyst - such as an arrest - that moves the crowd to action (Waddington et al., 1989, p.1). Gustave Le Bon, on

the other hand, saw the crowd as an "irrational" entity, gripped by a mass hysteria that could not function on any individual basis (Le Bon, 1952, p. 61-2). The significance of this debate also relates to the factor of public consensus and support for rioting groups. Rude suggests that outbreaks of violence cannot be "triggered" without an underlying groundswell of support extending further than those actually participating in the violence (Rudé, 1981, pp. 244-5).

In summary, many perspectives on crowd action seem to follow either structural-functionalist (and/or Marxist), or pluralist (local-specific) avenues. Here we can also recall the debate on "communalism" (discussed in Chapter Two), whereby some have related the rise of "communal" violence in India to the development of the capitalist economy in the subcontinent and the socio-economic disparities it brought about. (See Chakrabarty, 1989, p.186 in the case of Calcutta riots, Engineer, 1989, p.210 on Sikh-Hindu violence in Punjab). Others, meanwhile, claim that the "communal" wave rode a variety of local-specific political factors (as Bayly, 1985 suggests). I will argue that in the case of Karachi, violence has related both to local political factors such as the position of the "mafias" and the police, and to underlying societal structures - including unemployment in the formal sector - upon which charismatic political leaders such Altaf Hussain have effectively played.

Violence and Gender

I have suggested that most urban violence in Sindh involves young males. It should be added, however, that disturbances go through various complex stages of development, from outbreak, to spread, sustainment and finally abatement, and in some of these stages, in some cases, women have clearly played an important role.

This was the case in the riot that developed on 31 October 1986, starting in Sohrab Goth, northern Karachi, where women were a crucial element in a dispute that "triggered" wider urban violence. The trouble began when MQM supporters travelling to a rally in Hyderabad refused to pay their bus fares, since the MQM leader had promised that some buses would be provided for supporters free of charge. When the drivers demanded their fares at Sohrab Goth a violent argument developed between passengers and fare-collectors, in which women passengers played an important part in terms of being abused by and abusing the bus-drivers (Dawn, 1 November 1986, Karachi). Women, or more precisely the concept of women and their honour in Pakistan's society, were thus important in this early stage of the development of the unrest, although women were not largely involved in the violent incidents that followed over the next few days.

The importance of gender to violence in South Asian society has been considered by Stanley Tambiah, who depicts it as a powerful symbolic focus for incidences of "ethnic" rivalry between communities (Tambiah, 1990, p.746). In the South Asian examples discussed by

Tambiah, an attacking crowd will sometimes want to strike at the heart of the targeted community, and the involvement of women becomes a psychologically effective way of doing this. Thus, civil disorder can involve the rape and abduction of women.

The cultural importance of the sanctity of a community's women and the level of reprisal provoked by such attacks was well demonstrated by the rape of Farhana Hayat in Karachi, December 1991, after which elders of the Hayat clan invoked Pakhtun tribal codes in calling for the hunting-down and killing of those responsible (Independent, 30 December 1991, London). The anger of the response demonstrates the heat produced by violent incidents involving women. Akmal Hussain comments on this factor in wider terms, relating it to the development of violence in South Asian society (interview with Akmal Hussain, 24 February 1991, Lahore). Thus, where "proximate identities" clash in violent, bipolar ethnic situations, violence progresses onto a psychologically damaging plane, involving such acts as rape (ibid). This can be seen in examples across space and time in South Asia - Sri Lankan army operations against the Tamils, Indian army operations in Kashmir, or the Pakistan army's operations against the secession of Bangladesh in 1970/71.

The MQM has often conveyed the symbolic importance in "ethnic" politics of attacks against women. The most obvious example is that of the *Pucca Qila* incident, described in Chapter 5. A letter of appeal to the Human Rights Commission in Geneva following the incident lists "killings, brutalities, massacres and abductions of women" as the various

ills being brought to bear on *Mohajirs* (MQM, 1 June 1990, Karachi). Another letter to the Pakistan High Commission complains of "confirmed reports of five rape cases by police in Hyderabad" (MQM, 30 May 1990, London). The tone of such letters uses violence inflicted on women as an indication of the particular gravity of the incidents. In this way, the MQM plays on the issue of gender as a tool in ethnic political rhetoric.

Institutional responses to urban violence

Whatever the accuracy of "ethnic" labels, the use of such identities in relation to civil unrest in Karachi has been taken as a given in certain quarters, notably in the press and in official government reports. In June 1990 the Sindh provincial government of Benazir Bhutto's PPP presented a report to the Federal Government in Islamabad on major riots in Sindh urban areas between 1985 and 1990. The report identified 27 major riots, and each was described as a bipolar battle, with the "sides" defined as political groups (Dawn, 6 June 1990, Karachi). The groups were the MQM, the PPI, the PSF (People's Student Federation), the PPP and *Jiye Sindh*. Every riot was described as involving the MQM on one side against one of the other groups on the other. It seems likely that the situation was hopelessly simplified by such a report, which generalises wholesale about the effect of political leadership on unrest on the streets, and laid the blame implicitly on the doorstep of one group in particular, the MQM. The generalisation extended from the manner in which the report was presented in the

Assembly (relating to the partisan interests of the government at the time), to the way in which the matter was reported by the press (which could relate to a tendency to adopt readily accessible "explanations" for urban violence).

The response of the Zia government to the large-scale riots that began to emerge in Karachi after 1985 was to order a Commission of Enquiry into Karachi Affairs to be presented in early 1986, which would suggest certain responses and development projects. The implementation of these was to be reported in 1989 and in subsequent years as appropriate. The Commission combined extensive interviews with various "prominent citizens" in Karachi with data from the police and utility boards. It is, as of 1993, the most concerted attempt by government to analyse and address the problems of Karachi, including civil disorder.

The Commission's report, presented in March 1986, identified various urban problems as being at the root of the unrest in Karachi, such as the growth of unregulated slum housing areas (*katchi abadis*), the shortfall in the supply to the urban population of certain utilities (particularly water), unemployment, an inadequate transport system, and general "frustration" in the population. The frustration is born of having to deal with the lengthy and often intimidating bureaucracy of government offices. The problem is made worse as it becomes apparent that certain sections of the population escape poor amenity supply through networks of corruption and the power of wealth.

There is much in the Commission's report to commend, and it does present a broad view of the problems faced by the city. The various

responses suggested by the Commission involved civil engineering projects such as the development of sewage treatment facilities, the rehabilitation of water supply conduits, upgrading ("regularisation") of *katchi abadis*, training to improve the service and efficiency in government offices, and some improvements and reorganisation of the transport network. The overall tone of the report was that rioting had been provoked by urban economic factors relating to the growth and overcrowding of the city through immigration, rather than by the entrenchment of "ethnic" particularisation in Sindh's society. In this manner the report also followed the policy of the government at the time - namely that ethnic groups should not be identified in any reports or news, particularly concerning incidences of violence.

The report was followed by the institution of an Implementation Unit in August 1987, which presented its first progress report in May 1989. This report also focussed on the urban economic factors mentioned above that were putting strain on the city and which were supposedly leading to outbreaks of violence. The report observed, among other things, the rise in the proportion of Karachi's population inhabiting *katchi abadis* from 37% in 1985 to 45% in 1989 (COEKA, 2 May 1989, Karachi, p.7), and the provision of 3389 extra personnel and 100 million Rupees for equipment to the city police-force since 1986 (COEKA, 2 May 1989, p.82). It is interesting to note that the police data supplied to the Implementation Unit, which principally concerns details of curfew impositions in Karachi in the period 1983 to the beginning of 1989, tended to describe rioting and disturbance in the city in terms of

generalised ethnic labels. The data suggest, for example, that the proportion of "ethnic rioting cases" reported as a total of all rioting incidents in Karachi rose from 24.7% in 1985 to 54% in 1988 (COEKA, 2 May 1989, p.9(i)). The police data, therefore, follow the lead of the press in creating a category of "ethnic riot", and suggest that this form of rioting gradually increased after 1985. The police view is that ethnic polarisation worsened in Karachi through the 1980s.

The curfew data supplied by the police to the Commission of Enquiry suggest that in 1983 a wave of religious sectarian violence broke out on two separate occasions, in February and March respectively, in Sohrab Goth, and in the largely *Mohajir* northern district of Liaquatabad (COEKA, 2 May 1989, p.9(iv)). Such a religious specification for the "reason" for a riot was conspicuously absent from all the data on reported disturbances after 1984, although the districts of Liaquatabad and Sohrab Goth recur frequently as riot-hit areas (ibid).

Sectarian violence in Pakistan in the 1980s had much to do with the nature of the Zia regime. Before 1984, all political parties were banned, and policies of "Islamisation" at the federal level were provoking bitter disputes between *Sunnis* (the sect followed by Zia) and *Shias* throughout Pakistan over how Islam should be interpreted by the state. After 1984, however, the MQM built-up a strong ethnic identification for the majority Urdu-speaking culture of Karachi. Because of the concurrent locations of sectarian and ethnic rioting between 1983 and 1984, it can be postulated that in this period some of the same

rioting groups *redefined* their dominant identity and rioted more often in the name of ethnicity rather than Islam.

In these terms, the underlying foundations of violence in society, in which communities address their grievances and disputes with the use of force, apply in the case of both sectarian and ethnic violence. Many aspects of the two forms of violence were identical, not least the spatial concentration in Liaquatabad and Sohrab Goth, and the modes of violence such as battles with the police, the erection of disruptive barricades, and the use of firearms. Thus, to speak of a new phenomenon of ethnic violence emerging after 1985 is in many ways to obscure pervasive societal stresses and strains that existed throughout the period.

The Commission of Enquiry of 1986 also suggested that resentment concerning the ethnic composition of the city police force was an important aspect of the involvement of the police in civil disorder:

"Police recruitment on all Pakistan basis for Karachi was carried out during the period when Karachi was the capital of the country. It has given a certain complexion to the police force of Karachi which does not easily match with the present character of the city."

[COEKA, March 1986, p.30]

The diplomatic language of this statement, which carefully avoids identifying ethnic groups for the reasons mentioned earlier, echoes a resentment voiced by the MQM that the police force is just one of the many areas of employment in Karachi in which *Mohajirs* are disadvantaged compared to ethnic groups from northern areas. However, this hides a general police-citizen resentment that occurs in many urban contexts throughout South Asia and beyond. In times of violence, battles with the police may quickly develop, not necessarily because a rioter feels resentment towards the ethnic identity of the police, but because the police are viewed as oppressors of the public, either through the enforcement of state dictates or through the abuse of power for their own personal gains. Frustration at such matters was the initial catalyst at the "Bushra Zaidi" incident in 1985.

The problems with these insitutional approaches to civil disorder are that they tend to simplify the situation, and suggest that there are identifiable solutions to the urban problem in such policies as *katchi abadi* regularisation. From the official documents and police reports used in this research it seems that the formal sector of administration in the city holds two views concerning the persistance of civil disorder in Karachi.

Firstly, it is felt that the root of the problem lies largely in the *katchi abadis*, not only since they harbour informal sector operations and unscrupulous "middlemen", but also because they foster a culture of frustration and resentment. The

frustration extends to the population of urban Sindh in general, since the structural and physical development of the cities has generally failed to keep pace with population growth. The official agencies of Karachi, even after the Zia era, have demonstrated that they consider the rapid growth of Karachi, and particularly that of the *katchi abadi* housing areas, to be at the root of the city's problems. A meeting of the Karachi Chambers of Commerce, the KDA, KESC and KWSB in January 1990 delivered a detailed statement to this effect (Daily Recorder, 18 January 1990, Karachi).

Secondly, the urban administration has identified an ethnic element in the conflict, particularly as regards the perceptions of recruitment to the police. The police themselves have also suggested that ethnic conflict is increasingly a part of life in certain parts of the city.

Civil disorder in Karachi is a complex phenomenon. I have shown that some of the incidents in the city that had previously been termed "religious sectarian" conflicts, suddenly became "ethnic" conflicts after 1984 according to police records. It should also be noted that, in Orangi, a district that represents almost every community of Pakistan in its population, certain districts have been affected by conflict while some others, such as Afridi colony, have been relatively calm, notably during the large-scale riots of December 1986 (Herald, January 1987, Karachi, p.47). Such variations seem to relate as much to the relative effectiveness and work of individual local councillors as to any

pervasive "ethnic" factors (Herald, *ibid*). It is interesting to note that at the time of the December 1986 riots, OPP board-member Arif Hasan predicted that the trouble would naturally spread to the whole of Pakistan (Herald, *ibid*, p.45), when experience has since shown this not to be the case.

I would argue, however, that urban violence in Sindh does reflect underlying societal and political strains within Pakistan's society. In this respect, I am sympathetic to some aspects of the structuralist school of crowd studies, which suggest that rioting groups draw on or expose structural tensions deeper than the personal desires and motivations of the participants. In Karachi the rioting of the 1980s reflected these underlying societal and political processes, but the modes of violence were themselves largely determined by the city's own specific physical and socio-political features, which might not apply to every other city. This is an important distinction to highlight.

The structural tensions underlying urban violence in Sindh are complex. Firstly, I have suggested that resentment of the state and its ability to tackle urban problems has been coupled with a breakdown in non-violent modes of debate to deliver a persistent problem of urban violence. It can be argued that this "frustration" has constituted a general crisis in civil society, not just in the *katchi abadis* but throughout urban Karachi. The successful work of individual councillors in certain *mohallahs* can begin to address the problem, and show that with an effective approach to the

economic and developmental problems that involves the community, the question of civil disorder does not so easily arise. In many postcolonial societies, where several institutions of state are weak or "missing", problems of effective representation of the population have arisen. In Pakistan, the problem is especially severe as a result of persistent non-elected military rule.

Secondly, much of the violence through the 1980s in Karachi can be related to the MQM's efforts to become the dominant element in the local state in the city. Here I am returning to Clapham's notion of the state (in this case the local urban state) as a fragile "structure of control" over inherited institutions (Clapham, 1985, p.39), and to Washbrook's characterisation of ethnic politics as being geared mainly to the mobilisation of local economic and political resources (modelled on Dravidian politics in India - Washbrook, 1989, p.178). Such a political battle, in Karachi as elsewhere, often becomes expressed as a physical battle on the streets between supporters and activists in the political environment.

Karachi's own specific conditions, including its dominant position within Pakistan's economy, have also indicated that the rise and fall of violence within the city cannot necessarily be replicated in other cities which hold less economic importance for the central government. When Arif Hasan said the violence would automatically spread across Pakistan (Herald, *ibid*), he was probably referring to a general breakdown of civil order in

Pakistan's society. This has certainly continued since 1986, while the sort of large-scale riots and inter-ethnic battles suffered in Karachi have not been seen to the same extent elsewhere.

I would argue that an effective method of analysing these macro and micro elements in the development of urban violence in Karachi is to divide the 1980s into two distinct phases, during which time repetitive serious civil disorder underwent crucial changes. The reasoning behind this is that before and after 1988 there were clear differences in the internal dynamics of the violence in the city, and in associated political rhetoric and reactions. An understanding of these factors, and of the reasons for the differences between these two periods, goes a long way to explaining the underlying processes that have led to civil disorder.

7.4 CHRONOLOGY OF CIVIL DISORDER IN KARACHI

Period One: 1985-88

It seems apparent that urban Sindh was virtually free of the communal violence that preceded and followed the Partition in 1947, unlike many other urban areas such as Bombay, parts of the Punjab or Bihar. Interestingly, the Sindhi writer Siraj-ul Haq disputes this theory and charges that some anti-Hindu disturbances were

"manufactured" in Karachi in 1948 to hasten the departure of local Hindus (interview, 13 February 1991, Karachi).

Between Independence and the 1980s, there were two major episodes of widespread unrest in urban Sindh. The first followed the Presidential Elections of January 1965, in which Ayub Khan was re-elected nationally, but was defeated in the cities of Karachi and Dacca to the sister of the *Quaid-i Azam*, Fatima Jinnah. Disturbances occurred when a victory taxi-cade, bedecked in paper roses (the election symbol of Ayub) toured Karachi, and provocatively entered *Mohajir* areas such as Liaquatabad and Nazimabad, where the vote for Fatima Jinnah had been the strongest (Economist, 9 January 1965, London).

The scenes of violence during this episode, in which rioters clashed with one another and with the police, and burning barricades of debris and vehicles were laid to block the roads (Economist, *ibid*), were not to be repeated to any extent until July 1972, when the newly-installed Bhutto provincial and national government passed some contentious measures, such as the Quota System and Language Bill. The apparent physical and psychological impact of these measures on the formation of the *Mohajir* subnationalist movement have already been discussed. In Sindh, the measures were immediately followed by protests among the *Mohajir* community in Hyderabad, Sukkur and Karachi, which in the latter case quickly developed into widespread rioting, mostly directed at the local and national authorities. Here again the *Mohajir*

strongholds of Central Zone such as Liaquatabad and Nazimabad were the first to suffer curfew impositions (Dawn, 8 July 1972, Karachi), while industrial and commercial areas were also disrupted by the erection of barricades and battles with the police (Dawn, *ibid*). The message that the rioters were protesting against the government was evident in the form of battles with the police and generally disruptive actions, which seemed to challenge the notion of "control" of the economic hub of Pakistan. By the 11th July the government had responded by extending curfews and exercising such measures as press censorship over reporting of the troubles (Dawn, 11 July 1972, Karachi). Here we can see the central state's response in the battle for the control of Karachi.

The 1972 episode, although brief (the matter seemed to have been resolved and the disturbances ended after approximately two weeks from the passing of the Language Bill), acted as an interesting forerunner to the sort of disturbances that flared in urban Sindh in the mid-1980s, in terms of modes and distribution of violence. In 1972, however, the dominant nature of the unrest was a protest at the government. In the 1980s, the increasingly unpopular Zia regime faced a similar public confrontation in Pakistan's cities, but by this time a complex web of other local and "ethnic" factors had also come into play.

The first major incident of the mid-1980s was the "Bushra Zaidi" incident of April 1985. The major element of the disturbances appeared to be a battle between groups of Pakhtuns and

Mohajirs (principally *Biharis*). The unrest spread beyond the location of the accident in the northern *Mohajir* commercial and residential district, Nazimabad, to engulf large parts of the city as a whole, after which 48 consecutive days of curfew were imposed in 8 districts of the city (COEKA, Implementation Review, 2 May 1989, Government of Sindh, Karachi, p.9iv). Tambiah has described the manner in which the initial incident developed into a riot in Orangi, some miles away, after a series of incidents, notably an unruly APMSO demonstration supporting the funeral wake of the girl (Tambiah, 1990). A complex combination of factors were at work here - anger and resentment at both transporters and the government after another fatal accident, the involvement of a politicised "ethnic" organisation, the key role of an important spatial node in Karachi (*Banares Chowk*, a large junction connecting Nazimabad with Orangi), and a later series of ethnic attacks and reprisals between *Biharis* and *Pakhtuns* in parts of Orangi.

The incident proved to be the catalyst for several later disturbances. During 1985 the police recorded 608 rioting cases, claiming 56 lives and injuring 114 (COEKA, Implementation Review, 1989, p.9(i)). Between the Bushra Zaidi accident and the next major incident, curfew was imposed for 59 days in selected parts of Karachi (ibid), in response to the continual outbreak of disturbances. From the beginning of 1986 to December 1988, there were 2345 recorded incidents of rioting in Karachi (COEKA, ibid), mostly displaying similar characteristics to the incidents surrounding the April 1985 incident. The key themes were sporadic disturbances around the city, often involving the police, and

inter-ethnic clashes between Pakhtuns and *Mohajirs*, almost invariably flaring in Orangi town where large sections of the two communities live in neighbouring *mohallahs*.

April 1985 laid the groundwork for new large-scale riots in Karachi. Yet two subsequent episodes in particular came to characterise the processes taking place in Karachi in the first period of analysis.

Episode 1: 31 October 1986

A particularly salient element of the first key incident of the first period is that it indirectly involved the MQM. The unrest began on the day of the Movement's second major rally, and its first major meeting in Hyderabad. However, the key theme of the first period of unrest up to 1988, is that the MQM was not directly involved in its political or rhetorical leadership to the same extent as the period beginning at the end of 1988. While the rioting usually involved *Mohajirs*, the MQM was still a relatively new force in Karachi and could only watch and issue statements after the event.

The government's stance towards the MQM was much the same as its stance towards other political and ethnic groups at this time. Consequently, Altaf Hussain was jailed twice in the late 1980s, along with many other political leaders. We have seen, however, that some analysts and observers believe that the MQM was closely related to the Zia regime, and that it was able to operate more freely than other political groups in the mid-1980s. Nevertheless, the Movement's grip on

the street forces operating in the disturbances of this first period was far less effective than was the case after 1988.

The basic sequence of events² of the first case study here is as follows:

- The MQM organises its first major rally in Hyderabad, and publicises the event extensively in Karachi to attract visitors. Altaf Hussain also states publicly that some transport will be provided free of charge to those travelling to the rally from Karachi.
- Many bus-loads of travellers set off for Hyderabad on the morning of 31 October from Lee Market in central Karachi, including some free buses organised by the MQM. Some people, however, board ordinary buses bound for Hyderabad and refuse to pay.
- These buses travel as far as the point where the Super Highway to Hyderabad starts to leave the city at Sohrab Goth. Here there is a bus interchange and bazaar area (see Figure 7.1). At this point the collectors and drivers on the buses finally resolve that they will go no further until the *Mohajir* travellers pay their fares.
- Angry scenes ensue, during which a violent fight breaks out between the transporters and the passengers, including a group of women, and firearms are used.
- The battle is joined by local people (most of whom are Pakhtuns, who support the transporters against the *Mohajir* passengers) and firearms such as *Kalashnikov* automatic rifles are freely used. Three people are killed almost immediately (Morning News, 1 November 1986, Karachi).

- During the evening, violence spreads with groups of Pakhtuns conducting raids on *Mohajir* (and *Bihari*) localities on the one hand, and *Mohajirs* attacking Pakhtun transporters and destroying their vehicles in many parts of Karachi on the other, after hearing of the initial incidents. In Hyderabad, sporadic reprisal attacks on Pakhtun transporters and their vehicles also occur throughout the evening.

- Disturbances continue into the next morning by which time curfew is imposed in Liaquatabad, Gulbahar, Jahorabad, Pak Colony, Nazimabad, Orangi, Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE), New Karachi, Landhi, Quaidabad and Model Colony in Karachi, and central Hyderabad. Incidents continue throughout the next days in various parts of Karachi and Hyderabad, including the following:

- In central Hyderabad, a clothes bazaar (Landa Bazaar) is destroyed in an arson attack.

- In Liaquatabad, a group of "young people" set on fire a minibus and rickshaw by a roadside hotel, pelt passing vehicles and police with stones, and build barricades of burning advertising hoardings and tyres to obstruct traffic (Viewpoint, 6 November 1986, Lahore).

- In Nazimabad and surrounding areas, police fire teargas at rioting groups, and direct traffic down side-streets to avoid the barricades on the main roads.

- Isolated incidents continue in Karachi and Hyderabad for almost two weeks. Curfew continues in Orangi, Liaquatabad, Nazimabad, Quaidabad, New Karachi, Sohrab Goth, Shah Faisal Colony and Malir until 11 November.

This episode appears to constitute an "ethnic riot" between *Mohajirs* and Pakhtuns, arising from a localised incident at Sohrab Goth. While the episode was related to the MQM's affairs in that it happened on the day of one of its first major rallies, the leadership of the Movement itself was not directly involved, as it was a hundred kilometres away in Hyderabad at the outbreak of rioting. (Little information is available of the role played by local MQM cadres in this case). Some of the details that suggest an "ethnic rift" include the manner in which dispersed reprisals for an initial argument centred around attacks on innocent people on the basis of their ethnic identity alone. We can also see the central position played by neighbouring groups in Orangi township in this incident, and particularly the *Biharis* and Pakhtuns.

However, I would argue that there are other important factors displayed by the incident. Firstly, societal and geographic factors specific to the city of Karachi were important. These comprise the rapid appearance of the *Kalashnikov* automatic rifle, notably in the context of a peripheral *katchi abadi* location (forging a link between "mafia" trade in arms in the city and the location of such informal sector businesses). Also, specific geographic nodes and locations were important, such as Orangi, and the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE). These are obviously factors specific to the layout of Karachi.

The involvement of SITE also conveys the fact that it was not just ethnic rioting that was involved. This theory is reinforced by acts of traffic disruption and skirmishes with the police. If the only element

of the disorder was a battle between Pakhtuns and *Mohajirs* or *Biharis*, the unpopulated area of SITE would not have been a significant node of disturbance. I would argue that its appearance in the curfew statistics suggests that many of the rioting groups were merely aiming to cause general disruption, either to convey a message to the government, or through an unfocussed frustration or "criminality".

These, I will argue, are the ground-rules of the first period of civil disorder in Karachi. I can demonstrate that the October/November 1986 incident was not an isolated case by presenting a second case study from this period.

Episode 2: 12 December 1986

The second case study has been mentioned in several contexts as it raises many important issues. Like the first incident, the December 1986 unrest incorporated a complex sequence of events that combined to create a general atmosphere of prolonged violence.

Stemming from a slum-clearance operation in Sohrab Goth, violence again spread to the ethnically heterogenous Orangi township, this time in the form of highly organised and murderous ethnic violence launched by groups of Pakhtuns on *Bihari* localities. Again, sporadic incidents followed throughout the city for some weeks after, effectively paralysing the metropolis for a short period. The "ethnic" element in the violence encompasses reprisals, perhaps for ills committed by *Biharis* and *Mohajirs* on the Pakhtun community in the incidents of April 1985

and October/November 1986 (the second of which had abated just weeks before the December episode). From the Pakhtun side, not only was there evidence of considerable behind-the-scenes organisation in the violence, but rhetoric disseminated among the Pakhtuns also claimed that the *Mohajirs* of Karachi were implicitly siding with the central government in a policy to rid Karachi of Pakhtuns.

If violent episodes of urban unrest can be ranked on a scale of disruption caused, then the December 1986 period can probably be labelled the worst that Karachi, and indeed Pakistan, had seen by 1993. The incident, with that of October/November and others, led to 1986 officially being a year of 185 deaths in Karachi from urban unrest, an increase of 230% over 1985 (Karachi police figures; COEKA, Implementation Review, 1989, p.9 (1)), and the highest annual toll to date by 1992 (ibid). Unofficial sources suggest a much higher toll. "The Star" evening newspaper claimed that 170 people were killed in the first two weeks of the December 1986 episode alone (Star, 24 December 1986, Karachi). The same pattern of escalation applied to the number of reported rioting incidents in 1986, which grew 50.8% over the 1985 figure to 917 cases (ibid).

The December rioting began with "Operation Clean-up" in Sohrab Goth. The Operation was part of the central government's policy to be seen to be doing something decisive about urban problems, and particularly those in the key city Karachi, following the riots beginning in 1985 and the much-publicised Commission of Enquiry of early 1986. The sequence of events in the episode was broadly as follows:

- In the evening of 11 December, the police raid houses in Orangi, confiscating a cache of home-made bombs and arresting many people.
- In the early hours of Friday, 12 December, "Operation Clean-up" is launched in Sohrab Goth by the police and army, to bulldoze slum housing and bazaars and evict local tenants, in an effort to seize suspected stores of arms and drugs. Indefinite curfew is announced.
- The Sohrab Goth operation continues through Friday and into Saturday (13 December), by which time over 200kg of heroin are reputedly discovered (Herald, January 1987, Karachi, p.39). Meanwhile, angry reactions to the operation ensue throughout Karachi, particularly among Pakhtuns, some of whom form blockades with rickshaws, buses and taxis to disrupt traffic.
- Printed hand-bills in Pashto appear from an unknown source, claiming that Operation Clean-up is a scheme with a hidden agenda to drive the Pakhtun community from Karachi altogether, with the support of *Mohajirs* living in the city (interview with Arif Hasan, 11 February 1991, Karachi). In Orangi - scene of violence in April 1985 and November 1986
- tension mounts between the *Mohajir/Bihari* inhabitants and the Pakhtuns.
- Early on Sunday morning (14 December), an angry crowd of Pakhtuns form at *Banares Chowk*, disrupting traffic and building burning barricades.
- Mid-morning, the Pirabad mosque (on the hills above Qasba Colony, Orangi) issues calls for "attack" from its loudspeakers. Machine-guns

fire from the hills into Qasba Colony below, and large groups of Pakhtuns storm into Qasba and Aligarh Colonies.

- Arson attacks on non-Pakhtun houses and businesses ensue, focussing on Qasba and Aligarh Colonies, and the large bazaar area in the latter. The violence spirals, and begins to involve the indiscriminate looting and murder of non-Pakhtuns (BBC WS, SAS, 19 December 1986, London). Police intervention seems to be sporadic, largely allowing the violence to run its course, but occasionally tear-gassing crowds, sometimes including those attempting to resist the Pakhtun groups with rocks and stones (Amenah Azam Ali, Herald, January 1987, Karachi, p.41).

- At 3pm, curfew is announced, and at 4.30pm army contingents finally arrive in Orangi to establish relative calm.

- In the following days, incidents continue throughout Karachi. Groups of Pakhtuns, sometimes riding in pick-up vans, continue to select non-Pakhtun businesses and homes for brutal attack. In Orangi, the *Bihari* locality of Sector 11 is submitted to a sustained attack by Pakhtun youths. Throughout the city, *Mohajir* groups build barricades, arson-attack buildings, and battle with the police in a general protest at the security situation.

- The city is effectively "frozen" for approximately one week, including closure of the docks to all incoming and outgoing traffic. Curfew remains in many areas of the city (restricting movement on main roads to a limited period in the middle of the day and inviting firing from police or army contingents when ignored). This remains in place continuously until 26 January 1987 in Landhi, Korangi, Shah Faisal

Colony, North Karachi and Liaquatabad (COEKA, Implementation Review, 1989, p.9(vi)). Meanwhile, in Hyderabad, unrest slowly gathers pace through January, largely involving attacks by groups of *Mohajirs* on symbols of the state, such as police stations and post offices, seemingly to demonstrate a loss of confidence in the state's ability to protect the *Mohajir* community (Muslim, 15 January 1987, Karachi).

The second incident, like the first, spread from an initial localised event, to general rioting in many parts of the city, involving brutal ethnic-sectarian violence in parts of Orangi. A sinister aspect of the December 1986 episode was the level of organisation of many of the attacks in Orangi, starting the day after Operation Clean-up. These attacks involved an ample supply of heavy firearms and ammunition, the use of loudspeakers in the Pirabad mosque to issue instructions, the mysterious distribution of hand-bills in Pashto urging violence and reprisal, and a singling-out of non-Pakhtun owned businesses and homes for burning and looting. It is interesting that many of these general features were prominent in the Delhi riots of 1984, and notably the manner in which Sikh homes and businesses were singled-out for destruction by Congress-Party supporters (Tambiah, 1990, p.745).

Such organisational features of the violence of December 1986 in Karachi have led many to conclude that powerful "mafias" were behind the scenes, mobilising disenchanted Pakhtun youth along emotive ethnic lines. Akmal Hussain, in a detailed analysis of this particular episode claims that:

"The Mafia syndicates when threatened by the Sohrab Goth affair, retaliated by mobilizing the *Pathan* community on the basis of primordial emotions. If the purpose was to show the power of the Mafia bosses by paralyzing Karachi, it was achieved."

(Akmal Hussain, 1987, p.4; italics added)

There were certainly ways in which ethnic factors could be used to incite violence. Pakhtun identity involves powerful codes of revenge and retribution for ills committed to its community. Ameneh Azam Ali (Herald, December 1986, Karachi, p.5) suggests that events at the end of 1986 provided some Pakhtuns in Orangi with the opportunity to avenge deaths committed by neighbouring *Biharis* in the Bushra Zaidi incident of 1985. Meanwhile, the motivation for the "mafias" in causing unrest would relate to a desire to put a stop to the sort of government crack-down on the drugs and arms business heralded by Operation Clean-up in Sohrab Goth.

Other important features of the incident include the development of violence around specific spatial "nodes". Firstly, Orangi was again the scene of brutal ethnic violence. This may relate to the way in which communities such as Pakhtuns and *Biharis* are closely concentrated in neighbouring streets, with the Pakhtuns tending to build up the hillsides, and the *Biharis* occupying the valleys below. Furthermore, the police had shown in earlier incidents that they are reluctant to enter

police had shown in earlier incidents that they are reluctant to enter the semi-regulated *katchi abadis* of Orangi. Their reluctance relates both to a fear of becoming ensnared in the network of narrow and largely unsurfaced streets, and to the suspected existence of quantities of automatic weapons among certain communities in the area (a suspicion vindicated by the use of heavy machine-guns from the hills around Qasba and Aligarh Colonies in December 1986). In this way, group violence can be undertaken with relative impunity for some hours before the intervention of security forces.

Secondly, *Benares Chowk* was again a focus of violence, with crowds of Pakhtuns effectively blocking the busy interchange on the morning after the Sohrab Goth clearance operation. It was here that violence occurred in April 1985, as Bushra Zaidi's *dhoom* [funeral procession] passed through. It is interesting that the docks were also closed for a brief period during the December 1986 incident. Surprisingly, despite the tactical advantage to be gained by paralysing the principal outlet to the sea of Pakistan's economy, the docks in Karachi are only blocked during the most serious disturbances (brief closures occurred again in 1988 and 1989), and even in these cases the problem has been the blockage or restricted movement on supply roads in the city rather than disturbance in the docks themselves. The reasons for this are principally geographical, concerning the location of the docks away from major concentrations of habitation, necessitating rioters in travelling some distance to reach the area. The Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE), or the industrial areas of Korangi on

the other hand, are far more often the focus of disruption, due to their greater proximity to concentrations of population, and the existence of arterial through-roads in their districts.

By December 1986 (when the MQM had only just begun to become prominent in urban Sindh's politics, and had yet to sweep the local elections) the balance in the battle for control in Karachi was firmly in favour of loosely-organised groups of Pakhtuns and others, and the informal-sector organisations which were possibly behind them. However, links between such clandestine agencies and the Pakhtun community in the city are unclear. ANP leader Wali Khan stressed at the time that the unrest should not be seen in ethnic terms, and that a "Pakhtun drug-den" attitude to the problem should not be taken (Star, 24 December 1986, Karachi). Instead, it was suggested by Pakhtun political leaders that ethnic "divide-and-rule" policies were being undertaken by the Zia regime, as the Sohrab Goth operation had conspicuously failed to arrest key figures in the drugs business or to seize significant quantities of drugs or arms (ibid). Furthermore, the seizure of home-made weapons and bombs in Orangi the night before the operation, coupled with the sporadic police intervention in the violence that ensued, gave credence to this conspiracy theory in the minds of many. The benefits of such a policy for the government would be to defuse any potential of a unified oppositional political power in Pakistan's principal city, at a time when disenchantment with Zia's regime was flaring into violence throughout Pakistan.

Compared to later episodes of violence in the city, it appears that the MQM was not active in orchestrating the violence of December 1986, and was involved only in terms of being the party that most *Mohajirs* and *Biharis* in Orangi had started to support. This appears to be so in the light of a lack of rhetoric originating from the MQM before events, and in view of the fact that the *Biharis* in Orangi seemed to be largely unsuspecting victims rather than active perpetrators of violence. The response of the Movement to the violence was to "demand" the early repatriation of Afghans from Karachi (Dawn, 21 January 1987, Karachi), and to declare, partly by way of widely distributed posters in Urdu, that the citizens of Orangi should forget saving for video-recorders and buy firearms instead (interview with Arif Hasan, 11 February 1991, Karachi). Interestingly, MQM documents recalling the events of December 1986 avoid mentioning "Pakhtuns" as such, and refer specifically to the failures of the law enforcement agencies, claiming "This was the worst massacre in Pakistan's history but not a single culprit was apprehended or arrested" (MQM, 1990b-1, p.8). Thus, in these terms, and as regards the nature of much of the violence in Karachi and later Hyderabad, the wrath of the MQM at this time was directed as much at the state and its perceived failures and partisanship, as at rival ethnic groups.

Anti-state sentiments were apparent at many stages in the episode. It is interesting that the mysterious Pashto hand-bills described a nefarious state policy to rid the city of Pakhtuns, and the threat obviously struck a chord with many in the community. Also, the violence in Hyderabad that ensued in January 1987 showed more basic

anti-state feelings, with attacks on government offices being the major locus of disturbance.

In these terms, three underlying factors can be seen. Firstly, there was obviously some form of "ethnic" particularisation and polarisation underway, including elements of revenge for previous violence. Both the October/November and the December 1986 episodes showed instances of homes and businesses being selected for attack on ethnic grounds. Secondly, however, there was also a general discontent with the actions of the state, expressed by all sides in the disturbances, and articulated in violent ways. I would thus suggest that Zia's society was one in which a lack of interface between state and population over problems of development, or the abuse of civil rights, was leading to a general breakdown in civil order.

Thirdly, the role of "mafias" must also be mentioned. There was obviously some degree of organisation in the Pakhtun attacks that followed Operation Clean-up. The level of firearms used in the initial raids from the hillsides above Qasba Colony also suggest a considerable degree of financing behind the attacks. Certainly, Operation Clean-up would have angered those trading in drugs and arms, since the Operation threatened to be the start of a new hardline policy by the government against their activities. It is not implausible that the "mafias" mobilised disenchanted youth to sow confusion and thus hamper these policies. I will return to the question of "mafias" in Karachi later.

The next two years saw similar incidents throughout urban Sindh (though none quite on the scale of the December 1986 episode). Police

TABLE 7.1: Police statistics on rioting for 1987/88

	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>
Reported rioting cases	880	548
"Ethnic rioting" case	365	296
Houses destroyed	62	105
Shops/bazaars destroyed	261	164
Motor vehicles destroyed	111	95
Deaths	56	135
Injuries	408	670

Source: COEKA, Implementation Review, 1989, pp.9(i-iii).

figures for 1987 and 1988 are shown in Table 7.1. The figures only involve those incidents reported and recorded, and it can reasonably be assumed that the "true" tolls for those elements (which can never be fully verified by any source) are higher than official figures suggest.

In general terms, however, the figures show that while the overall climate of "rioting" in Karachi was improving, "ethnic riots" were becoming a greater proportion of the total, rising from 41.5% of recorded incidents in 1987 to 54.0% in 1988. The trend is also demonstrated in the fact that while the destruction of vehicles and commercial property declined over the two years, the destruction of

personal residences and deaths and injuries increased. These factors are part of the transformation to the second major period of civil disorder in the 1980s, in which the "ethnic" element appeared to be a greater part of the overall violence.

Period Two: 1988-90

The riots of 1986 and 1987 demonstrated that the state did not have full "control" of the city of Karachi, while the heavy guns and community organisation of "mafia" groups were far more effective in certain areas. The result for such communities as Aligarh and Qasba Colonies, among others, was that life and property in the city could not be protected by any agency.

This was an important element of the political void in parts of the city to which the MQM effectively addressed itself at this time. The Movement may not have been an active agency in the large-scale riots of 1986, but not long after these events the Movement rapidly began to assert itself in the politics and life of urban Sindh. *Jamaat-i Islami* meanwhile, by its own admission, (*interview with Professor Ghafoor Ahmed of Jamaat-i Islami, 27 January 1992, Karachi*), deliberately remained aloof from the violence, seeing ethnic conflict as a "local issue" (*ibid*). The first major breakthrough for the MQM at this time was the Local Bodies elections of December 1987, whereby the MQM became the largest single party in the KMC and Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, beginning its dominance of the official civic agencies in the two cities. (As I

showed in the previous Chapter, the Islamic parties were toppled from dominance in these cities with these elections). By this time, the Movement had already begun to flex its muscles. On the first anniversary of the 31 October 1986 incident, the MQM called a "Protest Day" strike to condemn the military government. The strike was effective in largely halting economic activity in Karachi for the day, and was accompanied with further mob-attacks on symbols of the state such as national banks, post offices, police posts and the Korangi telephone exchange (Muslim, 1 November 1987, Karachi).

With such activities as strikes, the MQM was not only becoming the pre-emptive force in the disturbances, in a manner that had not applied in the large ethnic riots of the first period, but it was shifting the emphasis of the violence towards the symbols of the national and provincial state rather than agents or henchmen of the informal sector in the city. As I have suggested, the MQM has approached the battle for control in Karachi by targeting, and ultimately winning, dominance of official institutions in the city. This is where the MQM feels it can have most impact on the local state. The wider significance of strikes and similar activities in Karachi is the way they cause disruption in the economic hub of Pakistan. By means of strikes the MQM could hope to exercise leverage on the balance of control at a national level.

Yet the ethnic picture was also changing through the 1980s in terms of inter-community conflict. If the large riots of 1986 were mainly Karachi affairs, events through 1988 saw the second largest city

of Sindh - Hyderabad - taking the lead. By mid-1988, violence was beginning to emerge in this city between *Mohajirs* and Sindhis, and was taking a profoundly ethnic-sectarian form. As described in previous chapters, Hyderabad differs from Karachi in that it does not contain large populations of Pakhtuns or Punjabis. The events of November and December 1986 in Orangi were not directly mirrored in Hyderabad. Furthermore, the direct economic and physical competition between Sindhis and *Mohajirs* in Hyderabad heightens the tension between the communities in a way that cannot occur in *Mohajir*-dominated Karachi so easily.

In addition to this basic ethnic pattern on the ground, Sindhi politics through 1988 were becoming increasingly anti-*Mohajir*. In April 1988, the Pir of Pagaro condemned *Mohajirs* and said they should leave Sindh (*Morning News*, 20 June 1988, Karachi). In March/April, Dr. Qadir Magsi's Jiye Sindh Progressive Party (JSPP) broke away from the G.M Syed group, and propounded a more concerted Sindhi nationalist line. On 30 September, a series of bombings and shootings in Hyderabad claimed over 160 lives, mostly of *Mohajirs* (*Dawn*, 1 October 1988, Karachi). Magsi is currently facing charges of organising the massacre.

The other aspect of the Sindhi/*Mohajir* violence that differed from the large Karachi riots of 1986, was the sudden, small-scale and almost "engineered" nature of attacks. A Hyderabad journalist claimed that unlike Karachi "there have been no mob clashes" in Hyderabad city (*interview*, 13 April 1991, Hyderabad). The violence involved a frequent use of automatic weapons such as the *Kalashnikov* rifle, an increasingly

sectarian choice of targets where victims were killed or maimed solely on the basis of their ethnic identity, and a suddenness of attack, often involving a quick strike from a car or the back of a motorcycle. The nature of such violence relates partly to a general militarisation in society, as automatic weapons became readily available. In rural parts of the Province, also, the violence was beginning to involve more sophisticated weapons, such as mortars and heavy machine-guns. Zia's pro-US policy over the *Mujahideen* in Afghanistan was facilitating this flood of arms into the region. The use of such weapons in Sindh reflected a decline of civil order in the province.

The 30 September 1988 massacre in Hyderabad led to such modes of violence spreading to the streets of Karachi, in the form of ethnic-sectarian reprisals largely directed at Sindhis. The situation worsened through 1989 and 1990, during the tenureship of the Benazir Bhutto government, which was believed by the MQM to support Sindhi nationalism. Increasingly, the MQM called the tune and surges of violence began to follow statements and events of the Movement, particularly the "Black Day" strike of 26 May 1989, "Black Wednesday" on 7 February 1990, and Altaf Hussain's "fast unto death" of April 1990. At the same time, it seemed that the major riots involving Pakhtun groups were also finally coming to an end, as the focus of ethnic tensions shifted.

I have selected two episodes of civil disorder from this period to illustrate the processes that were at work at the time. The first episode could have happened at any time before or after this period and is, in many ways, symptomatic of daily life in Karachi and other

Pakistani cities. For the second incident I have chosen an episode not in Karachi, but in Sukkur, the third largest town in Sindh province, which contains a sizeable community of Urdu-speakers in the central area. The reason I have shifted the focus to this city is that the sort of ethnic sectarian violence that it describes was a feature not only of Karachi, but also of other towns and cities in Sindh during this later part of the 1980s. Indeed, it was often events in Hyderabad or elsewhere that prompted retaliatory violence in Karachi during this period. This is different from the large riots of the earlier 1980s which were largely Karachi affairs. In some ways, the Sukkur incident I have chosen is unique in that it happened some time after the height of such ethnic sectarian violence in Karachi and Hyderabad. However, the episode is instructive on the modes of violence that Sindh's cities suffered after 1988.

Episode 3: October 1989, Karachi

- In Quaidabad, Karachi, a prominent *Maulana*, president of an anti-drugs committee, is shot and injured by two men, believed to be drug-traffickers. Nearby police fail to apprehend the attackers.
- The next day, a demonstration is organised by residents of Quaidabad to protest at the failure of the police to arrest the traffickers, despite having received tip-offs at the time as to their whereabouts.
- Police fire upon the demonstration, killing several people (Muslim, 29 October 1989, Karachi).

- Later, some "youngsters" (Muslim, *ibid*) set on fire a minibus in protest at the police action.
- The following day, a crowd of angry residents *gherso* [barricade] Quaidabad police station and are fired upon again by police.
- Warnings of disaster are broadcast from the loud-speakers of local mosques, while various shooting and rioting incidents take place. Calm is finally restored after a meeting of the area police commissioner with local representatives (Star, 31 October 1989, Karachi).

Episode 4: February 1991, Sukkur

- After relative calm in urban Sindh since the Autumn of 1990, Sukkur breaks the pattern with a renewed bout of ethnic-sectarian violence. The episode begins when *Maulana* Mazharuddin Sheikh, president of a small Sindhi cultural group called *Sindhi Sheri Ittehad* [Valiant Sindhi Union], has a heated argument with three men in the old part of Sukkur. A short time later, the men fire on the *Maulana's* decoration shop, killing him and wounding four others, who also later die in hospital (Dawn, 9 February 1991, Karachi).
- Shortly afterwards in the vicinity of the shooting, a *Mohajir* is gunned-down and killed.
- The following day, a series of particularly cold-blooded murders of ten *Mohajirs* take place, whereby the victims are dragged from their homes and shot at close range either on the street, or on a bridge over

the Indus River in the city centre. The bodies are dumped in the river (Herald, March 1991, Karachi, p.38).

- "Virtual curfew" is imposed in the Old City area (Herald, *ibid*).

The first incident shows that many of the everyday stresses and problems in the city that lead to civil disorder were continuing in this second period. The episode has all the ingredients that exacerbated matters during the large riots of 1985-87. Firstly, public anger over the infiltration of drugs traffickers into the community in Quaidabad heightens tensions. It is interesting to note that many of the local residents are opposed to the existence of this clandestine sector of the informal economy in their communities, and that community leaders such as a *maulana* have made some efforts to organise against the drugs trade. The second key ingredient that turns the frustration and anger in the community into civil disorder is the variable and incompetent actions of the police. Not only are known villains perceived to be allowed to operate with impunity (which could relate either to the police having been bribed by the traffickers, or to their reluctance to tackle probably armed villains), but when the local people protest, they receive much harsher treatment, and are actually fired upon, sustaining some deaths. In these terms, people are given the impression that there is no justice for the criminals in their communities, and that the police are worse than useless in protecting them. It is not surprising that the frustration quickly turns into civil disorder on the streets.

The second incident, coming at a time when the other two major cities in the province had been free of ethnic-sectarian violence since Autumn 1990, and in a city which had itself been relatively peaceful even when Karachi and Hyderabad were riven with violence, provoked much talk of a conspiracy to "destabilise the democratic order established in the country after a long struggle" (Pakistan Times, 9 February 1991, Lahore³). The nature of the incident mirrored those in Karachi and Hyderabad in 1989/90, where brutal murders and reprisals were committed purely on the basis of ethnic identities. At the end of the 1980s it seemed that a Sindhi/*Mohajir* "ethnic rift" had taken root, which was eclipsing the issues of the earlier riots of 1985-87.

The incident shows how an argument between people who happen to belong to different ethnic communities becomes settled with physical force, using freely-available firearms. This localised disagreement quickly spirals into a general ethnic conflict. Reprisals are conducted against members of the two ethnic communities, with victims chosen who have no connection to the initial incident. With each act of terror, further reprisals are undertaken, and the situation quickly balloons out of control. The incident is characteristic of those that blighted Karachi and Hyderabad throughout the latter part of the 1980s.

A key element of the violence after 1988 was that the MQM played a more active role in its development. The Movement's rhetoric at the time involved a liberal reference to "massacres of *Mohajirs*" (particularly around the time of the *Pucca Qila* incident in 1990, and the "thwarting of Sindhudesh"). Much of the violence, in Karachi in

particular, became centred around acts in the political drama between the MQM and the PPP government. The acts of this drama were conducted in the urban space of Karachi, where the MQM organised strikes and demonstrations. The MQM anti-government "Black Wednesday" strike of February 1990, for example, was accompanied by over 40 murders in Karachi, many of them brutal ethnic sectarian killings (Star, 8 February 1990, Karachi). Similarly, Altaf Hussain's five-day "fast unto death" two months later (conducted initially at Altaf's home in Azizabad and ending at the *Abbasi Shaheed* Hospital) to protest the "killing of innocent people" (Star, 9 April 1990, Karachi) was, ironically, in a week that saw over 70 deaths and 300 injuries in ethnic violence in Karachi (Morning News, 12 April 1990, Karachi). The relationship of the violence to wider political processes at this time was very different to the situation at the time of the riots in 1986. Furthermore, unlike the period before 1988, this later period was one of nominally democratic government.

Obviously, the violence of MQM supporters was matched by that of certain Sindhi nationalists, and this must be mentioned as one of the reasons why the climate of ethnic rivalry in Sindh has become so heated in recent years. The September 1988 Hyderabad bombings can only be described as brutal acts of ethnic terrorism. The fact that the casualties were almost exclusively *Mohajirs* points to the violent lengths to which certain players in the ethno-political drama will go, and also describes the socio-political environment in which the MQM was developing and growing.

It is interesting to note that the return of democracy in Pakistan does not seem to have altered the focus and energy of community frustrations with the local and central state. In these terms, not only is the state seen as fundamentally "unaccountable" for its policies, but organs such as the police are seen as partisan and repressive, much as they were under military rule. Such sentiments could relate both to the perceived nature of the state under democracy, or to a failure to eradicate memories of the nature of the state under military rule, even when that rule is removed. Perhaps most likely is the fact that democracy in Pakistan cannot always be compared to Western versions of democracy. The post-Zia regime has actually seen little change in the "feudal" bargainings, "horse-trading" and repression of opposition that has pervaded Pakistan's politics since Independence. There is still much to be altered in the corridors of Islamabad before the population can start to believe that things really have changed since the dark days of Zia.

With regards to urban violence, Tambiah has suggested that politics in South Asia often involves an element of widespread civil disorder. He cites the examples of the local government elections in Bangladesh in 1988, the national elections in India in 1989, and the Presidential Referendum in Sri Lanka in 1982, all of which were accompanied by large-scale violence (Tambiah, 1990, pp.753-54). On the smaller scale of strikes, political meetings or "events" such as hunger strikes, I would argue that conditions in Karachi between 1988 and 1990 lend credence to Tambiah's account of the mechanics of South Asian

democracy and its relationship to widespread civil disorder. I will return to this point later.

Post-1990 conditions

By Summer 1990, and particularly after the *Pucca Qila* incident of June in that year, the MQM had firmly aligned itself against the PPP government, and had joined the Combined Opposition Parties (COP) that eventually "won" the general election in October 1990. In many ways, the manner in which the MQM had increasingly begun to "control" political and ethnic violence in urban Sindh through the imposition of strikes and demonstrations around which the violence concentrated, was demonstrated by the fact that the violence abruptly ended in the cities of the province after the IJI government was installed. In Sindh, the MQM is the principal component of the provincial administration, ironically united with the nationalist Sindh National Alliance (SNA) of G.M Syed, initially under the tutelage of Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali (an embittered PPP dissident) until his death in March 1992. In these terms, the MQM has achieved its goal of holding office in Sindh, yet has lost some direction as a result.

The sort of ethnic violence that rose to a crescendo in the 1980s has thus largely disappeared from the scene in urban Sindh, at least for the time being. This is not to say that *all* urban violence has ended, however. In the sphere of student politics, the APMSO has been battling with the IJT over specific college issues, claiming the lives of

some students in the process (Dawn, 30 January 1991, Karachi). In Hyderabad meanwhile, six people were killed by a bomb on the occasion of an anti-government strike called by the PPP's student wing, the PSF (The News, 21 January 1992, Karachi). Shortly before, opposition by Sindh nationalists to the appointment of the interim successor to Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali, the *Mohajir* Tariq Javaid, was punctuated with the explosion of seven bombs in the centre of Karachi, injuring at least 17 people (Dawn, 4 November 1991, Karachi). Finally, the sort of spontaneous violence arising from disputes or accidents, or criminal violence such as kidnappings and murders, have continued apace. In these terms, the underlying conditions in which the modes of violence in the 1980s were articulated, are still very much in place. These fears were strengthened by the controversial Sukkur incident of February 1991.

7.5 MODES OF VIOLENCE

The episodes of violence selected for analysis above are intended to convey the changes and developments that civil society in Karachi and other parts of urban Sindh was experiencing through the 1980s. The episodes show a complex combination of factors, which together appear to result in different forms of violence. The violence that accelerated in Karachi through the 1980s can broadly be described as ethnic, political or criminal violence. (Religious sectarian conflict has occurred in Karachi as in other parts of Pakistan, but during the 1980s it seemed to be overshadowed by other forms of conflict in the

city, and did not appear to be an element of large-scale unrest at this time. I will return to this form of violence later). I would argue that in terms of societal tensions underpinning civil disorder, these forms of violence are not mutually exclusive. I have suggested that one of the factors that leads unrest to assume differing modes of expression in various contexts, is the element of the specific socio-political and physical features of the location of the unrest. It is necessary, therefore, to consider how the physical environment of Karachi has shaped the unrest that has taken place there.

Major forms of violence in urban Sindh in the 1980s

The large riots of October/November and December 1986 involved a complex range of incidents and events, but the most murderous aspect appeared to be ethnic sectarianism, focussing on particular districts of Orangi such as Qasba and Aligarh Colonies. Here, Pakhtun groups singled-out non-Pakhtun people and property for increasingly merciless attack, with little regard for who fell victim.

There was also an element of revenge here, a process itself relating to ethnicity, since the *Biharis* in parts of Orangi may have inflicted similar violence on Pakhtuns in the unrest of April 1985. Yet the involvement of interest-groups behind the scenes places a question-mark over the spontaneity of the violence. Rudé would suggest that the murderous acts could not have been committed without a fundamental underlying belief among the wider population in the foundation of the

violence (Rudé, 1981, pp.244-5), in this case ethnic particularism. Alternatively, Tambiah, using the example of ethnic violence in Sri Lanka, suggests that the violence gains its own momentum after a while, negating the importance or relevance of its original foundations, and eventually forcing disparate communities and viewpoints into polarised camps (Tambiah, 1986, pp.118, 121). It is important to try and return to those original foundations, however, if the violence is to be understood. Certainly the manner in which ethnic violence has waxed and waned in urban Sindh casts a shadow over the concept of spontaneous ethnic violence.

After 1988, there were many violent incidents of an ethnic nature, but this time involving Sindhis and *Mohajirs* rather than Pakhtuns, and often occurring in places other than Karachi. Here, attacks were conducted from speeding cars or motorbikes, by masked men with powerful firearms, claiming victims for little reason other than their ethnic identity. The incidents are too numerous to mention, but the September 1988 massacre in Hyderabad probably brought this form of Sindhii/*Mohajir* violence to the streets of Karachi for the first time. A particularly important aspect of the post-1988 violence was that it became "politicised" by the MQM, who blamed the attacks on *Mohajirs* on a cartel of Sindhii nationalists and the PPP, and who largely ignored the countless attacks on Sindhis occurring at the same time. The battle at large became articulated by student groups also, with the APMSO on the side of the *Mohajirs* and the PSF fighting for the Sindhis. Here, the

violence involved murder, abduction, and torture in *khels* (subterranean torture chambers); (Pakistan Profile, 1-14 June 1990, London, p.10).

With regard to the politicisation of violence we can return to Tambiah's argument that, in South Asia, processes of democracy and "collective violence" are integrally linked (Tambiah, 1990, p.758). I have shown that, in some respects, this theory does apply to urban Sindh, particularly in terms of the 1988-90 period. However, it should be reiterated that local factors shape the mode and expression of urban violence in any one city. In the case of Pakistan, I would argue that such local factors call into question Tambiah's theory of collective violence relating to political processes, modelled on Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka (Tambiah, *ibid*, pp.753-54). Firstly, unlike India, Pakistan's history involves almost continuous Martial Law, with very little participatory democracy. Certainly in the period running up to 1988, when large-scale ethnic riots had taken place in Karachi, the political scene was governed by General Zia whose regime was probably the most oppressive of all in Pakistan's history. Furthermore, unlike the examples of Sri Lanka or parts of India (such as Punjab), the few elections that have taken place in Pakistan have themselves been relatively peacefully conducted, and the major bouts of collective urban violence have occurred at altogether different times.

Religious sectarian violence has often flared in Karachi, and could be said to be a persistent problem throughout Pakistan. In many ways, this form of violence links the societal tensions and stresses in other parts of Pakistan with conditions in Karachi. During my fieldwork

period in Winter/Spring 1991, Punjab Province was suffering *Sunni/Shia* clashes in the city of Jhang, following the apparently politically-motivated murder of a leader of an extremist *Sunni* party. Many of the details of the conflict were similar to those of ethnic and other conflicts in Sindh throughout the 1980s, such as the use of *Kalashnikov* rifles, and the resultant spatial polarisation of communities in the city (Herald, February 1991, Karachi, p.61). In Karachi, meanwhile, religious sectarian conflict has signified both inter-Islamic clashes, and attacks on religious minorities by Muslims, notably after events in neighbouring India involving "communal" conflicts.

I have suggested that, in many respects, and particularly in terms of the location of violence, Islamic sectarian clashes in Karachi in 1983/84 were similar in their nature and modes of expression to incidents that were later labelled "ethnic riots". Police data record two *Sunni/Shia* riots in February and March 1983 in the districts of Liaquatabad and Sohrab Goth, which necessitated the imposition of six and ten day periods of curfew respectively in those districts (COEKA, Implementation Review, 2 May 1989, Karachi, p.9iv). The ethnic nature of these districts (largely Pakhtun in Sohrab Goth and *Mohajir* in Liaquatabad), and the fact that they would recur in subsequent ethnic unrest, suggests that the sectarian riots of 1983 were forerunners to later "ethnic" disturbances.

In the years following 1983, it seemed as if large-scale Islamic sectarian violence in Karachi was overshadowed by other forms of violence, at least as far as police data would suggest (ibid). By 1992,

however, when ethnic violence had subsided in the city, sectarian conflict re-emerged in the form of a dispute between *Sunnis* and *Wahabi Deobandis* over the jurisdiction of a mosque in central Karachi. The *Sunnis* have been represented in part by a militant organisation called the *Sunni Tehrik*. Again, the outward expressions of the conflict, such as the use of automatic weapons, and attacks on journalists and newspapers (Herald, January 1992, Karachi, p.74), were all too familiar. I would argue that these episodes of sectarian violence, when viewed in combination with the other episodes of violence I have described, constitute a picture of continuous inter-community urban violence in Karachi, despite the expression of that violence fluctuating between ethnic and Islamic conflict. Sectarian violence also links conditions in Karachi with urban contexts in other parts of Pakistan, to form a picture of a crisis in the civil order of the country.

It is important, however, to distinguish between the conditions in which violence flares, and the specific modes of that violence once it takes a hold. I would argue that "collective violence" in South Asia, and its relationship to wider political processes, reflects the underlying tensions and weaknesses of some postcolonial South Asian States. In previous chapters I have shown how a lack of synthesis between community identities and the national State in Pakistan has led to societal stresses which have often resulted in serious civil disorder. It is true to say that these problems of "national development" apply just as much to Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh, where ethnic or other community movements have also risen and sought separation from the

national unit (such as in Kashmir or Punjab in India, or in the Tamil areas of India and Sri Lanka).

The brief experience of democracy in Pakistan since Zia's death in 1988 has hardly reassured the regional communities of the country of their rights to representation or of the accountability of national institutions. Government since 1988 has been punctuated by examples of the abuse of power by elected ministries. The Bhutto government was rocked by financial scandals that ultimately contributed to its downfall. The IJI government that followed was often willing to oppress those who opposed its rule.

This oppression was particularly marked at the provincial level in Sindh, since it was in this Province that the the major force of opposition to the IJI - the PPP - was based. The provincial administration under Jam Sadiq Ali (who was replaced on his death in 1992) mercilessly intimidated the PDA opposition. "The Jam's" methods involved the repeated arrest of PDA delegates, sometimes on the eve of Senate or by-elections and occasionally without charge. (See, for example, the arrest of MPAs and the surrounding of the residences of others by police on the evening before Senate by-elections in December 1990; Dawn, 1 December 1990, Karachi). Perhaps most unsettling of all are the charges made by the PDA that the elections of 1990 were rigged to ensure an IJI victory (PDA, 1991).

All of these practices and allegations suggest that even under "democracy", unconstitutional and oppressive measures can be used by the state to achieve its aims and settle disputes. Returning again to the

example of Sri Lanka, Tambiah observes that one of the island's worst ever bouts of civil disorder occurred some months after the staging of a national referendum in 1983 (Tambiah, 1990, p.754). As a paper issued by a civil rights organisation in Colombo observed:

"The fact that violence has been used to meet criticism and political dissent in the country as a whole, including the Sinhala areas, may well have encouraged the belief that the ethnic problems could be dealt with in a similar manner"

(in Tambiah, 1990, pp.754-5).

Thus, by using violence, intimidation and oppression itself, the government encourages the population to do the same to settle its problems. The military governments of Pakistan freely used such methods, since they were largely unaccountable at the time. Democratic government in Pakistan has not so far suggested that the situation can be significantly different.

Much urban violence in Sindh cannot be termed "ethnic" or political, but is more precisely criminal. However, the same perceived failures of the state can be noted in regard to the growth of serious crime, which has increasingly set foot on the streets of Karachi. Table 7.2 shows the increase of serious crime in Pakistan through the 1980s.

Of course, crime is often "politicised" and related to the fund-raising of political groups, in the manner of terrorist groups in

TABLE 7.2: Selected crime figures (reported), Pakistan, 1980-89

<u>Crime</u>	No. of reported cases	
	<u>1980</u>	<u>1989</u>
Murder	4307	7928
Kidnapping	3228	6195
<i>Dacoity</i>	70	451

Source: Government of Pakistan, 1990a, p.375

Northern Ireland. In Hyderabad, the *Iqbal Ladla* faction, which claims allegiance to the MQM, is suspected of involvement in illicit activities such as gun-running. (It was nominally this faction that was the target of the ill-fated *Pucca Qila* operation in May 1990). It is impossible to verify such political links. Much of the violence in urban Sindh is probably motivated by greed, as press reports concerning various arrests and "busting" of seemingly autonomous "gangs" would suggest (see *The News*, 20 January 1992, Karachi). In 1990, there were 76 reported kidnappings in Karachi. By January 1991, all but four of these had been returned after the payment of ransom money, reaching up to three million Rupees in some cases (*Herald*, January 1991, Karachi, p.84). One unfortunate victim, the son of a wealthy jeweller, was kidnapped twice within six months (*Herald*, *ibid*). The Nawaz Sharif government reinstated

a policy of public hanging in an attempt to present a decisive face on violence (although no hangings were conducted under its rule).

Violence in Karachi and conspiracy theories

The inherent complexity of the urban violence in Sindh, and particularly the mysterious nature of the "masked attackers" involved in many incidents of violence in the Karachi in the late 1980s, has not surprisingly led to a wealth of conspiracy theories. The theories suggest that violence in Karachi is neither ethnic-sectarian, "political" or structural in form, but concerns a sponsorship of violence by "hidden hands" bent on the disintegration or destabilisation of Pakistan through the disruption of its major economic centre.

The most often held conspiracy theory is that relating to the riots of 1986, which some have interpreted as being organised and exacerbated by hidden "mafias". These groups can operate without interception by the authorities within a general climate of anarchy. Arif Hasan termed the process an "ethnic smokescreen" (interview, 11 February 1991, Karachi), whereby powerful ethnic and tribal rivalries can be excited and provoked to develop an ongoing situation of violence and reprisal. The process causes the police to employ most of their energy in riot-control and curfew supervision, and also creates "no-go" districts where clandestine groups can operate more freely. The geographical focus of smokescreen-rioting is assumed to relate to the pattern of informal-sector land development and other businesses

described in the previous chapter. Writing in November 1986, Arif Hasan claimed that "outsiders" had just purchased some *katchi abadi* land around Benares Chowk and in Aligarh Colony, to develop or rent illegally (Herald, December 1986, Karachi, p.7). These areas became the epicentres of the two large riots at the end of 1986, supposedly to create a "smokescreen" over the work of the "outsiders".

Similarly, Akmal Hussain speaks of "syndicate organisations" which have entered the city with the "large illegal arms market and the burgeoning heroin trade" (A. Hussain, 1987, p.4). With slight differences to the "ethnic smokescreen" theory of Arif Hasan above, Akmal Hussain suggests that the mafias "mobilised" the Pakhtun community in retaliation to the threat posed by the authorities with Operation Clean-up (ibid). Christina Lamb, meanwhile, suggests that in Karachi, "vast areas are controlled by drug barons" (Lamb, 1991, p.139). Hamza Alavi holds to much the same theory, describing the situation in the following terms:

"There is a well-organized *Pathan* mafia that is well-entrenched in trade in drugs, illegal arms and, not least, rackets in urban land.....There were attempts to explain away that violence [1986/87] as an ethnic conflict, an explanation that masks its organized nature and the interests that lie behind it."

(Alavi, 1989, pp.245-6).

Here again the "mafia" is named, although in this instance there is a danger of equating the problem with a particular ethnic group, and of thinking that collective violence is synonymous with Pakhtun (or Pathan) identity; an equation that Wali Khan has warned against. That Pakhtun groups were effectively mobilised along ethnic lines in the large-scale Karachi riots of the mid-1980s says nothing about the underlying interests in land or clandestine businesses that may constitute the "mafias", not least with respect to their own identity. It is not clear why such interests would want to actively promote unrest, other than possibly through wanting to drive down land prices in order to speculate in the urban land market.

The "Indian factor" in Pakistani politics must also be mentioned, since it produces the most regular flow of conspiracy theories. This matter is more important in such cities as Lahore, according to "Nation" editor Arif Nizami (interview, 23 February 1991, Lahore), than is the case in urban Sindh, due to differing proximities to cities in India. Nevertheless, the matter has occasionally surfaced in Sindh. This was particularly the case in February 1990, when the calling of a strike by the MQM in the middle of a "solidarity week" for the Muslims of Kashmir, led theories to circulate that the MQM was working with Indian agents to destabilise the Pakistani government (Pakistan Times, 17 February 1990, Lahore). An interior minister in the Bhutto government at the time announced that investigations were being made to determine if the Indian intelligence service, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), was involved in the Karachi disturbances (Daily Leader, 15

February 1990, Karachi). The matter remains just one of the many unverifiable accusations of Indian intelligence interference in Pakistan, and vice versa.

At around the same time as the "Black Wednesday" strike of February 1990, the chief of the PPI Sarwar Awan was voicing a theory that Altaf Hussain and the MQM were endeavouring to make Karachi a free port, like Hong Kong, and to this end were inciting riots that would drive non-*Mohajirs* opposed to the idea from the city (Muslim, 16 February 1990, Karachi). The "Hong Kong" theory was also voiced by a prominent Sindh academic⁴. The theory is that, with the return of Hong-Kong to China, the clandestine businesses that have flourished in that city will look for another Asian city in which to base their operations. These businesses have supposedly looked to Karachi and the MQM as a possible "host", and have been harnessing disenchanted poor labour to indulge in destabilisation in the city and thus weaken the grip of the law-enforcement agencies (interview, 18 February 1991). This theory also remains unverifiable, and relates to the question of the "separation" of urban Sindh in the MQM's policy, as discussed earlier. The theory is also somewhat untenable in economic terms. I have shown that unrest has actively discouraged investment in the cities of Sindh.

The conspiracy theories, particularly those concerning Indian intelligence-agency involvement, need to be taken with a pinch of salt. The voicing of such theories is a favourite pastime of amateur political analysts throughout South Asia, and I found nothing to vindicate such theories as the "Hong Kong" model. No doubt there is much anti-MQM

propaganda at work in these theories. Nevertheless, the abundance of such theories helps to explain both the complexity and opacity of the processes of urban violence that Sindh was suffering at the end of the 1980s. Furthermore, some credence should be given to "mafia" theories. There are undoubtedly some organised criminal gangs operating in Karachi, as there are in many South Asian cities, with another notable example being Bombay. (The "Bombay bombings" of early 1993 are suspected of being the work of disenchanted Muslim "mafia" organisations also involved in urban land market speculation). The details of the large riots of 1986 and 1987, for example, suggest that some form of quite well-organised networks were contributing in some way to the development of civil disorder at the time.

Modes of violence in Karachi

In the previous chapter I described the informal sector of the local state in Karachi, and suggested that this sector responds to weaknesses and shortfalls of the state in two ways. Firstly, some local community organisations and businesses tackle the developmental problems that the state has failed to address. Secondly, clandestine and illegal businesses take advantage of the lack of state jurisdiction in many areas. I have suggested in this chapter that the "mafias" in Karachi have, to different degrees at different times, been important contestants in the battle for urban space in Karachi. It should also be recognised that much urban violence in Sindh is criminal violence, which

also takes advantage of lacking or weak official jurisdiction in many areas. Criminal violence in urban Sindh is closely related to that in rural areas of the province, where "dacoits" have operated regardless of developments in the political arena.

Conditions in the Frontier region and elsewhere have given form to clandestine racketeering businesses in Karachi, and particularly the trafficking of heroin from the Golden Crescent (which is constituted by Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan). Here again, specific conditions have shaped the particularly explosive and militarised *modes of violence* in the socio-political environment of Sindh, in ways that may not necessarily apply to other cities in South Asia or elsewhere.

The transport sector in Karachi also constitutes a significant element of the violence. Again, much of the problem stems from the role of the central state, which is seen to play a somewhat ineffectual role in the improvement of traffic conditions, by exercising little control on operators, failing to provide an adequate low-cost public transport system of its own, and largely failing to enforce traffic rules. Transport legislation, meanwhile, has been slow and bureaucratically complex. The circular railway line around the centre of the city has proved to be of little attraction to urban travellers. In 1974 a Rapid Transport Cell was set-up by the Bhutto government to analyse the overall problem. Since then various reports and suggestions have been made, concerning such ideas as subways, electric tramways and improved government bus services, but no scheme has so far progressed beyond embryonic stage (COEKA, March 1986, p.66).

In times of rioting, the proliferation of buses, rickshaws and taxis throughout the city has led to their destruction and use as material for barricades against movement. The burning of vehicles provides an effective barricade on the streets, particularly in the wide straight avenues dissected by the raised or planted central reservations characteristic of many parts of Karachi, where one side of the street can be quickly blocked (see Figures 7.2 and 7.3, which show South Avenue in SITE, a frequent scene of disruptive rioting). Tambiah has suggested that the burning of rickshaws and buses was an important element of the Hindu/Sikh riots in Delhi in 1984. Here, as was the case with the Pakhtun-owned vehicles in Karachi, the motivation for the attacks was not only to cause disruption but to strike at the economic assets of the targeted community (Tambiah, 1990, p.745). In any given city, the outward dynamics of inter-community violence will be shaped by the nature of these community assets.

An important spatial element of the rioting is the aspect of "nodal points", that Tambiah observed in the case of *Banaras Chowk* (Tambiah, 1990, p.749). The area, shown in Figures 7.4 and 7.5, is a congested traffic roundabout on a raised causeway over the Orangi Nala river. It has frequently been an effective focus for disruptive violence. All traffic in or out of Orangi must pass through Banaras Chowk, which negotiates the steep hillsides inhabited by *semi-pacca* Pakhtun colonies and the river valley that form the link between Orangi and Karachi. The congestion and strategic importance of the *Chowk* has made it the scene of disruptive disturbances many times, notably in April 1985 when

Bushra Zaidi's *dhoom* (funeral procession) passed through, and the morning after Operation Clean-up when crowds of angry Pakhtuns blocked the *Chowk* and attacked passers-by.

The recurrence of specific spatial nodes in the history of Sindh's urban violence thus depends on a variety of factors. I have described the cultural significance of *Haider Chowk* in Hyderabad, the importance of which to Sindhis has caused *Mohajir* activists to use the square as the location of provocative symbols of *Mohajir* lore. The square would not be the scene of violence so often, however, were it not also an important traffic node, whose blockage causes considerable disruption to the city of Hyderabad.

The frequent occurrence of riots in the industrial area SITE in Karachi relates more specifically to physical features. The importance of the area to the city reflects the position held by Karachi within the national economy. A recognition of this position has led rioters to disrupt the area from as early as 1972, particularly on occasions when the disturbance involved a general protest at national or local government. Socio-political factors cannot be so relevant in the targeting of SITE, as the area is not residential and thus "belongs" to no particular community.

7.6 CONCLUSIONS

The sheer brutality of much of the ethnic violence that occurred in the second half of the 1980s in urban Sindh has led many to feel

that an "ethnic rift" has grown between *Mohajirs* and their neighbours. We have also seen in the previous chapter that the production of embedded spatial patterns and processes have lent weight to such a theory of rift.

However, I have argued that underlying the process of ethnic politics and violence, and linking it with other diverse modes of urban violence, is a basic crisis of civil order and state jurisdiction in Sindh, and in Pakistan more widely. The crisis has allowed the rise in Karachi of agencies that effectively operate "secondary states" within the city. Such organisations not only aim to provide facilities and opportunities for their own particular segments of the population where the state is perceived to have failed, but also to offer a secondary system of protection and "justice" for those communities. On the one hand are the agents of violent clandestine businesses in guns, drugs and land; the "mafias" who may well have been active forces behind the large riots of 1986/87, while on the other hand there is the MQM, which has grown to challenge these agencies in such areas as Orangi, and gain its own grip on the city through the orchestration of violence (to supplement its dominance of civic agencies). By 1988/89, the MQM demonstrated that it had indeed gained "control" of politically-motivated civil disorder in the city.

The sudden cessation of ethnic urban violence in Autumn 1990, broken seriously only once to date in the Sukkur incident (whose location and timing led to further conspiracy theories), has cast some

doubt on the depth of the "ethnic rift" within the population of Sindh. Sindhi nationalist leader Mumtaz Bhutto claimed that:

"I am not over-awed by this Sindhi/*Mohajir* conflict. After all before 1986 they had all lived side by side. There was a flare-up in 1972, but that was isolated. Between 1972 and 1986 there were no conflicts. So why suddenly now?"

(*interview*, 21 June 1991, London).

The implication is that the violence has been promoted and harnessed by political, "mafia", or other mysterious interests - in this case by the Zia regime who is charged with operating divide-and-rule policies in Sindh (Mumtaz Bhutto, *ibid*). Here, the "communalism" debates are again recalled, whereby some claim that religion was used as a basis for violence for political purposes in pre-Partition India (Dyakov, 1966, p.81), in the same way that ethnicity is used now in Pakistan and elsewhere. If this is the case with the Sindhi/*Mohajir* conflict, then at least there is some hope that communities can be reconciled as rapidly as they were pitted against one another.

But in many ways the damage has already been done, particularly in the economic sphere, where ethnic disturbances coupled with unchecked crime have frightened off potential investors. Incentives for decentralisation, particularly out of Karachi towards the province of

Punjab, have led private industrial development to stagnate in Karachi in recent years. Between 1985 and 1989, loans sanctioned by the National Development Finance Corporation for major projects in Sindh declined in number by 47.8%, while in Punjab the number rose over the same period by 105.9% (Herald, May 1991, Karachi, p.106). Fear of disruption, as well as the sheer physical problems associated with curfews and sabotaged facilities, have a grave effect on the economic sphere. Investors evidently take these matters seriously. In January 1992, for example, a report of differences between Altaf Hussain and the Prime Minister led to substantial falls in the Karachi Stock Exchange (The News, Business, 19 January 1992, Karachi). Meanwhile the Sukkur incident of February 1991 added to the economic misery there. The President of the Chamber of Commerce in the city said that 40 units in the industrial estate had closed in the months immediately preceding the incident, leaving the estate with a "deserted look" (Herald, March 1991, Karachi, p.39). The violence in February 1991 can only have accelerated this process. Given that unemployment is considered by KDA director Abu Shamim Arif to be one of the most important sources of frustration among Karachi youth (interview, 12 April 1991, Karachi), the economic impact of the violence can only bode ill.

In many ways, the problem is common to many postcolonial societies. Wignaraja, in examining South Asian society, suggests that a common process of persistent civil disorder springing from feelings of "fear, insecurity and aggression" (Wignaraja, 1989, p.20) was arising throughout the subcontinent at the end of the 1980s.

Akmal Hussain has analysed Pakistan's own particular problem of civil disorder in terms of an "undermining of civil society" (A. Hussain, 1990, pp.367-94). He has linked the growing problem of violence to two main factors. Firstly, there have been the problems of economic development and growth, leading to wide economic disparities across regions and sectors of the population. Secondly, the Zia era in Pakistan led to particular processes of militarisation and economic dependence in society. The dependence was symbolised both by an increasing reliance on U.S. aid, and an exploitation of cheap labour opportunities in the Gulf, both of which are now being denied or are reducing in importance. Militarisation, meanwhile, sprang from the processes I have described with respect to Karachi, such as the flood of arms into society, the growth of "Mafia type syndicates" (A. Hussain, *ibid*, p.386) and the lack of participatory political processes to encourage moderate political and student groups. In these terms, the growth of violence has related both to general problems common to most of the developing world, and to Pakistan's own specific political history.

In Sindh, urban and rural, the security situation has probably worsened steadily throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. In 1991 up to the end of May, 1,294 kidnappings were reported around the province (Herald, July 1991, p.86), and many more doubtless went unreported. Occasionally, and notably during the Benazir Bhutto government of 1988-90, such a breakdown of law and order has touched the city of Karachi; between August and October 1990, for instance, 42 people were reportedly kidnapped for ransom in the city (Herald, January 1991, Karachi, p.84).

Where the state fails, other community organisations such as the MQM in the case of *Mchajirs*, *biraderi* [clan] groups, ethnic or subnationalist parties in the case of Pakhtuns, Sindhis and others, or simply crowds of angry citizens, offer other forums in which local voices can be heard. Often the *Kalashnikov* is chosen as the most effective way to end a debate. With each violent incident, the bitterness and militarisation of such conflicts increases. Communities have memories.

The shadow of mysterious "hidden hands", about whom nothing can be said with any certainty, has fallen over all the incidents of urban violence in Karachi. In terms of MQM involvement, the violence through the 1980s can be seen effectively as a battle for control of Pakistan's economic hub, Karachi. In the large riots of 1986 it seemed that forces other than the MQM were dominant in the city. After 1987, however, when the Movement began its domination of the city's civic agencies, and orchestrated the rise and fall of violence on the streets of Karachi with the strikes, demonstrations and "hunger strikes" that it organised, it appeared that the MQM had finally "taken control" of urban Sindh. It is perhaps significant that the Movement has called for the police to be brought under the control of the KMC, which the MQM dominates. This act would more or less complete the Movement's grip on the city.

In these terms, I have argued that a theory of "ethnic rift" alone is not an adequate one to "explain" what has been happening in urban Sindh over the last few years. Both Ponna Wignaraja (Wignaraja, 1989, p.22) and Akmal Hussain (interview, 24 February 1991, Lahore) agree that ethnic particularism in South Asia represents a reversion to

"proximate identities" as a response to societal problems. A comparison of incidences of violence in Karachi over recent years, and between Karachi and conditions in other cities in Pakistan, suggests a growing problem of persistent urban violence, despite the outward expressions of that violence varying between cases. The tensions in the State of Pakistan that lie beneath this violence relate to the battle for local urban control (which highlights the MQM's role in the violence), to civic problems such as burgeoning unemployment, and to the undermining of civil society, whereby communities increasingly turn to the *Kalashnikov* to resolve problems. I would argue that the problem is faced not only by Karachi or Pakistan, but also by many contemporary postcolonial developing countries.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The bomb exploded in the grounds of the Sindh Government Secretariat buildings, killing one person and wounding many others. Responsibility for the bombing has not yet been claimed by any agency (Herald, October 1991, Karachi, pp.37-8).

2. The following case studies are derived from press sources comprising: "Herald", "Newslines", "Viewpoint", "Dawn", "The Star", "The Muslim", "The Nation", "The Frontier Post" and "Pakistan Times".

3. The location and timing of the Sukkur incident are significant for two reasons. Firstly, the incident happened in a city that is believed to have been largely free of such brutal incidents before 1991, even during the height of the violence in Karachi and Hyderabad. Secondly, the incident came some months after a general calm had descended on other urban areas in Sindh. Many in Pakistan feel that the incident was deliberately engineered (by unspecified "anti-democratic elements" - the "hidden hand" factor) to attract criticisms of the government's handling of affairs in Sindh.

4. No further details of this interview can be given.

SECTION FOUR

OVERVIEW AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

It is the true desire of every artist to impose his or her vision on the world; and Pakistan, the peeling, fragmenting palimpsest, increasingly at war with itself, may be described as a failure of the dreaming mind.

(Salman Rushdie, 1983, p.87).

In this dissertation I have not only been concerned with questions of nationalism, subnationalism and ethnicity in a developing postcolonial country, or with the organisation, dynamics and rhetoric of a political party/movement, but rather with the intersections between these questions, events and themes.

It is clear that many post-colonial States have faced problems in forging a nation - or a sense of a nation - from a diverse collection of regional cultures and ethnic groups. In the case of Pakistan, I have shown that the problems of nation-building have been hampered by two main sets of factors. On the one hand, there is the matter of an unhappy imperial legacy. Pakistan was formed on the edges of the British Empire in India, and came into being in areas largely devoid of raw materials and established industries. In order to overcome these inauspicious economic beginnings, it might be supposed that a strong state would be required to fashion a process of economic development based hesitantly

on agrarian reform and initially assisted with import-substitution industrialisation and massive injections of foreign aid. On the other hand, the possibility of creating a strong *and democratic* state in Pakistan was hampered by certain weaknesses in civil society in the new State and by the lack of secure bases upon which might be created a sturdy vision of national identity and development. The "nation" of Pakistan was always an artifice, and soon after its promulgation in 1947 it became apparent that the central state (and Punjab) would face a series of challenges from those established ethnic groups - Bengalis, Sindhis, Baluchis - who could, on occasions, consider themselves to be *outside* the "project" of Pakistan.

The main power-brokers in Pakistan have attempted to come to terms with these tasks - and with the task of nation-building above all - by stressing (at least rhetorically) the importance of Islam and Urdu as unifying elements of the nation and identity of Pakistan. I have shown in this dissertation, however, that neither of these identities is sufficiently stable (or widely enough used in the case of Urdu) to form a lasting and unproblematic foundation for Pakistani nationalism. In practice, therefore, the State of Pakistan has regularly had to be held together by the army. In this respect, Pakistan bears out Clapham's depiction of the postcolonial developing state as a seemingly paradoxical combination of strength and fragility. On the one hand, the development of civil institutions in States like Pakistan is sufficiently understated that the army can rule by force in order to create or impose one version of "national development" among the population. On the other

hand, the lack of support for army rule, in tandem with its own internal tensions, means that military rule is often vulnerable to sudden coups and successions. In Pakistan, too, the territorial reach of the central state is far from secure, as is only too evident in the bandit-infested regions of Sindh (and to some extents Baluchistan). In a curious echo of British days in India, the central state is sometimes condemned to rule parts of Pakistan by courtesy of various local leaders and brigands, moving to crush them only when the wider interests of the State of Pakistan are threatened.

It was into this wider political climate that the MQM emerged so forcefully in the 1980s. Not surprisingly, perhaps, the MQM - and certainly its leadership - soon became infected by the political vocabularies then present more widely in Pakistan; vocabularies which emphasised force and the use of arms and which discounted the language of a more representational and non-violent politics. But why did the Movement emerge in the 1980s (above all) and not earlier, and why in Sindh and not in Punjab? A meaningful account of *Mohajir* subnationalism must engage closely with these two questions. In my judgement, it is possible to advance an account of the MQM which does not reduce its subject matter to an insubstantial and banal political movement and which does not only see its leaders as so many evanescent individuals bent only on maximising their own positions within Sindhi society (although this is clearly part of the story).

I have tried to answer the two questions outlined above by examining the phenomenon of *Mohajir* subnationalism at two main levels.

At a general level, I have shown that the State of Pakistan was fundamentally unstable throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and that this instability was heightened by the consolidation of a more militant form of Sindhi nationalism in the south of the country. The rise to prominence of Sindhi leaders like G.M.Syed undoubtedly helped to foster the growth of a *Mohajir* sense of political identity, both by creating the *Mohajir* community as a possible target (or outsider) population, and by signalling the political mileage to be gained from mobilising on a community or "ethnic" basis. In the 1950s the *Mohajir* community had been a relatively prosperous community in Sindh, and *Mohajirs* were well represented in the corridors of power of the central government and in Pakistan's growing bureaucracy. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, this relative affluence was challenged, and probably diminished, by the continued induction of Punjabis into important positions within the state and by the removal of the national political centre to the Lahore-Rawalpindi-Islamabad region.

But worse was to come at a local and provincial level. The Bhutto government in the early 1970s enacted a number of measures that alienated a sizeable part of the *Mohajir* community both economically and culturally. The first of such measures was the Sindhi Language Bill, which struck at the Urdu-speaking heart of the *Mohajir* community. Very much related to this, in terms of employment, was the establishment of quotas for public-sector employment and higher education places that were designed to discriminate positively in favour of the rural populations of Sindh. In many developing countries - and possibly in

Pakistan - this latter policy could reasonably be accounted a progressive one; after all, Michael Lipton has not been alone in emphasising the depredations suffered by the "rural class" in the so-called Third World (Lipton, 1977; see also Clapham, 1985). From the point of view of the *Mohajir* community, however, these two measures directly threatened their present and future prosperity, precisely at a time (following the OPEC oil price rises of the mid-1970s) when formal sector employment in Pakistan was probably coming under threat. (I say probably, because it is difficult to obtain meaningful figures on unemployment and underemployment on a regional basis, over time, for Pakistan). It is thus surely not a coincidence - but rather a "predictable" response - that the APMSO emerged in 1978 in the college campuses of urban Sindh to challenge the threat perceived to lie within the community quota scheme, and to engage (sometimes violently) with the other militarised student bodies that were then aiming to intimidate the dominant Urdu-speaking student population.

It would be unwise to underplay these economic imperatives in the formation and consolidation of a politicised *Mohajir* community identity. In many post-colonial developing countries, access to education and public-sector jobs are often seen as *the* gateways to a better (or even tolerable) life. The state provides these resources and communities must struggle for them (as for any scarce public goods: Weiner, 1965). As the job-market tightened, then, it might be supposed, the incentive increased for certain *Mohajir* individuals (and students at first) to present their "community" as a legitimate contender for whatever state largesse was on

offer. It may also follow that a *Mohajir* student community would be well placed, along with sympathetic figures in the public arena in urban Sindh, to fashion a nascent "ethnic intelligentsia" which could invent or re-invent those mythologies of *Mohajir* lore that might strengthen an emerging *Mohajir* sense of community identity. I have indicated that this is precisely what happened from about the late-1970s through until the end of the 1980s.

I have also shown that there were many good reasons why a latent sense of *Mohajir* identity should flourish in the 1980s. Without needing to reiterate certain points, it is clear that *Mohajir* subnationalism strengthened in the 1980s precisely as the national project of an "Islamic" politics began to falter, as Sindhi nationalism began to strengthen, and as parts of the economic and political fabric of urban Sindh came under threat from "new" (non-*Mohajir*) "mafia" groups, accompanied by a "*Kalashnikov* culture" fed by conditions across the Pakistan border in Afghanistan. To the extent that many *Mohajirs* did recognise, by the 1980s, that they were involved in a deepening (and often defensive) struggle for economic dominance in urban Sindh, then developments such as these in Sindh would surely have sharpened their sense of community consciousness. By the 1980s it was not implausible that some *Mohajirs* would feel that they were a community under threat in Sindh. This was not the case in Punjab, and it was not the case in Sindh in the 1950s or 1960s, but by the 1980s there were identifiable "foundations" upon which the MQM could build in Sindh's society.

The problems that the MQM has had to face, however, have been far from easy and have related to questions of possible alliance partners and questions of territory: to what we might call the geography of "subnationalist" struggle. In Section Three of the dissertation I emphasised the importance of Karachi to MQM politics and noted how the centrality of this city has served both as a blessing and a curse for the Movement.

It is clear firstly that the MQM has scored its greatest successes in the *Mohajir* areas of Karachi, both in terms of public meetings organised and votes polled. Not surprisingly, the MQM has not performed well in non-*Mohajir* areas of urban Sindh - despite its avowedly national and secular political stance - nor has it addressed rural areas at all. More to the point, the MQM has been able to take control of large parts of Karachi. The Movement dominates the official local state (headed by the KMC) and was able, in the late 1980s, to so reorient these local state agencies that the MQM was running a *de facto* "secondary state" in Karachi. State agencies that were meant to serve all community groups came increasingly to serve only *Mohajirs*, and a classically clientalist form of politics was thereby reinforced. *Mohajirs* were encouraged to vote for the MQM in the knowledge that the MQM would reward at least some of them with jobs and other forms of political patronage. The "secondary state" was also a bulwark for the *Mohajir* community against the dangers increasingly posed by various "mafia" groups working in (and controlling) Karachi's informal economy. The city of Karachi became, in effect, the arena of conflict between competing ethnic groups in the

1980s, with the MQM determined to show its mettle in defending the access of *Mohajirs* to the formal and public-sector economies of the metropolis. Whether or not the MQM had the blessing of Islamabad is a moot point; at times it probably did. What matters, in any case, is that Karachi is so central to the economy of Pakistan as a *whole* that MQM control over it conferred great power on what otherwise would have been little more than a local, urban-based, "ethnic" pressure group. Given the violent nature of the struggle for urban space, it is perhaps also understandable that the MQM indulged in political violence like most other political agencies. In Chapter 7 I showed how and when the MQM was able to organise "ethnic" violence in Karachi, (and to a lesser extent in Hyderabad and Sukkur).

For all its successes in Karachi, however, the MQM has remained a political prisoner of particular places. I have shown that it was in 1990, just when the MQM's control over much of urban Sindh was well established, that Altaf Hussain was encouraged to approach the national IJI coalition and subsequently to become a partner within the new federal government. It was at this stage that the MQM's politics appeared to descend into meaningless ractionalism and banal sloganeering. The Movement started to make grandiose claims about wanting to uplift the rural poor in Pakistan, and simultaneously joined an alliance encompassing largely unpopular Islamic groups, subnationalists, and some of the largest and most "feudal" landowning dynasties in southern Pakistan. The MQM's improbable somersaulting round fruition in the supposedly new ideology of "Practicalism and Realism"

that promised all things to all people, and that was quickly rejected by those who had supported the MQM as an ethnic political party delivering patronage to ethnically affiliated political supporters. The Movement has subsequently split into two factions, each of which is probably not aided by autocratic - it sometimes charismatic - political leaders (and a corresponding lack of accountability). The old MQM is now divided into a faction that supports class-based politics (or so it says), and another that proposes to mobilise afresh along ethnic lines. Moving outside Karachi and Sindh has not worked to the advantage of the Movement.

I have dealt, therefore, with the rise and fall of a political movement in the context of the postcolonial state, and subnationalism, in Pakistan. Perhaps more importantly, though, I have tried to demonstrate how a sometimes confusing, and latterly rather banal, political movement, fronted by the MQM, has been imbued with a meaningful - if often contradictory - political agenda, and how a study of such a political movement can have recourse to some quite traditional concepts and analytical procedures from within social science. In my judgement, even a banal politics demands to be explained - it should not be mirrored in thought by accounts of politics which deny meaning or coherence to the political arena in large parts of the Third World. I have also demonstrated how geography, or the struggle for political spaces and places, is central to an account of politics in a post-colonial country such as Pakistan. If the MQM holds a lesson for

outsiders it is in terms of questions of political meaning and
meaninglessness, and in regard to political geographies.

APPENDICES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX 1: BRITISH GOVERNMENT TRAVEL WARNINGS

- a. Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice for visitors to Pakistan and Sindh, 1990/91 (page 525)

- b. British Deputy High Commission (Karachi) advice for visitors to Pakistan at the time of the Gulf War, January 1991 (pages 526-7).

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
CONSULAR TRAVEL ADVICE

COUNTRY:-

PAKISTAN

ADVICE TO:

(a) Visitors - Travel to Pakistan has not been affected by the recent change of Government. Those intending to travel to Sindh Province should be aware that there has recently been inter-communal disturbances there. Visitors to Karachi in particular should be aware of the possibility of further clashes and should avoid crowds where possible. Those travelling to the interior of Sindh should contact the British Deputy High Commission, Karachi, tel: 532041-6. In Kashmir there is the possibility of incidents near the line of control and travellers are advised to avoid large crowds and demonstrations in the area.

(b) (i) Longer Term Stayers (Employment/Residents)
(ii) Aid/Charity Workers - As above

Issued on 31 August 1990
By Travel Advice Unit
Consular Department

NB: While every care has been taken in preparing these notes, neither Her Majesty's Government nor any member of the British Consular staff abroad can accept any liability for injury, loss or damage arising in respect of any statement contained therein.

RESCI



BRITISH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSION
KARACHI

IMMEDIATE ALL WARDENS

15 January 1991

I should be grateful if you could inform British Nationals in your area of the following advice:-

We are now entering a period of considerable international tension. We cannot rule out the possibility of serious civil disorder breaking out in Pakistan if hostilities in the Gulf begin. British Nationals should continue to follow our earlier advice of keeping a low profile, adopting commonsense security measures and stocking-up on essential food and other supplies - should shops close.

We also have reason to believe that the general threat to British Nationals in Pakistan has increased. While we are NOT, at this stage, formally advising British Nationals to leave the country, it would be sensible for them to consider if their dependents need to remain here at this time.

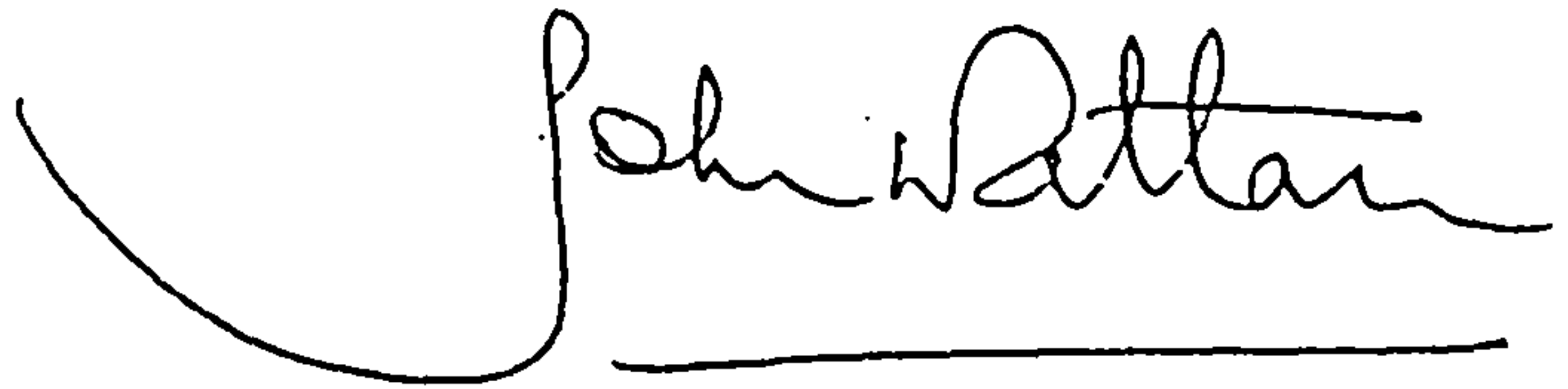
It is their responsibility whether they act on this advice but the longer they delay, the more difficult the subsequent departure of their dependents may become.

The nature of the current international crisis means that our advice could change at short notice. British Nationals should continue to keep in contact with their Consular Warden and the Consular Section of the Deputy High Commission, open to the public, 8am to 3pm, Sunday to Thursday. Out of hours, the duty officer can be contacted on an ansaphone service by telephoning 532041-6. They should also continue to listen to the news broadcasts on the BBC World Service.

If they are aware of any casual visitors intending to come to Pakistan, it would be sensible to ask them to consider

postponing their visit for the moment.

2 We are continuing to watch the situation very closely and will keep you informed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Wattam". The signature is written in black ink on a white background. The first letter "J" is large and loops around to the left. The rest of the name is written in a fluid, connected cursive style.

J Wattam
Attache (Consular)

APPENDIX 2: TEXT OF THE "AIDE MEMOIRE"

Nationalism and Subnationalism in Pakistan: The *Mohajir* Movement aims to examine the process of national development in Pakistan since Independence, by focussing on the community that played a pivotal role in founding the state during the last days of British rule in India. Emphasis is placed specifically on the *Mohajir Qaumi Movement* (MQM) in urban Sindh in the 1980s, which has marked a movement in the *Mohajir* community away from integrationist, progressive rhetoric and action, towards more subnationalist, ethnic expressions.

The aim is also to challenge traditional eurocentric theories and models of nationalism, modernity and development, and suggest a more paradoxical and complex experience in the process of "third world" national development.

The research begins with a historical analysis of the Muslim community in India, and assesses the controversies and debates surrounding the emergence of mutually exclusive and hostile nationalist movements under the British, between the Hindu and Muslim communities. The theme of paradoxical development in the State of Pakistan is initiated with the electoral vagaries of the Pakistan Movement in the 1940s, leading to the troubled period of Partition, and to the migrations and communal violence symbolised by this chapter of history.

The political achievement of Pakistan is placed very much in the context of a specifically limited political intelligentsia leading the

national development of far wider communities of people. The research approaches this process by focussing specifically on the *symbolism* over time of the various communities that make up Pakistan, and specifically the *Mohajirs*, who not only played a crucial role in the creation of the State, but who have also been fundamental elements of the economic, and initially the political development of Pakistan up to the present day.

The political sphere of society is the area in which the *Mohajirs* have been increasingly at odds with the dominant central power-brokers of Pakistan since Independence, socially, economically and culturally. This has marked a change over time in the political allegiance of the community. This research aims to analyse this political process, examining the motives for and the pressures on the *Mohajirs*, that have led them to form the MQM. Research in Karachi will involve interviews with members of the party, against general political commentators, as well as the collection of archival and historical material that provides an appreciation of political symbolism, such as party manifestos and declarations. I would be most grateful for your assistance in this research project.

Cambridge scholar calls on Benazir

By our correspondent

KARACHI: Julian Richard of Cambridge University called on the leader of the opposition in the National Assembly, Benazir Bhutto, on Wednesday. Julian Richard, who is working on a paper about nationalities of Pakistan, is in the country these on his study tour.

According to a statement, Benazir Bhutto informed Richard that Sindh has been the victim of ethnic division since 1983 and the ethnic politics has destroyed the economical, social and political life of the province.

Benazir Bhutto told the Cambridge scholar that ethnic organisations have committed serious crimes against their political opponents and the provincial administration was also violating the human rights on mass scales. The present government, she informed him, has a complete support of these ethnic organisations and in return these organisations were being strengthened by the government.

Benazir Bhutto said that with a planned programme the conspiracies of Sindhudesh and (Jinnahpur) were being initiated. She said Sindh was the heart of Pakistan and Karachi was the mirror of Sindh.

Deputy Secretary General of PPP, N. D. Khan, Nawab Yusuf Talpur and Begum Ashraf Abbasi were also present during the meeting.

PPP symbol of federation, says Benazir

KARACHI, Jan 22: PPP Co-Chairman Benazir Bhutto has said her party guarantees the rights of all nationalities and is the symbol of Federation.

She was talking to Mr Julian Richard, a research scholar from Cambridge University, who met her on Wednesday to discuss the nationality issue in Pakistan.

She said PPP had been functioning in all the four provinces without any consideration of nationality or ethnicity.

She pointed out that ethnic and group politics started in Sindh in 1983 and since then this province had been in trouble.

Ethnic politics had destroyed the social and political fabric of society, and political opponents were the targets of this politics, she added.

She claimed that Sindh government was violating human rights, and its opponents were being made targets of torture while ethnic organisations were being given a free hand.

She said the elements opposed to Pakistan were being patronised and sustained efforts were being made to set up "Sindhudesh and Jinnahpur."

She said, Sindh was heart of Pakistan, and Karachi was the focal point of attention.

APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DOMICILE CERTIFICATE, SINDH, 1991

(following page)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DOMICILE CERTIFICATE

1. Name
2. Fathers's name
3. Address.
4. Date of birth
5. Place of birth (a) District
 (b) Province
 (c) Country.
6. National Identity Card No. (Attach photo copy)
7. Are you a citizen of Pakistan by birth? if so, attach all or any of the following:-
 - (a) Birth Certificate from Hospital/Municipal Town Committee/Revenue official
 - (b) Residential Certificate from a grade-17 or above Govt: Officer/Senator/MNA/MPA/member of Municipal Committee or District Council of the District
8. If answer to question No. 7 is 'No', did you migrate to Pakistan from India before 14th April 1951? If the answer is 'YES' attach residential Certificate from a grade-17 or above Govt; Officer/Senator/MNA/MPA/Member of Municipal Committee or District Council or the District.

 If answer to question No. 8 is 'NO' state whether you have aquired Pakistan Citizenship Certificate or Naturalization Certificate? (Attach an attested copy).
9. Are you a migrant from former East Pakistan or any other District of Pakistan? If so, surrender you Certificate of Domicile (in original)
10. Period of continuous residence in the District (give date of arrival).
11. Details of immoveable property in the District, if any, with supporting documents, (for migrant from one District to an other).
12. Photo Copies of educational Certificate, if a student
13. Service Certificate from head of office, if in service (Private or Government).
14. Documentary proof of any other occupation
15. Are you a minor i.e. below 21 years of age, if so attach copy of Domicile Certificate of your father/guardian.
16. Are you a married woman? If so, attach a photo copy of Domicile Certificate of your husband or a Certificate from a grade-17 Officer or above that your husband is permanantly settled in the District.

SIGNATURE.

N.B: "Write 'Not applicable ' if a column is not applicable to you".

APPENDIX 5: KARACHI DECLARATION: 1 December 1988

1. Destiny of Pakistan rests on united and unstratified society and Pakistan Peoples Party and Mohajir Qaumi Movement will reunite the rural and urban population through a process of representative Government which makes provision for redressal of legitimate grievances and political adjustments in a sense of accommodation.
2. The total system of running government will be improved to serve the needs of the people efficiently, effectively and with speed. Maximum authority of government will be devolved to the smallest functional unit.
3. Democratic processes by a broad political process give lasting stability to civilized rule.
4. Only an effective and democratic government can mobilise the will of the people to correct the imbalances in our economic and political structure.
5. Pakistan Peoples Party and Mohajir Qaumi Movement stand for the rights of all oppressed people and different segments of society.
6. PPP and MQM will endeavour that all groups residing in Pakistan live together on the basis of common programme, common principles,

common goal, common ideals and common vision so that brother is not pitted against brother and province not pitted against another province.

7. Mohajir Qaumi Movement and Pakistan Peoples Party will singly and jointly protect and safeguard the interest of all persons residing in the province of Sindh irrespective of their language, creed, religion or origin of birth.

8. Pakistan Peoples Party and Mohajir Qaumi Movement will jointly stamp out lawlessness and will fight for the rule of law.

9. We will ensure that every citizen of Pakistan is provided dignified existence and equality before the law to build Pakistan into a modern nation state.

10. No one can claim to be outside the bounds or the rule of law.

11. Administration will be conducted on accepted norms of good government and ensuring high standard of service.

12. Culture is a central place in our daily life. It is a cumulative experience of the community. Any section of citizens having distinct culture, language have the right to preserve and promote the same.

13. Pakistan Peoples Party desires that it is determined to give back to the people their right to expression in prose, in verse and all other art and cultural forms.

14. The uneven development in different parts of the country and the large scale unemployment have resulted in the influx of people from other provinces into Sindh. No body wants to leave his home and hearth if he finds meaningful employment nearest to his place of residence. The influx specially that of unskilled labour can be arrested if the underdeveloped areas are properly developed.

15. Housing authorities in most of the cities have miserably failed to do any planning or maintain any kind of controls on illegal land grabbing. The provision of housing facilities has been much shorter than the requirements. This has given rise to Katchi Abadis and land grabbing by middlemen who are very often the agents of the officials of those very authorities who are responsible to provide housing. Under the law, land grabbing is already a crime. One only has to maintain controls in this regard. At the same time there exists 200 years old localities in Karachi, which have not been given lease etc.

We are committed to provide decent housing to people residing in Katchi Abadis, and have given a detailed plan for Housing and transformation of Katchi Abadis, and to provide all civilized facilities for the residents.

16. With regard to transport a modern fast moving mass transport will be introduced in all major cities. That fly overs will be constructed over main roads and crossings, modern methods of traffic control will be introduced and the problem of parking in the Central district will be solved.

Ring roads will be made in accordance with the Master Plan for Karachi.

17. Educational institutions are made to cater to the local needs and the principle is well accepted.

18. Student exchanges are necessary to strengthen national integration.

19. Students belonging to one region will go to other region and their numbers will be balanced to ensure that no body is deprived of their legitimate rights.

20. Karachi girls medical students will not be transferred to Nawabshah.

21. The University Grants Commission will evolve a uniform criteria for proper distribution of university grants taking into consideration all the internationally accepted criteria.

22. Admisson policy in universities will be on objectives basis and consideration will be given for its rationalisation like the example of Karachi University.
23. The number if educational institutions will be increased keeping in view the increase in the primary enrolments rate.
24. Universities and centres of higher learning will be established in all major cities of Sindh.
25. The allocation for the education sector shall be increased to 4.5% of the GNP as a non lapsable fund.
26. Degree colleges in the city of Hyderabad will be affiliated to the university with facilities of post-graduate education.
27. The budget allocation for health will be increased in Sindh.
28. The condition of the existing hospital will be improved.
29. Jinnah Post Graduate Medical Centre may be made autonomous to provide teaching facilities to Sindh Medical College.

30. The expansion of metropolitan Hyderabad makes it imperative to provide a 200 bed hospital encompassing with at least four 25 bed satellite child and maternity centres.

31. The shifting of Head Office of autonomous bodies may not be permitted unless compelled by objective considerations.

32. The Khokrapar route will not be opened until permitted by normalisation of the relations of India and Pakistan, the national security considerations and related questions.

33. The postal charges for India will be considered in the context of the SAARC and Indo-Pakistan Postal Agreements.

34. Those Pakistanis living abroad by choice or compulsion will have all priveleges accorded to citizens of Pakistan.

35. Afghan refugees will be repatriated according to bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the repatriation of Afghan refeugees. In order to facilitate speedy repatriation of the Afghan refugees, if permitted by financial resources they will be shifted to camps near the Afghan-Pak border. Only citizens of Pakistan can purchase property.

36. In order to prevent further spreadup of Arms the protection of people's security being the prime duty of the Government, the Arms Licences would not be issued without the reccommendation of MNAs, MPAs and Senators. Steps will be taken to confiscate illegal arms forthwith.

37. The committee comprising of elected representatives of Provincial Assembly of Sindh will examine the scope and the working of domicile certificates and National Identity Cards, including the proposals of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement so that the rights of the locals are fully protected.

38. Further this committee will also examine the recruitment of locals at all levels in the Police Department.

39. The rights of the locals covered by SRO issued by the Government in 1973 and 74. These will be fully enforced. There will be rapid industrialisation and the sanctioning power of the new industries in the province will be simplified and wherever possible there will be one window operation.

40. The census will be carried out in 1991 on the same criteria as that of 1961 including language and the birth place of their parents and thereafter the appropriate ratio can be established. National integration demands introduction of merit as a sole criteria for selection at the soonest possible time. It is also provided that no discrimination is

practiced against any citizen. The provincial quotas in federal services are on the basis of population of the respective provinces. There shall be no provincial selection board to make selection for all federal jobs. Within the province the quota system has been accepted up to 1993 because of unequal facilities available in the rural and urban areas.

41. Every effort has been done to maximise educational and health facilities in rural areas so that with the provision of equal opportunities merit becomes the sole criteria of selection. The idea of quota system was to benefit the poorer classes but the benefit has gone to people with false domicile certificates causing resentment. Therefore the entire matter should be considered by the committee of elected representatives so that a lasting and durable formula is evolved in the transitional period up to 1993.

42. For the purpose of getting the strict adherence to urban and rural quota in federal and provincial jobs for the province of Sindh, two committees shall be constituted at federal and provincial level comprised of elected MNAs and MPAs respectively to keep vigilance over the recruitment in federal and provincial jobs.

43. Even within Sindh people living in cities have sometimes their votes registered in their home villages. It is our considered opinion that fresh lists have to be prepared, which should also include voter's identity card No. Possession of double identity card is a crime, and

this provision has to be invoked to ensure that every voter is registered at only one place. In these days of computer programming it should not be difficult to ensure correct lists. Also if we allow sufficient time to election campaign these irregularities will come to surface.

44. If an 18 years old is good enough for military service and to die for the country he is old enough to cast his vote as well.

45. No discrimination in employment will be allowed on any grounds. We are not only stopping the lay offs but have promised that all persons laid off under MLR 52 shall be reinstated.

46. That the system of contract labour in industrial and other business organisations shall be abolished. That the preference will be given to the locals in the employment of Government and private industrial concerns established in Sindh.

47. All local residents of Sindh who do not own a house should be provided plots at concessional rates and loan will be give to help them build their houses according to the agreed housing policy.

48. Karachi Electric Supply Corporation will be deregularised from WAPDA and its control will be given to the Government of Sindh.

49. The rate of fuel adjustment charges will be fixed uniformly throughout the country.

50. Sales Tax will become the part of the divisible pool and distributed on the criteria of population, collection, urban-rural ratio and the principle of norms and needs.

51. A committee of experts will be set up immediately to consider all aspects of local Government finance including Motor Vehicle Tax and it will submit its report in 4 months.

52. That a committee of the provincial assembly will be set up to look into the structure of local bodies and municipal corporations so that there is a proper administration having regard to the functions assigned to them and the size of the local bodies reflecting the cost of providing services to its citizens. The committee will report within 3 months so that the necessary amendments are made in the legal framework of the local government including payment of stipends to the councillors.

53. Hyderabad should be connected with other cities of Pakistan with air routes of PIA if it is economically feasible and subject to the availability of aircrafts.

54. Article 172 (2) states that "All land minerals and other things of value within the continental shelf or underlying the oceans within the territorial waters of Pakistan shall vest in the Federal Government". This will be rigidly followed.

55. Befitting recognition with solemnity and dignity will be given to all poets and those who struggled for Pakistan and democracy.

56. All persons subject to political victimisation since July 5, 1977 by being placed as under trial and confined to prison or are in custody of various agencies or awaiting trial will have their cases reviewed as to the falseness of the charges framed against them and after examination of their cases as per accepted norms, rules of business and the prevailing law honourably disposed of.

57. All persons who have suffered in different unwarranted attacks at various localities will be adequately compensated monetarily and otherwise. For this purpose mohallah committees including elected representatives and leaders of various communities will be set up in Sohrab Goth, Hyderabad Market Chowk, Green Town, Shah Faisal Colony, Golden Town, Azeem Pura, Khawaja Ajmer Nagri, Jalalabad, Qasba Colony, Orangi Town, Bewa Colony, Alfalah Society, Aligarh Colony, 5A-1, 5A-2, 5A-3 and 5A-D of New Karachi, Surjani Town, North Karachi, Goth Brahami, Goth Thahim and other much affected areas of Sindh.

58. The compensation will be reconsidered to the next of kin of the persons who were brutally massacred on 30th September 1988, and 1st October 1988 in Hyderabad and Karachi. The responsibility of the persons for this act will be fixed and appropriate action taken.

59. In order to monitor the implementation, the time dimension and the resource availability there will be quarterly reviews between the Chairman of Mohajir Qaumi Movement and the President of Sindh Pakistan Peoples Party.

Signed:

Syed Qaim Ali Shah; President, Pakistan Peoples Party, Sindh.

Azeem Ahmed Tariq; Chairman, Mohajir Qaumi Movement.

Source: Information Department, Government of Sindh, 1989, Karachi, pp.1-6.

APPENDIX 6: MQM NEGOTIATING POINTS; 27 November 1988

IMMEDIATE DEMANDS:

1. With drawal of cases against all MQM workers including Haq Parast Councillors, office bearers and sympathisers who are -

(a) Under trial and confined in prisons.

(b) Who are wanted by different agencies but have not been arrested as yet.

(c) Who are under trial but have been enlarged on bail.

All the above persons should be released unconditionally and all cases against each of them should be withdrawn and closed for good. The charges against them being false and only for purpose of political victimisation.

2. The Mohajir families who have suffered in different attacks since 31-10-1986 on their mohallahs such as Sohrab Goth, Hyderabad Market Chowk, Green Town, Shah Faisal Colony, Golden Town, Azeem Pura, Khawaja Ajmer Nagri, Jalalabad, Qasba Colony, Orango Town, Bewa Colony, Alfalah Society, Aligarh Colony, 5A-1, 5A-2, 5A-3 and 5A-D of New Karachi in planned and deliberate attacks of organised gangs of

miscreants with vested interest under complete support and protection of the Police and local administration, should be compensated in terms of -

(i) The families rendered homeless should be given alternate accommodation in safe localities.

(ii) The families of persons who have been killed and/or maimed should be given adequate monetary compensation.

(iii) The above deliberate and organised attacks should be investigated, the arms used by them be uncovered and culprits should be tried and brought to book.

(iv) The Mohajir families still living in the above extremely sensitive localities are exposed to the imminent danger of such renewed attacks. As such they should be provided actual protection and their safety should be ensured. Besides they should be given arms licences for their safety as a special case.

3. The compensations allegedly given to the next of kins of the persons who were brutally massacred in Hyderabad on 30.9.1988 be totally inadequate they should be compensated adequately, which should not be less than 50,000/- more to each and their expenses for the education of their children should be borne by the Government. Similarly the marriage and other necessary expenses of the daughters of deceased should also be paid by the state.

4. The Officers and Officials of the Police and Local Administration of Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana and Sukkur, who have acted negligently or deliberately connived with the miscreants, have shown bias for reasons of ethnicity or creed and/or who are guilty of dereliction of duty in connection with the various incidents of organised attacks mentioned above, should be apprehended, tried and punished.

5. The Police and Administration officers/officials who are guilty of committing atrocities particularly on MQM workers and Mohajir people in general in Police Stations, in the streets and localities who have committed other acts of torture and unlawful house-break, who violated the sanctity of Mohajirs Homes, who detained innocent family members of innocent MQM workers should be tried and give exemplary punishment.

6. The Mohajir families who were routed from interior Sindh especially districts Larkana and Dadu since June 1988 as a result of attacks on their homes and hearths and who were forced to leave their homes should be rehabilitated, compensated adequately.

7. The Mohajirs, who are living in interior Sindh should be given security of their lives and properties. Their children should be given protection of their lives in educational institutions in interior Sindh.

8. In order to promote harmony in relations between Mohajirs and Sindhis it should be ensured that throughout Sindh the local administration and Police Officers should be posted in a manner which ensures equitable representation of Mohajir and Sindhi officers, as this will go a long way promoting sense of security, justice and fair play in both the inhabitants of Sindh, e.g if the Commissioner is Mohajir the Deputy Commissioner should be Sindhi. If the DIG is Sindhi the SSG should be Mohajir, this system should be adopted at all levels.

9. The most immediate and pressing need of the time is that the Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh since the 1971 debacle should be repatriated to Pakistan. This issue is of Charter of Resolution of MQM.

10. Another issue requiring immediate action is the opening of Khokrapar Route for the visitors to and from India as it has been causing great difficulties to the Mohajirs and Sindhis. The point is also of the MQM Charter.

11. The active connivance of Hyderabad Police Officials and Local Administration Officials with the persons responsible for the Hyderabad massacre 30-9-1988 should be investigated, unearthed and such persons should be punished on top priority basis.

12. In order to make up for almost total absence of representation of Mohajirs in Police Department a crash programme of recruitment in

Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur and other cities of Sindh's Police Department be commenced whereby, the Constables, Head Constables, ASI, SI, Inspectors and Deputy Superintendent of Police and Senior Superintendent of Police levels should be recruited locally from Mohajirs on top priority basis.

13. There should be a similar programme of recruitment for local administration to the posts of Assistant Commissioners, SDMs, Deputy Commissioners etc, through public service commission on urgent basis.

14. Since there is inadequate facilities for University Education in Hyderabad and Karachi, immediate provision should be made for creation of one University in Hyderabad and one for Karachi.

Source: Information Department, Government of Sindh, 1989, Karachi, pp.17-18.

APPENDIX 7: THE MQM CHARTER OF RESOLUTION; 20 November 1988

1. Sindh domicile should be given to only those people who are residents of Sindh at least for 20 years, except those who were settled in Sindh after the fall of Dhaka. Domicile certificates of all non-locals should be cancelled and the certificate should be made compulsory for issuance of ID cards.
2. Only locals should be recruited to all police and intelligence departments and locals should be appointed in the province.
3. Arms licences should be issued to Mohajirs and Sindhis and the procedure should be simplified as in the case of radio and TV licenses.
4. Afghan refugees should be shifted to camps near the Afghan-Pak border and they should not be allowed to buy property or carry out business or interfere in the cities.
5. All immigrants into Sindh from other provinces should be provided jobs in their areas so that the illegal increase in Sindh's population is arrested.
6. Katchi Abadis set up by 1973 only should be regularised and landgrabbing should be declared a crime. The police station concerned

should be held responsible for any landgrabbing in its jurisdiction. All allotments to non-locals as rewards should be stopped.

7. A modern and fast transport system should be introduced in Karachi and Hyderabad and government transport should be given to municipalities. Driving licenses should not be issued to non-matriculantes and locals should be preferred in issuance of professional driving licenses.

8. Locals should be given first preference for all government and semi-government corporations and administration jobs, from the lower to the highest level. All non-locals already posted in these positions should be sent to their respective provinces. Locals should be preferred for all trade and industrial facilities like issuance of licenses, quotas, NOCs for industries and tenders.

9. Only locals of Sindh should be given the right to vote as hundreds of thousands of non-locals have voting-right in Sindh as well as their home provinces.

10. Minimum voting age should be reduced to 18 years.

11. An honest census should be held to determine the population of Sindhis and Mohajirs and they should be given their proportionate share in power, jobs and educational institutions both in the Centre and in

the province. A joint committee comprising elected representatives of Sindhis and Mohajirs should be set up to implement the quota system in a fair and just way. Ten per cent quota of merit in federal jobs should be abolished and these jobs should be distributed among all the provinces according to their population. All federal jobs, including those in administration or defence, should be allocated according to the population ratio.

12. Mohajirs should be constitutionally declared a separate nationality in Pakistan.

13. Locals should be preferred in all public and private sector, industrial units in Sindh and contract system should be abolished.

14. Uniform service and retirement rules should be made for all federal, provincial, government and semi-government departments and corporations. All anti-Mohajir policies in these organisations should be changed and lay off of Mohajirs should be stopped.

15. Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh should be accepted and repatriated as Pakistanis.

16. The Khokrapar rail route with India should be immediately reopened.

17. The same postal tariff should be fixed for India as is being applied to other neighbouring countries of Pakistan.
18. All locals should be given first preference in admissions to educational institutions in Sindh.
19. A new hospital should be set up attached to the Sindh Medical College.
20. All local residents of Sindh who do not own a house should be provided plots at concessional rates and loans should be given to help them build their houses.
21. KESC should be separated from WAPDA and services of all non-locals in KESC should be deputed to WAPDA.
22. Municipal Committees should be given the right to collect the Motor Vehicle Tax.
23. Fuel adjustment charges should be made uniform throughout the country.
24. Sindh government should be authorised to collect sales tax.

25. Annual "Urs" of Shah Latif Bhitai and death anniversary of Liaquat Ali Khan should be declared national public holidays and observed as national days.

Source: Information Department, Government of Sindh, 1989, Karachi, pp.10-11.

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