This material has been provided by Asbury Theological Seminary in good faith of following ethical procedures in its production and end use.

The Copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyright material. Under certain condition specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to finish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

By using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.

Contact
B.L. Fisher Library
Asbury Theological Seminary
204 N. Lexington Ave.
Wilmore, KY 40390

B.L. Fisher Library’s Digital Content
place.asburyseminary.edu
ABSTRACT
Revisioning Outreach To Sindhi Muslims:
Proposals For Christians In Pakistan
Samuel E. Naaman

Muslims in Sindh remain largely unaffected by the Church of Pakistan, the largest Protestant denomination in the country. This study asks, (1) “What are the obstacles that prevent the Church of Pakistan from evangelizing Muslims in Sindh?” and (2) “How can the Church of Pakistan in Sindh develop an effective strategy to evangelize Muslims?”

The author, a Punjabi Christian from Sindh, develops answers from historical research and from field interviews conducted in 1996 and 1998 with former missionaries, Sindhi Christian converts, Sindhi Muslims, and Christian workers.

Chapter 1 discusses the socio-political background of Sindh, including the Muslim conquest, British colonization, and subsequent Islamization, revealing a number of obstacles to the effective presentation of the Gospel to Sindhi Muslims: hostility to the British who brought Christianity as colonists, hostility to the Punjabis who had accepted Christianity and hostility to the West in general as it is considered Christian. Chapter 2 shows that conflict between Punjabi communal solidarity and Sindhi hospitality; the relationship of Sindhi Muslims to their spiritual guides; and other features of the cultural and religious context make the acceptance of the Gospel by Sindhi Muslims problematic.

Chapter 3, recounting the story of the Christian mission in Sindh finds that, although former missionaries were sensitive to the unique features of Sindhi Muslims, the current church focuses almost exclusively on outreach to Hindus.
Chapter 4 lays out the responses of five former missionaries to Sindh, five Sindhi Christian converts from Islam, ten Sindhi Muslims, and seven Christian workers in Sindh to interviews conducted in 1996 and 1998. Chapter 5 highlights seven themes emerging from an analysis of these interviews: (1) Christian hospitality has played a major role in Sindhi Muslims' coming to Christ and remains a significant requirement of successful Christian outreach; (2) Sindhi Islam's intense spirituality requires that spirituality play an important role in outreach to Sindhi Muslims and in the nurturing of Sindhi Christians; (3) if the church is to be successful in reaching out to Sindhi Muslims, it must disassociate itself from symbols of English colonialism and from close association with Punjabi dominance in Pakistan; (4) outreach to Sindhi Muslims must take seriously the persecution of Christian believers in Pakistan; (5) women workers must be trained to focus intentionally on meeting women's needs; (6) for the success of Christian outreach among Sindhi Muslims, Gospel meaning will have to be expressed in forms compatible with the culture of Sindh; and (7) some actual and ideal strategies for outreach to Sindhi Muslims emerged. They form the basis for Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 focuses the results of the study on a set of proposals for Christian outreach in Sindh: (1) Sindhi convert fellowships should be formed; (2) Christian spiritual guides should be raised up as functional equivalents to the spiritual guides (pirs) prevalent in Sindhi Islam; (3) in reaching out to Sindhi Muslims, hospitality means sharing time, space and food; (4) more women workers need to be devoted to meeting the needs of women; (5) working with "Tentative Believers" involves recognizing that conversion is a process, using culturally appropriate means, and protecting Christian workers and Sindhi Muslims in a volatile situation; (6) safe homes for converts and inquirers need to be
established; and (7) the hope is expressed that the Church of Pakistan will give its blessing to Sindhi Muslims.
This dissertation, entitled

REVISIONING OUTREACH TO SINDHI MUSLIMS:
PROPOSALS FOR CHRISTIANS IN PAKISTAN

written by
Samuel Ezra Naaman

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Missiology

has been read and approved by the undersigned members of

the Faculty of the E. Stanley Jones School
of World Mission and Evangelism
Asbury Theological Seminary

A. H. Mathias Zahniser, Mentor
Eunice L. Irwin
George G. Hunter III

Date: May 1999
REVISIONING OUTREACH TO SINDHI MUSLIMS:
PROPOSALS FOR CHRISTIANS IN PAKISTAN

by
Samuel E. Naaman

A dissertation
presented to the faculty of
E.S.J School of World Mission and Evangelism
in partial fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Doctor of Missiology Degree

Asbury Theological Seminary
Wilmore, Kentucky
May, 1999
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am indebted to many who contributed towards this project. I am grateful to the late Dr. Everett Hunt, Jr., who met and interviewed me in Korea for Asbury seminary. Upon his recommendation the E. S. J. School very graciously gave me a full tuition scholarship. Without this help, I would not have been able to come to Asbury. I also thank Mr. John Pickering who was my sponsor to come to Asbury. I am grateful to my mentor and academic advisor Dr. A. H. Mathias Zahniser who encouraged me to write about this topic. My gratitude also goes to my readers Dr. Eunice Irwin and Dr. George Hunter, III for their valuable advise and suggestions.

My special thanks goes to Dr. Robert C. Douglas and Dr. Janet Metzger of Chicago Center for Urban Mission, who read my work and encouraged me while I was struggling to finish. Without their help and constant encouragement, this project would have been difficult to finish. I extend my thanks to the library staff of Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore Kentucky, Billy Graham Center in Wheaton Illinois and Day Missions Library of the Yale University’s Divinity School in New Haven Connecticut, without their help in research this project would not have been possible.

I am also grateful to Dr. Desmond & Rita Francis and their family, for taking me into their home in Wilmore, while I was still struggling with the pain of my younger brother Obed Naaman’s martyrdom by the Muslims in Sindh, Pakistan. I cannot forget their constant help and Christian love. I thank Dr. Phyllis Corbitt who provided free medical care both to me and many international students at Asbury. My thanks also goes to Ms. Pat Richmond our E. S. J. School’s office manager who helped a lot in the final
stages of my dissertation as I was living off campus in Chicago. My thanks to my friends, Roy Oksnevad and Doug Corbitt, who spent hours using computer skills to help finish many drafts including the final one.

I am deeply indebted to my late father, Dr. G. M. Naaman and brother, Obed, whose love and burden for Sindhi Muslims encouraged me to work on this project. I also thank my mother Daisy and younger sister, Dr. Khulda, who have supported and encouraged me to write on this topic from Pakistan.

Last but certainly not the least, I thank my dear wife, Dr. Deborah Naaman, who always encouraged and reminded me that I could finish this project with God’s help. All the Honor and Glory goes to the Lord who called me and enabled me to finish this work. I humbly dedicate this writing to my brother who gave his life in Sindh and many others who may follow to be martyrs for the sake of the Gospel in Sindh.
Map of Pakistan

(Larson 1996:Figure one)
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Acknowledgment

Map of Pakistan

Introduction

1. Purpose Statement
2. Research Questions
3. Population and Sample
4. Scope of Study

### Chapter 1
The Socio-Political and Historical Background of Sindh
5. Indus Valley Civilization
   5. People and Culture
   6. History
9. Islam in Sindh
   9. Introduction of Islam
10. Reasons For Muslim Success
11. The Influence of Islam on Caste and Class
12. Mysticism and Fellowship
13. British Colonization
   14. Initial Contacts
14. Consequences for Hindus and Muslims
17. Nationalization
   17. The Role of Sindh in Making Pakistan
   19. Socio-Political Consequences for Sindhi Muslims
20. Islamization
21. Summary and Implications

### Chapter 2
The Cultural and Religious Context of Sindh
24. The Cultural Context of Sindh
   24. People Groups
   24. Cultural Conflict
   27. Importance of Biraderi
   29. The Importance of Language
31. The Religious Context of Sindh
31. The Role of Islam
   31. Sunni Islam
   32. Shi’a Islam
   33. Sufism
Religious Traditions ................................................. 40
The Importance of Poetry, Song, and Dance ..................... 40
The Relationships of Pir and Murids .............................. 42
Summary ..................................................................... 43

CHAPTER 3
The Christian Witness in Sindh ....................................... 45
The History of Christian Mission ..................................... 45
Present Situation of Christianity in Sindh ......................... 50
Church Of Pakistan .................................................... 53
The Church Union ..................................................... 53
The Muslim Response ................................................ 60
New Possibilities ...................................................... 68
Summary ..................................................................... 69

Chapter 4
Results of the Interviews ............................................ 72
Category A- Former Missionaries ................................. 73
Category B- Muslim Converts ..................................... 87
Category C- Sindhi Muslims ....................................... 98
Category D- Christian Workers .................................. 107

Chapter 5
Analysis of the Interviews .......................................... 121
Hospitality ............................................................... 121
Narration ............................................................... 122
Discussion ............................................................ 125
Spirituality .............................................................. 128
Narration ............................................................... 128
Discussion ............................................................ 130
Colonial and Punjabi Power ......................................... 131
Narration ............................................................... 131
Discussion ............................................................ 133
Persecution ............................................................. 136
Narration ............................................................... 136
Discussion ............................................................ 137
Women’s Needs ......................................................... 138
Narration ............................................................... 139
Discussion ............................................................ 140
Contextualization ...................................................... 142
Narration ............................................................... 143
Discussion ............................................................ 145
Strategies for Reaching Muslims ................................. 148
Narration ............................................................... 148

viii
Introduction

Approximately one hundred and fifty churches belong to the Church of Pakistan in the province of Sindh. The Church of Pakistan, the largest Protestant denomination in the country, is the result of union between the Church of Scotland, the Lutheran Church, the Church of England and the Methodist Church in 1970. It is situated within a multi-ethnic, business-oriented, predominantly Sindhi Muslim community. For the past fifty years, church membership has remained stable. What growth has occurred has been either biological or transfer growth. The Muslim community has largely remained unaffected by the life and witness of a typical Church of Pakistan congregation.

This gives rise to a number of pertinent questions:

1. Why has the membership of the Church of Pakistan remained stagnant over the past fifty years?
2. Why is only biological or transfer growth characteristic of the local church?
3. Why has the Sindhi Muslim community remained unaffected by the Christian witness of the Church? What are the barriers existing between these two communities?
4. What will it take for the witness of the Church of Pakistan to evangelize Sindhi Muslims?

These questions lead to the purpose and methodology of this study. But before moving on to discuss the study itself, a word is in order about the author.

I am a Punjabi Christian from Sindh. My father was a Muslim convert to Christianity, a priest in the Church of Pakistan, and a Christian spiritual leader--what the
Sindhis call a pir. My intense involvement with the issues allows me to give color and voice to historical details and public attitudes and opinions not noticed by historians engaged in public discourse. This oral (private) history provides a structure for and elaboration of the work of historians and vice versa (Bailey 1982:247-258, Frisch 1990: xxi-xxxii, Rossman and Rallis 1998:197-199). I found the special collections of the Day Missions Library, Yale Divinity School of great value in confirming much of what I learned through my upbringing and the interview process.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study is to suggest ways for the Church of Pakistan in particular and the Christian movement in general to be more effective in reaching the Sindhi Muslims with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Research Questions**

This study includes the following concerns:

1. What are the obstacles that prevent the Church of Pakistan from evangelizing Muslims in Sindh?

2. How can the Church of Pakistan in Sindh develop an effective strategy to evangelize Muslims?

Factors contributing to the conversion of former Muslims in Sindh are explored to help us be more effective in evangelizing Sindhi Muslims.

**Population and Sample**

To help with answers to these questions, four groups of people were interviewed by my assistants and me during 1996 and 1998: Former Missionaries, Sindhi Christian
Converts, Sindhi Muslims and Christian workers. Questions were mailed and hand delivered to more than 15 Church of Pakistan workers. Only one responded. None was directly involved in reaching Sindhi Muslims. I then broadened my research to other Christian workers (See Appendix A, B, C and D for details). Some Sindhi Muslims responded only to parts of my interviews. All interviews were conducted in either Urdu or Sindhi. (The author and his assistants were fluent in both Urdu and Sindhi). The interviews were translated into English by the author.

Group 1

Five former missionaries to Sindh, four foreign and one national, were interviewed. No Church of Pakistan missionaries responded to my questionnaires; at the time of my interviews the Church had no one working directly with Sindhi Muslims. The five interviewed were working with para-church groups.

Group 2

In Group 2, I am presenting the responses of five Sindhi Muslim converts. These responses were gathered by my seven assistants and me during 1996 and 1998.

Group 3

This group includes ten Sindhi Muslims. I interviewed all of them in Sindh during my research visits in 1996 and 1998.

Group 4

Also I interviewed seven Christian workers who were currently working in Sindh. One person from the Church of Pakistan responded.
Scope of Study

The contents of this dissertation consist of an introduction and six chapters. Chapter 1 presents the socio-political and historical background of Sindh; Chapter 2 discusses the cultural and religious context of Sindh; Chapter 3 is devoted to the Christian witness in Sindh; Chapter 4 presents the results of the interviews; Chapter 5 analyses these results; and Chapter 6 offers a summary and proposals for the Church of Pakistan and beyond.

The conclusions of this study are presented in the hope that they will facilitate the Church of Pakistan in evangelizing Sindhi Muslims. A change of approach in evangelism may lead to greater openness in sharing the gospel with Muslims and greater acceptance of the gospel within the Muslim cultural milieu.
CHAPTER 1

The Socio-Political and Historical Background of Sindh

To be effective in reaching Sindhi Muslims with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we need to understand the history and background of Sindh. These first three chapters, therefore, discuss the background issues that shape the need to revision outreach to Sindhi Muslims and to develop new strategies for Christian witness. A range of issues involving the province's history, politics, culture, religion, and the history of Christian witness are critical in understanding the challenge of Sindh today. This chapter discusses the socio-political and historical background of Sindh, with special emphasis on the Indus Valley civilization, the introduction of Islam to Sindh, British colonization, nationalization, and, finally, Islamization. The chapter concludes with a focus upon the influence of political power and structure upon Sindhi Muslim attitudes toward Christian witness.

Indus Valley Civilization

The features of Indus Valley civilization, its people, its culture, and its history are relevant to this study. Understanding the people and the culture is crucial because Sindhis are extremely proud of their heritage, and because many of the old cultural patterns are still found in Sindhi culture. Understanding the history is important because Sindhis celebrate their heritage in one of the oldest civilizations in the world, a civilization dating back to the Abrahamic times. Even though they may be backward from a Western point of view, there was a time when their culture and technology dominated the area. Thus the Sindhis expect their history and culture--and themselves--to be treated with respect by outsiders.
The Indus Valley includes the area of present day Sindh and has spawned one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The excavations of Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh, for example, date back to 5000 B.C. (Quddus 1992:56), prior even to Abraham and the patriarchs of Israel.

Not only is the Indus valley civilization one of the oldest civilizations, it is also one of the richest. "This land is a veritable crucible of cultures. In the South, the Indus Valley Civilization was at its pinnacle some four thousand years ago" (Kureshy 1977:21). According to Quddus (1992:202-208 passim), Sindh was a major commercial center as early as the fifth millennium B.C. with its people enjoying a richer, more prosperous life than much of the rest of the world. This is evident from the layout of Mohenjo-Daro where one can see evidence of a sophisticated irrigation system, of flourishing commerce, and even of urban planning. Hints of effective, responsible government abound. The city was well fortified. There are municipal structures that suggest accessible, accountable leadership. Large common houses indicate close, vital links between nuclear families and larger clans (Lal 1997:104-110). There is also a great deal of evidence that the separation of the sexes existed even at this early date.¹

¹ This material about the family in Sindh comes from growing up in Sindh. The reader will notice in this section other material about attitudes that support the writings of historians. The knowledge of these attitudes also has come from growing up in Sindh and from my field research in Sindh 1996 and 1998. My own history and life in Sindh have helped me to see and understand aspects of the public history of Sindh that are not ordinarily reported. For further reference on shared histories and voice see Frisch 1990:xxi-xxii, Rossman and Rollis 1998:197-199.
For the most part desert (There is an Arab saying that the desert of Sindh can boil a raw egg in no time), Sindh’s major source of water is still the famous Indus river. Ancient Debul, now called Karachi is located on the Indus delta and remains the region’s only seaport. The local population, predominantly Aryan, relied chiefly upon farming and husbandry.

Life in ancient Sindh appears to have been simple, relaxed, and celebrative. Numerous instruments bear witness to a widespread love of music and poetry. Statues of dancing girls suggest a people who loved to celebrate life’s blessings. And public baths and public gathering places point to a civic-minded people who enjoyed their common life and honored the virtue of hospitality (Lal 1997:108, Quddus 1992:126-127).

The culture of the Indus Valley was, and still is, patriarchal (Quddus 1992:118-119). The head of the clan or village made major decisions, and the common people did not have a voice in those decisions. This pattern is still seen among the modern Sindhis. In the home the man was and still is, the head of the household; he makes all the major decisions, and the women and children have little or no say. Women typically remained at home and helped their husbands or fathers with the farming. Great importance was, and still is, placed on the stability of the family, both nuclear and extended family (Quddus 1992:118-119).

Many folk tales have been handed down orally from this era. Common themes involve romance, simplicity, hospitality, and trust. Ancient Sindh was largely Hindu but

---

2 These stories have been passed on to me by the common Sindhi villagers.
idol worship and animism were also common. Sacrifices to the gods of the earth were a welcome and festive part of the everyday life.

The common people were hard working and proud of their heritage. Land had a tremendous importance. Foreigners were accepted with warmth and hospitality. The Indus Valley civilization with its rich legacies of hospitality, poetry, dance, generosity, and festivity are still very much part of the modern Sindhi culture even with a deep Islamic overlay (Schimmel 1980 chapter 4, Quddus 1992:108-113).

History

Historically, the Indus Valley was the gateway to India; both invaders and traders came through the Indus Valley. It is important to note that the Sindhis hated the invaders but welcomed all that came in peace. As a result, the Sindhis played an important role in helping many civilizations become a part of India. Despite the influx of these civilizations, Sindhis managed to keep alive their traditions of hospitality and simplicity (Quddus 1992:52-53, 115-117).

Life, however, was not always happy for the common people. The oldest kingdoms of Sindh were Hindu, and their rulers were at times brutal and only marginally concerned with the plight of their subjects. The Hindu caste system was deeply ingrained, with the lower castes despised and rejected by the upper. This led to resentment of the Hindu rulers by the common people. Consequently, the lower castes were prepared to abandon the caste system, but the Hindu rulers regularly crushed the reform movements led by peasants and Buddhists. This situation did not change until Islam came to Sindh in the eighth century (Ikram 1993:5).
Islam in Sindh

The coming of Islam changed the lot of the common person. The introduction of Islam, the reasons for Muslim success, Islam's influence on caste and class, and its mysticism and fellowship represent the topics of this section.

Introduction of Islam

At the time of Islam's advent 712 A.D., Raja (King) Dahir ruled Sindh. A staunch Hindu and a ruthless ruler, he mistreated his people and forced them to work for him with very little reward. And his hatred of Buddhists did little to dispel the tension between the upper caste and lower caste Hindus. Ikram tells the story of how, during Dahir's reign, a ship loaded with merchandise on its way to Arabia from Lanka (present day Sri Lanka) was looted by sea pirates from Dahir's kingdom. The pirates took the goods and imprisoned the passengers. When the news of this tragedy reached Arabia, the Arabian governor, Hajjaj bin Yousaf sent a delegation to Raja Dahir demanding the unconditional release of his people. Dahir replied that he has no control over the sea pirates and refused to cooperate. Hajjaj sent a small army to fight Dahir but suffered a sound defeat (Ikram 1993:1-2). Then he appointed the young general Muhammad bin Qasim in 712 A.D. to lead the second expedition. Qasim, only 17, was already a tactical genius.

Landing at Debul, Qasim's army encountered stiff resistance from Dahir, but ultimately Dahir was unable to match the spirit and determination of the Arabs. One after another the small towns fell to the Arab army, and the young general eventually defeated Dahir (Quddus 1992:66-74; Ikram 1993:2-4). With the Arabian conquest of Sindh, Islam
came to Sindh. For this reason, Sindhi Muslims claim their province as **bab ul Islam** (Gateway of Islam) to India and even to the Far East.

**Reasons For Muslim Success**

It is interesting to note that Hindu and Muslim historians of the Indian subcontinent give somewhat different reasons for the success of Islam in Sindh. From the perspective of a Muslim historian such as Ikram, Qasim was well received by the local Hindus and Buddhists of Sindh. People were tired of Dahir and his rule of terror, so when Qasim came, they welcomed him and helped him to conquer Dahir (Ikram 1993:1-12).

From the Muslim point of view, Qasim also enjoyed another advantage: Sindhis, quite familiar with Arab traders, were attracted by their lack of a caste system. Consequently, the lower caste Hindus and the Buddhists were prepared to accept Qasim and his more egalitarian religion (Ikram 1993:4-6).

From the Hindu point of view Qasim used excessive force in conquering Sindh. Pannikar argues that Muslims converted many Hindus either by force or by the offer of equality (Pannikar 1964:131). Pannikar also writes that,

Islam, on the other hand, split Indian society into two sections from top to bottom and what has now come to be known in the phraseology of today as two separate nations came into being from the beginning. Two parallel societies were established on the same soil. At all stages they were different and hardly any social communication or intermingling of life existed between them. (Pannikar 1964:135, see also Majumdar 1960:101)

Schimmel, a Western historian presents a moderate perspective:

Muhammad ibn al-Qasim did not attempt mass conversions; he left the people to their ancient faith, except in the case of those who wanted to become Muslims . . . It would indeed have been difficult for the small minority, which was operating at such a distance from Damascus, the center of government, to impose new religio-social patterns upon a country of a very different culture. Therefore the
young commander did not to change the social structure of Sindh and acted very prudently when progressing farther north. (Schimmel 1980:4)

Titus posits several reasons for Muslim success (Titus 1959:15-16). Some strategies were peaceful, including the spread of Islam by traders and preachers and the patronage of scholars from Persia and Arabia who introduced Islamic arts and sciences. Other methods were forceful. Qasim forced circumcision on Brahmans and committed such other acts of war (Titus 1959:17-19) as the slaughter of people, the destruction of temples or their conversion to mosques, and the enslavement of the Indians (Titus 1959:21-27). The early centuries of Muslim rule in India seem to have emphasized Islamization. The later centuries of Muslim rule beginning with Baber 1526 A.D., and the founding of the Moghul empire at the beginning of the 16th century seem to promote tolerance and appreciation of the indomitable Hindus (Titus 1959:16).

The Influence of Islam on Caste and Class

The new Muslims who converted to Islam in Qasim’s time were pleased to be free from the Hindu caste and class system. Islam accepted them on equal grounds (for example see Qureshi 1970:9-13), and hence Islam grew rapidly in Sindh. The first Muslim mosque was built by Qasim in Aror on the banks of Indus.3 There is a Hindu temple on the next hill. During my conversation with the Hindu priest of this temple in 1985, I asked if he could tell me about the history of Aror. He mentioned that Hindus accepted Muslims from the very beginning (as indeed they do) since Islam did not bring radical changes to Sindh. He continued that the Muslims were kind and slowly acclimated to the local

3 This is part of oral tradition in Sindh.
culture, showing a great respect for the local Hindus and their religion and temples. (cf. Titus 1959:116. For a different perspective see Schimmel 1980 chapter 1, Titus 1959:15-21). By 1857 Elliot and Dawson could report that Islam and Hinduism, Muslims and Hindus coexisted peacefully. Again, according to them, Islam brought liberty for lower caste Hindus, yet respected the local Hindus who still embraced their ancient religion (Elliot and Dawson 1867:165, 185-186, 202-203).

The Hindus did not experience radical cultural upheaval. Like the Hindus, Muslims also placed strong emphasis on family and community, but even more significantly, Muslims quickly adopted Sindhi as their language, a remarkable show of respect for the indigenous Hindu culture. Thus the Sindhi language, with its associated traditions and culture, became a strong bond between the Hindus and Muslims. Religious differences were of secondary importance. Thus, while Islam abolished the caste system and brought freedom to low caste Hindus and to Buddhists, it in other ways caused very little change in the culture and traditions of Sindh (Elliot and Dawson 1867:176, 183, 184, 465, Ikram 1993:15-16, 21-22).

Mysticism and Fellowship

In addition, Islam also adopted a variety of Hindu worship practices, especially in the form of songs, dances and mystic teachings. The Muslims who came to Sindh did not represent orthodox Islam. They were heavily influenced by the mystical elements of Islam. These Mystic Muslims desired to be one with God. They emphasized the importance of unity in humanity and of the desire to seek God. They were not separatists. They accepted the local culture and traditions; they adopted local Sindhi folk tunes for their
songs. This acceptance of Hindu ways won the hearts of many Hindus. Several Muslim
mystics, e.g., Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, Sachal Sarmast have written
a great deal of Sindhi poetry set to Sindhi tunes. Interestingly enough, these Muslim
saints and religious leaders (pirs) are still worshiped by the local Hindus and Muslims.
The annual urs (meeting) at the shrines of Qalandar, Bhitai and Sarmast draw a lot of
Sindhi Muslims and Hindus alike (Ikram 1993:20, 21, 22, Nadvi 1950:240, Zaehner
1960:93-100).

Not only did Islam bring freedom from the oppressive caste system; it also gave to
the Hindus and Muslims in Sindh a sense of community. The Hindus shared with the
Arabs the values of strong kinship within the clan, strong allegiance to the spiritual leader,
common interest in such cultural aspects as dance and poetry, and strong emphasis on
community. These common values made it possible for the Hindus to accept the Muslims
and to live at peace with them.

Thus when we look at Islam in Sindh, its introduction, the reasons for Muslim
success, mysticism and fellowship, and caste and class, we find that the Muslims were
welcomed rulers who respected the local traditions, language, and culture of Sindhis.
Each of these traits contributed to the success of Islam in Sindh, and each was absent from
the British colonization and the introduction of Christianity in Sindh.

British Colonization

The effect of British colonization on Sindh was radically different from that of the
Islamic conquest. The radical difference is found both in the initial contacts the British
made with Sindh and in the consequences for Hindus and Muslims.
Initial Contacts

The British came to India initially as traders. The famous East India Company set up operations in Calcutta in the eighteenth century. The British Army, acting in the interests of the Company, moved slowly northward in India and started capturing small states. Sir Charles Napier eventually conquered Sindh in 1843 (Quddus 1992:81).

The British conquest was quite different from the coming of Islam in Sindh. Muslims came to punish Raja Dahir for his refusal to cooperate and to grant their petitions for redress of grievances. The British came as colonists seeking to expand their empire. The British, moreover, were aliens bringing an alien culture. Their language was strange. They were of a different color. Their customs and traditions were unfamiliar. And their religion was virtually incomprehensible. No one welcomed their coming as the lower castes had welcomed the coming of the Muslims.

In contrast with the Muslims, the British overturned the traditional infrastructure of Sindh, imposing their own ideas and customs (Qureshi 1962:215-223). They violated the trust of local Sindhis by dividing them and encouraging them to fight each other. They ignored the local Sindhi pirs. They used a Christian regiment called 72 Punjab to

---

4 In fact, they captured a very famous Sindhi pir Pagaro in 1920. On the way to England, they tied him with heavy stones and threw him in the sea. I have learned about this incident from Talpur and other recipients of the oral tradition. I have also seen the house which was bombarded by the British in the attempt to destroy the legacy and the family of pir Pagaro. They did not succeed. Pagaro’s son became the next pir (also called pir Pagaro), and his followers or murids, the Hurs, continued to support him. After these outrages, the Hurs rebelled against the British, and this rebellion lasted until the British left in 1947. The rebellion reveals how much political power the pir has and in what high esteem he is held, for the continuing rebellion of the Hurs left the colonial rulers exhausted and depleted. The present government still calls upon these Hurs to help defend Sindh (Musk 1989:50-51).
complete the conquest of Sindh. (The Muslim soldiers refused to fight against the local
pir.) The 72 Punjab was from the province of that name in western India; the regiment
was comprised primarily of lower caste Hindus who had converted to Christianity
(Naaman 1996). The consequences of this use of a Punjabi Christian regiment in Sindh
were disastrous: the Punjabi Christians were seen as approving the British aggression and
as taking part in the British conquest. The consequences were also disastrous for the
Christian mission in Sindh: Christianity was perceived as an instrument of colonial power
and policy and also as the religion of undesirables.

Moreover, Christianity was perceived as totally different from Hinduism and Islam.
The architecture of Christian churches was strange and unsettling. Communicants sat on
benches; they did not prostrate themselves. They sang unknown hymns to unfamiliar
tunes. Men and women worshiped together—without their shoes on! Christian women
traveled openly (without veils!) and danced in dance halls. It was hard for Muslims and
Hindus to avoid the conclusion that Christianity was profoundly secular and immodest.
Wasn’t it perfectly obvious that genuinely religious people prostrated themselves in prayer
and that genuinely religious women remained in seclusion (purdah)?

Consequences for Hindus and Muslims

British rule brought upheaval to Sindh in many ways. First, it brought a race that
was largely insensitive to the local language, culture and traditions. It created an
infrastructure that was foreign to the local Sindhi (Ahmad 1967:24). Once easy going and
relaxed, Sindhis now had to conform to a system which demanded precipitous change.
Before, the local Sindhi landlord settled family feuds and land disputes; now people had to
go to the British courts for the settlements. Furthermore, a people who had governed themselves for centuries now became the subject of foreign lords who did not understand their language or religion. The whole sense of losing the land and of losing control was further intensified by the killing of pir Pagaro. This killing left Sindh in disarray. The same people who were the source of the distress had eliminated the very person to whom a local Sindhi turned for spiritual guidance and help (especially in the time of distress).

British rule also destroyed the systems of family dependency and land ownership. This created a great rift between the traditional landlords and the British. The British wanted independence for the local people, but independence was at odds with the Sindhi way of life. A Sindhi wants to be dependent on the family, extended family, and community. Western individualism and independence were foreign concepts for Sindhi Hindus and Muslims alike.

In addition, the apparent immodesty of the British women gave the impression that Christianity was an immoral religion. The consequence was that Sindhi Muslims were nervous about investigating Christianity; it seemed to threaten the very foundation of the Sindhi family.

The British colonization of Sindh was much more disruptive than the Islamic conquest of Sindh. The new forms of government and religion, together with a basic lack of respect for the local Sindhi culture and traditions, created a tremendous gulf between the British, on the one hand, and the Hindu and Muslim Sindhis on the other. With nationalization, the British left, but the Punjabi Christians were a continuing reminder of
the British presence. The social and cultural disruptions of colonial rule have not disappeared.

**Nationalization**

The gulf created by the British between the Muslims and the Hindus of India was so deep that the Muslims not only wanted the British out but also wanted a homeland of their own. Sindh was instrumental in passing the resolution for Pakistan, and was thus instrumental in creating a Muslim homeland. The consequences for Sindhi Muslims were mixed.

**The Role of Sindh in Making Pakistan**

During the two hundred years of colonial rule in India and Pakistan, the British enjoyed neither peace nor stability in Sindh. With the killing of *pir* Pagaro, the local Sindhi and the Hurs sought to overthrow the British. These struggles initially were isolated and easily suppressed because of the British policy of "divide and conquer." Colonial governors bought allegiance with the promise of money and titles such as Khan Bhadur, Sir, etc.

In spite of the "divide and conquer" policy, many Sindhis supported the Hur rebellion. And after 1857, when the last Moghul emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was captured and jailed by the British (The Mutiny of 1857; or from an Indian perspective, The War of Independence), many more Sindhis spoke out in favor of the independence movement. At this time, the Muslims of India, including Sindh, were divided. Some totally rejected the English language and other British institutions, but others, especially the followers of Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan started to learn English and sought to be part of
the British government (Schimmel 1980:191-193; 197-199, Qureshi 1962:236-238). The Hindus, on the other hand, were not divided. They took an active part in the British government and thus received many high posts (Quddus 1992:90).

By the late nineteenth century, there was a clear difference between the Hindus and Muslims of India, each group struggling for preeminence. In Sindh, also, people like Obad Ullah Sindhi, Bhurgari and Shah Wali Ullah emphasized the importance of learning the English language and customs in order to achieve social and political stature. The Sindh Madresah (School) Board, for example, was established in 1885 (Quddus 1992:83, 84). (The British also established many Christian schools).

Sir Muhammad Iqbal conceived of the idea for Pakistan in the 1920s (Qureshi 1962:297). Along with other leaders of India, Sindhis, including piris actively pushed for this independence (Lewis 1985:44-55, Quddus 1992:85-86). They fully supported the Muslim League, which was becoming the sole voice of Muslims in India (Quddus 1992:87). In 1935 the Government of India Act created the autonomous province of Sindh. Although this province was still under British rule and although this province maintained ties with the rest of India, the establishment of this independent province provided the justification for the creation of Pakistan (Quddus 1992:85). In 1940 the Muslim League of India (including Sindh) passed the Pakistan Resolution of 1940 stating that all the provinces of India having a majority of Muslims might join Pakistan, “the Land of the Pure” (Qureshi 1962:297, Quddus 1992:87). “Following the Pakistan Resolution of 1940, in March 1943 the Sindh Legislative Assembly passed a Resolution moved by G. M.
Syed in favor of the creation of Pakistan and this was the first Sindh assembly to do so” (Quddus 1992:87).

Pakistan gained its independence from the British on 14th August 1947 (Qureshi 1962:304). Initially it had two parts, East Pakistan (which became Bangladesh in 1971) and West Pakistan. The current nation of Pakistan (formerly West Pakistan) has four provinces: Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan, and the North West Frontier Province. It also has some tribal areas where the Pakistani law is not enforced; the tribal chiefs govern these areas.

Socio-Political Consequences for Sindhi Muslims

Sindh and Sindhis were fully in favor of a Muslim state. They worked hard for independence, and when it came, Karachi became the first capital of Pakistan (Quddus 1992:87). Islamabad became the capital in 1958. Thus the nationalization of Pakistan was a dream fulfilled. One of the greatest benefits was that the Muslims got a separate homeland where they could freely practice Islam.

On the other hand, there were unintended negative consequences. The partition of India brought many Urdu speaking Muslim refugees also called (Mohajirs) from India. Sindh became the destination of the largest number of Mohajirs who fled India for the new Muslim Pakistan. These people brought their own language (Urdu), culture, customs and traditions, and they proved to be much better prepared than the Sindhis for success in business and commerce (cf. Wirsing 1988:72). In addition, the new immigrants benefited from the property and wealth left behind by Hindus who fled Sindh during Partition.
Many wealthy Hindus remained in Sindh but at the cost of grave threats to their treasured ethnic identity. Sindhi Hindus and Muslims had lived together for generations with few problems. The zealous new Muslim immigrants from India soon captured the lion’s share of industry and commerce in Sindh, and this left the native Sindhis--both Muslim and Hindu--economically disadvantaged and resentful of the new Urdu-speaking immigrants. The old courtesy and easy tolerance between Sindhi Hindus and Muslims disintegrated even further than during colonial rule (Wirsing 1988).

Islamization

The new state of Pakistan was founded on Islamic principles (Qureshi 1962:303) because Muslims in India wanted a separate homeland where they could practice their religion unhindered. It began as a democratic state where the rights of minorities were protected, but on July 5th 1977, under the Punjabi general Zia ul Haq, Pakistan entered a new phase. Haq initiated the Islamization of Pakistan. This meant that the Islamic law (Shari’ah) would become the law of the land. (As it turned out, this would not happen during Haq’s tenure) (Wink 1991:34-36).

Under Nawaz Sharif and the Muslim League, Shari’ah law was finally passed in the Assembly in 1993. As a result, judicial rulings are to be handed down by the Muslim judges trained in Islamic law, a legal code quite different from the civil law, which had previously governed the young state. Moreover in September 1998 the present Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif under the pressure of Islamic parties added another amendment Number 15 to the constitution. According to this document Pakistan will adhere to the true teaching of the Qur’an and the Sunnah. Pakistan is now under Shari’ah law. This
means that from now on the cases of blasphemy will be tried in Islamic courts and the sentences given cannot be challenged in the civil courts. According to this law if two Muslim men appear in an Islamic court and say that John has said something against the prophet Muhammad, John will be sentenced to death. Islamic law has contributed to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and has made life very difficult for non-Muslims, Muslim converts, and women. For example the fear of “Blasphemy Law” has hit the Christians, and they are very hesitant to share the Gospel with Sindhi Muslims openly. Also for example women’s rights were reduced (Wink 1991:38), and on February 15-16, 1999, ABC’s Nightline reported that there are “honor killings” in which “women are murdered, often by their own family members, for allegedly taking part in activities considered immoral.” (ABCNEWS. Com: Nightline, Feb.16, 1999 page 1, cf. Musk 1995:67-73).

Summary and Implications

In this chapter, I have discussed the socio-political and historical background of Sindh as it pertains to developing an effective Christian witness. I discussed the Indus Valley civilization, the introduction of Islam to Sindh, British colonization, nationalization, and Islamization. This history has created a hostility not just to the British, but to their institutions, to the Punjabis, and to the West in general, and, by extension, to the religion of the West: Christianity.

Hostility to British

Sindhis hate the British and their religion because it shook the foundations of their religious and cultural heritage. The British killed one of the most prominent pirs, Pagaro of Sindh, who had many followers (murids) in Sindh. They introduced an alien system of
government, quite different from the typical family-oriented system of government where the leader or landlord makes the final decision. Power shifted from the local 
pir, whose political influence was based upon spiritual authority, to a British judge whose power was secular and founded on colonial rule. Large Christian churches were constructed in the heart of the cities. The British enlisted the lower caste Punjabi Christians to conquer Sindh. The result was a deep hatred for the Christian religion and for the Punjabi Christians who made possible the British rule.

**Hostility to Punjabis**

Hostility to Punjabis originated with British enlistment of Punjabi soldiers and intensified after the partition of India when so many Punjabis migrated to Sindh. Punjab was more advanced industrially and agriculturally and had the largest population. Thus Punjabis soon dominated the politics and commerce of the new Muslim State, and this led to hostility toward the Punjabis. Punjabi-and Urdu-speaking immigrants gained control of the Army and other government agencies and institutions. Sindhis understandably resented the new state of affairs and felt betrayed by these two dominant groups. Urdu, the language of the immigrants, became the national language of Pakistan. The language of Sindh, which had been the language of government in Sindh, was now spoken only in the home. To the Sindhis, who were fiercely proud of their language, their culture, and their heritage as the bab ul Islam (Gateway to Islam), it seemed that they had lost all that was most dear.
Hostility to West

Sindhi hostility to the West first arose because of the deep differences between Christianity and Islam. More recently, the involvement of the West in the Arabian Gulf and the Middle East has been a constant reminder of new forms of colonialism, which the Sindhi Muslim finds intolerable. We have seen the resentment of Muslims in the retaliation against the West in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations. As long as the West is present in the Gulf this resentment will increase. As long as Christianity is viewed and presented as a Western religion in its form, language, and culture, the local Sindhi will have a difficult time accepting it.

Issues to be Considered in Mission

Historically, Christianity has been associated with three hostile aggressors: the British, the Punjabis, and the West. These people destroyed the original harmony between Muslims and Hindus, disturbed the family structure, violated the pir, devalued the language, overtook commerce and politics, and introduced an apparently immoral religion. This has created a deep gulf between the local Sindhi Muslims and the Punjabi Christians. All these points create a unique challenge for the presentation of the Gospel to the Sindhis. When we see how Islam became the prominent religious orientation of Sindh, how the British introduced Christianity, and how Pakistan became a nation, we see that there is no compelling reason for Sindhi Muslims to consider Christianity. The next chapter will discuss the cultural and religious context of Sindh, which will help us to further understand Sindhi Muslim reactions to the Christian faith and thus help us prepare our strategies for effectively proclaiming the Gospel to the Sindhis, the aim of this dissertation.
CHAPTER 2

The Cultural and Religious Context of Sindh

As seen in Chapter 1 there is no compelling reason for Sindhi Muslims to consider Christianity. In fact, because of Islamization and the blasphemy law there is very good reason for a Muslim not to consider Christianity. Furthermore, the cultural and religious context of Sindh complicates the situation for the Gospel presentation because of the historical relationships between the different ethnic groups and different languages. On the other hand identifying these ethnic identities, relationships and the Islamic influence prepares us for the better communication of the Gospel. Therefore in this chapter I will look at the cultural context of Sindh and the religious context of Sindh.

The Cultural Context of Sindh

In order to understand the cultural context of Sindh it is helpful to know about the major people groups and one definitive cultural conflict. These subjects will be discussed below.

People Groups

Pakistan has about 140 million people, of which 97% are Muslims and 3% are Hindus, Christians, including Roman Catholics and other denominations, and a few Buddhists. It is difficult to give an accurate number as the last census was done in 1981. There are seven main people groups, each of which has its own historical identity. The second generation, nevertheless, considers itself the “New Sindhis.” Quddus identifies the ethnic groups of Sindh as the following: Baluchis, Punjabis, and Sindhis (1992:92-93).
Other ethnic groups include the Brahvi, the Pathans, and the refugee groups Mohajirs from India and Afghans from Afghanistan.³

The Baluch are settled on the coastal areas of Sindh as well as in their native province of Baluchistan. They tend to live in rural areas.

The Punjabis initially came to Sindh from Punjab after World War I and World War II when the British made the land reforms and allocated the land to the Punjabis who fought in those wars. Punjabis dominate the commerce of Sindh and the politics of Pakistan; they are also in agriculture. Punjabis are resented by the Sindhis for their role in the British colonization of Sindh. They are also blamed for dominating Sindh and hanging the Sindhi Prime Minister, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who was the new voice and pride of Sindh identity. The actual order was given by Punjabi army general Zia ul Haq. The killing of Bhutto created hostility between the Punjabis and the Sindhis which resulted in ethnic violence and killing in the 1970s.

The Pathans originally are from the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. In the Frontier Province the Pathans live in the mountains and are warriors. In Sindh the Pathans mostly live in Karachi. They control the local transportation (buses, taxis, trucks, and mini-buses) in all Sindh.

---

³ Quddus (1992:117-118) and Wirsing (1988: 72-73) list some of the ethnic groups in Sindh; Weekes (1978:517) lists people groups in Pakistan. None of these give a complete list of people groups in Sindh. This information, “is available only from census” Gena K. Zelenka reference librarian North Park University Chicago April 8th 1999. This census information is found at www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/pk.htm page3. This census information lists only the five major ethnic groups of Pakistan and does not give all the information about the ethnic groups in Sindh. In Sindh people know this information.
In 1947 as part of partition of India, the Urdu speaking Mohajirs came from India and settled in the Sindhi cities. They control the business in all the major cities in Sindh. The Mohajirs feel discriminated against by the Sindhis. Since 1971 there has been much ethnic tension and violence between the Mohajirs and the Sindhis. Mohajirs have even started asking for a separate province, which would include Karachi, the heartbeat of business. This request has increased the bloodshed since 1986.

In 1971, when East Pakistan became Bangladesh, many Bihari refugees flooded into Sindh’s urban centers in search of jobs. The Russian invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s sent many Afghan refugees to Karachi. With these refugees came drug and arms trafficking. The once calm and peaceful Sindh has become a war zone.

The native Sindhis, trace their ancestry back to the old Indus Valley civilization, one of the greatest civilizations in the world. This group includes both Hindu and Muslim Sindhis, both claiming that they are direct ancestors of the great Aryans. Hence, they have a special bond because of their origin, language, culture, and ethnic background. Sindhi Muslims are very proud that Sindh became the gateway of Islam, also called bab ul Islam, to the whole Indian subcontinent and even beyond. Other distinct Sindhi people groups such as Talpurs, Mirs, Kalhoras, Mahars, Legharis, Jaskani, Gadhani etc., are very cautious of their Sindhi identity and are struggling to retain their separate identity amidst modernization and the influx of other ethnic groups in Sindh.

Family plays a very central role in a Sindhi’s life. Extended families live together, with father and grandfather making most of the important decisions for the family. Honor and shame are core values at the very heart of Sindhi culture (Musk 1995:67-88). If one
brings dishonor to a friend or to a family member, the friendship or the family relationships are broken often for life.

With the influx of many different ethnic groups in Sindh, the local Sindhis fear losing their identity. Initially, in 1947, the Sindhis were the only people who welcomed the Muslim refugees from India. They did not expect the Mohajirs or the Punjabis’ to take over every aspect of government and business in Sindh. The Sindhis definitely resent the Punjabis (Wink 1991:38). This resentment is intensified by the Punjabis role in killing Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the Sindhi prime minister, their own Sindhi son who brought a lot of pride and dignity to Sindh. The Pathans, Baluchis and Brahvis have not been a major threat to the Sindhis, though there have been some minor racial incidents. The Afghans are resented more for bringing drugs and arms into Sindh. At times these ethnic tensions bring one Muslim group to slaughter another. The government has been ineffective in controlling the ethnic problem in Sindh. Sindhis look at these new immigrants as non-Sindhis even though the majority of them are Muslims.

Cultural Conflict

The deep sense of Sindhi identity even crosses religious lines, meaning that Muslim Sindhis will accept Hindu Sindhis over non-Sindhi Muslims. Moreover Sindhi Muslims feel especially threatened by the Punjabis (Muslim or Christian) because the dominant Punjabis in many ways have bypassed them. The conflict between the Punjabis and the Sindhis is further exacerbated by cultural conflicts. The Punjabi identity is created in a strong sense of biraderi (see the following paragraph). The Sindhi identity is found in the Sindhi language. By definition the Punjabi biraderi excludes Sindhis. On the other hand
knowledge of the Sindhi language will help a non-Sindhi to be welcomed by the Sindhis.

Until Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto’s reforms in the 1970s non-Sindhis were not expected to learn Sindhi. In fact, the national language of Pakistan was and still is Urdu, so Punjabis would not have taken the first step to learn Sindhi.

**Importance of Biraderi**

In order to understand Punjabi and Sindhi interaction and relationship it is necessary to understand the Punjabi concept of *biraderi*. *Biraderi* is a structure of familial relationships that gives people their identity and their support system. “Allegiance to these kinship relationships is paramount . . . . Social identity is so enmeshed in this web of relationships that other duties and responsibilities—to friends, patrons, employers, religious sects, and the state—becomes subject to the interests of the *biraderi*” (McClintock 1992: 349). People without *biraderi* are lost: they don’t have money, references for jobs if they need it; they don’t have emotional or financial help. *Biraderi* provides for the people in their own circle, and *biraderi* excludes and repels anyone who does not belong to that particular *biraderi*. An example of *biraderi* is as follows. In my research trip to Pakistan in 1996, I met a pastor Jalal. In our discussion the question of the election for the bishop of Sindh came up. I mentioned a Muslim convert who served as a pastor and was educated and experienced for the post of bishop. To this Jalal (1996) responded that this pastor has no *biraderi*. He does not belong to the local Punjabi *biraderi* and thus cannot be considered to be one of the candidates for the election of bishop of Sindh.

*Biraderi* is a very strong sense of Punjabi identity and community, which does not accept people from other ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, by definition, Punjabi *biraderi*
excludes the Sindhis. This biraderi structure also is in contradistinction to the Sindhi Hindu or Muslim value of hospitality (For a specific discussion of Muslim hospitality see Crawford 1997:25, Mallouhi 1997:79-85, Musk 1995:89-105).

The Importance of Language

Sindh has many distinct language groups. Sindhi is the original language of Sindh; it is spoken by 52.4% of the people (Wirsing 1988:72) including Sindhi Muslims and Hindus. According to Sher, the development of Sindhi “has been influenced by Dravidian, Sanskrit, Greek, Turkish, and Persian. Sindhi literature and language are very rich in their vocabulary, and pure Sindhi is used in academic, literary and journalistic work” (Sher 1990:177). Sher notes the following:

With the advent of Arabs and Islam, Sindhi was the first local language of India which was used for translating the Holy Qur’an. Between the years 1050 and 1350 AD many religious works were translated into Sindhi. Ismaili preachers spread Islam in Sindh, through developing a 40-letter alphabet known as the Khojki script.

Sindhi poetry consists of different schools of Sufi thought, Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, and Sachal Sarmast enriched Sindhi literature by the 18th century, and emphasized the importance of the human being. (Sher 1990:177)

Sher also says, “The prose writings in Sindhi are as well known, amongst, religious scholars and preachers, as Sindhi poetry [sic]” (Sher 1990:177). Sindhi is now a required language in the schools of Sindh.

The following languages are also spoken in Sindh: Urdu, originally the language of the Mohajirs and now the national language of Pakistan; Pushto, of the Pathans who live in the urban areas such as Karachi and Hyderabad; Baluchi, of the Baluch who live in the coastal areas of Sindh; Marwari, and other tribal languages spoken by the low caste
Hindus living in rural areas of Sindh; Gujarati, spoken by Hindu Kohlis and the Muslim Memons, both ethnic groups from India. All these people use the Sindhi language as many of them have lived in Sindh for generations, but they still maintain their own ethnic identity. The percentages of people speaking each language is not clearly reported in either Wirsing (1988:73) or in (www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/pk.htm page 3).

It is important to know about the role of language because of complex socio-political and generational issues. Ethnic Sindhis were and still are very proud of the Sindhi language (and the concomitant culture and traditions); at the same time ethnic Sindhis have seen their language (and their culture) threatened by the Punjabis and other ethnic groups. Therefore in order to reach the Sindhis with the Gospel we need to use Sindhi as the main language of communication. On the other hand, people who originally spoke other languages such as Punjabi, Baluchi, Pushto and Brahvi now must study Sindhi, as it is a required language from the grade school to the professional degrees. Even though these people may struggle between their own ethnic identity and being Sindhi, by learning Sindhi these people are better equipped to present the Gospel to the ethnic Sindhi.

We have looked at the cultural context of Sindh, both the cultures that exist in Sindh and the cultural conflict between the Sindhis and the Punjabis. We see that both culture and also ethnic tension divides Sindhis from the non-Sindhi groups. This makes it difficult to present the Gospel. Furthermore when we look only at the Sindhis specifically we find that the religious context colors how the Christian message is perceived.
The Religious Context of Sindh

The original religion of Sindh was Hinduism. With Qasim's conquest of Sindh Islam came to Sindh and coexisted side by side with Hinduism and acculturated itself to Hinduism (Quddus 1992:115-123). This acculturation was facilitated by the mysticism of the Sufis. When we look at the role of religion in Sindh with a particular focus on Sindhi Muslims, it is most important to be aware of the influence of Islam (rather than Hinduism) and the continuing Sindhi customs.

The Role of Islam

Islam is the main religion of Pakistan and Sindh and is the one of the main factors uniting the ethnically diverse Muslims. However ethnic identity for Sindhis may at times supersede this aspect of Islamic unity. Islam is a monotheistic religion; it means “submission.” Muhammad founded Islam in seventh century Arabia after he received a direct revelation from God through the angel Gabriel. The Qur'an is the holy book of the Muslims which from their perspective is the direct dictation from God to Muhammad (Miller 1995:88-89, 129). The core of Islam is its five main beliefs and the five pillars. The five beliefs are as follows: God, Angels, Prophets, Sacred Books, and the Day of Judgment. The five pillars are Confession, Prayer, Almsgiving, Fasting, and Pilgrimage (Miller 1995:168). There are two main branches of Islam, Sunni and Shi’a. Sufi mysticism cuts across both these branches.

**Sunni Islam.** Sunni Muslims represent about 85% of the population in Sindh. They uphold the rule and tradition of the four immediate successors of Muhammad, or caliphs, and their authority. The Sunnis believe no one could succeed Muhammad in his
nature and quality as a prophet, because they hold that the Qur'an, finalized and perfected, was the revelation of divine guidance and declared Mohammed to be the "Seal of prophets" (Zaidi 1996). Muhammad's successor could therefore be no more than the guardian of the prophetic legacy. Such a guardian was called Khalifa or Caliph.

The Caliph was responsible for leading the people to the Qur'an and for administering matters of the community in obedience to the Qur'an and prophetic precedent. Caliphs were selected from the male membership of the Quraish tribe to which Muhammad belonged. After Muhammad's death, there were four "rightly guided" (rashidun) Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Uthman, Umar and Ali. These four lived so closely to Muhammad that their example, together with Muhammad's, is taken to comprise the authoritative sunna or custom for all later generations of Muslims to follow. The Sunnis gradually developed a comprehensive system of communal law, the Shari'ah. Most of the Islamic nations including Pakistan practice this law to one degree or another (Malik 1996). Sunnis follow the democratic aspect of Islam, which means that a consensus determines its leader. They strictly follow the Qur'an, the Hadith (sayings of the prophet Muhammad) and the Sunnah, the daily practice of Muhammad. Sunnis tend to be tenaciously orthodox in their faith, though some are nominal Sunnis too.

**Shi'a Islam.** Shi'ite Muslims make up about 10% of the population in Sindh. The Shi'a do not accept the authority of the four caliphs. Instead, they believe the leadership should come directly from Muhammad's descendants. They follow the teachings of Ali, the cousin of Muhammad and his son-in-law by marriage. They give more importance to Ali than to the caliphs. Spiritual leadership in Shi'a Islam comes from the imam (spiritual
leader) who acts as a mediator for the Shi’a Muslims (Schimmel 1992:91-92). Great importance is placed on the teachings of this leader (Saal 1993:38); in fact, “As God’s friend wali, the Imam possesses the power of initiating man into the Divine Mysteries and can safely direct the human spiritual journey” (Tabatabai 1975:175).

**Sufism.** Sufism is a movement, which started in the eighth century. This grew out of the dissatisfaction of Muslims who followed Orthodox teachings. Sufis wanted to go in depth in their quest to follow God. Sufis believed and today believe that in their devotion and worship they can become one with God. This for Orthodox Islam is blasphemy. Sufism has highly influenced the Sindhi Muslims. As we shall see, the pir (spiritual leader) plays a very important role for a Sindhi Muslim. People go to shrines of dead pirs to receive blessings and make vows on Thursday or Friday. Others visit living pirs, for the same purpose. These pirs have their own disciples called murids. Unlike in Egypt where there are women spiritual leaders (Hoffman 1995:291-299), there are no women pirs in Sindh. Furthermore there are no leadership roles for women in Sindhi Islam.

“Sindh, the first province of India to be invaded by Muslim armies, was also the first to be occupied by Muslim mystics, so that to-day it rightly claims the distinction of being the home of Indian Sufism” (Titus 1959:116). In fact, Butani calls Sindh “the land of Sufism” saying, “Sindh seems to have been chosen as the place for Sufism” (Chopra and Butani 1956:609). Every Sindhi Muslim, Sunni or Shi’a, is highly influenced by Sufism. This tendency is not limited to the illiterate; even educated people have great faith in pirs. Beside the pirs there are many dervishes (monks or wanderers) who are mystics and travel all over Sindh. Many of these Sufi saints sing special songs called kafis.
written by *pirs* and the poets. Their lifestyle is very simple. They have no earthly 
belongings, other than maybe a simple stringed instrument called Tamboora. This is made 
from a hollow shell of squash. These Sufi saints travel village to village and people feed 
and house them. Sindhis count it a blessing when a Sufi saint visits their homes. 

As one studies more about this movement, one realizes why most Muslims of 
Sindh are inclined to believe in Sufism. It is interesting to note that Muslims of both 
dominant sects still may have many mystic influences in their beliefs. 

Sufis attribute to Muhammad mystic experiences. After Muhammad's death, Sufis 
found it necessary to teach this mysticism only because Islam had become "shallow and 
impure" (Niles 1983:637). Sufism was the remedy: 

Mystics on the other hand--and Sufism is a kind of mysticism--are by definition 
concerned above all with 'the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven'; and it would 
therefore be true to say, in a pursuance of our image, that the mystic is one who is 
constantly more preoccupied by the ebbing wave than by the water which it has 
left behind. He has none the less need of this residue like the rest of his 
community--need, that is, of the outward forms of his religion, which concerns the 
human individual as such. (Lings 1977:12) 

According to Annemarie Schimmel who has written a lot about Sufism in Pakistan: 

Mysticism can be defined, as love of the Absolute--for the power 
that separates true mysticism from mere asceticism is love. Divine love 
makes the seeker capable of bearing, even of enjoying, all the pains and 
afflictions that God showers upon him in order to test him to purify his 
soul. This love can carry the mystic's heart to the Divine Presence like the 
falcon which carries away the prey, separating him, thus, from all that is 
created in time. (Schimmel 1975:4) 

Syed Hossein Nasr another renowned Muslim scholar mentions this about Sufism: 

Sufism speaks essentially of three elements: the nature of God, the nature of man 
and the spiritual virtues, which alone make possible the realization of God and 
which alone can prepare man to become worthy of the exalted station of becoming 
the total theophany of God's Names and Qualities. . . . The mystic path as it exists
which alone can prepare man to become worthy of the exalted station of becoming the total theophany of God's Names and Qualities. . . . The mystic path as it exists in Sufism is one in which man dies to his carnal nature in order to be reborn in divine and hence to become united with the Truth. (Nasr 1977:340)

It is difficult to define Sufism. It includes both ascetic and pantheistic elements; it can tend toward mysticism; it can also tend toward extreme discipline and frugality; for example, there are monks and dervishes who basically live on nothing (cf. Mujeeb 1967:113, Parshall 1983:26, Shahid n.d:127). A convert from Sufi Islam, John Subhan emphasizes that the activities of the inner self are more important than the performances of external ritual (Subhan 1938:6). The ecstatic outbursts of Sufism find their voice in poetry (Jones and Jones 1941:20). What John Subhan (1938:26), a convert from Sufism, and Violet and L. Bevan Jones (1941:20) wrote more than fifty years ago is still true today.

Nicholson has succinctly stated the Sufi view of law: “The ecstatic state knows no law, and therefore the people of God are beyond infidelity and religion. The true saints keep the law not because they are obliged to, but through being themselves one with God” (Nicholson 1949:233).

Sufism has greatly influenced the Sindhi Muslims. According to a former missionary who served in Sindh for over 20 years, “Many people have their own pirs also called sheikhs (holy men) to whom they go for their spiritual help whenever they have any problem” (Lawrence 1996). As stated several times above, one of the important aspects of Sufism is the activity of a select fraternity of spiritual guides known as pirs. These pirs in Sindh are only men and said to be endued with special powers that are transmitted to murids (followers or devotees). Pirs are basically mediators between God and human beings. Orthodox Islam forcefully rejects a system that elevates a person to a position
followers. Islamic fundamentalists decry what they perceive to be a personality cult. They see the pirs diverting attention from God and focusing it on themselves. They also suspect the financial dealings of the pirs.

Nevertheless the word *pir* is synonymous with the noun, saint; a friend of God, able to solve life’s mysteries, and worthy of imitation (Nicholson 1921:22, Parshall 1983:54). Karam further writes of the stages involved in becoming a saint:

The *pir*, having established his reputation as a man of special favor, begins to recruit disciples from among those who come to him. This relationship resembles that of Hindus and their *guru* (Hindu spiritual guide). It is to be understood that no one can become a Sufi without being initiated as a follower of a *pir*. This is the door to Sufism in Sindh. So it is right and proper to ask each person who claims to be a Sufi, who his or her *pir* is. The *pir* is expected to possess almost magical power. It is the saint who can avert calamity, cure disease, procure children for the childless, bless the efforts of the hunter and even improve the circumstances of the dead. (Karam 1980:57)

One of the most famous Muslim saints in Sindh, who has many devotees, is called Lal Shahbaz Qalandar (1177-1274 A.D.). Saints have not only influenced the illiterate, but many educated people also believe in them. Schimmel writes about an ascetic Qalandar Lal Shahbaz from Sistan who settled in Sehwan in the lower Indus Valley in the mid 13th century. The place where he settled was an old Shiva sanctuary (Schimmel 1980:34-35). Lewis reports, “Qalandar's influence becomes clear from the following testimony from no common individual. The witness is none other than the son of a Governor General of Pakistan and himself senior vice president of the National Bank of Pakistan:”

It was October 1952 that I first visited (the shrine of) Lal Shahbaz Qalandar and it was then that I experienced the initial awakenings of devotional love and inner attachment. A serene tranquillity and comfort of
qalb (heart) were the inaugural blessings which this new attachment based on inner feelings, coupled with a sense of inner discipline was bestowed into a blissful psychic relationship between the saint and myself which continues to this day. My attachment and reverence for the saint increased due to his blessings and guidance overlooking my shortcoming. (cited in Lewis 1985:88)

Mujeeb helps us grasp the significance of Sufism for Sindhi Islam by what he says about the conversion of Hindus to Islam. Sufism solidified, undergirded, and permeated the other attractions of Islam such as civil employment in the government resulting in many large-scale conversions of Hindus to Islam in the 15th and 16th centuries (Mujeeb 1967:21-22).

Mujeeb’s assessment was confirmed by a number of my informants. One stated that, understanding Sufism “is the key to Muslim evangelism in Sindh” (Asif 1996). According to another, “Mysticism is present in every breath of a Sindhi Muslim” (Naaman 1996). One informant stated, “The pir is very important in my life” (Shah 1996). “Whenever I have a problem,” said another, “I go to my pir and it is there that I get all the answers and remedies to the complexities of life.” (Soomro 1996)

A pir for a Sindhi is very important. He serves as a spiritual mentor to Sindhi Muslims. It has been tragic that Western Christianity in its apparently secular approach has not been able to present with any satisfaction a “functional substitute” for the pir to Sindhi Muslims who have accepted Christ. In my research and interviews of Muslim converts I have concluded that a pir plays a major role in the life of a Sindhi Muslim.

Sufi Islam has greatly influenced Sindhi Muslims. Even in this present age of technology and science, people have no doubt or question about their spiritual leaders.
For example four out of five of the Sindhi Muslims I interviewed were highly influenced by Sufi Islam (See Chapter 4, “Category C”).

Sufism plays an important role in the life of a Sindhi Muslim. Let me attempt to describe the life of a Sindhi Muslim. Most Sindhis live in rural areas. Though there are many famous Sindhi pirs like Pir Pagaro in northern Sindh and Pir Sirhandi in the south, most Sindhis do go to their local pirs who may not be so famous. These local pirs may not have a large following as the two mentioned above may have. Yet the local pirs are more accessible to their murids.

A Sindhi Muslim’s allegiance or contact comes even before he or she is born. The parents are usually disciples of a local pir. So when a woman is pregnant she with her husband visits her pir and ask for direction as to what name her child may have. If she was childless and the pir prayed for her and she had a child, then the relationship between this family and their pir may become stronger. After a child is about a week or so old, the child is taken to the pir to receive blessing. Normally the family may take some goats or other crops to this local pir as a thanksgiving offering. This is done out of love not as a duty or obligation, though at times other disciples may manipulate this system and ask for a special offering.

As the child grows, he or she is reminded of the parents allegiance to this local pir. Pir becomes a spiritual father and part of the family. Pir also helps interpret the dreams and visions that are very common in a Sindhi Muslim’s life. Before making any major decisions, the Sindhi Muslim consults with the pir who is living. But there are many dead pirs who have received the honor of becoming saints, such as Latif, Qalandar Lal Shahbaz
and Sachal Sarmast. Many songs are written and sung in honor of these saints. There are only male pirs in Sindh, though one may find female pirs in other parts of Islamic world.

The life of a Sufi is very laid back and simple. For a Sufi, simplicity in life and acceptance of all is the main point of living. The Sufis are not against modernism, but certainly are threatened by Western technology and its influence on their teaching and disciples.

The uniqueness of Sindhi Sufis and their pirs is that they attract even Hindus and Christians to their gatherings. They believe in inclusiveness and love for all. Their leaders or pirs are available to all at anytime. The tender love and care a person may receive among Sufis is very attractive even to the Westerners whom I have seen in Sindh looking for acceptance and happiness.

A Sindhi is a Sufi in heart though he or she may be a Shia or Sunni Muslim. The Sindhi literature both prose and poetry, songs and dances are so much part of the Sindhi culture that one may find it difficult to be in Sindh and not be influenced by the Sufi thinking.

The Spiritual direction is received by visiting a pir in humility. The pir's decision and clarification is never questioned and usually accepted. This leaves no room for critical thinking and questioning which may result in confusion of thoughts. This again is a very strong point as this contributes much to a Sindhi's thinking and the importance a pir plays in a Sindhi Muslim's life. Christianity which came from the West offers no "functional substitute" for the pir and his role in a Muslim or Christian's life.
Mysticism and Sufism have to be studied if we are to understand Sindhi Muslims and to share the Gospel effectively with them. Unfortunately Western missions as well as the present Church of Pakistan in Sindh have still not been able to accept this reality and challenge. This has isolated the Sindhi Muslims and has created a big gap between them and the local church (Naaman 1996, Shah 1996). It will be a conclusion of this dissertation that Sufi spirituality, especially the role of the pir, must be considered in Christian evangelization and discipling in Sindh.

It is important to know Islam in order to explain clearly to Sindhi Muslims how Christianity differs from Islam. It is important also to know about Sindhi customs because they can serve as bridges for the Gospel proclamation.

Religious Traditions

Two Sindhi traditions are critical for Christians to understand, appreciate, and work with. The first of these is poetry, song, and dance; the second is the relationship of pir and murid.

The Importance of Poetry, Song, and Dance. Sindhis love poetry and poets. While traveling in Sindh one may hear poems being recited by people. Poems by famous Sindhi poets are taught in academic settings as well. At times there are overnight recitations of poems in a ceremony called mushariah, which is held in honor of famous Sindhi poets and where their poems are recited. There is a large collection of Sindhi poems, which are sung in the rural areas.
There are many folk stories in Sindhi culture. These stories are transferred orally from one generation to another. These include many old love stories such as Sassi Punnu (Quddus 1992:185-190), Omar Marvi and others (Quddus 1992:179-185).

Singing songs plays an important role in Sindhi culture. These songs are written in honor of Muhammad and the famous Sufi saints, such as Lal Shahbaz Qalandar (1177-1274 A.D.) of Sehwan, Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai (1689-1752 A.D.) of Hala and others. Many times these songs are sung in a repetitive form called qawali for the whole night; where the lead singer sings the first stanza and his party repeats it. Since most of the above mentioned Sufi saints have written long songs and poetry, the devotees, or murids, of these saints sing their kalam (poetry and songs) also called kafis in their remembrance. Sindhis put a lot of emphasis on memorization and oral traditions of teaching history and culture through singing of these songs. These songs are memorized. One may still hear them in the desert where a local Sindhi is herding camels.

Dancing is another important aspect of Sindhi culture. The dance in Sindh is very different from the Western ballroom dance where a man and woman dance together to show love and affection to each other. This Western dancing as practiced by the British in Sindh (often in “Dance Halls” [sic, cf. ballrooms] where liquor was served) was secular and immoral from a Sindhi Muslim’s perspective. Sindhi dancing, called dhammal, is religious; it is done on the annual festivals of pirs. This begins when a song is sung and some devotees start to dance in order to get into trance. Women usually do dhammal separately, but on certain occasions they may join men too. People take opium and bhang (hemp) and then start dancing in order to get high. Though many Muslims may deny this,
one of my Muslim informants, Farukh (1996) mentioned that drugs are an important part of these festivals.

**The Relationships of Pir and Murids**

The majority of Sindhi Muslims have their own personal *pir*. As discussed above, a *pir* is a counselor, spiritual leader, and guide. The *pir* is available 24 hours at his place where his devotee can meet him. This relationship is a life long commitment and the devotee never questions the decision of his/her *pir*. Usually once a year *urs* (religious festivals) are held at the shrines of the *pirs*. These festivals are also held at the places where the *pir* is alive. These festivals attract many devotees both Hindus and Muslims, and at times even Christians. My evangelistic team and I visited several of these gatherings and sold a record number of pieces of Christian literature in Sindhi to people.

The *pir* is a symbol of power in Sindhi culture both spiritually and politically. The *pir* wheels a lot of influence politically. Many times Sindhi leaders, before making an important decision, consult with the local *pir*. This also is the reason why, when the British killed *pir* Pagaro, they could not put down the uprising in Sindh and eventually had to leave.

If a Christian were to understand and work with the *pir* and *murid* structure it would bring to a Sindhi Muslim a sense of safety, guidance and personal spiritual help in the time of trouble. The effect on the worshiper would be even more special than for

---

6 The *pirs* in Sindh are mostly males. I have not met any female *pir*. So in my writing I will always address them in masculine gender form.

7 For a detailed analysis of the *pir* and *murid* structure in Pakistan see Lewis 1985. For the issue of conversion see Syrjanen 1984.
Westerners to be able to go to the altar and be prayed for whenever they wished. If a Christian were to appreciate and use Sindhi poetry, song, and dance, the Gospel would have a rich Sindhi flavor. For these oral, non-literate, people, the Gospel would take on the living Sindhi form that is necessary for them to truly hear and comprehend the Good News.

Summary

This chapter explained the cultural and the religious context of Sindh. Within the cultural context were discussed cultural differences and the cultural conflicts between the Sindhis and Punjabis. Within the religious context the influence of Islam was examined and also the influence of religious traditions. From the cultural context, we see that historical tensions between the Punjabis and Sindhis would make it very difficult for a Punjabi to share the Gospel with a Sindh, and for a Sindh to accept the Gospel from a Punjabi. From the religious context, we see that the presentation of Christianity in Western forms or by Westernized people would be seen as the introduction of a secular and or immoral religion.

Sindhis perceive Christianity and Christians very negatively. Christianity was brought by the British colonial power. Baluch (1996), one of my Muslim informants mentioned, “Every aspect of Christianity was and still is foreign in its form, language, culture and customs. The local Sindhis never accepted the British and their religion.” Furthermore, the British used the former and present dominant Punjabis to conquer Sindh. These Punjabi Christians were from an untouchable class. This further created a big gap between the Sindhis and Punjabis. Thus it is a major sociological barrier to cross for the
Sindhi to become a Christian. The whole function of *pir* in a local Sindhi’s life was and still is very important. British Christianity had no substitute for this *pir* in their faith. In fact, they undermined the political and religious influence and impact of a Sindhi *pir* and killed the most revered and respected *pir* Pagaro for their own benefit.

Culturally Christianity came in a Western form. A colonial priest wearing foreign attire with foreign language, having worldly possessions was never able to communicate the Gospel to the heart of a Sindhi, who was used to a local *dervish* and his simplicity. Furthermore, the priest could never fulfill the need and function of a *pir* for the Sindhi Muslims. In fact, the British never thought of the need for a Christian *pir*. The worship style was and still is foreign to a local Sindhi. One of my Muslim informants Zahida (1996) mentioned that her brother even after becoming Christian often visited his Muslim *pir*.

From this discussion of the cultural and religious context of the Sindhi Muslim we find that the Sindhi Muslim could remain unaffected by the Christian witness of the church because this witness appears to the Sindhi Muslim to be secular and immoral. The next chapter deals with the Christian witness in Sindh.
CHAPTER 3

The Christian Witness in Sindh

To understand the Christian witness in Sindh we need to understand the history of Christian mission there, the present situation of Christianity in Sindh, and the Church of Pakistan. I will discuss these issues and then show how this history and church provide the setting for the contemporary evangelism of Sindhi Muslims. To protect their identity, the names of living missionaries and their exact places of work cannot be mentioned here. We will identify the persons by using pseudonyms, though my father, Naaman preferred his own name to be used while quoting him.

The History of Christian Mission

Christianity came to Sindh through the colonial presence of the East India Company and its trading business. In 1842, the British conquered Sindh in a campaign led by Sir Charles Napier. One interesting incident, which I have heard through different sources and oral traditions, is about Sir Charles Napier. When he captured Sindh, he wired London saying, “I have sin.” The government in London could not figure what the “sin” was till a few months later when they discovered that Charles captured Sindh. Aziz Ahmad comments:

As soon as the British got Sindh, the British priests and special army Chaplains started visiting the troops. The British consolidated the forts in major cities of Sindh and made these as their headquarters. They built cathedrals for worship. (Ahmad 1967: 24-25)

Aziz Ahmad further asserts the feelings of Muslims regarding the British and their
help to missionaries:

Even more disturbing to Muslim religious susceptibilities was the patronage of Christian missionary activities by some officials of the East India Company, and the close identification of these missions with British rule. In 1813 the revised Charter of the East India Company had provided facilities to the Christian missionaries for the ‘moral improvement’ of the Indian people. (Ahmad 1967:24-25)

Army garrisons surrounded the massive cathedrals, which are still there, and, as one of my Muslim informants, Badar (1996), mentioned, “A constant painful reminder of the British and their religion.” Initially because the British had totally wiped out the Sindhi forces they did not think much about sharing their faith. One of my Muslim informants Leghari (1996) commented, “How could they share their faith as an aggressor?”

Slowly, as was the situation in the rest of India, the British missionaries started to come to Sindh. For as Mr. Mangles, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the East India Company, said in the British Parliament in 1857:

Providence has entrusted the extensive empire of Hindustan to England that the banner of Christ should wave triumphant from one end of India to the other. Everyone must exert all his strength that there may be no dilatoriness on any account in continuing in the country the work of making all India Christian. (Savarkar 1909:52-53)

The Church Mission Society (CMS) sent their first missionaries to Karachi in 1852 through the efforts of Colonial Preedy (Clark 1883:224). These missionaries worked with both Hindus and Muslims. They started a school, boarding school and orphanage. The early CMS workers were limited, as they could not move around Sindh for fear of their lives. Though the missionaries came and the mission was started in 1856, the first convert (either Muslim or Hindu) was not baptized until 1869 (Clark 1904:224). A note is added to the record that there were two inquirers at this time.
What the Sindhis understood and saw in Christianity was as follows: (1) it was a colonial religion; (2) it was very secular in its form and worship as one could see the architecture and worship style of churches; and (3) it appeared immoral. It appeared immoral because women and men had the freedom to mingle with each other and to dance in local dance clubs (exclusively for the British and serving liquor). In addition, some of the early missionaries were very racist, insensitive to the local traditions, and very proud of their white heritage. Some had a superiority complex, thinking what they saw of Islam and Hinduism in Sindh was all pagan, and believing their religion was superior. These missionaries wanted to clean Sindh of its pagan religions and purify it.

Two of these early missionaries were well respected. Arthur Burns was the first missionary to come through the London Church Mission Society. Another early person was George Shirt. He mastered the Sindhi language and was chiefly instrumental in the translation of the New Testament and much of the Old Testament, parts of the Prayer book, hymns, and the Pilgrim’s Progress. He also produced a Sindhi English dictionary and many other books and tracts. Shirt had the honor of celebrating the first Holy Communion in Sindh, with six communicants.

One missionary who stands out from the rest was Donald Harper. Harper devoted his entire life to serve in Sindh. He came in the 1920s and died in Sindh. He was a man of vision and loved the nationals. In my early childhood, I met some of the old villagers who remembered Harper. They related that Harper was different because he cared for the Sindhis and was open to listen to their concerns with patience. Harper had a passion for Sindhi Muslims. He encouraged street evangelism and dialogue with the local Muslims.
He also believed on the holistic aspect of the Gospel. He not only told them about Christ but also took care of their needs.

He bought a piece of land called Harperabad for the new Christians so that they could be self-sufficient. He labored to make an irrigation system, as the canal system in Sindh was not yet finished. Later the London CMS backed out and did not support him with people and funds. He died a very discouraged man because of this lack of support.

Despite the lack of support Harper was a missionary to be emulated. As his daughter, Dora Green, wrote about his Punjabi services:

> The church services were yet another example of my father’s forward looking practice. He wrote of them, “They are absolutely Indian in character and spirit. All sit on the floor; vernacular is entirely used; the tunes are Indian; so is the ‘orchestra’, which is composed of harmonium (Indian), drums played by hand and fingers (tabla), and tambourines (tambura). For Hymns are sung the Punjabi psalms in verse, and sometimes hymns from Rahat Dil. [sic]” (Green 1981:39)

After the London CMS started serving in Sindh, its sister organization, New Zealand CMS (NZCMS), also started to send missionaries in 1859. Frank Long was sent to Sindh, and he worked with George Shirt in the Karachi grammar school, which was established by the CMS. This school still has a very high standard of education. The founder of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah also studied at this school before moving to the Mumbai (Bombay) area in India. The CMS also started hospitals in Sukkur and Shikarpur in Sindh. Sukkur had a hospital only for women, and Shikarpur had a small eye clinic established in the 1930s (Gregory n.d:102-103).

One important person from the NZCMS is Charles Haskell who learned both Urdu and Sindhi and who published a Sindhi comprehensive grammar. He preached in both
Urdu and Sindhi on Sundays. This means that these were two separate services. Haskell addressed the dilemma of local churches and Christians not learning Sindhi:

One day I paid a visit to a village 100 miles from Karachi in company with a Punjabi Christian. The people of this village were descendants of a few Punjabis who had settled in Sindh about fifty years before. My friend spoke to them confidently in Punjabi, then Urdu, the two languages of the Punjab, but the headman turned to me rather pathetically, saying in Sindhi, “What is he talking about? I cannot understand a word!” So I had to help out with my little Sindhi. In the course of fifty years these families had forgotten every word of what was the mother tongue of their grandparents. (Haskell 1957:180)

During the 1960s, Sir Henry Holland, the famous eye surgeon in Sindh, used to come from Quetta during winter months to this eye hospital. I still remember once my father and I were in the main ward of Shikarpur Hospital. We always prayed for the patients before the doctor came. One day my father was telling them about the coming king, referring to Jesus. As he asked the question after teaching, “Who is the coming king”? All replied, “Dr. Holland!” The point is that these early missionaries like Harper, Haskell and Holland lived exemplary lives so that the people saw the light of Christ in their lives.

Up until the 1970s with the Islamization of Pakistan, the Gospel continued to be shared at these hospitals. Each morning the Gospel was shared through preaching and in the evening it was shared through filmstrips. I still remember that after the film shows the Sindhis used to sit around the fire through the night, at times even late into the morning asking questions. They sat on dirt or straw and quietly listened to my father and others as they shared Christ in the Sindhi language and in a simple Eastern setting. They had not been attracted to the church building or Western style of worship. They were attracted to
the non-threatening way of communication where stories were shared. Evangelism continued as long as these institutions were up and running. In the 1970s when Bhutto nationalized all the Christian schools and hospitals this aspect of missions was greatly hurt.

Another name that stands out in the era of Christian missions in Sindh is that of Bishop Chandu Ray. He was a Sindhi Brahmin convert. In 1958 he became the first national bishop of the Karachi diocese. Naaman (1996) mentioned, “When Chandu became the bishop all the foreign missionaries left Sindh with three pennies in the diocese account.” This shows the colonial mindset of not only the rulers but of the British missionaries; they did not want to support a national bishop financially. The national church was very young at this time. Chandu was a brilliant person and had a lot of contacts with non-Christians. Through his contacts, he established schools and churches in Sindh. Later he left Sindh to serve at the Haggai Institute in Singapore. He also served with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Chandu had a great heart for Sindhis and especially for Muslims. He cared for the Muslim converts and tried his best to establish them in his area. He encouraged my father and other evangelists to come and settle in Sindh. He was a great national leader who played a very key role in the Church Union in Pakistan, which resulted in the formation of the Church of Pakistan, the largest Protestant denomination in Sindh.

Present Situation of Christianity in Sindh

In Pakistan the majority of Muslims believe that Christianity is a religion of the West. They believe that all Christians can speak English and that they all have relatives in the West. Even though missionaries tried to approach Muslims, they were rejected
because they were British and because the British ruled Pakistan harshly. It is interesting, however, to see that Muslims are eager to attend the best mission schools and prefer to be treated in the Christian hospitals because they say the care is better. Even so, they have never accepted Christianity.

Muslims in Sindh typically are very closely knit in their own families, societies and language groups. Most of them live in rural areas. The early missionaries directed their efforts to cities where those who responded were most often low caste, poor people.

From the very beginning, Christianity has been a religion of poor and low caste people. The People Movement in Punjab was among these poor. McGavran noted that agricultural laborers called Churas or “untouchables” of northern Pakistan formed about 7% of the total population. These people, “Skinned dead cattle, cured the skin, collected the bones and sold them” (McGavran 1955:71).

Fred Stock, who was a missionary in Pakistan for many years, gives his thought about the present Pakistani church.

Although the present Christian Church in Pakistan has come entirely from the depressed classes, nearly a century of Christian teaching and influence has lifted the Christian community to a status considerably above the 'Scheduled Castes' remaining in Pakistan. (Stock 1975:204)

Gregg Livingstone, who has ministered to Muslims for a number of years, mentions an incident that shows the mind set of Muslims toward Christians in Pakistan.

I was walking through the streets of Karachi Sindh with well-educated Muslim, who as a friend of colleagues, had a good understanding of the gospel and its implications. As a group of street sweepers (who were Christians of Hindu background) passed us, he wrinkled his nose and demanded of me how I could ask him to join those people! He could relate better to us, as Westerners, than he could to poor Punjabi Christians in his own city who were citizens of his country. (Livingstone 1993:155)
Wayne McClintock, who has done an extensive survey about Pakistani Christians, also acknowledges that the Church in Pakistan on the whole is a Punjabi church. Some 80% of Pakistani Christians reside in the Punjab, and many of those who live in other parts of the country have migrated from the villages of that province (McClintock 1992:345).

He emphasizes:

The Pakistani church is, therefore strongly influenced by the worldview, beliefs, values, social institutions, and patterns of behavior of Punjabi society. Indeed, any national church that is dominated by a single ethnic group inevitably reflects many aspects of that ethnic group’s culture. While much of the theology, liturgies and structures of church government in Pakistan is based on Western models, the everyday lives of individual Christians and their families, and even the power struggles and politics within the church itself, are largely shaped by the Punjabi social context. (McClintock 1992:347-348)

The essence of the Punjabi value system is its “deeply relational or familial world view” (Francis 1985:19). Indeed, the biraderi system dominates the world-view of Punjabis to such a degree that they readily extend kinship terms to friends and other acquaintances (Wakil 1970:705). As indicated in chapter 2, biraderi is a term derived from a Persian word and means “brotherhood” (Korson 1979:174). It is a kinship group, larger than the extended family, which operates as a highly complex system of favors and obligations.

McClintock referring to Wakil states:

Within the bosom of their family, and biraderi, Punjabis find security and shelter from a hostile world. From infancy, they learn that they must always operate within the context of their kinship relationships. Members of the biraderi define their duties, rights, sentiments and norms of social behavior. (Wakil 1970:704, McClintock 1992:349)

McClintock continues:
Allegiance to these kinship relationships is paramount. Their social identity is so enmeshed in this web of relationships that other duties and responsibilities—to friends, patrons, employers, religious sects, and the state—become subject to the interests of the biraderi. (1992:349)

The leaders of the various denominations and parachurch organizations in Pakistan are subject to these same familial pressures. They are expected to use their positions within the church to provide economic and political support to their immediate family and to other members of their biraderi as well. If they ignore the requests of their relatives for jobs or other material aid, their relationships with other members of the biraderi become very strained. Yet, if they do respond positively to some of these requests for aid from their relatives, other leading members of the church will heavily criticize them for practicing nepotism. Should any of these critics have a similar opportunity to use their own positions within the church to secure economic benefits for their own relatives, however, they probably would not hesitate to exploit it (McClintock 1992:349-350)

**Church Of Pakistan**

The Church of Pakistan is the result of the church union of Methodist, Scottish Presbyterian, Anglican and Lutheran churches. These churches were united on November 1, 1970. Bishop Woolmer, Bishop Chandu Ray and others supported this union. This union actually followed the example of Indian church union and a lot of key elements in the mandates were taken from the Indian church union as a model to follow. The majority of the members of the Church of Pakistan are Punjabis from the Punjab province. To understand the witness of the Church of Pakistan we need to consider the following four issues: church union, the ministry of the laity, the Muslim response, and new possibilities.

**The Church Union**

Chandu Ray’s exemplary life (born April 14th 1912 died circa 1979) led many people to the Lord. He is called the architect of the church union in Sindh. Chandu Ray was born in Sindh into a wealthy Hindu family. When he was 18, his mother took him on
a pilgrimage through India, which only resulted in emptiness and disillusionment for Chandu. With a hungry, seeking heart, for the next nine years he desperately studied Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. At the age of 27, while working as a printer and teacher, he came to Jesus Christ through the witness of a close English teacher friend.

Chandu Ray’s transformation and new life of communion had such far-reaching effects that he forsook business and teaching to study theology on a postgraduate level at Bishop’s College in Calcutta India. Upon graduation, he was ordained an Anglican Priest and returned to his home state to minister.

He had such an interest in evangelism that around 1958, he risked his life in taking the Gospel to a remote area in Sindh inhabited by Muslims who were known to kill rather than welcome intruders. In nine months there were 200 believers and about a year later four thousand acres were given to build a new community for those once-feared people. A school, a church and new house soon stood as symbols of the power and love of God. Early in his ministry, Chandu Ray learned the importance of training local people to reach their own community. He identified the Muslim converts especially and encouraged them to go for further training in theology. Chandu Ray was the man who influenced my father to come to Sindh and to learn the Sindhi, Gujarati and Marwari languages. “Bishop Ray’s life was a clear example of Christ like character. His humility could be easily compared to Christ. Being a Sindh he never showed any bias to Punjabis, in fact he always encouraged Sindhi and Punjabi interaction” (Naaman 1996).

Bishop Ray supervised the translation of the Bible into Tibetan and Sindhi languages; Sindhi has its roots in Persian. His interest in the Bible led him to serve for
many years as the secretary of the Bible Society in Pakistan. In 1978 the Chicago Bible Society gave him the prestigious Gutenberg Award for his contribution to Bible translation and distribution. He was the first Third World person to be so honored.

Subsequently, he was consecrated the Anglican Bishop of Karachi, the first Pakistani national to attain that level of leadership. During his twelve and a half years as Bishop, he spearheaded all of his efforts with evangelism. Because of his business background he also saw the need for, and successfully built numerous schools, hospitals, community centers, and churches. He knew how to capitalize such projects with borrowed funds and pay them off in installments. The membership of his diocese jumped from 8,000 to 57,000 during his tenure.

From 1953 to 1968 Bishop Ray worked on negotiating and implementing the Church Union. In fact, “In January, 1963, the diocese of Lahore, West Pakistan, was divided into two, forming a new diocese of Karachi with the Rt. Rev. Chandu Ray as Diocesan [Bishop]” (Wittenbach 1963: 82).

8 It is important to note that as he took the office all the missionaries withdrew their money and went back to New Zealand and England. They could not see a national taking the leadership. They left only three cents in the bank for the new bishop to operate the whole diocese of Sindh. This incident is never mentioned in any CMS history books because the Lord used Chandu Ray to build the diocese from scratch and the missionaries were surprised by his abilities. Later they came back and worked under him. It is good that colonialism ended in 1947, but since then we have been the victims of “neo-colonialism,” i.e., the present missionaries have their own agendas and plans. Very seldom do they hear the heart beat of national workers for reaching Sindhis. (Naaman 1996)

9 Most of the information on Bishop Ray has been taken from Haggai Institute’s Newsletter published in honor of his death. H.I. News and Third World Report: Michael Youssef, ed (Nov-Dec.1983). This news letter did not give detailed dates. I had the privilege of knowing Bishop Ray and observing him closely during my father’s ministry in Sindh.
The following CMS reports from this time give detailed comments on mission work. For example, in 1962 “A CMS missionary on the staff of [Kinnard College]” writes,

“Our Christian students too often tend to remain in a separate clique, having little real contact with the Muslims, and little concern for them.” This is a common complaint made of Christian colleges and schools in Pakistan, and indeed of the Christian Church as a whole, that only too often, conscious of its smallness and minority status, it tends to keep itself to itself. One of the great needs in Pakistan is for more points of contact, and more bridges of understanding, between Christians and Muslims.

Speaking of the attempt to build up understanding at college staff level a missionary says: “The Christian staff, who are mostly resident, are generally far too busy to spend very much time getting to know and make friends with the Muslim day staff. We realized recently that, as a staff, we needed a more intelligent and deeper understanding of Islam and a deeper sympathy with our Muslim staff and students... Instead of continuing our pattern of fortnightly bible-studies, therefore, for a while we invited outside speakers who could tell us a little more about Islamic history and the religion of Islam. We hope that these talks will be an introduction to some sort of group study of the text of the Qur'an.” (Cardon 1962:140-141)

In 1963 CMS reports there was “an outburst of anti-Christian propaganda in the news papers which... added to the feeling of insecurity of the Christians, many of whom [were] already at a disadvantage because of their illiteracy and humble origin” (Wittenbach 1963:83); there was much concern over cultural issues such as hygiene and honor killings (Wittenbach 1963:86).

In 1964 CMS missionaries sensed a strong “opposition and anti-Christian feeling” (Cardon 1964:158). In fact Christian land was taken by the government and Christians renounced their faith to get the land back. At the same time the missionaries were wrestling with how to live sacrificially with the Pakistanis (Cardon 1964:157-162).

In 1965 missionaries were wrestling with the issues such as responsibility to and
equality with national workers and the tragedies of disease and floods (Price 1965:99, 102-103). In 1966 the situation seemed improved in that:

In a large number of spheres of life, Christians of the middle class are beginning to mix with the Muslims of the same class. Here is the opportunity and challenge of this day. The opportunity, without any doubt, is very great indeed. The question is, of course, how far can the Church in Pakistan, particularly through its middle-class members, rise to this challenge; and the second question arises from that: mainly how far are we from the West, who are here to help and serve the Church, making our contribution towards this particular end. (Hargreaves 1966:87-88)

Hargreaves also mentions, “There is in West Pakistan a new emphasis on the training of the laity” (Hargreaves 1966:94). This training of the laity included courses preparing men [sic] “to be lay voluntary workers, others lay evangelists, and some ordained workers.” (Hargreaves 1966:94).

These reports indicate both a desire to reach Muslims and an uncertainty about the appropriate strategies for working with Muslims.

On All Saints Day, November 1, in 1970 the Lahore Cathedral witnessed the consummation of 50 years of negotiations on the part of Christians to achieve visible and organic unity; the Church of Pakistan was now a reality. Four church groups participated: the Anglicans with the three dioceses of Lahore, Karachi and Dacca; the two Methodist Conferences in West Pakistan; the Lutherans based mostly in the Frontier Province; and the two Church Councils of the Presbyterian Church, namely Sialkot in the west and Rajshahi in East Pakistan. The total membership of the United Church was 200,000 souls out of a nation of 125 million. It is estimated that other Christians number about 750,000 (Gregory n.d:278). Some 3000 representatives gathered outside the Cathedral. Bishop
Woolmer had been invited back by the Inaugural Committee, but also went as an official representative of the English CMS, and carried greetings from the Archbishop of Canterbury. He also presided over the Holy Communion. This church union brought a fresh and new hope for the future of the church in Pakistan. Christians, being a minority and second class citizens, hoped that being united would enable them to stand against the oppression of Muslims. The church union also made the Church of Pakistan the largest Protestant denomination. All the denominations were advised to work on a common book of prayer and liturgies. A spirit of cooperation and toleration was present among the negotiating team from the very beginning; it was their earnest desire that this same spirit would be a part of this new church.

Since our focus is on reaching Sindhi Muslims, it should be noted that the united church's position on worship, which could have directly helped Sindhi Muslims to come to the Lord, did not do so. Article V of The Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan deals with the Church’s worship. It said that the church should seek to adopt and develop new forms of service adapted to the needs and experience of the country. It said that in due time the church should have a common service book, which would express the unity and breadth of its faith and life, and which would result naturally from the fellowship in the united church. It stated that this service book should include a variety of forms, liturgical and non-liturgical, to meet the needs of various congregations, and to preserve the distinctive values in the various traditions of worship (Kellock 1967:27-28). Going into further understanding of the church of Pakistan, it is important to note that one reason for the church union was to strengthen the local churches in evangelism, specifically
through lay ministry (Kellock 1967:32-33). For example the 1953 draft of the Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan emphasizes the following points:

A. THE MINISTRY OF THE LAITY.

The uniting Churches recognized that it is the duty and privilege of every member to share in the ministry of the Church. Within in this ministry they recognized that there is a rich diversity of gifts, and all are agreed that it is a prime concern of the Church to see that all its members make their full contribution to its life. This contribution should be given in the following ways:--

(i) By the life and witness [text corrupted, cannot be read] with the world, wherein lie the Church’s evangelistic task and opportunity.
(ii) In the full-time service of the Church in the ministries of evangelism, education, healing or other forms of Christian service.
(iii) In part-time service in the Church’s life, such as Sunday school Teaching, Youth Work, Lay Preaching, Social Service.
(iv) In sharing with the Bishops and Presbyters in spiritual care, nurture and government of the Church. (The Negotiating Committee for Church Union in North India and Pakistan 1953:6-7)

In spite of this equipping of the laity for witness and in spite of the encouragement to try different liturgies, witness to Muslims was minimal. There appear to be two reasons for this. First the spirit of cooperation among the leaders did not permeate the entire church. Colonialists, who left many people feeling not a part of it, orchestrated the Church Union on the Indian pattern, and, in fact, some Methodists splintered off and American Presbyterians did not even join the Church Union. Thus the emphasis on new forms of worship and training of laity did not materialize. Second, witness to lower caste Hindus was so effective that the church did not pay much attention to reach the Muslims. For example in the 1989 handbook of the Diocese of Hyderabad Sindh no specific mention of work among Sindh Muslims is made or in the Sindhi language except for the following comment, “The Language Project of the Church of Pakistan is based in Hyderabad and has
workers translating and producing literacy materials in six or more languages in Sindh and Baluchistan” (Hayward 1989:7).

The Muslim Response

In spite of the lofty ideals of its Plan of Church Union, the present Church of Pakistan in Sindh—united since 1970 for the most part has not made any effort to reach the Sindhi Muslims. Christensen writes, “Surely no one is blind to the fact that at a generous estimate, not one in ten missionaries is really doing anything to propagate knowledge of Christianity among the masses. And among national Christians the figure would probably be not one in 100” (Christensen 1977:128).

Since the diocese of Sindh came into existence in 1980, with Bashir Jiwan as its first bishop, we have not seen any significant effort on the part of the church in reaching Muslims. The problem is that the Bishop, being a Punjabi Christian from Punjab, has not been able to challenge the local Christians to be more active in Muslim evangelism. Punjabi songs and hymns are used regularly in the worship services. If Muslims are invited to a church service, the whole church reacts negatively to their presence. A Muslim inquirer has difficulty in establishing credibility even to be accepted as a genuine seeker and learner. The local Christians appear to have no interest in evangelizing Sindhi Muslims. One Sindhi convert Aftab (1996) mentioned, “Being a former Sindhi Muslim, I have made a mistake in following Jesus. I left all my family and community. After 20 years the local church does still not accept me. When will the local church be open to accept Sindhi converts with open arms.” Phil Parshall, an experienced missionary to Muslims, affirms this tendency, “All too frequently, the church has a mentality which leads
members to express grave suspicion concerning the motives of any Muslim who professes Christ" (Parshall 1985:189). Michael Nazir Ali, son of a Muslim convert and former Bishop of Karachi, Pakistan states, “Only too often Muslim inquirers are discouraged by the aloof and suspicious attitude of church members” (Ali 1983:162).

During the last 15 years, there have been only a few converts in Sindh. My father (Naaman 1996) pastored a local church in Sindh for 17 years. During his ministry, four Muslims accepted Christ. Some were baptized as secret believers. The main reason was that the local Punjabi Christians were hesitant to allow these new believers into their fellowship.

The fear of prosecution by Muslims is one of the major factors against open conversion to Christianity. Since the process of Islamization in 1977 and even more since the blasphemy law of 1998 (see Chapter 1), it has become more difficult to become Christian openly. When a bank manager in my former hometown became Christian, my father had to appear before a state inquiry and respond to the questions about his conversion. This and other conversions also contributed to the assassination of my younger brother by the local fanatic Islamic group of Sindhis. My father was given two options, first to stop the Christian work and second, to leave the city. He did not bow to these threats and this resulted in the assassination of my brother.

The local church is also a symbol of Western colonialism and Christianity. The painful reality is still that the missionaries who come to Sindh are not much concerned to develop the national leadership. In the past 15 years only a handful of people have been encouraged to go for theological training. Many times when my father and other older
pastors confronted the bishop and other missionaries, they were labeled as rebels. One convert I interviewed was very blunt about it:

The present missionaries have the blessing of the bishop who is no more than a puppet in their hands. Why should he bother to train the people when his whole family is receiving all the benefits. The sad part is that whenever foreign visitors come, they are fully entertained and taken to places where people are scared to talk. They go back with an impression that everything is fine. (Asif 1996)

Asif is a former Sindhi Muslim. He became Christian about 20 years ago. He married a Christian Punjabi girl. Missionaries arranged the marriage. A scholar and writer, he has been actively involved in producing Sindhi Christian literature and radio programs for Muslims.

Pakistani ‘culture’ is related to Punjabi culture. It is very difficult for the Church of Pakistan congregations to receive and accept an ethnic Sindhi-Muslim genuinely.

One reason why so few Muslims come to Christ is that the majority of the Church of Pakistan in Sindh feels that Muslims are unreachable or salvation is not for Muslims (Naaman 1996, Lawrence 1996). Lawrence who served in Sindh for 30 years further supports this point. “Perhaps the greatest obstacle to the Church of Pakistan in evangelizing and witnessing to Sindhi Muslims is the lack of concern for their salvation, which is largely due to the fact that members themselves have not personally experienced the ‘new birth.’” He further mentioned, “The church is an extension of the biraderi system that they have as a cultural experience. There is lacking a deep conviction of the lostness of people apart from the grace of God in Christ. There needs to be teaching as to what and who constitutes the body of Christ, the ‘church’”(Lawrence 1996).
Furthermore, many sociological factors hinder the present Church of Pakistan from reaching the Sindhis. Sindhis by nature are attached to their family, village and relatives. Most of them have never left their villages. The most adventurous thing that they may do would be go to a nearby city for shopping or to see cricket or soccer matches. They require a family structure and acceptance from the church, which the church has not been able to provide in the past (Naaman 1996). Language, culture, ethnic difference and a different worldview of the present church has been a reason for few conversions from Sindhi people.

Asif (1996), a former Sindhi Muslim mentioned above, states that the present church is still far from accepting him and tolerating him as a Christian. Corruption, gossip, self-praise and helping one's own biraderi are very important to Punjabi people. Sindhis are still looked upon with suspicion. The majority of the Church of Pakistan is from Hindu background and they have no interest or burden for Sindhi Muslims. If by mistake a Sindhi Muslim becomes Christian, that person has to conform and follow the Punjabi church and its culture.

According to Asif, another important factor is that most of the pastors and leaders are busy getting rich. Their whole purpose in life is to get rich at the expense of local people. In most of the projects, Punjabi people like to hire their own. Not much consideration is given to local Sindhi folks for their betterment (Asif 1996).

In answering another question, Asif (1996) mentioned that Muslims consider Christians sweepers, he included, as one of the "untouchable ones," which has been a major shock and constant pain for the past 20 years. He lost all his family and became a
second class citizen. The question is, “If the local Christians do not accept him, where can he go?”

In January 1996 when I was in Pakistan for research, I was able to visit a church in my former hometown, pastored by Jalal, a Punjabi pastor. He was also one of the candidates to become the next bishop of the Diocese of Sindh. During our conversation the question about the eligibility of a candidate for the bishopric came up. I reminded the pastor about a Muslim convert who had the same qualifications as he did as a possible candidate. To this, the pastor replied, “The convert has no biraderi, no support of extended family. He is all alone” (Jalal 1996). This was painful for me to hear. The point is, if some of the learned and experienced pastors still have the mentality of the Punjabi biraderi system, how can the congregation be able to break through this bondage. How will the pastor be able to encourage them to share the Gospel with Muslims? If a Muslim becomes Christian, will that person be accepted by people who have such a narrow mind set in the Kingdom of God?

During the research trip to Pakistan in 1996, I was able to meet two more Sindhi Muslim converts. When asked, “What role did the Church of Pakistan play in their conversion?” the reply from both (K. Ali 1996 and Khalid 1996) was that the Church of Pakistan, being a Punjabi church, had no role in their coming to the Lord. Both came through visions and dreams and also through the ministry of Bible Correspondence School. Muslims still hesitate to accept Christianity because it means that they would have to sit, eat and identify themselves with low caste sweepers in general. Early missionaries realized this. McGavran mentions, “The missionaries were at first dubious
about admitting that they had Christian fellowship with these lowest of the low since most of the upper castes and the Muslims took offense and came to think of the Christian enterprise as 'untouchable'” (McGavran 1955:71-72).

However, Muslims are not necessarily hard to win, or unique in their theology and faith. There are other reasons for the small number of conversions. Stock argues that, "Too often we assume that theological differences are the primary barriers to winning Muslims. . . Many are theologically convinced of Christianity” (Stock 1975:202). This does not mean that all Muslims accept/affirm unanimously all of the basic Christian beliefs, but it does mean that for the most part most Muslims are generally accepting of some of the beliefs of Christianity. Also, theological differences are surmountable barriers when it comes to evangelizing Muslims. In fact, they act as bridges to introduce the Christian faith. He continues, however:

"Probably the greatest single barrier converts face is the necessity of integrating into the established Church with its depressed class background. This is not just because of prejudice ingrained from childhood, but because it requires a convert to adjust to a completely different culture, way of thinking, patterns of worship, religious vocabulary, and status in society. (Stock 1975:202)

There is another point. The purdah (seclusion) system in which Muslim women veil themselves with either a white or a black cloak is very strong. Men can only speak to men. For example, if we visit one of our Muslim friends, we may never enter the inner part of the house. We sit in the sitting room, which is usually separate and used for men only. Here all male visitors are entertained, so a person is bound to share the Gospel only with men in this room. By the same rules, women visit only the women of a household.
In such circumstances, women evangelists were needed from the very beginning. Since women's work was concentrated only in orphanages and hostels, women were not able to reach out directly to women in their homes. In contrast, the response among Hindu tribes has been very good from the beginning. Thus, it has been the tendency of missionaries to concentrate on these people.

There is no doubt that earlier opposition was strong, and that it is stronger in the present days as a new sense of Sindhi provincialism develops among the Sindhi people. So as shown in chapters 1 and 2, Punjab and Punjabi people have dominated the politics and economy of Pakistan. The mass migration of refugees from India after the partition has led to many internal ethnic problems and conflicts in Sindh. Some Sindhi leaders, including G. M. Sayed, recalled that they failed to foresee that the majority of Muslim refugees (all Urdu speaking from India) from Muslim majority areas of India would settle in Sindh following Partition. They did not anticipate that these people would combine politically with the dominant Punjabis to impose their control on Sindh (Banuazizi and Weiner 1986:281).

The observable hopelessness among Sindhi people may also affect the results of the Gospel presentation by the Punjabi Christians who are associated with the dominant

---

10 Due to a good response from Low Caste Hindu Tribes, much of the efforts in the last 40 years have been devoted to establishing churches among them. There is not a single CMS missionary or Punjabi pastor directly involved in Muslim evangelism. Muslim evangelism is seen as an impossible task to accomplish. A handful of Sindhi Muslim converts are left alone and without support. Only some para-church organizations and an evangelical mission are directly involved in Muslim evangelism. The names of these organizations cannot be mentioned due to security reasons. I have been forbidden by the Church of Pakistan authorities to give the exact number of people converted from Hinduism and Islam as the government can take legal action against the converts.
Punjabi-speaking and ruling class. As noted above, this disparity was felt even more
during the 1970's when the Sindhi leader, Zulfqar Ali Bhutto, became the prime minister,
and was assassinated by a Punjabi army general and president. Linguistic, cultural,
political, social and geographical barriers must be overcome if the Gospel is to impact
many Sindhi Muslims.

Sindhi Muslims have also cited the colonial architecture of present churches as
well as Muslim converts as a great hindrance. This reminds Muslims of the colonial period
and all of its atrocities. Muhammad Sadiq (1996) mentioned, “Many Muslims are hesitant
to come to a church as they do not know what functions they have to perform when they
structures with bells are so foreign to us that one cannot get used to it even after having
been a Christian for a long time. We need a community of loving and caring people who
will accept us as we are, then we will be able to go out and reach more Sindhis.”

Our study of the history, culture, and religion of Sindh helps us see why we need
to communicate the Gospel to Sindhi Muslims in Sindhi. This could be done with and
through people who have a clear understanding of the Gospel, having a simple lifestyle
and ways of worship that could be easily understood and adopted by Sindhi people. The
church has to be more open to accept Sindhi converts. Hope for a better future arises
from a surprising factor. It is amazing to see how the Lord has been forcing the Punjabi
Christians to learn Sindhi in the last 15-20 years. In 1972 Sindhi became the official
language of Sindh (Harrison 1986:282). Due to this, the new generation of Christians
knows this language and is able to identify with the Sindhi people. Many young people
are on fire for the Lord, which is a positive sign (Aftab 1996). Khadim Ali (1996) further stressed, "This certainly will be a great asset for the Church of Pakistan in reaching Sindhi Muslims."

New Possibilities

The young people or the second generation of Punjabi Christians is very much aware of this language problem. Because they know Sindhi there is less challenge for this new generation to witness to Sindhi Muslims. The important point is that this new generation, having grown up in the last 20 years when Sindhi became a compulsory language to study, are fluent in the Sindhi language. Sindhi language has been a binding factor for these young people and the local Sindhis. This has created an enormous opportunity for the Church leaders to take advantage of, but a lot of other things have to change also (as discussed in chapters 4, 5 and 6). The young Punjabi Christians are born in Sindh, and they are comfortable with the Sindhi culture and traditions. This new generation of change agents is fed up with church politics and traditions. From working with these young people in Sindh I have come to the realization that they want fresh ideas which may help them to identify more with the local Sindhi Muslims. They do not want to be identified as colonial agents representing an aggressive past; rather they want to be agents of peace and reconciliation in Jesus Christ.

In my initial survey none of the present Church of Pakistan pastors or missionaries responded about their role in Muslim evangelism as no one was directly or specifically involved in reaching Sindhis. If leaders of a church have no vision for Muslim evangelism, how can one expect the laity to be involved or challenged to reach the Muslims?
The parachurch organizations and other evangelical groups in reaching Muslims have entered this void. I cannot present any more information about these groups due to security reasons (details of the interviews and results are presented in chapter 4 and 5). More and more young Punjabi Christians are attracted to such groups, as they are trained and discipled to reach the lost, especially Sindhi Muslims. I myself was involved in one of these organizations and was very well accepted by the young people of Sindh. They now see hope for change and are excited to make a difference for the evangelization of Muslims in Sindh.

**Summary**

This chapter examined the history of Christian mission to Sindh, the present situation of Christianity in Sindh, and the Church of Pakistan. Background research and interviews of Sindhis and missionaries indicate that many Sindhis resented the Gospel since the people who took their freedom away had brought it. The forms and patterns of Christians were alien to Sindhi Muslims. Punjabi people who migrated to Sindh brought their own worldview and cultural forms of Christianity. Most of these people had become Christian from among the Chura or untouchable class, presenting a major hindrance for the Sindhi people's acceptance of Christianity. Factors leading to the formation of the Church of Pakistan and the role of the Church of Pakistan and its efforts to reach Sindhi Muslim were discussed. The struggles of Sindhi converts to Christianity must be taken seriously by anyone wanting to bring the Gospel to them. Although Sindhi converts are small in number, their concerns are significant. The Punjabi church is still dominant in its
culture and ways of worship and does not appear willing to change. All this makes it very
difficult for a Sindhi convert to adjust and be part of the existing Punjabi church.

As a result of our research, data collection, interviews, and observation, I may say
that the present church has failed to communicate the Gospel effectively and is unwilling
to change its approach to reach the Sindhis with the Gospel. The foreign ways of worship
make Christianity a Western religion. It is difficult for a Sindhi to accept the religion of
oppressors who ruled them for 200 years. The big cathedrals are a constant reminder of
colonial rule and its implication on Sindh. The only model the local Church of Pakistan
knows is traditional Anglican and Western. We have seen that this model has failed to
enable Christians to reach the Sindhi people. Therefore, membership in the Church of
Pakistan has remained stagnant over the past 50 years. Biological or transfer growth,
rather than conversion growth, is characteristic of the local church. The Sindhi Muslim
community has remained unaffected by the Christian witness of the church.

The negative aspect is that the Church of Pakistan in its present form and ministry
is very closed to the idea of reaching Sindhis. The church leaders still bow down to their
British masters. I have seen a new form of "neocolonialism" where the British masters
control everything, though they talk about partnership. A simple illustration of this
attitude is presented here, though I hope this is an isolated incident. In my work in Sindh I
was partnered with a British missionary, planning a project. When we differed on some
issues, I was clearly told by the missionary that he had the funds and would make the
decisions on how to use them. I was to have no say since I contributed nothing. Later this
matter was brought in front of a larger committee where my colleague, the missionary,
was confronted and he later apologized. As long as the Church of Pakistan workers have this kind of mentality, we will not be able to share the Gospel with Muslims.

On the other hand, the new generation of Punjabi Christian young people is fluent in Sindhi language and fully aware of Sindhi culture. They are new Sindhis and are accepted by native Sindhis to a better degree than their parents and older people. I have found in working with these second generation Punjabi Christians that these new change agents have taken serious steps to identify with the local Sindhis. They realize their survival depends on meeting the Sindhis on a middle ground in different aspects of life. They are tired of the old colonial past and their identity with it. They want to identify their Christian faith as indigenous Sindhi faith. This faith must represent the true dynamic of Sindhi culture and language.

Given this situation, we need to consider some new models or kinds of churches which will be able to present the Gospel to Sindhis as well as get rid of the stigma that Christianity is only a Western, or white people’s religion. Therefore chapters 5 and 6 will present answers to the two research questions: (1) What are the obstacles that prevent the Church of Pakistan from evangelizing Muslims in Sindh? (2) How can the Church of Pakistan in Sindh develop an effective strategy to evangelize Muslims? First, however Chapter 4 will present the results of interviews which my assistants and I carried out in 1996 and 1998. We interviewed former missionaries, Sindhi Muslim converts, Sindhi Muslims, and Christian workers.
CHAPTER 4

Results of the Interviews

This chapter contains details of the research that my assistants and I did in Sindh. Our purpose was to obtain the data collected from the field research in regards to my topic. The sample questions for interviews were sent by post to Sindh originally in 1994. I have divided the interviews into four categories: A- former missionaries; B- Muslim converts to Christianity; C- Sindhi Muslims; D- Christians workers. Twenty-seven people were interviewed in the above categories. A summary and analysis of the data gathered from these informants is the subject matter of Chapter 5.

In category A, I am presenting the results of interviews with five male former missionaries who responded to my questions. I personally interviewed three of them. Two gave written responses to my questionnaires. All missionaries interviewed were with agencies other than the Church of Pakistan. Not a single missionary with the Church of Pakistan was directly working with Sindhi Muslims.

In category B, I interviewed five Muslim converts to Christianity. Three interviews were done by my assistants and two by me. I had to translate three of them as they were in Sindhi and Urdu.

In category C, I interviewed five Sindhi Muslims. Three men and two women were interviewed as a group. I personally conducted these interviews in 1996 and then again in 1998. These Sindhi Muslims were my family friends, though upon my request they agreed to be open and honest about their feelings. The results suggest this was the case.
In category D, I present the data from six males and one female Christian worker in Sindh. Initially these questions were mailed and hand delivered to more than ten Church of Pakistan workers in 1994. No one responded. Then I decided to broaden my circle. In 1996 and 1998 my helpers and I interviewed other Christians who were working with parachurch organizations and other ministries in Sindh. The data from these interviews also had to be translated from Urdu and Sindhi. For security purposes, with the exception of my father, Naaman, and sister, Tabitha, the names and places are given pseudonyms. I cannot mention the names of foreign mission organizations. The Church of Pakistan, however, will be mentioned, as it is a body recognized by the government of Sindh. Responses will be given section by section.

Category A- Former Missionaries

It is important to note here that only one national missionary of the Church of Pakistan responded to the interviews. All other British missionaries were not directly involved in Muslim evangelism. Most of them had served among tribal Hindus of Sindh. Therefore, these people did not respond to the interview.

In this section each question will be mentioned, followed by a summary of each response. For the original interview guides, see appendix A.

Question 1 asked, “What is your name”? Our respondents gave me the names, which are confidential.

---

11One might speculate that this is due to fear of such Muslim reaction as that reported below on page 76, however, it is more likely due to the fact that Muslim evangelism itself is not being engaged in by the church. This latter explanation agrees both with responses from the interviews themselves and with my own experience in the region.
Question 2 asked, “How long were you a missionary in Pakistan?” Respondents not only answered the question, they elaborated on it. Four of these missionaries reported that they served in Sindh for 20 years. The ages of these missionaries ranged from 34 to 70 years. Four were from the United States holding Bachelor of Divinity degrees.

Question 3 asked, “Which mission organization did you work with?” Four respondents declined to mention the name of their mission organization due to security reasons. One national missionary worked with the Church of Pakistan.

All of them were ordained pastors. Four of them learned Sindhi and ministered to Sindhi Muslims. One of them learned Urdu and ministered to Muslims who had migrated from India. Their ministry was diversified. Two worked in Bible correspondence schools, and two were involved in evangelism and media work. Children of two of the missionaries have gone back to Sindh and continue the ministry their parents started. One of the missionaries was a Punjabi Muslim convert who moved to Sindh and worked with the Church of Pakistan for 40 years. So both foreign and national missionaries responded to my interviews.

Question 4 asked, “Describe the people you worked with?” The informants said they worked on all levels of society and also were involved in reaching the rural population, which makes up 75% of Sindh. Ethnic Sindhi Muslims are the majority of the province of Sindh. They are very staunch, although often uneducated Muslims.

Question 5 asked, “Describe the nature of your work.” Lawrence and Paul worked in urban settings. They sensed that educated Sindhis living in urban settings were
more tolerant and open to hearing the Gospel presented in a reasonable manner. Brown and David were involved with the Christian hospital as chaplains. Thus, they could minister to patients. Tabitha served in urban and rural Sindh as a medical doctor. So the missionaries reached both urban and rural people.

Very little effort was made to reach Sindhi women, since not many women missionaries were present. The strong separation between men and women made it impossible for men to reach women. One positive thing that was discovered was that in university settings in Hyderabad and Karachi, students were more open to talk. Most of the people who enrolled in Bible correspondence courses were high school and college students, mostly males.

Question 6 stated, "Share with us some of the stories of Christian conversion." I will select only a few to share. According to David (1996), in 1992 a listener to radio programs wrote with what seemed a very deep interest in the Gospel. After some months of correspondence, we arranged for him to come to our media office for a visit. Those who interviewed him were convinced that he had truly accepted Christ Jesus as his Savior. A systematic effort at follow-up continued until David left in March of 1993. Visits by a missionary and a Pakistani Christian worker were made to his village (about 75 miles from Hyderabad). The convert was ostracized and persecuted by his family, but is still in touch with the Christian workers in the city. Lawrence (1996) mentioned a furniture shop owner who became interested in Scriptures and began a serious study with him. After about a year when presented with the question of what he would do with this Jesus, he made his decision to follow Christ.
Naaman (1996) mentioned a Sindhi Muslim who was in love with a Punjabi Christian girl. The girl told him strongly that he had to accept Christ before their marriage. Their relationship went public among the Christians. Both Sharon and Mohammed were ostracized by the Christian and Muslim relatives. When Naaman arrived in Sukkur as a new pastor, the elders approached him with this new problem in the church. The elders told him clearly that this couple would never be accepted in the community as they had brought disgrace to them. It is important to note that Sharon and Mohammed had been friendly for the past 10 years before Naaman came into the picture. After much prayer and meeting with Mohammed for the next 2 years, he baptized him and married them. This was done at Naaman’s home in secrecy. They are now living happily in Sindh.

Lawrence (1996) also mentioned that there were instances when some Sindhis came to his own home and informed him about their interest in Christ. But further contacts revealed that some were sent by underground Muslim organizations to investigate the activities of missionaries and were not sincere. “Moreover, when faced with the reality of leaving their families and joining the lower caste and class (sweeper, also called Churas of Punjabi Christians was too much of a barrier for them” (Brown 1996).

Question 7 asked, “What factors played an important part in these Christian conversions?”

The most important factors include:

1. The teaching of the Word of God and the receiving of it as His authoritative message.
2. A sensitive and patient messenger (Brown, Lawrence 1996)

3. The example of the evangelist (Naaman 1996).

Five informants identified number 1, two number 2, and only one number 3. I would say the most important factor was clearly the teaching of the Word of God. The informants identified other significant factors as well. Brown (1996) and Lawrence (1996) mentioned the importance of a sensitive and patient messenger, a response very similar to Naaman’s (1996) example of the evangelist. “Contact with those who called themselves Christians had an important influence on the decision making” (David 1996, Paul 1996). Naaman mentioned an incident in which the example of the evangelists was decisive. Ali came to the Lord in 1953. Before this he was a magician. He left these things when he met Naaman. His wife was very sick. The family was tired of spending money on village doctors. When Naaman prayed for her, she was healed. Many times when visiting Sindhi villages Naaman was mocked and treated badly as he was accompanied by Ali. This left a lasting impression on Ali. One day Naaman and Ali were in a village and the villagers gave them the filthiest place to sleep, which also served as an outhouse for some. Naaman gladly accepted and slept in that place. The next morning the host was so touched by their lives that he gave his life to Christ (Naaman 1996).

Paul (1996) mentioned that his sensitivity in wearing the Sindhi cap as he preached was very much appreciated. This sensitivity was important for Sindhi seekers. Paul continues stating that:

Face to face interaction with a Christian worker who could carefully and lovingly explain Christian doctrine and dispel the numerous misunderstandings which are wide spread is very important. This kind of trained person is essential to the
process. Contact with this kind of Christian comes after the interested person has made some progress to serious inquiry. (Paul 1996)

Lawrence, David, Brown and Paul all mentioned that hospitality was another factor that made a great impact on Sindhi conversions. Paul (1996) mentioned that Asif and Khalid came to the Lord through a number of contacts with himself. Brown (1996) mentioned that emphasis on prayer in USA daily for the Sindhis made a great impact on their ministry in Sindh. “There were people who prayed for us on a daily basis sometimes engaging in whole night prayers” (Brown 1998). Paul mentioned, “Fasting for me was very important in my ministry to Sindhi Muslims. Fasting also helped me in the process of taking a Sindhi Muslim through the process of conversion” (Paul 1996).

Naaman further mentioned:

Some Sindhis saw Jesus in their visions and dreams and the next day came to me for clarification. My affirmation that Jesus does appear in visions and dreams and communicates through them made a tremendous impact on these Sindhi Muslims. I shared how I met Jesus several times in my life in visions and dreams. This made a solid bond with my Sindhi Muslim brothers who later became Christians. (Naaman 1996)

Question 8 asked, “What factors do you think are obstacles to the Church of Pakistan in evangelizing and witnessing to Sindhi Muslims?” There were five major responses to this question.

Lawrence (1996) mentioned “a serious attitude of distrust (which can escalate to hatred) of all Muslims as a group, and individuals. Actually many Christians have close friends who are Muslims, but an unknown individual Muslim is usually not trusted.”

Paul (1996) answered, “There is a weakness in doctrine and ability to share their faith. Many members of the Church of Pakistan churches are not clear about the doctrine
of sin and salvation. They often are not able to articulate clearly the steps an inquirer must take to find new birth in Christ.”^12

Brown (1996) stated, “A majority of Church of Pakistan members may believe that Muslims cannot really and truly be born-again. This expresses itself in an attitude which says any inquirer or convert must have some ulterior motive.”^13

Naaman mentioned, “A corporate unwillingness to accept ‘Sindhi inquirers or converts’ into the full life of the church. Because so much of the Church of Pakistan ‘culture’ is related to Punjabi culture, it is very difficult for the Church of Pakistan congregations to truly receive and accept an ethnic Sindhi Muslim” (Naaman 1996). “The Church is an extension of a biraderi system”^14 (Brown 1996). “The Punjabi Christians are not willing to change their language, ways and customs to adopt Sindhi culture, and they expect the new Sindhi believers to accept their cultural norms and language” (Paul 1996).

---

^12It is not our purpose to examine the doctrine of sin and salvation of the Church of Pakistan, nor do we conclude that they do not have the ability to articulate it for others. Our point here is that our informants feel this way. The Church of Pakistan does not emphasize a personal need to respond to Christ strongly. Personal invitation to accept Christ is usually presented in once a year revival meetings.

^13Readers may wonder, given the cost of conversion from Islam to Christianity, how any Muslim would have ulterior motive for becoming a Christian. It is, nevertheless, a fact that Muslims may claim to be interested in the Gospel or even to have become Christian in order to obtain gifts and protection from Christians or even spy on Christians. For example 3 Muslims were sent to our home by the Muslim movement in the late 1960s. They stayed 6 months in our home as family members, then stole all my father’s good Christian books from his library. They then went to the court and made public statements that they were Muslims, thus rescinding their earlier profession of faith. This means that the profession of Christianity was a deliberate act to spy on my father’s ministry.

^14 See chapter 3 for a detailed discussion about the biraderi system.
There is lack of sensitivity on the part of the Church of Pakistan towards Sindhi culture, language and customs.

“But the biggest problem for the Church of Pakistan is that it is not ready to face hardship. We are finding some compromising ways to have a comfortable time. We are finding excuses for ourselves. We blame each other for the lack of Sindhi conversions.” Naaman further mentioned, “The foreign liturgy, ways of worship, songs and music are also great hindrances” (Naaman 1996).

Paul (1998) commented, “The Church of Pakistan has no vision and plan to reach the Sindhi Muslims. Their whole effort is reaching tribal Hindus and maintaining Punjabi congregations, but they have no plan to reach 14 million Sindhis.”

Naaman, moreover, mentioned that Sindhis are homebodies. “They feel home sick even if they have to leave their family or village for a day. They need family type treatment by the Church, which the Church has not been able to provide.” Naaman (1996) further stated, “The Church of Pakistan has no substitute in their system which can function as a pir\(^{15}\) for Sindhi Muslims. Since all Sindhi Muslims have a pir, when they become Christian they have a great void because this aspect of their spiritual life is not there anymore.” Paul (1996) notes that the Church of Pakistan has priests who use Church of England liturgy, The Book of Common Prayer, and a worship style that includes sitting on benches, and men and women together. All this is totally foreign to a Sindhi Muslim.

---

\(^{15}\) See chapter 3 for a detailed discussion on pir.
Question 9 asked, “What factors are essential for the Church of Pakistan to be effective in its evangelistic witness to Sindhi Muslims?” Our informants mentioned several items, which can be summarized as follows:

The most important fact would be to develop true acceptance of Sindhi converts among average laypersons (Naaman, David, Lawrence, and Paul 1996). Lawrence further mentioned the support for any effort to reach out to Sindhi Muslims, and the absolute willingness of the local congregation to accept the converts in a genuine way. “This ‘change of cultural values’ is a must before any kind of effort at serious outreach could be started. Clergy and lay people have to sign-on, own the effort in every aspect and at every level” (David 1996).

“There needs to be a serious education effort to instruct the lay person and clergy in how to witness to and overcome Muslim misconceptions. All active adult members should be instructed; a select number should be given special training in ‘drawing the net’ (David 1996).

“More in-depth teaching for all adult members into the ‘cultural value system’ of the true ethnic Sindhi Muslim is vital” (Brown 1996). “The Church has a ‘Punjabi’ value system which is more free in having interaction between males and females. This is somewhat different and based in their Hindu background. Thus, many misconceptions arise when dealing with ethnic Sindhi Muslims” (Paul 1996). Naaman mentioned, “The Church of Pakistan in Sindh has to be more welcoming and hospitable. The church in Sindh has to become ‘church with action,’ not only giving lip service” (Naaman 1996).
Question 10 asked, “Imagine you were hired by the Church of Pakistan today and asked to suggest strategies that will make it effective in its evangelistic witness to Sindhi Muslims. What would you suggest? List as many suggested strategies as possible with a brief explanation for each.” Responses are listed below:

Naaman mentioned, “A serious effort has to be made to get the clergy from Bishops down to really ‘buy into’ the concept of Sindhi Muslim evangelism. If the clergy are not on board, then the whole thing will fail” (Naaman 1996).

Paul emphasized, “we need to have more training of lay people in reaching Sindhis, with the sincere and enthusiastic approval of the clergy-a comprehensive effort to instruct all active adult lay people in reaching Sindhi Muslims” (Paul 1996).

David mentioned that people should not depend on foreign missionaries to reach Sindhi Muslims. “The clergy need to be fully involved in each local congregation, and some of them need to be ‘in training’ to extend the teaching and value reorientation beyond the visit of a foreign missionary or specialist who would initiate the effort” (David 1996).

Lawrence focused on the importance of literature and media. “Preparation of very focused and culturally sensitive literature is needed. Other print media should be used, as well as radio and TV, to the extent they are available. We need to train the local missionaries in the use of such literature and other mass media tools” (Lawrence 1996).

Brown further mentioned that “we need to develop among all members the awareness of others who are reaching out to Sindhi Muslims and seek ways to help and make use of the resources these people have” (Brown 1996).
Naaman suggested we need "some kind of spiritual emphasis (revival) meetings for each congregation so as to open hearts to the power of the Holy Spirit. This would include serious prayer times focusing on the needs and opportunities for Sindhi Muslim outreach" (Naaman 1996).

All the former missionaries mentioned that we need to have a 'safe house' for converts. This will be a house where the Muslim converts can come when they are persecuted or kicked out from their families. Lawrence commented, "There must be a place with a truly open, caring and practical helping environment for Sindhi converts who will be put out of their culture and families. This should be modeled after other successful places already in operation in Pakistan. It does need ethnic Sindhis either to be actually running it, or giving very close hands-on guidance to its operation" (Lawrence 1996).

Paul mentioned the need of openness among the local Christians. "An openness is needed, again including all levels of clergy and lay persons, to the possibility of 'Sindhi Muslim Convert' worshiping groups. Such groups may function for a longer or shorter period of time, although the ultimate goal is total integration into the life of the Church [i.e., join a Punjabi church]. It is often essential for some new believers to have an environment which is 'non established-Church' for a time" (Paul 1996).16 "This is a critical area, and relates to the speed and degree of change accomplished in the various congregations, who will ultimately be the Church family for new converts" (Naaman 1996).

---

16Paul is a Western missionary who tends to use the word "group." As an Easterner I would tend to prefer the term "fellowship." Fellowship is preferred because it communicates to us more harmony, oneness and warmth than the word "group."
Question 11 asked, “How should the Church (accept, disciple or teach) new Church members?” All five respondents mentioned that the *ekklesia*, meaning the local body of “called out believers,” should assimilate each newborn babe in Christ as newcomers into the fellowship of the family of God. Though Naaman also stated that, “the Church in its present shape and form is not willing or open to accept the Sindhi Muslims” (Naaman 1996). Paul mentioned, “Because Sindhi culture (and to large extent Punjabi culture also) is family oriented, some kind of linkage with Church families is vital. This is again a very tricky and difficult consideration, but also very important” (Paul 1996). Brown further said, “Also total openness of all in the Church with an evident demonstration of trust are absolute essentials. This does not mean naivete, or lack of spiritual discernment” (Brown 1996). Finally David and Lawrence mentioned that helping Church members to learn to accept, love and be transparent with new converts is very important, as is a wise observant discernment (David, Lawrence 1996, 1998).

Question 12 asked, “What follow-up is essential for these new converts?” The informants reported the following. Because Muslims (including ethnic Sindhi Muslims) are trained to live life by the rules, Paul (1996) recommended a standardization church polity. “Do not contradict one another from congregation to congregation.” David further mentioned, “one on one (or a very a small group) teaching is very important. Listening carefully and sympathetically to the questions of new converts is essential” (David 1996). Lawrence mentioned, “One must answer their questions. They need to have as well, the reinforcement of the godly lives of Church members” (Lawrence 1996). Hypocrisy is one
of the serious charges leveled at the Church in Pakistan, and not without reason (Naaman, Lawrence 1996).

All five respondents emphasized that getting new converts active in the work of the Church is very important. The questions of when and where and how to give baptism will have to be worked out by the clergy and lay leaders, but as anyone knows, baptism is the “badge” of a Christian. When to have the new believer put it on is a very difficult decision.

Naaman recommends, “New converts be reached in their own homes. They should not be expected to come to the church building.” They should be encouraged to establish their own fellowships (separate from the Church of Pakistan’s present structure) among themselves” (Naaman 1996).

Lawrence stated that, “the Church of Pakistan demands high standards for these new converts and there are many who act like ‘judges’ to accept or reject a convert. They do not try to understand the new believers” (Lawrence 1996). “The Church of Pakistan is not willing to accept the Sindhi Muslims even to attend the Church service, so the question of discipling or teaching does not exist-- at least not within the church” (Naaman 1998).

Question 13 asked, “How can these new converts become a part of the life and witness of the Church of Pakistan?” Here again there are two different opinions. For Paul and Lawrence, every convert should be encouraged to seek out three or more persons he or she knows to be a believer in Christ, and to share with them their newly formed faith in Christ and tell of their joy in becoming that person’s brother/sister. They must be
encouraged to pray for the salvation of others in their immediate family and friends who do not know Christ. “Each new convert must be taught to lead others to Christ’ (Paul 1998). It is good for new converts to seek out a prayer partner and pray together for persons they are seeking to win. Perhaps the pastor can be encouraged to go with members of the Church in such a team effort. There is no joy like that of being a soul winner and the joy of seeing new babes in Christ in the fellowship of Christ (Paul 1998; Lawrence 1998).

On the other hand, Naaman (1996), mentioned, “No methodology can be adopted for this purpose. If a person is really converted to the Lord, and has committed his/her life to Him who has called them, he or she will automatically join the Church of God. But it will be helpful if the existing Church has a welcoming attitude.”

Question 14 asked, “Should new converts be used in the Church of Pakistan’s witness to Sindhi Muslims? If yes, how? If no, why not?” To this the overall opinion was yes, they should be used to witness to the Gospel. Paul (1996) further mentioned, “The first aim should be to win their entire family (even extended family). This requires very careful approaches, and in fact every situation will be different from every other one.” “It seems that too often in the past we have been able to win a young person to Christ, but have not been able to extend the Gospel to the whole family. This failure on our part needs to be addressed” (Naaman 1996). David said, “Often there are ‘hidden agendas’ on the part of the serious inquirer. That should be discovered and a different approach used, so that the inquiry is based mostly on spiritual need” (David 1996). “However, we should even at an early stage, seek to get the senior ‘decision maker’ of the family involved in the
Gospel (evangelistic) teaching, or at least make sure that those senior people are not totally against the inquiry being made” (Brown 1996).

“New converts do need the support of ‘like-minded’ new believers” (Naaman 1996). It is for this reason that Paul mentioned the possibility of “new convert fellowships.” David stated, “This may seem to some like a false or anti-biblical approach. However, it seems that there is ample New Testament evidence for both diversity and unity. It needs to be done very carefully with extensive oversight and the realization that the ultimate goal is true oneness in Christ” (David 1996).

Lawrence summarized his thoughts that the Sindhi convert has firsthand news and can be more inspiring than a person with secondhand news. “The only problem with the Church of Pakistan has been that people were brought in from other areas of Pakistan with no local language, and with Western training. This has not worked well. The local convert should be trained and given a chance to serve the Lord and help the newly established Church in Sindh [i.e., the Church of Pakistan]” (Naaman 1996). For further discussion see Chapter 6.

**Category B- Muslim Converts**

Our next interviews were done with Muslim converts to Christianity. Out of ten known converts at the time, I was able to interview five. Converts ranged in age from 26-64 approximately.

Question 1 asked, “Describe how you became Christian?” Asif, Khalid and Aftab (1996) reported that Bible correspondence courses and literature distribution played a major role in their conversion. For Ali and Sadiq (1996) Jesus appeared to them in
dreams and visions. In one case, Asif was working in a shop when two foreign missionaries visited him and gave him a Sindhi Bible. He reported, "I was very intrigued to see these foreigners speaking Sindhi" (Asif 1996). His father was a government official. There were two sons in his home and four sisters. The father died when Asif was twenty-two and after four years his mother also died. The economical situation at home was good as long as the father lived. The two sons were in no need of work at that time.

Asif opened a furniture shop when his father died. Some missionaries came there to get their furniture repaired and having noticed that the shopkeeper was a literate man, advised Asif to enroll in Bible correspondence school. A friendship with these missionaries was initiated. At the same time his mother died, and his sisters were all married, so he was left completely alone. Asif was not able to run the shop anymore. He did not know what to do and became sad and worried.

At the same time Asif was studying the Bible, "I saw the truth about myself. I became convinced there was no other name than that of Jesus Christ by which man can find salvation. The idea of sacrifice in the Bible made a deep impact on me" (Asif 1996). He further mentioned, "After this a big change took place in me, not at once, but certainly slowly, then I accepted Christ" (Asif 1996).

Sadiq grew up in rural Sindh. He was a faithful Muslim. His father was the leader in the local mosque. He reported about a visit to Karachi, "I saw a picture of a man who was on the cross and asked my friend if we could visit this shop" (Sadiq 1996). When they entered the shop, the manager explained that the picture was of Jesus. Sadiq asked this man, "Why was Jesus on the cross?" "He later gave me a book and I learned that
Jesus was the resurrection and life” (Sadiq 1996). Sadiq returned to his village and then a missionary came with some tracts. He got the tracts and started Bible correspondence courses. After he finished the courses, he met the missionary and studied further about the Bible. Then after some years he accepted the Lord.

Aftab comes from a strong religious background with generations of Muslim leaders. His background is Sunni Muslim. He was studying in a Muslim school to become a Muslim cleric. One day some missionaries came to a nearby village with the “Jesus” film. He asked his principal if some of his friends could go and see this movie and argue with the team. Before the movie began Aftab started asking questions, but the team leader requested him to watch the movie and after that he would be glad to answer the questions. As the movie began, Aftab mentioned, “I became very restless and was challenged to see the life of Christ versus the life of Mohammed. Christ’s miracles and resurrection made a great impact on me” (Aftab 1996). He asked the missionary for further materials. After graduating from Islamic school he came back to his village in Sindh, but he felt very uneasy. He started reading the Bible. “One night,” he reported, “Jesus appeared to me in a vision and said, ‘I am the truth, the way and the life.’ I got scared and woke up. After some time I became a Christian with the help of a foreign missionary” (Aftab 1996).

Question 2 asked, “What were your previous religious beliefs/experiences?” All of the informants come from strong religious backgrounds. Unlike many secularized Muslims, these were very devoted Muslims. All read the Qur’an faithfully, went to the mosque regularly, and one of them served as imam (cleric) of a village mosque. They all had their pirs to whom they went for council and help in the time of spiritual need. Sadiq
mentioned, “I used to get very sick after reading the Qur'an which really disturbed me, but I still continued my Quranic studies” (Sadiq 1996). Aftab mentioned, “I was not treated nicely by my peers and family and this left a scar on me” (Aftab 1996).

Question 3 asked, “What attracted you to Christianity?” Aftab and Sadiq mentioned that the importance of Jesus as the savior and healer appealed to them. Also when they realized that Jesus came to this earth to save them from eternal hell to give them life, that was a blessing. Asif (1996) mentioned, “Total assurance that I will be in heaven made me joyful.” Ali (1996) stressed that “the love of Christians was a great factor in my conversion. The consistency, honesty, love and care of Christians was also important.” Aftab (1996) went through very bitter experiences after he became a Christian. Aftab mentioned that a person who cannot find a job becomes a pastor. “Many are not called and lack sincerity in meeting Sindhi Muslims. Internal conflicts have plagued the Church of Pakistan. Every leader is busy in making money and exploiting foreign resources.” Sadiq (1996) further commented, “One has to be closely related to one of the bishops in order to have a hearing in the local Churches. Money has become their god, and they take pride in their wealth. They feed their own families and extended families while neglecting the poor and needy people. People who have no vision to reach the Sindhis have become leaders.”

Question 4 asked, “What person(s) was/were instrumental in your becoming a Christian? (Please list the role of each of these persons in your life and type of position held by each person).” All of these converts have been led to Christ by foreign missionaries with the exception of one who was led by a national missionary, a former
Punjabi Muslim himself who served with the Church of Pakistan for over 40 years. The missionaries served the converts as mentors, guides and families on all occasions. Ali said that “the home of the local missionary was like a safe nest for me, whenever I was depressed I stayed with my missionary” (Ali 1996). Their homes were open to them and the converts were discipled one on one by them. They were encouraged to read the Scripture and keep a pure and holy life. The converts stayed in the missionaries’ homes eating with them and traveling with them to local villages. The discipleship process lasted for years. One convert was encouraged to go to a local Bible school where he got the passion to further his knowledge. He later received his Masters in Sindhi literature and worked with the media office for many years. Missionaries also arranged his marriage. He married a Punjabi Christian girl. They have been married for more than 20 years. Some of the converts also met each other at different occasions so they were reminded that they were not alone, but this happened a good bit of time after their conversion. A former Muslim who was his friend led one of the converts to the Lord. This person was later discipled by a missionary.

Question 5 asked, “Of the above persons instrumental in your becoming a Christian, how many of those are Church leaders, Church members, friends, medical workers, school teachers or others?” Ali commented, “Only the missionaries played an important role in my life.” For the remaining four, one Church leader who was a convert himself (mentioned above), four Church members, one friend, one medical worker and Bible correspondence workers and missionaries.
Question 6 asked, “What role did the people of the Church of Pakistan play in your becoming a Christian?” Four converts had a strong “none” for this. Only one mentioned the local national missionary who was also a pastor of the Church of Pakistan. He himself was a convert. Interestingly the convert had to come in the middle of the night to be baptized and married and this news was kept a secret for a long time (Naaman 1996).

Question 7 asked, “What specific thing happened to you that led you to consider the Christian faith as your faith?” I will mention each response. Sadiq (1996) mentioned, “I got peace when I read the Bible, before this I used to be worried and scared. After I started reading the Bible all my worries stopped.” Asif (1996) mentioned, “I used to be sad and depressed. The message of salvation gave hope and joy.” Aftab (1996) said, “I had a vision and dream of Jesus appearing to me, so one day I went to the local missionary and explained my situation. After many months I became a Christian.” For Khalid (1996) the friendship of a former Muslim helped him to accept Christ, as both were close friends. Khalid saw a major change in his friend’s life and he wanted to find out how his friend could become so good. The Christian message gave Khalid peace and hope with assurance to go to heaven. For Ali (1996) the life and testimony of a former Muslim convert helped him to accept the Christian message.

Question 8 asked, “Were there some external factors that made you more receptive to the Christian faith? If yes, please check all that apply: sickness, death of a loved one, education, political instability and other?” For four of the converts, sickness and family problems led them to Christ. Their family members did not accept them. Many Muslims mocked them. One went through hunger and despair and was emotionally
One’s father always mistreated him. So these went through a lot of emotional trauma before they came to the Lord. One, on the other hand, was led to the Lord by the consistency of his girlfriend. She remained faithful to him despite family pressures and difficulties. He was touched by her love for the Lord and this played a major role in his becoming a Christian.

Question 9 asked, “What part did the Bible play in your becoming a Christian?”

Asif (1996) mentioned, “I learned about the Gospel and Jesus through the Bible. It is the source of guidance, peace and instruction for righteousness.” Sadiq learned much from the Bible Correspondence courses. Aftab came to the Lord after getting the Bible and studying it with a critical mind to debate the Christians, but in his study he discovered that it had a message of life. Ali (1996) mentioned, “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Asif (1996) further commented, “Bible is the word of God, it is the truth.”

Question 10 asked, “Prior to becoming a Christian, what circumstance (political, social, economic or other barriers) or person, if any, kept you from becoming a Christian?” For Ali (1996) there was no political pressure. In fact he was very active in politics which helped him to minister to Sindhi politicians after his conversion. Asif (1996) mentioned, “The major social barrier was becoming a sweater Christian.” All five converts faced this problem and it was very difficult to get over this barrier. Khalid (1996) mentioned that “99% of Christians in Pakistan are sweepers, in fact the original Christians are sweepers.” Also if they became Christian, they were expected to leave their Sindhi language and traditions. The Punjabi Church was not open to them and they had a very
difficult time getting adjusted to this new social class and environment. They were looked upon with suspicion from Sindhi Muslims as well as Punjabi Christians. They were mistrusted, abused, beaten and at times had to face thorough investigation by the Muslims. The real persecution came from Muslim clerics who spoke against them openly, and their Muslim families had to face this opposition also. It was a very painful thought that they would become second-class citizens after enjoying majority status and respect. This really brought a lot of emotional trauma and depression. "The lukewarm attitude of Christians within the church was a difficult thing to accept" (Ali 1996).

Economically, it would be difficult to find a job as the word got around fast that they had deserted Islam. Khalid (1996) mentioned that the local national missionary Naaman after leading him to the Lord had to appear before a Sindh government hearing in which he was asked to show the investigator the baptism register, which he refused to do. Khalid was transferred to a remote area. All this created economic problems. All five faced difficulties but still took the step of accepting Christ.

Question 11 asked, "Did you have a meaningful opportunity to hear and respond to Christian faith?" All heard a clear presentation of the Gospel not once but many times. The patience, love and trust of missionaries and long hours of discussion with prayer played a major role in their conversions.

Question 12 asked, "How did you overcome these obstacles or negative influences, if any, to become a Christian?" Ali (1996) mentioned, "The reading of the Bible was very crucial and important for me." All were fervent in prayers. Asif (1996) said, "I always avoided arguments with the Muslims who wanted to debate with me and
Punjabi Christians who mistrusted me.” Sadiq (1996) said, “I never gave up hope and depended on the Lord to give me eternal peace.” They met together at missionaries’ homes whenever possible and shared their problems and joys. They had come to the thinking that perhaps the local Christians would never accept them. Giving their testimony to Christians gave them a great joy, and baptism played a major role in giving the assurance that they had made the right decision.

Question 13 asked, “Are you a member of a local Church? If so, what was the process you went through to join the local Church?” All replied that the local Punjabi Church had not accepted them as Christians so to become a member was out of the question.

Question 14 asked, “Would you consider yourself a growing Christian?” All responded in a positive manner. Compared to the past they have grown a lot in their faith.

Question 15 asked, “What helps you in your growth? If so, in what ways?” Khalid (1996) mentioned, “Putting my life on the cross, guidance of the Holy Spirit, the example of Christ’s life and trying to live by Christ’s commands have helped me grow.” Sadiq (1996) mentioned, “Reading the Bible, witnessing, prayers, living on a true path, dying to self and fellowship with other converts are important for me.” One convert had very bitter experiences. Aftab (1996) mentioned, he feels empty, as he was not treated well by missionaries. He feels rejected. A few missionaries come to Sindh for vacations. “They live in fancy homes, enjoy the servants and exploit the Muslims. I felt unfortunate to accept Christ. I felt I was being used.” After years of Christian life the people have deserted him. When he had talents and energy he got praises from everyone, but now he
has no friends as those missionaries are gone. He left his home and family and committed social and economic suicide. Aftab (1996) further mentioned, “A Muslim commits suicide when he or she accepts Christ in Sindh or Pakistan, but that person never realizes the outcome of his/her conversion.” This is due to the fact that, “ninety nine percent of Muslims revert back to Islam after they see the inner life of the Church and its members.”

Question 16 asked, “What hinders your growth? If nothing, why not?” Asif (1996) mentioned “there was no growth, so there was no question of hindrance.” The rest of the four felt Satan’s opposition in the shape of temptations to go back. Ali (1996) mentioned that pressure from family members has been a very difficult thing for him. He further mentioned that, “Loneliness as a young man is hard to address. At times I feel there is no one to share my heart with. It is difficult to find a Christian wife. I am so depressed about the future and the fear of having no kids.” Sadiq (1996) said, “even after trying my best, the non-acceptance from the Church of Pakistan and Punjabi Christians is very painful. Hypocrisy in the local Church is difficult to understand.” Aftab (1996) said, “there is no pir whom I can go to in spiritual drought and difficulty.” Missionaries are fine but still the informants felt uncomfortable to communicate these factors to the missionaries, as they would not understand. Khalid (1996) mentioned that he has really struggled in his Christian life. “High expectations on the part of missionaries and local Christians for me to become righteous overnight is confusing.” All mentioned that growth takes time.

Sindhi converts are very attuned to the inner life of the church because of their training and long history in spiritual or Sufi Islam. Thus conflict and coldness in the Church of Pakistan would repel them.
Khalid (1996) and Ali (1996) mentioned the nation of Israel and how God was patient with them.

Question 17 asked, “How has the Christian faith helped to meet your needs? Be specific?” All the five converts mentioned that the guidance of the Holy Spirit was the most important factor. Khalid (1996) further stressed, “Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit I would have gone back to Islam.” Asif mentioned that total dependence on the Lord helped and released them from fear. Prayer played an important role also (Asif 1996). Sadiq (1996) mentioned, “To know that God cares for each and every aspect of my personal life was very affirming.” Fellowship with other believers and training to be God’s servant helped them. Most of the time Punjabi Christians have not accepted them, but on one occasion a Punjabi Christian family gave their daughters to marry these Sindhi Muslim converts. The missionaries arranged this. So they are thankful for a small minority of Punjabi who are born-again believers and serve the Lord faithfully.

Question 18 asked, “If you were giving suggestions to the Church of Pakistan as to how they could be more effective in evangelizing Sindhi Muslims what would they be?” Aftab (1996) mentioned that “I would never allow the Sindhi community to go in the fire of hell.” Asif (1996) stated, “The Church of Pakistan has no vision for Sindhis. They will never change their Punjabi languages and customs so there is no point in thinking about reaching Sindhis through the Church of Pakistan.” The remaining members mentioned that it has to start from the leader or pastor of the local church. If the pastor is sold out to
to reach Sindhis, his congregation will get behind him. Khalid (1996) further mentioned, "The Gospel should be presented in a more culturally sensitive way, not inviting Sindhis to Western styles of worship with Western songs. They are so foreign to us. They have to start thinking about following a pir. When we do not have a pir, we are lost." Ali (1996) mentioned that, "The pastor at times does not understand us when we share our needs with him. Maybe he did not learn this in his training which he received from his Church." Sadiq (1996) said, "The Church must love Sindhis with an open heart as Christ loved His people. The Church of Pakistan may start separate fellowships for Sindhis in which they will feel at home."

Question 19 asked, "What should the Church of Pakistan stop doing or do in order to attract Sindhi Muslims to Jesus and His Church?" All informants mentioned that they have no hope that the Church of Pakistan will have any burden for Sindhi Muslims. Aftab (1996) said, "As long as the church is controlled by the Punjabis we have no hope unless something dramatic happens, maybe Jesus personally appears to Punjabis and ask them to reach the Sindhis." Khalid (1996) mentioned, "the Church must act rightly with love before them and greet them warmly, then speak of Christ. How can they claim to be Christians and not accept Muslim converts?"

Category C- Sindhi Muslims

In this segment I describe the results of our interviews with the Sindhi Muslims. I would like to make this clear that the people who responded to the questions were my

18 In the Church of Pakistan as well as in other missions only men are pastors or leaders of congregations.
family friends. They had known my family for many years. Initially, at the very beginning of this process, it was difficult to get details. However after I mentioned that their names would not be used and I was in the United States writing my dissertation, they felt free to be interviewed. Furthermore I mentioned that they should feel free to say what they wanted as they were interviewed by me. I stressed that they could take me as a stranger and answer freely without any bias. I interviewed three men and two women for this section. They were basically workers, housewives and college students. Another point to note is that, in the translation of material from Urdu and Sindhi languages, I have used “we” for the first person reflecting the Sindhi usage. These were group interviews in 1996 and 1998. I did these twice because I wanted to have as much data as possible for my studies. Zahida (1996,1998) answered some of the questions pertaining to her brother’s conversion outside the group interview.

Question 1 asked, “You are a Sindhi Muslim. What are some of your beliefs?” All had basically the same answers. They believe in Allah and the prophet Muhammad as the final prophet and the Qur’an as the final revelation. All agreed on the five pillars of Islam. Four out of five of them had a Sindhi pir as their spiritual leader to whom they went for spiritual guidance. All were highly influenced by Sufi Islam. In Chapter 2 the likely dimensions of the Sufi Islam of Sindhi Muslims was identified and described.

Question 2 asked, “What is your understanding of Christian faith?” Tahir (1996) mentioned that, “Christianity is a Western religion which believes in three gods. Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Christians believe that Jesus is the son of God which is the greatest sin one can commit, i.e., putting partners with God.” Badar (1996) mentioned,
“There is no strong discipline in Christian faith. No one keeps the law and fasts. It seems it is a free religion. All are free to do whatever they desire, then ask forgiveness.”

Shahida (1996) mentioned, “Christians have very little fear of God. Look at the Western media and all the garbage in it. Everyone in the West is Christian, yet they do not fear God and obey his laws.”

Question 3 asked, “What images come to your mind when the word ‘Christian’ is mentioned? Is there a dominant image? If so, why is this your dominant image?” Our respondents shared that the word “Christian” itself is a foreign word. Tahir (1996) mentioned, “We think all Christians are under the influence of Satan. The West is Satan and what we see in Western movies is satanic. The way women show their bodies and exhibit no respect for human life is a sin.” Badar (1998) said, “We also remember the Crusades and more recently the Western domination in the Gulf. Western people are even present in the most holy places of Islam in Saudi Arabia.” Farukh (1996) mentioned, “They are dominant in all the fields and it seems they want to dominate everyone. Western missionaries are not different. They rule us in the name of Christianity. To sum up, Christianity is a Western religion as is shown from its worship places and language that is used” (Farukh 1996). Farukh (1996, 1998) continued, “We got rid of the British and the colonial powers, but we still see their presence in the form of these sweater Christians who may have accepted Christianity hoping to be accepted by us Muslims.”

Tahir (1998) further commented:

We have this as a dominant image because from the beginning missionaries worked among the poor ‘untouchables’ who skinned the dead and were not part of the Hindu society even before Islam came. Missionaries work among the people who have a slave mentality and who do not want to be freed. If they show any desire to
come out of this situation, they are discouraged thinking that the missionaries will not be happy. So we have this new kind of colonialism, i.e., keeping poor Christians in poverty.

Question 4 asked, “What image(s) come to your mind when you hear the phrase “Church of Pakistan?” To this Farukh (1996) stated, “I think of the big Churches in the cities and people who belong to them as all sweepers. We as Sindhi Muslims have nothing to do with this colonial presence.” Badar (1996) further mentioned, “We feel it is a foreign religion or group which has nothing to offer us religiously, culturally or socially. This is a representation of the West and has nothing to do with us.” Shahida (1996) mentioned, “I am not sure what or who is the Church of Pakistan.”

Question 5 asked, “In light of your understanding of the Christian faith and your Muslim beliefs, are there any similarities between the two? If yes, what are they?” This is a complicated question, they mentioned. Badar (1996) said, “On one hand we have the same root of Abraham. On the other Christians do not accept Muhammad as the last prophet. But let us consider the similarities briefly. The virgin birth of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. We accept that the Gospel (Injil) is a heavenly book. Jesus will come again. We all want to be free from sin. We all want to have peace in Sindh and care for one another.”

Question 6 asked, “In what ways can these similarities be built upon to establish friendly relationship?” To this our informants asked, “What do I mean by Christians.” “There are no Sindhi Christians” (Shahida 1998). “The Christians we have are from Punjab and they are sweepers” (Tahir 1998). Farukh (1996) mentioned, “They are scared even from their own shadow. They come from a depressed class and society. They may meet Sindhi Muslims, but they can never be equal to us. So the question of ‘friendly
relationships’ doesn’t even arise.” The Punjabi Christians want to have relationships with Sindhis only to be elevated in social life. There are many Punjabi Christian girls who marry Sindhi Muslims, but the majority of them end up being kicked out after having children. Then there is a big barrier of language. As Punjabi people are the dominant group in Pakistan, so every Sindhi hates them. They feel that they have taken their rights and manipulated the political system. So socially, economically and politically there is little chance that Punjabi and Sindhis will become friends (Tahir 1996).

Question 7 asked, “Do you believe the Church of Pakistan has made a positive impact in your life or has it had little influence in your life?” The response was a big “no--no impact and no influence.” With the exception of some Christians and missionaries the Church of Pakistan or its people are out of their circle of relationships.

Question 8 asked, “If the Church of Pakistan had a positive impact in your life, please share some stories about its positive influence?” Four respondents mentioned that they have not been invited to any Church and very few Christians take the initiative to share their religion with them. So there is nothing to share. Zahida (1996) whose brother had accepted Christ said of him, “I have seen a good change in my brother’s life so I think the Christians and maybe the Church had an impact on my brother.”

Question 9 asked, “What can the Church of Pakistan do or stop doing in order to make a positive contribution to your life and/or your community?” This question deeply affected them. Badar (1996) mentioned “that the Church of Pakistan, if it has some truth, should go and tell the Sindhis what they believe in.” Tahir (1996) further commented, “They have no work among the Sindhis. They work among Punjabi sweeper Christians or
would like to see some clear sign or vision or dream to see if Christ has a message for us.”

“"We would also want to meet a former Muslim who has become a follower of Christ” (Badar 1996). “Further we would like to feel accepted by the local Christians or Church. We would like to remain Sindhi in our language, ways of worship, music, customs and traditions” (Zahida 1998). “We would certainly not feel at home in the present form of Christianity, which is totally foreign and has a stamp of colonialism” (Badar 1996). “We would love to meet genuine Christians who will accept us as we are” (Tahir 1996). “We would expect some security if our families kick us out, which is bound to happen. Will we have a home? Can we belong to the Christian ummah (religious community)? Will we be one with all the Christians worldwide? These are some of the questions which we may have for you as you ask us how can we become followers of Jesus Christ” (Farukh 1996).

Question 12 asked, “What may be the first signs or experience that you are moving in the direction of becoming a Christian?” To this they replied with humor, “When we would be willing to becoming a sweeper and eat with them” (Zahida, Shahida, Tahir, Badar and Farukh 1996,1998).

Question 13 asked, “Of the family members or friends you know, how many have become Christians and why do you think they became Christians?” Four of our respondents replied that none of their family members have become Christians, so the second part does not apply. Only one, Zahida, had a brother who had come to the Lord. This person was very religious and always wanted to read about Christianity. Somehow he received a Bible from a literature distribution team on a street and began to read. After months of reading he got more confused. Later Jesus appeared to him in a dream and
said, "I am the way, the truth, the light, follow me." Asif (1996) went to the city and found a missionary and spoke to him about his experience. Initially the missionary was very reluctant to accept his story but later he believed him. “For the next year they studied the Bible and then he became a follower of Christ” (Zahida 1998).

Question 14 asked, “Of the above how many are still Christians? Why are they still Christians? How many are not still Christians? Why?” Only one responded that she saw that Christians really loved her brother. He was happy and peaceful in his life as never before. He reads the Bible and has shared about Christ with her also. The last part of the question does not apply.

Question 15 asked, “Describe how they became Christians” Our informant shared her response above. Briefly it was his own search, the emptiness of Islam for him, and the love of his missionary that played major roles in his conversion to Christianity. Also this missionary preached in Sindhi to him. From the very beginning he told him that he would have to share his faith. So the aspect of fear was limited. This believer was so excited that he wanted to become a missionary in the Gulf states (Zahida 1998).

Question 16 asked, “How long did it take for them to become Christians? Why?” Only one could answer. It took her brother two years to become a follower of Christ. Her brother wanted to be sure that the step of conversion is not taken out of emotion, but with prayer and research. Zahida (1998) mentioned, “He also wanted to remain a Sindhi Christian.” This took some creativity and time as there was no model for the missionary to follow. “The missionary started his own worship service, totally indigenous in form
language and culture. They sat on the floor and kept the Bible above foot level. The missionary shared and did exposition from the Bible" (Zahida 1998).

Question 17 asked, “How has the society looked upon them since they became Christians?” Again only one response: The family has rejected this young man. He has been kicked out of his house; disowned from the property, abused, beaten and even attempts have been made to kill him. At times he has met his sister secretly. Zahida (1998) further mentioned, “His extended family feels that he has become a ‘sweeper’ as he has become a Christian. They hate him for the moment, but I pray that one-day they will accept him. At times his only refuge is the missionary’s home. Even the Punjabi Christians do even not accept him, which was so shocking for me. They do not trust him.”

Question 18 asked, “Have they reverted to their former religious beliefs?” Only one response, and that was no.

Question 19 asked, “Have they mixed their new Christian belief with their former religion?” Zahida (1998) mentioned that her brother does meet with his pir who is a Muslim. “This Muslim pir is very open and happy that one of his followers has found truth. Though my brother wonders whether he will ever have a Christian pir who will be able to understand him more deeply.” He has tried to share this idea with his missionary friend, but has always been told that Christianity does not believe in pirs. This is the only example, which she could mention. “Otherwise my brother is a solid follower of Christ” (Zahida 1998).
got was in the words of Tahir (1996), “If they have a thing so precious why don’t they let people know.” “It seems that the people who belong to the Church of Pakistan themselves are not sure what they believe in, so they are afraid to tell. Secondly they have to do something about their ‘sweeper’ status” (Badar 1996). Shahida (1996) mentioned, “No one wants to become a ‘sweeper’ in order to become a follower of Christ.” “The Christians will have to get rid of these massive colonial reminders which they call their Churches. They are a constant reminder that we were mistreated by the British” (Farukh 1996). Zahida (1996) mentioned, “Their Christianity has to become Sindhi in order for the Sindhis to even care to listen to them.” “They should not have bias against Sindhis. If they live in Sindh, they have to become Sindhis in their thoughts and mind. The Punjabi superiority complex will never help them.”

**Category D- Christian Workers**

The last group of respondents was Christian workers. Initially this questionnaire was sent to ten local pastors of Church the of Pakistan. No one responded. During my visit in 1996 and then again in 1998, I contacted them and received only one interview with reluctance. This contact did not complete the whole interview and plainly said, “The Church of Pakistan does not want and is not directly involved in Sindhi evangelism” (Jalal 1996). One Hindu tribal convert, Patel (1996), was gracious in answering questions. This led me to broaden my base and go to other Christians who have worked in Sindh and who agreed to give their thoughts. These included people from parachurch organizations (Khokhar, Haq, and Mark 1996). I have also included the remarks of a foreign missionary (Roy 1996, 1998) who is presently working with Sindhi Muslims, though he does not
belong to the Church of Pakistan. His ministry has been very successful over the past years, so his comments are important and are included in this section. I also interviewed a lay woman (Tabitha 1996, 1998) who, though she has not been affiliated with any Christian organization directly, has been involved in the medical field as a physician and lay Christian worker for the past 15 years and has a burden to see Sindhis come to the Lord. This provides a woman’s perspective also for our study. Her responses are included from question 10 onward. I collected all the data in this section in response to the questionnaire and a personal interview.

Question 1 asked, “What is your ethnic background?” Three were Punjabi Christians working with a parachurch organization. One was a tribal Hindu convert working with the Church of Pakistan. One was a Punjabi Christian working as a medical doctor in a government hospital. A last one was an expatriate missionary not directly associated with the Church of Pakistan.

Question 2 asked, “What languages do you speak fluently?” Three respondents spoke Urdu, Punjabi and English. Patel spoke Marwari (a tribal language), and Sindhi. The other three respondents, spoke Urdu, Sindhi and English. All of these languages were used by these contacts in their evangelism.

Question 3 asked, “Why did you join the Church/organization?” Roy had a direct call. He is the son-in-law of a former missionary to Sindh. His wife grew up in Sindh and loves Sindhis. He pastored in the United States and had a great burden to reach the Sindhis for the Lord. He left for Sindh in 1989, learned Sindhi and has been working among Sindhis since then. “The overwhelming need to reach the Sindhis touched me in
the USA. There are 14 million of them. That’s why I came to Sindh” (Roy 1996, 98).

Haq (1996) stated, “In response to God’s call I felt the responsibility to evangelize the people of my country and I joined the Church.” Khokhar held an executive position in an oil company as a nominal Christian. After 20 years the Lord led him to work for an evangelical student movement (like InterVarsity in the USA). For the last 16 years he has been the head of the Pakistan Bible Society. “I am convinced that the Lord was taking me through different stages till I was selected by the board to head the work. I accepted the Lord as my Savior in 1955” (Khokhar 1996).

Question 4 asked, “Why did you join the Church/organization?” No one responded to this question.

Question 5 asked, “When and where were you first involved in Church work?”

Our informants were involved in the North West Frontier province, Punjab, Sindh, and the USA.

Question 6 asked, “Are you employed full or part time in your position in the Church/organization?” Four of our contacts were in a full time ministry as we interviewed them in 1996 and are still working. Tabitha had been working with the government of Sindh as a physician.

Question 7 asked, “What were the kinds of qualifications and gifts the Church/organization required of you?” We received a variety of responses. For Haq (1996), a good knowledge of the Bible and the Urdu language, a good moral character and a Master of Divinity degree were required. For Khokhar (1996), the knowledge of the country and Church, credibility and acceptability in the Church, Bible knowledge,
sound theological awareness, administrative gifts, ability to deal with international organizations and public relations were considered for his selection. For the rest of the respondents, a clear calling and vision for ministry were the criteria. Patel (1996) added that "my gift of preaching was identified by the local Church and they asked me to come and lead the Church."

Question 8 asked, "Do you remember your selection process? If so, please describe it for me?" The board selected one. Because he was one of the two candidates, Khokhar prayed with his family that if God wanted them in that place then there should be only one candidate. He did not wish to work with a divided board. "The other candidate withdrew when he learned that I was being considered as well and so this is how the Lord Himself led me into this ministry" (Khokhar 1996). Haq (1996) had to pass a written English language and Bible test and then appear before the board for the final selection. Mark (1996) started working in a book room, then was involved in cassette and radio ministry, finally becoming a pastor. Roy (1996) was a local pastor here in the US, went through a foreign mission board, raised support and then started working among Sindhis.


Question 10 asked, "Describe the people you work with. Are they students, professional workers or others. Please list." All our respondents worked with all these categories among Christians as well as Muslims. All four men had some kind of preaching
ministry and one primarily worked among the Sindhis. The woman was involved directly in the medical field working in a government hospital where her contact was directly with women, both Sindhis and Punjabis.

Question 11 asked, “Describe the nature of your work—evangelism, social work, medical, education and other. Please list.” Khokhar was primarily involved with the literature ministry. That included printing of Bibles and giving seminars. Haq (1996) said, “Making the Word of God available is my work.” Roy (1996) and Mark (1996) were directly involved in evangelism, one with Sindhis and the other with Hindu tribal people as well as Sindhi Muslims. Tabitha worked primarily in medical work.

Question 12 asked, “How do you feel when you approach a Muslim with the purpose of sharing the Gospel?” The informants had different thoughts. Haq (1996) mentioned, “A few years back it was no problem. But now I feel it is not an easy thing to share the Gospel with a Muslim.” Mark (1998) mentioned, “I never shared the Gospel initially. Friendship was cultivated and then followed up by the “Jesus” film and Bible studies.” Patel (1996) mentioned, “Jesus told his disciples to leave your relatives and follow me. As a former Hindu, it is difficult to take the Gospel to Muslims. Still we share Christ with them.” Khokhar (1996) responded, “I feel that the Lord is in control of the situation. It’s not my wisdom that will prevail, but the spirit of God that will convince and convict the listener. It’s a joy to share your faith in a spirit of love and care” (Khokhar 1996). Tabitha (1998) mentioned that she usually befriends women, then tells them about her background and her father’s testimony. “This really opens the door for further sharing.” She mentions how she has studied Islam from her childhood and has found it
empty. Then she shares how Christ has changed her life and how Christ can make a
difference in their lives too. She further mentioned, “I depend heavily on stories of faith in
my own life and then share how they can have peace too through Christ. I do not feel
intimidated by Muslims and stand firm on my conviction that Jesus is the only way.” She
also mentioned that “it is my firm faith and unshakable Christian attitude that brings many
inquisitive women to me.” She and three of the informants really feel burdened for
Muslims. Haq (1996) however, mentioned that, “I will not go out of my way to talk to a
Muslim; if one approaches, I will share Christ with him.”

In Sindh, men only can meet with men, clarifying why the contact used to share
only with men. Men are only welcomed in a special place of the house, which is usually
the front side. If you visit a village, men sit far from the houses under the trees or a place
called Otak, which is used to entertain men only.

Question 13, “Do you feel that a Muslim, if presented with an opportunity to
become Christian, would respond?” To this our contacts had these comments. Haq
(1996) mentioned, “I do not think a Muslim can become Christian very easily at the very
first approach.” Khokhar (1996) mentioned, “It depends on circumstances--very difficult
in our situation.” Patel (1996) said, “It will be hard for him--he will be cut off from his
relatives.” Mark (1998) strongly affirmed “yes.” He mentioned that one never knows
where a Sindhi Muslim is in his/her own spiritual life. Many times Mark has been able to
pray with them, and for them and that opened the door for further contacts. He
mentioned, “We should never doubt the power of the Holy Spirit and proclaim Jesus with
passion and assurance that He is the only way.” Tabitha (1996, 1998) responded by saying,
"Muslims will definitely respond either positively or negatively. But we still have to share the Gospel with them." One may be surprised how open a Muslim is when one shares the Gospel. The question she raised was this, "When we share, do we want our Sindhi contact to become a follower of Christ or a Western Christian? If we do not distinguish between the two, then we limit the positive response. But when we clearly make the distinction that Christianity is not a Western religion, but actually a personal relationship with God, then the response has been more acceptable, at least for further conversations."

Question 14 asked, "If your witness is rejected, do you feel it was because of the message or messenger?" Haq (1996) said, "If my witness is rejected, I would feel my audience was not prepared by the Holy Spirit." For Mark (1998) the witness could be rejected because of lack of understanding. For Patel (1996) it could be both. Either the person is not ready or is fearful of the suffering a Sindhi Muslim convert may go through. Khokhar (1996) mentioned, "Our witness could be rejected because of the messenger, although there’s an in-built antagonism for the Christian message also." Tabitha (1996, 1998) believes in the present circumstances, her witness, when it is rejected, is because the other women are too scared to accept Christianity. "There is no model for her to follow. Christianity comes with a total Western color. Christianity offers no substitute for her allegiance to the local pir. The next question asked often is, what if the Sindhi woman is kicked out of her house? Is there any way for her to hide? Who will support her?" So a lot of sociological barriers come with the Christian witness. For Sindhi women these are the pressing points after which come the message and messenger. Tabitha has been able to share a lot in her medical profession. "One has to speak, act and come across as a
Sindhi to share Christ. Otherwise they will not accept the message that we have” (Tabitha 1998). (See Chapters 2 and 6 for discussions of women’s roles).

Question 15 asked, “Do you feel you have credibility with Muslims?” Khokhar (1996) mentioned, “Yes very much so. This is important.” Haq (1996) states, “I never had any bad experience during the sharing, though my Punjabi accent surely raised some eyebrows.” Roy was very much welcomed. Sindhis were surprised that a foreigner could learn Sindhi. They welcomed him and made him feel at home. Mark (1998) mentioned, “I was always sensitive to Sindhi customs and traditions, and my home was their home.”

Tabitha (1998) mentioned that growing up in Sindh, studying with Sindhi Muslims and learning the culture has been a very important part of her credibility with Muslims. “We share our homes, food, culture and world view. We have common feelings and we love each other as humans first. Then we are Christians and Muslims.” Tabitha further mentions that she has been accepted the most when a Sindhi woman is in emotional pain and she shows her love and care. This opened many doors for Tabitha when the contact felt genuinely loved.

Question 16 asked, “How have the people benefited from your work and ministry?” Khokhar (1996) mentioned (referring to his ministry in general and not particularly among Sindhi Muslims), “They have access to the Word of God. Some have dedicated their lives for Christian work through my preaching.” For Mark (1998) “people got saved and have a new view of Christianity.” Patel (1996) mentioned, “they have the truth now about Christ—they have accepted Jesus—they are spiritually strong and have established a tribal Church.” For Tabitha, many benefited from her medical work.
Question 17 asked, "Have there been conversions as a result of your work? Why?"

Khokhar (1996) mentioned, "There are secret believers among Muslims who know the Lord through the reading of His Word. There have been many conversions among nominal Christians." Haq (1996) stated, "Not open conversions, but I believe people are being prepared to accept the Lord as a result of my ministry." Roy led several Sindhi Muslims to the Lord. He mentioned several reasons. There was emphasis on prayer back in his home country. He started ministering to Sindhis exclusively, i.e., not mixing with other Punjabi Christians. Roy (1998) mentioned, "I started preaching in Sindhi as soon as I could use the language. I spent long hours visiting the homes and inviting them to my home. Hospitality played a major role. The Western concept of 'time' and 'space' was sacrificed. I totally immersed myself and my family into Sindhi culture. I avoided arguments in discussions." Roy further mentioned, "Our initial step was to set up a homogenous Sindhi fellowship—totally indigenous in its nature, language, worship and customs. We want the Sindhis to cross as few barriers culturally as possible. This was impossible with the Punjabi Christians. So we started a fellowship for Sindhis only." He further states, "Initially if someone asked me if I am a Christian, my response was no, but I want you to follow Isa." "So we contextualized our lives, our message and our presentation of the Gospel. That is one of the reasons why some Sindhis came to the Lord" (Roy 1998). Roy states that he and his family were absolutely convinced that Sindhis can be won to Christ. This also played a very important role in their communication of the Gospel. For Tabitha, several showed interest, but never took the final step to become a follower of Christ.
Question 18 asked, “Do you disciple your converts? If so, what plan do you follow? Please share the teaching, training and strategies you use to disciple, as well as any resources used for developing a plan?” Patel (1996) visited them regularly, teaching different stories and verses from the Bible. He also arranged vacation Bible schools with the help of missionaries. Haq (1996) mentioned, “I do not disciple converts, but if anyone comes to me I guide them to the people who do discipleship. If needed, I use the Campus Crusade for Christ materials to help the seeker.” For Roy (1998), new Sindhi contacts were always told they have to go out and share their faith. This helped them to keep in touch with their families and have more opportunities to share Christ with them. He basically visited them in their homes. Roy mentioned, “Discipleship at times became complicated as not all were on the same scale academically and socially. So each believer was handled in a different way. The Bible was used specifically. No Western model was used for discipleship. It took more time and at times the meetings changed too” (Roy 1998). Roy was very flexible and patient with his contacts, and this made them more open to him. “I did not impose a set plan on them, I started when they were open to hearing.”

Question 19 asked, “Describe the barriers to discipling new converts. Please include among your barriers those that may be sociological, political and economic in nature?” Khokhar (1996) mentioned that, for Muslim converts, sociological and economical barriers are strongly felt. “A convert is always considered inferior, belonging to the poor class and is open to discrimination in every way.”

Haq (1996) says, “If a Muslim changes his religion he has to leave his job, property and family. Anyone can kill him and the convert will not get any help or defense from the
For Roy (1998) persecution also was the main point. "Only half of the converts could have a Bible at home. I spent personal time with the converts who did not have a Bible. Some of my contacts were illiterate so this complicated the situation more."

Question 20 asked, "How did you form the Church in your area? What facilitated its development? What obstacles did you overcome?" I had only one response and that was from Roy. Roy (1998) started with a house meeting, not calling it a Church but a fellowship. Roy mentioned, "Hospitality played a major role in its development. We also had a total separation from the Church of Pakistan and the Punjabi Christians." This was a total indigenous Sindhi fellowship of prior Sindhi Muslims. Roy and his contacts had to overcome the persecution. Many were beaten, ridiculed and mocked by their relatives and community.

Question 21 asked, "What has been done to develop indigenous support, worship and church life?" Patel (1996) has encouraged people to contribute to his church. Roy (1998) quickly turned the responsibility of the fellowship over to the Sindhis themselves. He has visited them and encouraged them to be more responsive.

Tabitha (1998) mentioned, "The Church has no vision to change its worship style and organization. We are still controlled by our British forefathers in money and the structure of our Church. All this has done a great harm in our approach to Sindhi Muslims. There is no direct effort to welcome Sindhi women among us. We have no strategy and the situation is so hopeless that I do not think things will ever change." She further commented, "The Church is governed by a bunch of hypocrites who want material
and foreign trips at the expense of our poor people. They exploit our people by taking pictures and showing them to their Western donors to get money.”

Question 22 asked, “What should be done in order for Christian witness to be more effective in reaching Sindhi Muslims?” Khokhar (1996) responded, “Holy and contented living, the display of Christian love and forgiveness and an evidence of Christian grace is needed as much in Sindh as anywhere else. The Christian Church must live and testify a transparent witness.” Roy (1998) mentioned, “We need to have more usable quality literature. For example it will be good to have a pocket size New Testament that could be easy to hide. Present New Testaments are in large print. We need to focus on establishing Sindhi convert fellowships instead of winning individual converts and expecting them to join other groups. Sindhi language has to be used to reach the Sindhis.” Tabitha (1998) mentioned, “We need to reach the Sindhi women because when we win a woman we have basically won the household. Women though secluded still play a very important role in the family. Our worship has to change to accommodate Sindhi culture and forms of worship. We need to love Sindhis genuinely as they are always suspicious of our motives. Even if they do not respond, will we or can we still love them as brothers and sisters?” (Tabitha 1998). Mark (1998) mentioned, “We need to exercise the unconditional love that we have received from Jesus. We need to follow the example of Christ.” Mark also commented that “We should not expect the Sindhis to come to the Church of Pakistan as she isn’t ready to accept them. For Sindhis to become members of the local the Church of Pakistan is wishful thinking.” Roy (1996) commented, “We need to identify the Christians who are really burdened to reach the Sindhis.” Tabitha (1998)
mentioned, “We also need to have a soft heart for the Christian girls who have married Sindhi Muslims as they are rejected by the Punjabi community as well as the members of Sindhi Muslim family. Many times their children are open to hear the message if we love and care for them.”

Question 23 asked, “Would you be comfortable if Sindhi Muslim converts used their own style of worship in your Church?” To this Haq (1996) responded, “Contextualization is OK to some extent but the way of worship should be a Christian way of worship.” To this I asked what he meant by Christian. His response was, “As we have been worshiping from the beginning, i.e., traditional liturgical worship.” Khokhar (1996) mentioned, “As long as the style of worship conforms to the New Testament pattern, I am comfortable. There must be clarity in the essentials of Christian faith. The style of worship must not be a stumbling block for the non-believers.” Patel on the other hand said he would not be comfortable if Sindhi Muslim converts used their own style of worship in my Church. For Tabitha (1998), this thought was inconceivable that the Sindhi converts might have their own style of worship in her local Church, but she strongly supports it.

Question 24 asked, “Would you be comfortable if they had this worship in a social gathering?” Patel (1996) responded, “Absolutely not, they should not be different than other Christians. All Christians should have the same style of worship which we see in the Church of Pakistan.” Khokhar (1996) mentioned, “I would be comfortable if they had this worship in their own social gatherings, where Christ reigns as Lord and King. Where no social taboos are encouraged and faith in the living Christ is professed instead of tradition
and superstition.” Haq (1996) responded by saying, “They should have this worship in their own social gatherings but the way of worship must be a Christian way of worship, so that everyone would know this is Christian worship.”

Mark (1996) mentioned, “I am comfortable with the above thought, in fact this should be encouraged if we want more Sindhis to come to the Lord.”

In this chapter I have given detailed results of the interviews and surveys which my assistants and I carried out in Sindh Pakistan. I have presented thoughts of former missionaries to Sindh, Muslim converts, Sindhi Muslims and Christian workers who are ministering in Sindh. In the next chapter I will analyze this data under several themes which emerge from this material.
CHAPTER 5

Analysis of the Interviews

In Chapter 4, I presented details of the interviews my assistants and I did in Sindh Pakistan during 1996-98. In this chapter I present an analysis of these details.

When I analyzed this data seven themes or categories emerged: (1) Hospitality, (2) Spirituality, (3) Colonial and Punjabi Power, (4) Persecution, (5) Women’s Needs, (6) Contextualization, and (7) Strategies for Reaching Muslims. The first five categories discuss very specific topics; the last two categories are more general topics. Each of these categories can be either a barrier or a building block depending on how it is handled.

I will present each of these seven categories and then present a closer look at the Church of Pakistan and a summary. Within each of the seven categories first I will narrate the views of each of the four groups, and then I will discuss these views. The implications for evangelism, discipleship, and church planting in Sindh will be presented in chapter 6.

Hospitality

The first major category and very specific topic to emerge is hospitality. As seen in chapters 1 and 2, hospitality is a major aspect of Muslim culture in general, and Sindhi culture in particular (Crawford 1997, Mallouhi 1997, Musk 1995: 89-105). When visiting a Sindhi one rarely leaves without having been given a cup of tea or a meal. Sindhis love to entertain and serve their guests. Hospitality plays a major role for the Sindhi Muslims in their coming to the Lord or in staying away from the church. Hypocrisy is a very severe threat to hospitality.
Narration

Former missionaries Naaman (1996) and David (1996) stated that Sindhi Muslim converts were not accepted and the Church of Pakistan was unwilling to receive them as acceptable persons among themselves for fellowship. Naaman (1996) mentioned, “The Church of Pakistan in Sindh has to be more welcoming and hospitable. The church in Sindh has to become a ‘church with action’ not only giving lip service.” Sindhi inquirers are not welcomed into the full life of the church.

Three stories illustrate this point. Naaman (1996) relates the intolerance of cultural diversity within the Church of Pakistan. A Punjabi girl was friendly to a Sindhi Muslim. The girl told him clearly that their relationship would not go any further if he remains Muslim. The church knew about this and they both became outcast until Naaman came to the city. After sharing Christ with the Sindhi Muslim, Mohammed, Naaman led him to the Lord and married them. But this was done in secrecy, as the local church would have objected to it.

Furthermore if a Sindhi Muslim comes to a church, every eyebrow is raised. The local church is predominantly Punjabi in its language, customs and culture. Naaman (1996) stated “Because so much of the Church of Pakistan culture is related to Punjabi culture, it’s very difficult for the church of Pakistan congregations to truly receive and accept an ethnic Sindhi.” Even though the church is an extension of the biraderti19 system, the Punjabi Christians expect new Sindhi believers to accept their cultural norms and language.

19 Biraderti is a strong sense of community. Punjabi people are very closely knit and they hesitate to invite any non-Punjabi to become a member of this community. I have discussed this aspect in the latter part of Chapter 2.
thus isolating the Sindhi converts from their community. As Naaman (1996) says, "There is a lack of sensitivity on the part of the Church of Pakistan toward Sindhi culture, language and customs."

Naaman (1996) and Lawrence (1996) both revealed the hypocrisy and double standards in the lives of church leaders. This has not helped Muslims come to Christ. In fact, a Muslim convert Asif (1996) said, "Ninety-nine percent of Muslims revert back to Islam after they see the inner life of the church and its members."

Sindhi Muslim converts did not find the Church of Pakistan to be hospitable. They have not been welcomed into the church which is predominantly Punjabi. None of the converts was a member of a local Church of Pakistan, as the Punjabi church had not made any effort to meet them. The converts were discipled by missionaries who were not directly involved with the Church of Pakistan. The converts felt the church has a very lukewarm attitude towards them. The people of the Church of Pakistan did not play any significant role in the lives of these converts. The converts felt that the Church of Pakistan will never change their Punjabi language and customs to accommodate the Sindhis.

Four informants who were Sindhi converts mentioned the corruption of the church. Many leaders are not interested, therefore we question their commitment. They lack sincerity in meeting Sindhi Muslims. Internal conflicts have plagued the Church of Pakistan. Sadiq (1996) mentioned, "Every leader is busy in making money and exploiting foreign resources. One has to be closely related to one of the bishops in order to have a hearing in the local churches."
However, a few of the converts mentioned that things might change if the leaders of the church take the vision and share with the local people. Asif (1996) stated, “The Church of Pakistan has no vision for Sindhis. They will never change their Punjabi language and customs so there is no point in thinking about reaching Sindhis through the Church of Pakistan.”

On the other hand, hospitality was found among the missionaries. Ali (1996), a convert from Islam, emphasized that “The home of the local missionary was a safe nest for me. Whenever I was depressed I stayed with my missionary.”

Tahir (1996), a Sindhi Muslim mentioned, “We would love to meet genuine Christians who would accept us as we are.” Another Sindhi Muslim, Farukh (1996), asked, “Will we have a home? can we belong to the Christian Ummah? Will we be one with all the Christians worldwide.”

Christian workers discussed two main issues, the hypocrisy in the Church of Pakistan and their own attempts to be hospitable. Tabitha (1998) mentioned, “The church is governed by a bunch of hypocrites who want material and foreign trips at the expense of our poor people. They exploit our people by taking pictures and showing them to their Western donors to get money.”

In contrast to the Church of Pakistan, the homes of some missionaries became the converts’ home. Mark (1996) emphasized, “Our home was their home.” Tabitha (1998) affirmed, “We share our home, food, culture and world view. We have common feelings and we love each other as humans first, then we are Christians and Muslims.” Roy (1996) also said, “Hospitality played a major role in Sindhi conversions in my ministry.”
Mark (1996) mentioned, “We contextualized our lives, our message and our presentation of the Gospel, this is one of the reasons why some Sindhis came to the Lord.” Some of the missionaries were very sensitive to the Sindhi customs. Mark always used a Sindhi cap as he ministered to Sindhis, showing that he was sensitive to the local traditions. Mark and his team were successful in starting a homogeneous Sindhi fellowship. “Our initial step was to start a homogeneous Sindhi fellowship—totally indigenous in its nature, language, worship and customs. We wanted Sindhis to cross as few barriers as possible (Mark 1996).

Discussion

There was an overwhelming emphasis upon the need for hospitality on the part of the missionaries and Sindhi converts. The Church of Pakistan’s people have not been sensitive to the Sindhi language. They have not been hospitable. They have always looked upon Sindhis as suspicious people. They have a bias and discriminate against Sindhis joining the local church. All of these attitudes are aspects of Punjabi biraderi which runs counter to Sindhi and Muslim hospitality (see Chapter 2, biraderi). As long as this attitude prevails, one cannot expect the Sindhis to come to Christ.

In cases where Sindhis have converted, they were welcomed and made part of a missionary’s family. In other words, the missionary welcomed the converts with customary Sindhi and Muslim hospitality (see Chapter 1). The missionaries were sensitive and patient towards the needs of the Sindhi converts. Since the Punjabi Christians or the Church of Pakistan did not demonstrate this behavior, these missionaries started a separate
fellowship. The missionaries also made an effort to contextualize their message and
themselves and thus have an “incarnational” ministry.

Despite the success of these missionaries, it does not seem as if the Church of
Pakistan has any plan to contextualize its message and worship in order to attract the
Sindhi Muslims. The Church of Pakistan is content to maintain its tradition, worship
patterns, and foreign liturgy.

Nevertheless the lifestyle of some missionaries with regard to openness to the local
people could be confusing. Some were hospitable and kind; others did not care to work
among Sindhis. Two incidents that happened in Sindh during my ministry illustrate the
importance of hospitality and a clear witness of lifestyle.

Once during the month of Ramadan three village evangelists came to Shikarpur
Sindh for a field conference. They had traveled ten hours by train and bus to this place.
During Ramadan everything is closed in Pakistan. It was a very hot summer. These
evangelists stopped at the house of Harry, a foreign missionary, and asked if they could
have a glass of cold water. The missionary appeared at the door and reminded them that
they were at the wrong place that the conference was in the mission compound. The
evangelists replied that they knew about it, but were thirsty and wanted a cold glass of
water. At this the missionary went in and brought one glass of water for the three grown
men.

This was a shock for these village evangelists since they gave their best to the
missionary whenever he visited them. As they shared this story with other conference
delegates, some of us were furious about this insensitive behavior of the missionary and
confronted him. He later apologized, but this left a scar on the minds and hearts of these village evangelists. The missionary never gained respect in that area.

Another incident involved a village evangelist who was visiting the city with his Sindhi Muslim friend. Around noon they decided to meet the foreign missionary, Tom, under whom the evangelist worked. They knocked on the door, and the missionary was surprised to see that his worker had come unannounced. The worker told the missionary that he was in town with this friend from his village and wanted to introduce his friend to him. To this Tom replied this is my lunchtime and shut the door in their face.

The evangelist was very sad about this behavior and his Muslim friend looked down on him. A few days later Tom visited this evangelist’s village for a prayer meeting. There were a lot of people who came for this meeting. After the prayer meeting, the evangelist invited all the people to his home for dinner. Tom was not invited. He got very upset. The next morning Tom confronted his evangelist and demanded an apology. The evangelist replied, “You preached and I participated in service as I am employed by you, but the food served to people was provided by my family and others and I did not feel strong to invite you for it.” Tom realized that this evangelist was hurt by his treatment. He apologized, both hugged and forgave each other, and later they became good friends and a great team.

These two stories offer a glimpse of what national evangelists go through and how they react. Hospitality was and still is very important for effective ministry, but particularly so for gaining influence with Sindhi Muslims.
The second major category to emerge was spirituality. This topic presents distinguishing realities in the life of a Sindhi Muslim.

Narration

Former missionaries, Muslim converts, and Sindhi Muslims spoke with deep conviction about the issue of spirituality. Christian workers made no comments in this area.

Naaman (1996), a national missionary, mentioned that some Sindhis saw Jesus in their visions and dreams and the next day came to him for clarification. His affirmation that Jesus does appear in visions and dreams and communicates through them made a tremendous impact on his contacts. His personal testimony of conversion from Islam emphasizes meeting Jesus in dreams and this religious experience made a solid bond with Sindhi Muslims who later became Christians. Furthermore Naaman (1996) said, “The Church of Pakistan has no substitute in their system who can function as a pir. As every Sindhi Muslim has a pir; when they become Christian they experience a great void in spiritual direction as this aspect of their spiritual life is not there anymore.”

The expatriate missionary, Roy (1996), told how much time missionaries put into teaching the Word of God to the converts. He emphasized that Bible reading was the key to survival in tough times for the Sindhi converts. At times when they were discouraged by the cold attitude of Church of Pakistan they went to Scriptures to gain strength.

Spirituality was extremely important for Muslim converts. For Asif (1996), guidance of the Holy Spirit played a major role in his conversion. Some other converts
also were led directly by the Holy Spirit to read the Bible or to meet a missionary. It is important to note that most of these converts were devout Muslims and some crisis led them to investigate Christianity. Except for one national missionary, it was foreign missionaries not working with the Church of Pakistan who led all converts to the Lord. The hospitality and spirituality of missionaries attracted the Sindhi Muslims to accept Christ.

The converts stressed, however, the continuing importance of having a pir who would help them meet their spiritual needs. Asif (1996) responds, “They [Church of Pakistan members] are so foreign to us. They have to start thinking about following a pir. When we do not have a pir, we are lost. The pastor at times does not understand us when we share our needs with him. Maybe he did not learn this in his training which he received from his church.”

The majority of our contacts had a pir to whom they went for spiritual guidance. When they saw the structure of Church of Pakistan, there was no functional substitute for a pir. Zahida (1996) mentioned that her brother who had converted to Christianity still sees his Muslim pir. This Muslim pir is very open and happy that one of his followers has found truth. Her brother wonders whether he will ever have a Christian pir who will be able to understand him more deeply. He has tried to share this idea with his missionary friend, but has always been told that Christianity does not believe in pirs. Our informants (for example, Sadiq 1996) mentioned that Jesus as Healer and Savior appealed to them. Here again the Muslim pirs performed healing and prayed for their murids (disciples).
Even though Christianity for Sindhi Muslims is a foreign religion, Muslims seek authoritative truth in the spiritual realm: “We will wait for the will of Allah. We would like to see some clear vision or dream to see if Christ has a message for us” (Farukh 1996). Dreams and visions are a very important part of Sindhi culture and Sufism. (See Chapter 2 for further details on dreams and visions).

Tahir (1996) strongly stated, “We think all Christians are under the influence of Satan. The West is Satan and what we see in the movies from the West is satanic. The way women show their bodies and show no respect for human life is a sin.” Sindhi Muslims mentioned that it would take divine intervention for them to consider becoming followers of Christ.

Discussion

As we laid out in chapter 2, Sufism influences the majority of Sindhi Muslims in Sindh. One of the important aspects of Sufi Islam in Sindh is having a pir. An incident, which happened in 1985 when I was in Sindh, relates to this topic of spirituality. One night my team and I were returning from a village. The road was dark. Suddenly we discovered that it was blocked with a tree. This was not a good sign because this area was famous for its looters and robbers. As we approached the tree, gunfire started from both sides. We sat and prayed. After some time a group of bandits appeared and asked us to identify ourselves. One of my teammates immediately said, “We are Christian pastors.” The bandits did not understand who we were. They brought the rifles to our faces. They asked again who we were. I immediately replied, “I am the pir of Christians from northern Sindh.” To this, they immediately retreated, asked our forgiveness kissed my hands and
asked for my blessings. I blessed them in the name of Isa (Jesus), prayed for them and left. We were all amazed by the impact of our introduction to these Sindhi robbers as pir of Christians. From that day on I have been struggling with the significance of this aspect, and been wondering how it could be incorporated into my understanding of Christian faith and spirituality. The Church of Pakistan is unable to meet Sindhi Muslims and Muslim converts at their deepest level of spiritual questioning and need. Neither can foreign missionaries meet this need unless they have been trained to look beyond their Western background and have learned how to proclaim Christ in the spiritual realm (Kraft 1986, Stacey 1985, Van Rheenen 1991, Zwemer 1920).

**Colonial and Punjabi Power**

Colonial and Punjabi power emerged as a very strong category among Sindhi Muslims and was also mentioned by Christian workers. This specific topic comprised two issues, which were crucial in determining peoples’ response to the Church of Pakistan: the impact of colonialism, and the dominance of the Punjabis as a powerful ethnic group in Pakistan.

Punjabi Christians, having Punjabi language and ethnic identity, are a constant reminder of Punjabi domination. When the Punjabi Christians do not want to change their ways to reach Sindhis, this lack of cultural sensitivity and allowance of cultural diversity becomes a major barrier for the Sindhis in accepting Christian faith.

**Narration**

Two groups focused on colonial and Punjabi power, Christian workers and Sindhi Muslims. Khokhar (1996) mentioned that sociological and economical barriers are
strongly felt by Muslim converts. “A convert is always considered inferior, belonging to the poor class and is open to discrimination in various ways. The Christian community on the other hand has not set a very good example for a convert.”

Political identity factors—both colonial and national— influenced Sindhi Muslim attitudes toward the Church of Pakistan. The Church of Pakistan reminds Sindhi Muslims of the colonial presence. Farukh (1996) mentioned, “We as Sindhis have nothing to do with this colonial presence.” Tahir (1996) mentioned that the people who go to the Church of Pakistan are sweepers from Punjab. The Sindhi Muslims reported that the work of the Church of Pakistan is predominantly among the low caste Hindus. Since majorities of Punjabi Christians are from low class sweepers who converted to Christianity from Hinduism, their desire to share Christ with Muslims is hindered. Zahida (1996) asked me if, in order to become a Christian, she would have to change her language and culture. As she put it, “Can one become a Christian and remain a Sindhi.” She also wanted clarification on the issue of caste.

A Sindhi Muslim Farukh (1996) mentioned that if Christians want to have any impact on Sindhis, “They will have to get rid of these massive colonial reminders which they call their church. They are a constant reminder that we were mistreated by the British.” Another Muslim mentioned, “We would not feel at home in the present form of Christianity, which is totally foreign and has a stamp of colonialism.” (Badar 1996).

Tahir questioned, “Why don’t the Western powers have the same sympathy with the Kashmiris in their struggle against India as they have with Israel.” The double
standard of the West toward Palestinian and Israeli issues is also a constant reminder of colonialism in a new form and Western domination:

We have this dominant image of colonialism because from the beginning missionaries worked among the poor 'untouchables' who skinned the dead and were not part of Hindu society even before Islam came. Missionaries work among the people who have slave mentality and who do not want to be freed. If they show any desire to come out of this situation, they are discouraged thinking that the missionaries will not be happy. So we have this kind of colonialism, i.e. keeping the poor Christians in poverty. (Tahir 1996)

Sindhi Muslims also mentioned that many Punjabis because they come from a poor and depressed class want to befriend the Sindhis. By becoming a friend of a Sindhi they are elevated and thus hope and want to be accepted by the local Sindhis. Farukh (1996) mentioned, "Deep political anger and strife will never bring the Sindhis and Punjabis to 'friendly relationships' and as long as Christians have a Punjabi mentality of dominance, Sindhis will hate them."

Discussion

As discussed in chapters 1, 2, and 3, Punjabis are the dominant ethnic group in Pakistan. They have the biggest industries and their land is fertile. Punjabis control the county's political arena. The Punjab is the hub of Pakistani politics; the political interests of the Punjabi-speaking elite cannot be ignored. No government or constitutional framework can survive long without Punjabi support. No political party aspiring to national leadership can succeed without it; no political party appealing to regional sentiments against it can aspire realistically to national leadership (Wissing 1988: 77-78).

In 1970, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto became the first Sindhi Prime Minister of Pakistan. His execution by a Punjabi army general Zia ul Haq in 1977 has left deep scars on Sindhi
Muslims. Bhutto’s daughter Benazir Bhutto has become the Prime Minister twice in the 1980's. Both times a Punjabi president ousted her on charges of corruption. Corruption and power struggles are part of Pakistani politics, but for a Sindhi this is another sign of Punjabi domination in the political arena. This adds to their hatred for Punjabi people in that a Punjabi general gave the order to kill Bhutto a Sindhi. Because the Church of Pakistan is basically Punjabi this violent action contributed to the Sindhi feeling of Punjabi dominance and contributed to Sindh hatred of Punjabi people. Sindhis did not want to be in a church, which is controlled by Punjabis whom they dislike.

Sindhis’ hatred of the West is still alive because of Western presence in the Persian Gulf countries (Wink 1991: 47-48). Western presence in the Gulf region reminds Sindhi Muslims of the Crusades. Christians went to war to get Jerusalem back from Muslims. Sindhis also feel the presence of Western powers in the Gulf indicates they want to rule economically by controlling the flow of oil. The United Nations’ embargos on Iraq and Libya appear to Sindhis to be an example of the typical double standard applied by Western nations--still perceived as Christian--that support Israel in violation of United Nations resolutions.

When Islam was introduced it abolished the Hindu caste system in Sindh. Every Sindhi became equal. Muslims brought justice in Sindh and released people from the bondage of their Hindu rulers. However, the British colonized the Muslims and took away their freedom. Sindhis still hurt from this. Moreover, the British who brought Christianity came with the colonizers and wanted Muslims to conform to the British
religion and culture. Thus Christianity has not yet been successful in reaching Sindhi Muslims.

To add insult to injury, the majority of the Church of Pakistan’s workers are Punjabis who have converted to Christianity from a lower sweeper class in the Punjab. These Punjabis who migrated to Sindh were reluctant to demand any change because they did not want or have the courage to displease their British masters. They were afraid to adopt the local Sindhi culture, since they were outcast as sweepers. This has remained a major factor for the Sindhis not associating themselves with the Punjabi Church of Pakistan. It is a “no win” situation for them.

Over the past fifty years, the Church of Pakistan and its leadership have done nothing to address this important cultural difference. As long as the Church of Pakistan keeps the identity of a Western religion in form and culture, there is little hope that a Sindhi Muslim will be attracted to it. Colonialism and Christianity have never been separate in Sindh. The big cathedrals with their Western architecture are constant reminders of the Crusades and all its atrocities to Muslims. Local Sindhis want nothing to do with this form of Western Christianity. The sad part is that even the present Church of Pakistan is not sensitive to this issue; in fact they are proud to keep their British identity, as this gives them a sense of social pride that they believe in the religion of the British.

It is clear from this research that as long as Christianity in Sindh is tainted by this dominant colonial image and is controlled by Punjabis, very few if any Sindhi Muslims will accept the Christian message. Sindhi Muslims will accept the message of Christ if the Punjabi Christians will not expect them to abandon their culture, language and customs.
Somehow Christians have to set themselves apart from the Western form of Christianity and identify themselves as Sindhi Christians. Punjabi Christians need to identify with local Sindhi Muslims and show them that they care. One political event that may help Punjabis show they care is that the Sindhi language has now become a compulsory subject in all academic fields and in business in Sindh. Since they now understand Sindhi language and culture Punjabi second generation children are not isolated like their parents.

**Persecution**

Persecution of Christians is not a new phenomenon. The first century Christians went through it. For Western Christians persecution may now be a memory; so at times it is hard for them to understand the deep scars that the past leaves on new Christians.

**Narration**

Naaman (1996) as a former national missionary stated, “Persecution from Muslims is expected, but it is very painful when the Body of Christ which claims to be Christian also rejects a Muslim convert.” This tragedy still continues, so it is very difficult for a Sindhi Muslim to accept Christianity.

Ali (1996), himself a Muslim convert, reports that Muslim converts had to go through severe circumstances. They were mistrusted, abused, beaten and at times had to face thorough investigations by the police. The real source of persecution was Muslim clerics who spoke against them openly and the Muslim families had to face this opposition also. It was very painful to think that they would become second class citizens after enjoying majority status and respect. This really brought much emotional trauma and depression.
A Sindhi Muslim, Zahida (1998), talked about her brother. She told about the way her family beat, abused, and tried to kill him. At times he met her secretly. "At times his only refuge was the missionary’s home." She said, "He is even not accepted by the Punjabi Christians which was shocking-- because they do not trust him."

Christian workers noted persecution in two realms. Mark (1996) emphasized that it is becoming very difficult to share the Gospel openly with Sindhi Muslims. This has happened due to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. Haq (1996) commented, "If a Muslim changes his religion he has to leave his job, property and family. Anyone can kill him and the convert will not get any help or defense from the law." There is no concrete strategy to address this issue in the Church of Pakistan.

Discussion

As seen in chapter 3 even in the 1960's before Islamization Christians faced such persecution as expropriation of lands. Currently in Sindh a Christian faces three types of persecution. First, in Pakistan a Christian is born as a second class citizen. So persecution for Christians starts at birth as the society will never accept them as an important part of the body politic. Pakistani Christians could never be elected to public office, so they do not run. This creates an ambiance of deep depression among the Christians.

Second, active persecution of Christians in Pakistan is not rare. For example Naaman and Esther (1984) share stories of persecution by their family and government. In both cases their family tried to kill them. Larson (1996) cites these and other stories of persecution. In this way he emphasizes just how strong the persecution of Christians in Pakistan is. On June 2, 1990 my younger brother was gunned down because our family
has been active in Christian witness. After his assassination we had to leave Sindh and our family became refugees. I will say that this incident has deeply scarred our family life.

A third form of persecution is not often discussed. While living in Sindh I discovered firsthand that Christians rarely accepted Muslim converts. This is persecution of believers by believers. Naaman and Esther (1984) both shared the painful humiliation of initiation into the Christian community. Christian believers treated them with contempt.

Missionaries do try to prepare people for persecution. Esther (1984) relates how a missionary gave her both the Bible and a book on martyrs at the same time thus warning her that persecution came along with Christianity. Esther was more willing to undergo persecution than the missionary was willing to let her go through it.

It is appropriate for missionaries to warn converts about the price of conversion. It is not appropriate for the church to humiliate Muslim seekers and converts. Furthermore, strong support systems—a safety network for converts—should be encouraged.

Women’s Needs

Very little effort has been done to reach Sindhi women who are secluded in purdah. In the case of the neglect of Sindhi women, the interviews are significant for what they omit. Since men are directly involved in reaching Sindhi Muslims, the strong separation between men and women in Sindhi culture has made it virtually impossible to reach the women. The absence of Women Christian workers has also been a factor in non-conversion of Sindhi women. "The Church of Pakistan has no vision for Sindhi evangelism specially among Sindhi women" (Tabitha 1998).
Historically a typical missionary came with a sense that men are the main workers and women are not supposed to develop relationships with the local Sindhis (Larson 1996). This has resulted in virtually no Sindhi women converts and has created a problem for the Sindhi men who have come to the Lord. They are depressed because they cannot find a wife. I have given the details about the cultural and religious bias that the Punjabi Christians had towards the Sindhis above.

In spite of this glaring problem, the majority of my informants had very little to say about the importance of women’s work. They focused on men reaching men. In the last one hundred years of Christian mission this has been the main strategy. No wonder women have not been reached. Obviously neither the missionaries nor the national workers have been sensitive to this failure. Some missionaries still function using a specific mindset where women are not allowed to preach and take active part in churches. Whether due to blindness to cultural issues or active discrimination, this indifferent action hinders the Gospel proclamation among Sindhi women.

Narration

Only Tabitha (1998) stressed the plight of Sindhi women. “Very little effort was done to reach Sindhi women as not many women workers were present. The strong separation between men and women made it impossible to reach the women by men.” She continued, “Women open up with me in the privacy of my home, my home is like a refuge for Sindhi women.”

Under present circumstances, if her witness is rejected, it is because Sindhi women are too scared to accept Christianity. There is no model for the Sindhi woman to follow.
Christianity, coming in a Western package, offers no substitute for her allegiance to the local pir. Sindhi women often ask what will happen if a Sindhi women is kicked out of her home after she accepts Christianity? Who will support her?

**Discussion**

Let us picture a typical Sindhi house where my wife and I would visit. As soon as we arrive our dear family friend Maher would greet us. I would be led to the main living room, usually at the front of the house, beautifully decorated with Sindhi rugs. There is no furniture, so we sit on the floor. My wife would pass this room and go into the inner part of the house, the women’s section.

I would spend at least four to five hours in conversation with Maher on different subjects including Christian faith. Meantime we would be entertained in the front room by his wife who will have prepared food and everything for us, but she will only greet me and leave immediately. My wife would spend the same time with her in the inner part of the house.

In this situation, how can I as a trained missionary share the gospel with Maher’s wife. Unless my wife is capable of sharing the Gospel with her, no way exists for us to reach her. She would never feel comfortable sharing her heart with a man, even though he is her husband’s best friend, but my wife could share with Maher’s wife.

The following incident from my own ministry shows how a Canadian woman missionary took the initiative in sharing the Gospel with Sindhi women. I was in a town in Sindh with my Jesus film team. Dora, the wife of a Canadian missionary working among Sindhis, approached us. She asked me if it would be possible to show the ‘Jesus’ film to a
group of thirty Sindhi women on the condition that I not be present in the room. She did not know how to use the film projector. Her husband and I figured out the logistics to put the projector in another room and screen in the room where these women would sit. I knew the dialogues of ‘Jesus’ film as I had used it for many years. As soon as each reel finished the middle door which was joining the two rooms was closed so that I could go and change the reel.

I never saw these women who belonged to the high and upper class of the city. Many were wives of city officials and some belonged to influential Sindhi landlords of the area. The friendship of this missionary and her innovative approach led us to present the ‘Jesus’ film to women. It was impossible for her husband and me to be present in the room. This one incident shows clearly the need for ministry to women in Sindh.

As seen in chapter 1, the segregation of the sexes is deeply rooted in Sindhi society. Thus it would appear that one reason very few Sindhi women have responded to the Gospel is that there have not been many women workers among them. Somehow this very crucial aspect of evangelism in Sindh has been neglected for the past fifty years. Not much emphasis has been put on training and encouraging the women to be active and aggressive in reaching Sindhi women. The Church of Pakistan has been insensitive in addressing this issue, partly due to the male dominant Islamic culture of Pakistan and Sindh. As Pakistan and Sindh adopt to stricter Islamic laws, the importance of women in Sindhi evangelism increases. Women from within the Church of Pakistan should be trained in both direct and indirect evangelism and trained to work with several groups of people: Sindhi Muslims, Sindhi Muslim Converts, expatriates, and skilled nationals.
Contextualization

The sixth major category, which emerged, was the importance of contextualization. According to Darrell L. Whiteman contextualization is one of the most crucial issues in mission application today (1997:2). "Essentially, he says, "contextualization is concerned with how the Gospel and culture relate to one another across geographic space and down through time" (1997:2). It is the attempt to bring about an authentic expression of the Christian Gospel in a particular setting. In connection with the concerns of this study, contextualization refers to the process of enabling Sindhi Muslims to become Sindhi Christians. The word "contextualization" came into missiological discussion in the 1970s, but the basic concern goes back to the early church's struggle with how much of the Jewish tradition needed to be a part of the Gentile church: could a Roman be both a Roman and a Christian? The Jerusalem council, recorded in Acts 15, represents the earliest known decision about contextualization--about the Gospel and culture. Whiteman suggests three functions of contextualization (1997:2-4). I present them here in relation to this study: (1) contextualization is an attempt to communicate the Gospel and establish the church in a way that makes sense to Sindhi people; (2) it is an attempt to insure that Sindhi Muslims who hear the Gospel and see it lived out are offended for the right reasons, such as the offense of the Cross and the conviction of their sins, and not for the wrong reasons, such as the church's association with colonialism, Western secularization, or Punjabi cultural dominance; and (3) it is an attempt to enrich the global church's understanding of the Gospel through a widened vision of it through the new lens of Sindhi culture, such as what I think will result from the
expression of the Gospel through Sindhi spirituality. This is a general topic that informs in some way all the preceding categories. Culture plays a very important role in one’s life.

There was a big difference between the cultures of Sindhi Muslims, Christians who belonged to the Church of Pakistan, and the missionaries who presented the Gospel to Sindhi Muslims.\(^{20}\)

**Narration**

Former missionaries did not mention anything explicitly related to culture. The Muslim converts, however, the Sindhi Muslims, and the Christian workers all made strong statements about cultural diversity.

The majority of the Sindhi Muslim converts felt that when they became Christians, they had to leave their own identity as a Sindhi. This meant leaving their language, customs and traditions to accept foreign traditions and a foreign set of values. Accepting Punjabi language for their religious customs was difficult enough, but on top of that they were expected to follow the Church of England’s traditions being presented by the local Christians who belonged to Church of Pakistan.

Khalid (1996) mentioned, “Ninety nine percent of Christians are sweepers, in fact the original Christians are sweepers.” It is important to note that when this point is presented to the Church of Pakistan leaders, they are in denial and do not want to address the issue. McGavran (1955) and Stock (1975) prove that the majority of Christians in

\(^{20}\)This study does not involve a discussion of the process of contextualization. For that see Hiebert 1987. Contextualization also involves danger of syncretism. The point of view that Sindhi Muslims have as revealed in our interviews suggests that syncretism of a very debilitating type already exists. Contextualization is likely to make Christianity among Sindhis less syncretistic.
Pakistan are from the Chura or sweeper class, I have covered details about this issue in chapter 3. Naaman (1996) mentioned, “A sweeper in Sindh will never have the courage to share the Gospel with Sindhi Muslims.”

Sindhi Muslims, themselves, said that the Church of Pakistan, “Is a foreign religion or group, which has nothing to offer us religiously, culturally and socially. This is a representation of the West and has nothing to do with us” (Badar 1996).

This major shift to identify themselves with the Western Christianity and sweepers in the initial stages of a Sindhi Muslim’s life was very traumatic. Tahir (1996) mentioned, “The word Christian itself is foreign.” The colonial aspect of Christianity was also a major factor for the Sindhis Muslims to face. The British build big churches. The architecture and set up inside the church with benches and stain glass windows was totally different from a local Sindhi Muslim’s mosque where one sees simplicity in everything and has only rugs to sit on. The Church of Pakistan members totally adopted the foreign ways of worship, which were totally different. In the churches the men and women worshiped together. In Sindhi culture women are in seclusion, purdah.

The present Church of Pakistan’s people want Sindhis to leave their own cultural traditions and adopt a Western/Punjabi style of worship. This is a difficult barrier to cross. Badar (1996) mentioned, “Every Sindhi would like to remain a Sindhi even if that person changes his or her religion.” Zahida (1998) stated, “We would like to remain Sindhi in our language, ways of worship, music, and customs and traditions.” She continues, “The priests were trained in a Western form of worship and liturgy. The dress of priests was totally foreign and the language of worship alienated the Sindhi Muslims from the
Punjabis.” Informants were surprised that Punjabi Christians had adopted the foreign language and religion.

When I asked the question to Sindhi Muslims, “What may be the first signs or experience that you are moving in the direction of becoming a Christian?” they replied with humor, “When we will be willing to becoming a sweeper and eat with them.” (Zahida, Shahida, Tahir, Badar and Farukh 1996-1998). The “sweeper stigma” for the Church of Pakistan and Christians in Sindh emerged as a major cultural gulf for the Sindhi Muslims to cross. Shahida (1998) mentioned this about Punjabi Christians, “Their Christianity has to become Sindhi in order for the Sindhis to even care to listen to them. They should not have bias against Sindhis. If they live in Sindh, they have to become Sindhis in their thought mind. The Punjabi superiority complex will never help them.”

I received two different opinions from the Christian workers regarding the worship style that could be culturally appropriate to Sindhis. Khokhar (1996) mentioned he would be comfortable with the Sindhis worshiping in their culturally appropriate way. Haq (1996) on the other hand mentioned that the Sindhis must worship in a traditional Christian way, which is the way of the Church of Pakistan.

Discussion

E. A. Hoebel, in defining culture speaks for many as, “The integrated system of learned behavior patterns which are characteristic of the members of a society and which are not the result of biological inheritance” (Hoebel 1972:6). Kroeber and Klukholm have summarized the culture concept as follows:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive
achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action. (1952:357)

According to Kraft, “each human individual is born into a particular socio-cultural context. From that point on persons are conditioned by the members of their society in countless, largely unconscious, ways to accept as natural and to follow rather uncritically the cultural patterns of that society” (Kraft 1979:46-47).

Kraft further mentioned, “Culture therefore, provides the models of reality that govern our perception, although we are likely to be unaware of the influence of our culture upon us. For the way we understand things seems to us to be ‘just natural’ or ‘human nature’” (Kraft 1979:47). But these same values may be different for people who do not belong to our own culture. Eating three meals a day is just natural in Western culture, but most Sindhis in rural areas eat only twice a day. One may be tempted to say, “Sindhis are poor or primitive.” But this may not be true. As Kraft mentioned, “Our customs seem to us to be the right ones because they are (to us) the ‘natural’ ones” (Kraft 1979:48).

Kessing and Kessing further mentioned:

To view other people’s ways of life in terms of our own cultural glasses is called ethnocentrism. Becoming conscious of, and analytical about, our own cultural glasses is a painful business. We do it best by learning about other people’s glasses. Although we can never take our glasses off to find out what the world is “really like,” or try looking through anyone else’s without ours as well, we can at least learn a good deal about our own prescription. (Kessing and Kessing 1971: 21)

According to Kraft,
The nearest we can come, then, to arriving at an antidote to an ethnocentric "monocultural" perception of reality is to develop what may be termed a "cross-cultural perspective." This is a perspective that always takes into account the fact that there are a variety of culturally governed perceptions of any given segment of reality. (Kraft 1979: 48)

Over the past fifty years very little has been done by the Church of Pakistan to be culturally sensitive to the Sindhi Muslims. We took a look at Sindhi Islam in chapters 1 and 2, noticing that Islam did not abolish local traditions and customs. The Muslims were very sensitive to the local culture and Islam was presented in a culturally sensitive way. Islam did not bring a total change and did not require its followers to change their culture. The same sensitivity needs to be demonstrated by the Church of Pakistan.

In my own analysis, the Church of Pakistan has failed miserably to identify the importance culture plays in a person's accepting the Christian message. The British invaders introduced Christianity in a foreign way. They were not sensitive to the local culture and traditions and imposed their own culture on the people who accepted Christianity. To Sindhi Muslims Christianity has remained Western and secular in form and culture. It appears secular because to the Sindhi it shows no reverence toward God in worship: men and women worship together with their shoes on and there are no ablutions or cleansing ceremonies. It appears Western because priests have replaced the Sindhi pir and Western hymns have taken the place of local Sindhi songs. Because local festivals such as annual meetings with the pirs did not become part of the church of Pakistan it further appears to be Western secularized Christianity or Punjabi Christianity.
Strategies for Reaching Muslims

The last category which emerged is strategies for the Church of Pakistan to be more effective in reaching Sindhi Muslims. Three kinds of strategies emerged: Effective, Hypothetical, and Desired Hypothetical Strategies were presented by the former missionaries, as well as Christians who were not directly involved in Muslim outreach, but who presented their views. Effective Strategies were strategies that actually worked. These were presented by Muslim converts and Christian workers, people actually involved in Sindhi evangelism. The third group of strategies was Desired Strategies. Muslim converts themselves presented these strategies, an unexpected response.

Narration

Former missionaries presented hypothetical strategies. Brown (1996) mentioned, “More ‘in-depth’ teaching for all adults into the ‘cultural value system’ of the true ethnic Sindhi Muslim is vital.” Emphasis was also made on the importance of hospitality. Naaman (1996) mentioned, “the Church of Pakistan in Sindh has to be more welcoming and hospitable.”

David (1996) mentioned that people should not depend on foreign missionaries to reach Sindhi Muslims. “The clergy need to be fully involved in each local congregation, and some of them will be ‘in training’ to extend hospitality and reach Sindhi Muslims beyond the visit of a foreign missionary or specialist who would initiate the effort.”

Brown (1996) focused also on the importance of literature and media. “Preparation of very focused and culturally sensitive literature is needed. Other print media should be used, as well as radio and TV, to the extent they are available. We need
to train the local missionaries in the use of such literature and other mass media tools” (Lawrence 1996).

All five missionaries mentioned that the ekklesia, meaning the body of believers, should incorporate each newborn babe in Christ as newcomers into the fellowship of the family of God. Naaman (1996) also stated that, “The church in its present shape and form is not willing or open to accepting the Sindhi Muslims.” All five missionaries also emphasized that getting new converts active in the work of the church is very important.

Paul (1996) mentioned that we need to win the entire family. In the past we have been able to win single individuals. In my research this again is hypothetical, because the Church of Pakistan does not have a support system for individuals who, after becoming Christians, are ostracized. What will happen if or when a whole family needs protection?

Muslim converts and Christian workers presented strategies, which were effective in reaching Muslims. Asif (1996), Khalid (1996), and Aftab (1996) reported that Bible correspondence courses and literature distribution played a major role in their conversion. All of the Muslim converts mentioned that hospitality played a major role in their conversion. The homes of missionaries were open to the Muslim converts.

Mark (1996) and Roy (1996) mentioned that Bible Correspondence Courses have been a great source of communicating the Christian message. This worked well in urban Sindh, in cities such as Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur. Urban college and university students were more open to talk. The Correspondence school did not have any follow up with the female students, nor did they have many female students.
Roy (1998) mentioned that he started a Sindhi fellowship in his home. This was separate from the Punjabi Christians as the Punjabis did not accept the Sindhis. This fellowship grew and Sindhis felt at home in this atmosphere.

Sindhi Muslims actually desired evangelism strategies. The Sindhi Muslims had not seen any deliberate effort on the part of the Church of Pakistan to share Christ with them. They said the Church of Pakistan had no influence or impact on them. The majority of the Sindhi Muslims had never been invited to a Church of Pakistan in their area. However Badar (1996) proposed, "If the Church of Pakistan has some truth, she should go and tell Sindhis what she believes in."

Sindhi Muslims answered the question, "What is your personal response to the Church of Pakistan’s evangelistic witness to Sindhi Muslims: tolerant, accepting or opposing?" Informants agreed that, "There is no effort on part of the Church, so no one can say that we are tolerant" (Tahir 1996). Shahida (1998) continues, "We may accept if Christians try to share their faith as there are many times when we question our faith also.” Zahida (1998) emphasizes, “There is a deep vacuum in our lives at times. Islam has not been able to answer our many questions. But we also know that the church has no time for us, they are too busy with their own programs and problems.” All in all, Muslims say that, with the exception of some Christians and missionaries, the Church of Pakistan or its people are out of their circle of relationships. It has no impact and no influence. “They have not been invited to church and very few Christians take the initiative to share their religion with them. So there is nothing [positive from the church of Pakistan] to share” (Zahida 1996).
Muslims say, "We want to meet a former Muslim who has become a follower of Christ. Further we would want to feel accepted by the local Christians or church" (Badar 1996). Tahir (1996) asks, "If they have a thing so precious why don't they let people know? It seems that the people who belong to the Church of Pakistan themselves are not sure what they believe in, so they are afraid to tell." Badar (1996) concurs, "The church of Pakistan if it has some truth, should go and tell Sindhis what they believe in. They have no work among the Sindhis."

Discussion

In this section the missionaries expressed their concern that the Church of Pakistan needs to be more open in its attitude toward Sindhi Muslims. This will happen only when the Bishop and clergy are open for Sindhi evangelism. As seen in Chapter 3, attitudes since the 1960s have been very mixed. The apparent belief today in the Church of Pakistan that Sindhi Muslims cannot come to the Lord will make this necessary openness difficult. Jalal (1996) said, "The Church of Pakistan is not involved in Muslim evangelism and maybe we don’t need to be."

Some strategies, such as rallies are problematic. Three strategies work: Bible correspondence courses, fellowship and boldness. Conversion stories illustrate that this process takes time and has many aspects. Pictures, discussions, literature, dreams, fellowship, love, and patience over a long period of time drew Muslims to the Lord. I have also noted a fourth conversion strategy. This is a problematic conversion strategy. I personally attended some Bible Correspondence rallies. This brought Sindhi Muslims together. Many Sindhis were surprised that their friends were taking these courses. This
gave them encouragement. On the other hand, this also created fear that their own peers will report to their parents that their son is involved in Bible teaching.

A Closer Look at the Church of Pakistan

It was the original intent of this study to discover how the Church of Pakistan could become more effective at reaching out to Sindhi Muslims. As a result of my failure to get an adequate response to my questions from Church of Pakistan workers and as a result of questions put to my informants who did respond, I began to question whether the Church of Pakistan would be willing to make the adjustments my informants appeared to be calling for. Early CMS missionaries such as Long, Haskell and Harper laid a strong foundation for the evangelism of Sindhi Muslims. When the Church of Pakistan united, it reaffirmed a focus on evangelism (see Chapter 3). Nevertheless through each of these seven major categories that emerged in this research project (Hospitality, Spirituality, Colonial and Punjabi Power, Persecution, Women’s Needs, Contextualization, and Strategies for Reaching Muslims) another theme emerges also: The Church of Pakistan is not adequately equipped at this time to fulfill its mission to Sindhi Muslims.

Only one Church of Pakistan worker responded for only half of the interview with me. Jalal (1996) mentioned, “The Church of Pakistan does not want, and is not directly involved in, Sindhi evangelism”. These 27 interviews with people outside the Church of Pakistan voice frustration with the Church of Pakistan in six areas.

Interviews include five male former missionaries, five male Sindhi Muslim converts, six male and four female Sindhi Muslims, and six male and one female Christian workers: The ten or more people in the Church of Pakistan who were mailed or hand
delivered surveys did not return the surveys. These outsiders, therefore, sense that the Church of Pakistan is not prepared adequately to reach Sindhi Muslims in six areas: (1) Theology, (2) Hospitality, (3) Cultural Diversity, (4) Spirituality, (5) Integrity of Leadership, and (6) Identity. Four of these areas of frustration with the Church of Pakistan echo themes that emerged on the overall analysis of the data: hospitality, culture, spirituality, and identity factors; the other two themes (theology and integrity) reflect issues related only to the Church of Pakistan. At this point I will look more closely at all of these six themes as they give voice to issues about the Church of Pakistan itself.

First of all concerning the theology of the Church of Pakistan, to these outsiders it appears that the Church of Pakistan’s theology of mission is weak. These interviews suggest there is a lack of faith among the present Church of Pakistan workers; they do not believe Muslims will come to the Lord. These two factors could be related. Another reason for the lack of faith might be that the church has lost hope because very few Muslims have come to the Lord. If the local people do not have any role in sharing Christ with Sindhis, not many will convert. Furthermore, the good response among Hindu tribes has distracted the church from interest in reaching Sindhi Muslims.

If the unanimous testimony of our sources correctly assesses the situation, the lack of hospitality in the sense of biraderi (extended family) can only be described as chilling. Muslims come from a very strong community background, when they are not accepted in the church and among its members, it is very painful for them. As a consequence they just leave.
Cultural diversity also creates problems. The majority of the workers in Sindh were Punjabis with a bias against working among Sindhis. Punjabi workers want to keep the purity of their culture, language and customs in their churches. They are not open for Sindhis to come to Christ and retain their own identity. One has to become a Western Christian in faith and a Punjabi in culture to become a Christian.

Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 3, the Church of Pakistan in Sindh is locked into the old traditions of the Church of England’s spirituality. Sadiq (1996), a Sindhi convert, mentioned this is perceived as a Western way of worship. The church still has foreign liturgy, songs and music that are totally different than the local Sindhi music. Talpur (1996) mentioned, “Music for Sindhis is food to their soul.” Foreign music just did not affect a Sindhi Muslim’s soul. This further demonstrates that Christianity is still a foreign religion for a Sindhi Muslim. In other words, the Church of Pakistan has not yet contextualized worship for Sindhi Muslims who wish to follow Christ. The Punjabi Christians expect the new Sindhi believers to follow the church of Pakistan styles of worship which is foreign (in terms of both Punjabi and British influence) to the Sindhis.

When Sindhi Muslims visit a pir or sing a qawali (religious song) they feel fulfilled and closer to God than when they contemplate attending a Christian service. Nevertheless Sindhis find they are to acculturate to British and Punjabi forms of worship. At the same time these Sindhi converts have no access to following a pir their preferred form of spiritual discipline. For example, in the time after becoming a convert, Sindhis have a deep need to be related to one who embodies the ideal life of the Christian. The church has
no functional substitute but only foreign and incomprehensible rituals. The convert feels empty.

Their perception that Church of Pakistan leaders lack integrity prevents the Sindhis from coming to the Church of Pakistan. Sindhis do not differentiate between the common Christians and the leaders of the Church of Pakistan. But to Sindhis, the leaders have a double standard; they feed their extended families and neglect the poor and deserving. This has hurt the church and its workers. When the workers are not satisfied with the local church, they do not share the Gospel with Sindhis. The sad part is that even the foreign missionaries of the Church of Pakistan remain silent about this situation. This raises questions about the credibility of the workers and the foreign missionaries.

Finally, as far as identity is concerned, the Church of Pakistan is not in touch with the Muslim’s reality in Sindh. To Muslims the church represents a sign of colonial presence. To both Sindhi Muslims and Muslim converts, the huge cathedrals represent the old colonial presence and a Pakistani caste system. Farukh (1996) emphasizes, “The colonial structures and the Punjabi Christians who belong to them are all sweepers. We as Sindhi Muslims have nothing to do with this colonial presence.”

These six areas that hinder the Church of Pakistan—theology, hospitality, culture, spirituality, leader integrity, and identity—have not always been sore points. As noted in Chapter 3, Harper and Haskell were very sensitive to the Sindhi culture and language. They promoted the Sindhi language and also had services in Sindhi. The early Church Mission Society missionaries also were very sensitive to the needs of Sindhi people. This
is important because Sindhis are sensitive to issues concerning their language and culture, they are very resistant to change, and they are proud of their heritage.

As the Punjabis came from Punjab, they brought their own traditional customs and culture. The Punjabis grew in numbers and slowly the Sindhis lost their identity as they were outnumbered by the Punjabis. The later missionaries and Punjabis forgot the Sindhis, leading to the present situation where we have a predominantly Punjabi church with little or no desire or effort for ministering to Sindhi Muslims. The church is ingrown and does not want to change and adopt new people. The church wants new Sindhi believers to change their ways and adopt Punjabi customs to become a part of the local church. This is a major stumbling block for the local Sindhi Muslims.

In the end, the church may look back into its own history especially to the time of Harper, Haskell, and Long who were CMS missionaries in the 1920s and 30s. They were sensitive to Sindhis, their language and customs. They set a model of sensitivity and identification. Their ministry was ‘incarnational’\(^{21}\) in many respects. They identified with the local people. They were sensitive not to mix Punjabi low class people with the few Sindhi Muslim converts. They even had separate Sindhi services for Sindhis and made a lot of effort to make Sindhi literature available. This model needs to be revitalized.

\(^{21}\) A detailed history about Harper’s work in Sindh can be found in Dora Green’s book *While It Is Day* (1981:19-44) see above Chapter 3.
Summary

In this chapter I have analyzed the data which was gathered by my assistants and me from 1996–1998. Seven themes emerged from the interviews of former Missionaries, Muslims converts, Sindhi Muslims and Christian workers. These themes were, Hospitality, Spirituality, Colonial and Punjabi Power, Persecution, Women’s Needs, Contextualization and Strategies for Reaching Muslims. Furthermore it was discovered that the Church of Pakistan is not equipped to reach Sindhi Muslims for six reasons: (1) It has a weak theology of mission; (2) there is little hospitality; (3) it is not sensitive to the issues of culture; (4) it does not meet the spiritual needs of Sindhi Muslims; (5) its leaders appear to Sindhis to lack integrity, which militates against whatever hospitality there is; and (6) it is a reminder of colonial and Punjabi power.

Strategies that can bring Sindhi Muslims into the Church of Pakistan included Bible correspondence courses, fellowship and boldness. Specific strategies are needed to reach women. Once within the church, new converts need hospitality and personal sensitivity to their culture, a deep and recognizable spirituality, culturally appropriate forms of architecture and worship (leadership, dress, music), community, and a reworking of the issues of Colonial and Punjabi power.

Cultural differences hinder both the Western missionaries and the Punjabi Christians in their ability to communicate with the Sindhi Muslims. Contextualization of the Good News is important for both the missionaries and the Church of Pakistan. For example, the overall emphasis of the Church of Pakistan, which is predominantly Punjabi, has been that the Sindhis should become Punjabis in order to become Christians. Then
they have to go a step further in their spiritual journey and accept a totally foreign
Christianity in its form, liturgy and style. Christianity was and still is presented in a foreign
colonial form in its structure of buildings as well as in its clergy and administration. There
is no substitute for a pir who plays a very important role in a Sindhi Muslim’s life.

There has been no great emphasis on women’s ministry in the past and the
situation has not changed in recent years. This is strange because the strong separation
between men and women in Sindh would seem an obvious indicator that women must be
reached separately from men. The Church of Pakistan still has not addressed this issue.

Sindhi converts were persecuted and this has also played a role in the fact of few
conversions. The Church of Pakistan in Sindh has no plans to address this issue. Naaman
(1996) mentioned, “Persecution from Muslims is always a blessing [sic], but it is painful
when the convert is not even accepted by the Punjabi Christians.”

The architecture of the churches reminds Sindhi Muslims of the British
domination. The fact that most Christians are from the background of the Sweeper class
and represent the politically dominant Punjabi ethnic group also has a negative impact for
the Sindhi Muslims. These barriers of colonial and Punjabi power are large sociological
barriers for a Sindhi Muslim to cross.

In the discussion of spirituality, the research revealed that the Church of Pakistan is
not convinced that Sindhis will come to Christ. Furthermore the Church of Pakistan has
no functional substitute for the pir who plays a very important role in a Sindhi Muslim’s
life. For this and other cultural reasons (such as music) the Church of Pakistan appears to
be very Western and secular to the Sindhi Muslim. Yet the spiritual standard by which a
Muslim convert was judged is so high that a Sindhi is afraid that he or she will never become a part of a Christian community.

Our informants reported that hospitality has been a major factor in their conversion. The Church of Pakistan has not been able to open its arms and accept the Sindhi Muslim. In fact, one of the main elements that discouraged many Sindhi Muslims was the perceived hypocrisy of the Church of Pakistan and Punjabi Christians so that they appeared inhospitable. This is important for the church to address.

Although Punjabis and Church of Pakistan workers neglected hospitality, a very important aspect of Sindhi culture, it was practiced greatly by workers who were not associated with the Church of Pakistan. This hospitality produced deep friendships and resulted in Sindhi conversions. Furthermore Christian workers such as Roy (1998) started a ‘homogeneous’ Sindhi fellowship which has gained success, as Sindhis feel more comfortable in not changing their culture to become Christians. This fellowship in Sindh was successful, because it was separate from Punjabis.

Greg Livingstone who has ministered to Muslims for many years says, “If there is one common element among Muslims from North Africa to the Philippines, it may be their hospitality. Therefore, the change agents must likewise be perceived as hospitable, generous persons” (Livingstone 1993:103).

In summary, the Church of Pakistan at its inception had strong theologies of evangelism, of lay ministry, and of the celebration of cultural diversity (see above, Chapter 3). The emphasis on outreach to Hindus has positioned it, however, to be seen by Sindhi Muslims as having a weak theology of mission, as lacking in hospitality, cultural
sensitivity, spiritual forms which are intuitively recognized by Sindhi worshipers, as showing little or no sensitivity to cultural issues, and as behaving in ways our sources interpreted as hypocritical. Thus the Church of Pakistan in its present form and style is unable to attract the Sindhi Muslims. Also the strong ethnic differences between Sindhis and Punjabis makes it virtually impossible for the Punjabis to reach the Sindhis. This is due to the Punjabi’s dominant image in the political situation of Pakistan. Thus the Church of Pakistan stands to Sindhis as a colonial presence, holding forth a standard that appears to them to be foreign and oppressive rather than familiar and liberating.

In the light of my research and interviews, I have concluded that the Church of Pakistan in Sindh in its present form is an entity totally foreign to a Sindhi Muslim. History is the witness that in the past 50 years there has been no effort to reach the Sindhi people. It is important to note that the early Church Missionary Society missionaries were sensitive to the cultural diversity issue of Sindhi and Punjabis. They even started separate worship services for these two groups. I have presented details about this in Chapter 3. In Chapter 6 I will present specific proposals to the Church of Pakistan for making its ministry effective in reaching Sindhi Muslims.
CHAPTER 6

Summary and Proposals for Evangelizing Muslims in the Province of Sindh

In Chapter 5 I analyzed data my assistants and I gathered from the interviews in Sindh Pakistan from 1996 to 1998. Each group interviewed (Former Missionaries, Muslim Converts, Sindhi Muslims and Christian Workers) concurred that the Church of Pakistan in Sindh is not reaching the Sindhi Muslims. The question then is raised, If the Church of Pakistan is not now reaching Sindhi Muslims what strategies should be used? Here are two classic strategies: Incorporation of Muslim believers into the existing church and the development of fellowship groups for Muslim converts (cf. Teeter 1990).

Ismail (1983), Khairullah (1979), Christensen (1977), and Larson (1996) recommend that Muslim converts be folded into the local church of Pakistan. For example Christensen admonishes;

If the Muslim convert is ever going to be a living stable Christian, a member of the body of Christ, you have need of an entirely different kind of faith. You need to believe that the church on the spot, in spite of all its failings, is the body of Christ, and given fair teaching and guidance, it will function as the body of Christ. Then you need to believe that it is your bounded duty to turn your raw recruit over to that church. He must know why, of course, but having told why, if he still refuses, you can do nothing for him (1977:174).

This suggestion that Muslim converts come and be part of the local church is not new. For example at the North American Congress on Muslim Evangelism held in Colorado Springs in 1978 (cf. McCurry 1979), Khairullah of Pakistan raised some serious questions regarding the “Muslim church approach.” His paper “The Role of Local
Churches in God's Redemptive Plan for the Muslim world" (1979:566-580) was a response to proposals based on the study of the church in Pakistan. Ismail mentioned that Khairullah's thesis is that the protest against the "Muslim church" approach in Pakistan is "a genuine protest." He argues that the local church if "given fair teaching and guidance will function as the body of Christ," and will receive Muslim converts into its fellowship, where they will be "living, stable Christians" (Ismail 1983).

This approach of enfolding Muslim converts into the existing church may indeed work in other parts of Pakistan. In Sindh however, as Roy (1996) mentioned, "Mutual fellowship does not seem likely." Our informants, Sindhi Muslims and Converts (Asif, Farukh, and Khalid 1996) also stressed this point. Therefore other approaches are needed, approaches that nurture and disciple the Muslim converts and foster a growing convert fellowship.

One viable approach for nurturing and discipling Muslim converts and for creating some growing Muslim convert fellowships in a similar situation had been the Jesus Mosque movement in Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) spearheaded by Phil Parshall (Stott 1978:35). The Jesus Mosque movement created Muslim congregations in a Hindu/Muslim area similar to Sindh. These Jesus Mosques were established in different villages where Muslims came to Christ. Converts were allowed to keep their traditional culture and ways of worship and they prayed to Jesus (Isa).

Despite the similarities of nationality and of religious/ethnic mix the Jesus Mosque model will not work in Sindh for two reasons:
(1) Both Bangladesh and Pakistan are Islamic states. However, "When Bangladesh was founded, the secular principle was one of the pillars of the new state" (Wink 1991:44). On the other hand Pakistan has moved in a fundamentalist Islamic direction (Wink 1991: 45). The imposition of the blasphemy law and the sentence of death makes it very difficult for Christians to share the Gospel with Sindhi Muslims openly. So the question of starting a Jesus Mosque never even comes to their mind.

(2) Bangladesh has about 15% Hindus. The Hindu influence in Bangladesh and the ethnic make up of the people is more tribal. Animism and Hinduism have greatly influenced Islam in Bangladesh. In Sindh the Hindu influence is very minimal. Karachi Sindh’s capital attracts people from Punjab, Baluchistan, and Frontier provinces. These Muslims are very strong orthodox Sunni Muslims. It is almost impossible to get a permit to build an official church for Christians, let alone have a Jesus Mosque. If the local Christians try to imitate the Muslims in building a mosque that would also serve for Muslim converts, the converts would be killed.

The two classic strategies of incorporation and of the Jesus Mosques do not fit the cultural and political situation of Pakistan, a strict Islamic country since the early 1990s. This strictness has created popular agitation since the early 1990s, as illustrated by the fact that radical Muslims have killed three Christians who were under investigation for insulting Muhammad. Two of them were even illiterate. Their lawyer reasoned with the judge that these Christians were innocent. The judge acquitted them. This Muslim judge was later shot too. In September 1998, a Catholic Bishop John Joseph, a prominent spokesperson on human rights, committed suicide in protest of the “Blasphemy law.”
Therefore to establish a Jesus Mosque in Sindh is unthinkable. The Islamic religious zealots would kill anyone who even proposes this idea. We do not want to jeopardize the safety of our missionaries or their contacts.

Thus in this next section I propose strategies that fit the cultural and political situation of Sindh and that speak to the issues raised by the former missionaries, the Sindhi Converts, the Sindhi Muslims and the Christian Workers. The first set of strategies is proposals for the Church of Pakistan. The second set of strategies is proposals that move beyond the Church of Pakistan.

**Proposals for the Church of Pakistan**

Given the historical, social, political, and cultural context of Sindh I propose seven strategies to evangelize Muslims. The first four strategies grow directly out of the informants' response to the situation in Sindh. These strategies are: a Sindhi Convert Fellowship, Christian *pir*, Hospitality, and Women Workers. All the above strategies describe the same dynamics--they only differ in emphasis. That is to say they are interdependent, resulting in an “alternative church” model for Sindhi Muslims. The next two strategies include working with Muslims as tentative believers and establishing a safe home for the Muslim converts and Sindhi Muslim inquirers. These build on the expressed needs. These strategies represent methods of interfacing with the culture, while the four strategies discussed earlier represent strategies for incorporation and nurture of believers. The last strategy, giving blessing to the work of God outside the Church of Pakistan, is a strategy that could over arch all six of the other strategies.
Sindhi Convert Fellowship

My main recommendation is that Sindhi converts be assisted in creating their own unique community of faith, a Christian ummah, in keeping with the Sindhi culture. This fellowship should be for converts only, incorporating seekers is not safe. McGavran (1980:95), Kraft (1979:315), and Parshall (1980:235) all emphasize the importance of the indigenous church model, leading to a "homogenous church" for Muslim converts. These convert fellowships could be within the Church of Pakistan. This “Sindhi Convert Fellowship” will be sensitive to keep its Sindhi language, music, and traditions of worship. I propose that instead of a pastor, a Sindhi convert dervish or faqir may lead this fellowship. The dervish is one who has renounced the world and is Sufi in thinking. His desire is to know God in depth. Sufi Islam, as discussed in Chapter 3, has had a great influence on Sindhis. Sindhis have a great respect for these spiritual leaders and feel they are more spiritually in tune with God. A Christian dervish would have a very different lifestyle than a Western missionary. This lifestyle means total renunciation of worldly things. Living at the standard or even below the standard of a local Sindhi in simplicity will attract many Sindhis to the Lord. For example I saw this happen in my late father’s life. After he accepted Christ, my father lived under a tree for more than two years without a roof (Naaman 1996). At first the Sindhis were suspicious, but as time went on they warmed up to him. The place where he stayed always remained dry even in rainstorms. The Lord used him to perform healing. Later the Sindhis built a straw hut for him. The incarnational life style of my father touched many lives and the Sindhis called him a Christian dervish and pir.
I, myself, observed that my father was deeply influenced by mysticism. He himself said many times, “I am a Christian Sufi.” Western ways of worship left a vacuum in his life. His books, poems and other writings all reflect the Christian mystical influence. He had to keep these things in check as he worked under the Westernized Church of Pakistan, but shared his feelings with the local Sindhis who were inquisitive about his writings and lifestyle. He being a former Punjabi Muslim did not matter to many Sindhis; his simple life and unconditional love attracted many to Christianity.

This “Sindhi Convert Fellowship” led by a Christian dervish will feature exclusively indigenous music. Music is the soul of a Sindi. This fellowship will have special festivals of songs written in honor of Christ. In my home church in Sindh we used to have a yearly festival of songs on Easter and Christmas. Such festivals attracted many local writers to write poems and singers to sing in honor of Christ. My father always invited Sindhi Muslims at times, though much to the displeasure of local Punjabi Christians. Time and again the Sindhis would shake their head in joy and close their eyes to be consumed in the music and words, which were presented to Jesus mentioning his great attributes, power, healing, and forgiveness of sins. They all were attracted to these special songs which we call qawalis. Christian qawalis will take the place of Western hymns, which are so foreign to a Sindi Muslim.

The fellowship would have a Sindhi Christian dervish leading the prayers. The members will sing Christian Sindhi songs and sit on the floor with their shoes off and heads covered. This “Sindhi Christian Fellowship” would attract many Sindhi Muslims. The Christian dervish would be a symbol of spirituality, which will soothe and satisfy the
spiritual thirst of a Sindhi Muslim. Symbols and ceremonies play a very important role in a non-Western culture. This approach will be a dynamic equivalent place of worship for the Sindhi Muslims and prove to be less of a barrier for their coming to Christ.

Zahniser (1997) stresses the importance of symbols and ceremonies. In my father’s and my own ministry, we always had a yearly gathering for the rural Christians at Easter and Christmas. These were very joyful events as people came together and had meals and fellowship. A fellowship meal with songs in Sindhi honoring Christ was an experience that Sindhis remember.

Thus the “Sindhi Christian Fellowship” that I propose should also have a yearly gathering at the house of their dervish. This would provide Sindhi converts a “functional substitute” for the Hajj. There is something special when Muslims gather for Hajj. These annual gatherings will also fill the gap of the meetings, which the Sindhis used to have at the shrine of a local Sindhi saint. Instead of a dead pir and saint, they will meet a living Christian pir and hear a living message that will give them eternal life. All this will be done in a contextualized form sensitive to the local Sindhi culture. The new change agents will have to learn to adapt to these new approaches in order to be better communicators of the Gospel.

Montgomery Smith gives a Biblical example for us to consider that supports the argument for this approach. The early church had distinguished between Jewish and Greek speaking segments (Acts 6). There were Christian movements among the Samaritans, the priests, and the Pharisees (Acts 15:5). It is reasonable to suppose that these homogenous groups heard the gospel in their own social units and then believed. It
is also reasonable to suppose that those who came to Christ wanted to communicate the Good News to those who were in their same social grouping. In this way, the gospel grew among existing social units (M. Smith 1976:168).

One must remember that the whole church must be open to accepting the idea of a “Sindhi convert fellowship” apart from the local church. Thus we need to identify individuals who have the passion to reach the Sindhis and train and encourage them to develop the Sindhi fellowships. Nevertheless it is important to note that since the 1970s the Sindhi government had started to make Sindhi language a compulsory subject to be studied in Sindh. This has been very important for the Punjabi second-generation young people who are fluent in the Sindhi language and comfortable with the Sindhi culture.

These second generation Punjabis are the keys to reach the Sindhis with the gospel. They are open for new ideas. They want to be accepted as new Sindhis by the local Sindhis and they want to overcome the linguistic biases and cultural “hang-ups” of Punjabis. I see them as the key people who are open to reach the Sindhis.

These new young change agents can be very successful in urban Sindh, specially working among college and university students. My informant Khalid (1996) mentioned that Sindhis were more open in urban settings as they feel lonely among different ethnic groups such as Pathans, Punjabis, Baluchis, and Brahvis in urban cities of Sindh. The change agents can also reach these different ethnic groups. Karachi attracts people from all over Pakistan who come in hope of making a better life. The second generation Christians are familiar with these groups as they dominate the local transportation and other businesses.
The Sindhi Muslim converts also can play a major role in reaching Sindhis. Many still have contacts with their families. As mentioned above in Chapters 3 and 4, Zahida (1998) had regular contact with her converted brother. Though this was done secretly, the peace and love of her brother for Jesus did make an impact on her and this opened the door for Zahida to inquire about Jesus.

**Christian Pir**

A lot of serious thought needs to be given to how a Christian could adapt or adopt the role of a pir, since it turns up again and again as a strategic part of the outlooks of Sindhis. My informant Sindhi converts (Asif, Khalid and Aftab 1996) all stressed the importance of a pir in their lives. Western scholars and missionaries have avoided writing on this subject. One reason could be that secularism in the West has played its role so that it is difficult for the Western change agents to identify the importance of the roles that spiritual leaders or ceremonies play in a Sindhi Muslim’s life.

“If we ignore traditional religious symbols and ceremonies in our discipling, believers from traditional religious societies may revert to their former practices in times of crisis and affliction” (Zahniser 1997:215). The Sindhi converts would concur. For them a pir is extremely important. As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, Sindhi converts face a dilemma of a lifetime when, after accepting Christianity there is no pir to whom they can go for spiritual guidance. Western Christianity affected by secularism, seasoned with individualism, and decaying in its values to respect their elders and spiritual leaders, has no answer for this very important native Sindhi Muslim tradition.
Therefore, it is very important for change agents to encourage Sindhi converts to appoint or establish a Christian pir for the Sindhis who want to seek guidance. Caution must be taken not to encourage a Western missionary to take this position as this will not work, and it may backfire. There are Sindhi converts who have converted from a high-class family and we need to encourage one of these men to take this leadership position and role for the new Sindhi fellowship. My data, research, and work experience in Sindh has brought me to this important point for reaching Sindhi Muslims.

This Sindhi Christian pir will be available to the Sindhis who come to the Lord. This Christian pir will be able to guide these new believers. The pir will also help them understand the dreams and visions they see about Jesus. Zahida (1998) mentioned that her brother who had converted to Christianity still sees his Muslim pir, though her brother wonders whether he will ever have a Christian pir who will be able to understand him more deeply. He has tried to share this idea with his Western missionary friend, but has always been told that Christianity does not believe in pirs. This Christian pir will also pray for healing.

My data and research showed what I have found true in my own ministry among Sindhis, that Western missionaries had difficulty addressing the issue of the dreams and visions which that Sindhi Muslims saw. In fact, at times they just laughed and ignored this matter. Nevertheless, "In the full and complex cosmological world of Islam, dreams are of central importance, especially with regard to religious activity" (Musk 1988:167). Esther (1984) a Muslim convert and Sheikh (1978) a Muslim convert both testified to the power of dreams and visions. My own informants do also.
Asif (1996) mentioned that the guidance of the Holy Spirit in his dream played a major role in his conversion. Naaman (1996) and Khalid (1996) all had dreams in which Jesus appeared to them. My Muslim informants mentioned, “We would like to see some clear vision or dream to see if Christ has a message for us” (Farukh 1996). My research reported in Chapters 4 and 5 shows that some Sindhis came to the Lord through visions and dreams.

In my own experience, during my studies at Asbury Seminary in Wilmore Kentucky and later in ministry in the USA, whenever I had a difficult time or felt lonely and missed my family, my father called me from Pakistan. Many times it surprised me. I asked my father how did you know? He always replied, “Jesus appeared to me and asked me to call you.”

Thus dreams and visions play a very important role in a Sindhi Muslim’s life. The Church of Pakistan and its workers must to be open to accept this and to help the new believers. This could be difficult as presently the workers are trained by Western missionaries who themselves struggle with the whole aspect of the unseen world. In the recent years some of the Western writers such as Musk (1988), Kraft (1979), and Parshall (1980) have presented the importance of dreams and visions in Muslim evangelism.

Hospitality

The second important strategy for evangelism is hospitality. Musk (1995), Mallouhi (1997), and Livingstone (1993) all agree that “hospitality is non negotiable” (Mallouhi 1997:85). My own informants also mentioned how important hospitality was. Roy (1996, 1998) mentioned that hospitality was the key for his contacts. Sindhis would
come and have feasts with him and later he with his family would be invited to their homes. Roy (1996) affirms, “Hospitality played a major role in Sindhi conversion in my ministry.”

In reaching out to the Sindhi Muslim hospitality means sharing time, space and food (cf. Musk 1995). It also means being vulnerable to the extent of being willing to be robbed, cheated and taken advantage off. For example my family was robbed three times by fake Muslim converts, nevertheless we kept our home open so that other Sindhi Muslims could come and could see the love of Christ. If we had not kept our home open we would not have reached many Sindhi Muslims at a deep personal level. There are three reasons why we could not have reached them at this deep level. First, if we had visited in a teashop we would have shared about general things but we would not have shared deep spiritual thoughts. Second, when Muslims came to our home we became a family; being a family means sharing deep hurts, pains, and joys. Third, it was in sharing our hurt and pain that we were especially able to share Christ. We cannot share Christ without sharing our deepest hurts and joys which happens only within the home. Opening the home is the primary first step for evangelism even in adversity. As indicated by Naaman (1996): sometimes ministering to people according to their needs first allows us to engage them in conversation leading to witness, always within a context of hospitality. My family modeled this especially well.

---

22 Christine’s Pohl’s book Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999) shows how from the perspective of history and ethics a more hospitable Christianity can be recovered.
Once a person becomes Christian, hospitality still is very crucial for growth and development. It is important for four reasons. First, believers cannot share openly outside the home because it is not generally accepted and it is not politically safe. Second, inside the home believers can be more open. Third, it portrays our hospitality as not simply for making conversions and counting numbers, but as an enduring relationship. Fourth, it makes the family stronger. This happens because my family ties with the believers are stronger; my family is stronger and becomes more than my family, it becomes the Christian family; and this Christian family is the basis of becoming a Christian ummah.

Hospitality is in the blood and body of Sindhis. When we as Christians share our homes with Sindhi Muslims we provide them with a functional substitute for their own Muslim ummah. When we as Christians share our homes with other Sindhi believers we portray the love of the Body of Christ. Hospitality thus becomes a very crucial factor in reaching Sindhis and without it we cannot clearly demonstrate Christ’s love and Christian fellowship.

Women Workers

The fourth main strategy for evangelism is for the Church of Pakistan to have more women’s workers in Sindh. Chapter 5 stressed the need and importance of “women reaching women.” In Sindhi culture men cannot communicate with women openly. The strong seclusion of women called purdah makes it impossible for men to talk to them about deep spiritual truths. Women are a very important part of a Sindhi family. Yet at present we do not have Christian women’s workers specifically focused to reach Sindhi women.
Part of the challenge is due to the lack of roles that women have in the Sindhi society. In this society there are no public leadership roles for women. Therefore, women workers can minister only in informal roles found in the context of friendship and hospitality or through work related conversations. These informal roles are the only proper contextualized roles for women workers in the phases of evangelism. Within a Sindhi Christian fellowship women possibly could function as lay leaders to other women under the guidance of a Christian pir. (These lay women leaders would not be teaching men).

Western missionaries are very careful to comply with the Sindhi culture, but have not been able to use this dynamic of reaching women by women successfully. Even though Western women can visit the inner section of a home and spend extended time with the housewives, they rarely do so because they themselves are wives and staying at home with their children; if they are in ministry, they are working with nominal Christians. This may not be an issue of language or of time because these women do speak Sindhi and do have two or three servants. This is as much an issue as of encouragement because the husbands are very protective of their wives. Perhaps new ways for wives to be involved in this aspect of mission can be developed. On the other hand we can encourage more women workers like the Canadian missionary who arranged the Jesus film showing. The details of this can be seen in Chapter 5.

There are no Pakistani women workers. Because of the deep seated, lingering and unconscious Islamic influence, Christians in Pakistan—even in the Church of Pakistan—have not realized the importance of women in ministry. The Church needs to establish a
whole network of women workers. The second generation Punjabi Christian women can easily become these workers because it is now these women who know the Sindhi language and culture. In my own ministry in Sindh, working with a parachurch organization I trained many women workers. These women workers were open to share the Gospel with Sindhi women.

Women change agents are essential if we want to see Sindhi Muslim women coming to Christ. Both Western and Punjabi women can play a role. Developing friendships and visiting in homes is essential (Love 1996:135-138).

In developing roles for women, it is important to remember that the Sindhi culture seems to have even stricter separation of the sexes than the Jewish culture of Jesus’ time. Jesus’ affirmation of the women could have been even more shocking to the Sindhis than to the Jews. Therefore, the process of the “critical contextualization” (Hiebert 1987:104-112) of women’s leadership roles will look very different than in Egypt (Hoffman 1995:291-299) or in the United States. Because Sindhi women do not perceive or feel a sense of subordination to men, in fact a happily married woman feels protected, there is no need to bring rapid changes in leadership roles and structures, especially according to Western standards. In fact, such rapid change would create a sense of immorality and would ruin the structure of community.

My informants stressed the four strategies I have just presented. Roy (1998) started one Sindhi convert fellowship. The need to have a Christian pir was shared by Sindhi Muslim converts. Hospitality was a strategy used by missionaries and was very successful in reaching Sindhi Muslims. Only one informant, a woman working in the
medical field—though the comments of Sindhi Muslim women also pointed to the need for women workers—stressed the need for women workers. In other words, all the above strategies came directly out of the interviews that my assistants and I did in 1996 and 1998. The final two proposals, however are strategies growing out of my broader research recorded in Chapters 1 through 3. These help to bridge the informants’ spoken needs and the actual political situation.

**Working With Muslims as Tentative Believers.**

The fifth strategy for evangelism is a strategy that: (1) recognizes that conversion is a process, (2) is culturally appropriate, and (3) protects the Christian and the Sindhi Muslim in a volatile political situation. This strategy is working with Muslims as “tentative believers” (Teeter 1990).


Sadiq went to Karachi where he saw a picture of a man who was on a cross. He asked his friend to visit this shop. When they entered the shop the manager explained what this picture was about. He later gave him some tracts, he got the tracts and started Bible Correspondence courses. After he finished the courses he met the missionary. Then after some years he accepted the Lord. (Sadiq 1996)

Aftab comes from a strong religious background. His background is Sunni Muslim and generations of Muslim clerics. He was studying in a Muslim school to become a Muslim cleric. One day some missionaries came to a nearby village with the “Jesus” film. He asked his principle if some of his friends could go and see the movie and argue with the team. Before the movie began Aftab started asking questions, but the team leader requested him to watch the movie and after that he will be glad to answer the
questions. As the movie began, Aftab became very restless and was challenged to see the life of Christ versus Muhammad. Christ’s miracles and resurrection made an impact on him. He asked the missionary for further materials. After graduating from Islamic school he came back to his village in Sindh, but felt very uneasy. He started reading the Bible and later became Christian with the help of a foreign missionary. (Aftab 1996)

My informants relate the lengthy path of becoming a Christian.

For Teeter, a Muslim--in this time of intense seeking and decision making before baptism--is “being born of the Spirit” (Teeter 1990:308). A Muslim at this time can be described as:

A “tentative believer” in Christ. He is deeply and profoundly changed, but he is not fully aware of the change. He has not made any deliberate “decision for Christ” but he is aware, on some level, when Christ has entered into his life. (Teeter 1990:308)

Working with Muslims as tentative believers is culturally appropriate. It recognizes that a Muslim sees himself or herself as submitted to the sovereign will of God, and it works with a Muslim’s sense that all decisions are provisional and in God’s hands until the day of judgment (Teeter 1990:309). For this reason decisions need not be made quickly, but may be made much more slowly. Too often I saw Sindhi Muslims turned away from the Gospel just because they were asked to respond by lifting their hands after showing of the “Jesus” film or by being pressured to make their decision instantly.

Sindhi Muslims respond if asked about any matter saying, in sha’Allah (God willing). For them everything depends on the will of God. In the Western traditions one seems to be expected to make a decision rather quickly. For Sindhi Muslims decision-making in conversion appears to be a longer process, tentative until the will of God is known.
Working with Sindhi Muslims as tentative believers is politically viable. Conversion in Sindh may cost a Sindhi Muslim his or her life. With the recent imposition of the Islamic laws, it is becoming very difficult for Sindhi Muslims to come forward and to declare the Gospel to Sindhi Muslims. Working with Muslims as tentative believers enables Muslims to follow Jesus and enables those who feel called to remain in their communities to be witnesses in these communities to their families, friends (Teeter 1990:309).

In 1998 Zahida asked me, “Can one accept Christ and remain a Sindhi Muslim?” Working with Muslims as tentative believers is one way to say “Yes, a Sindhi Muslim can be a follower of Isa.” It is one way of saying that a Sindhi may be a Muslim Christian (Teeter 1990:306). 23

The change agents who present the gospel to Sindhi Muslims may learn to accept many Sindhis as “tentative believers,” leave the results in God’s hand and to rest in peace that God in His own time will bring the harvest. Teeter comments, “We can bear witnesses of Muslim people who are walking with Christ without actually converting to Christianity. Some of these we can only describe as ‘tentative believers’” (Teeter 1990:312). This process may be a “dynamic equivalent” of conversion for Muslims who find Christ but who are called by God to remain in their own communities, as witnesses to family and friends (for a different perspective see Syrjanen 1984:164-187). With the strong Islamic

being implemented in Sindh this is a very important point for Christians to consider who are committed to share the Gospel with Sindhi Muslims.  

Establishing a Safe Home for Converts and Sindhi Muslim Inquirers

The sixth strategy for Muslim evangelism is to establish safe homes for converts, tentative believers, and Sindhi Muslim inquirers. The element of persecution is very imminent for the Sindhis when they accept Christ. Until now we have no safe place for the Muslim inquirers to come. As mentioned earlier, my home in Pakistan was a safe place for the Muslim inquirers. People from all over Pakistan used to send Muslim inquirers and converts to us since my father was a convert. They stayed with us for extended periods of time. Having fellowship with my father was very helpful for them. But we were very limited in our resources to support them. Time and again it was very painful to turn down a request from a person just because of lack of space. Therefore, it will be very helpful for the local church and change agents to have a half way house where people can come and stay. This house may also serve as a discipleship center. Caution may be taken not to disclose the location of this house as this may endanger the change agent, the converts and their families. The new Sindhi believers need constant care and guidance as they grow in the Lord.

The church may also be sensitive to the physical needs of these new believers. At times Christians are only concerned about spiritual food or salvation. However at this point in time converts have usually lost their jobs by becoming Christians. It is our responsibility as a body of believers to help these new converts. In my understanding it is possible that the church cannot provide all, but Western individualism has hindered this
aspect of ministry expecting people to be on their feet immediately. As noted above in our
discussion of hospitality and the Christian ummah, the national change agents must model
hospitality to these new believers to give them a sense of the Christian ummah. As
nationals model this aspect of hospitality, foreign missionaries may learn and follow their
eexample. Maybe the church, like the Jewish community in Europe, could help each other
develop skills and employment that do not depend on government or public approval.

These six strategies for the Church of Pakistan may help her in reaching Sindhis.
These strategies grow out of the interviews and are distilled from years of living in a
Punjabi Muslim convert home and watching very closely how my father, Naaman,
witnessed and shared Christ’s love with the Sindhi Muslims. But the church may also be
ready for persecution. As Sindhis come to the Lord, we may have to pay a price. As
noted above, Sindhis assassinated my own brother. My father was able to share about
forgiveness at his funeral. His sermon opened many doors for sharing Christ. People
were surprised at his ability to forgive the people who have hurt him so much. This
incident is a constant reminder that things may get rough when we make changes in our
approaches.

These six strategies may induce persecution. These six strategies may also induce
the drawing together of Sindhi converts into a truly Sindhi fellowship that sees itself as
having the liberty to function on its own without the necessity of conforming to the
Church of Pakistan standards. To do so assumes two major assumptions and one major
consequence. The first assumption is that a more Sindhi-culturally-sensitive approach to
evangelism, ideally would be carried out in the Sindhi language by Sindhi Muslim
converts, but also possibly carried out by Punjabis who would be willing to learn the Sindhi language and culture and be willing to put aside Punjabi biases and assumptions [to defy the traditional approaches]. The second assumption is that a culturally viable and biblically functional Christian dervish and pir embodying many New Testament leadership functions should probably be introduced into these Sindhi fellowships and adapted into the Church of Pakistan setting.

The major consequence would be facing the same problems that the Jesus Mosque movement in Bangladesh faced in its relationship with the established church in Bangladesh. Anyone who would institute these strategies could feel a lot of pressure. Punjabis Christians would ask, “Why are you doing that! That’s not Christian! How can you be considered integrated into the large church when you are out there doing your own thing?!”

To answer these objections and to withstand the hostility of the church, awareness of the process of rejection and acceptance that the Jesus Mosque movement in Bangladesh went through could be helpful. Pakistani Christians involved in Muslim evangelism need to be prepared to anticipate some of the same agonies and points of growth over time. The Bangladesh Jesus Mosque initially was viewed as heretical and was rejected. The assumption was that anyone who would do point one and two should be viewed as a heretic at worst and a troublemaker at best by the established church. In Pakistan, there will be an initial significant cost to be paid. But the Bangladesh situation holds out the hope that an initial chasm or bridge can be lessened with time in that, through the ongoing efforts of missionaries and Muslim converts, that gap has been bridged and the Hindu-
based church is now conceding that Muslim converts are family in Christ. Understanding these problems and processes of change will enable us to be more humble, patient, and persistent in this Christian witness.

Schreiter (1992) notes that the church is mandated to be a reconciling agent and (1997) must work with global and local issues of difference and diversity. The Church of Pakistan already has made a formal commitment to such. This reconciliation material could be focused on the Punjabis and Sindhi Christian need for reconciliation. Peaceful relations with Sindhi Muslim Convert Fellowships might be encouraged if the following strategy is followed:

1. Use materials such as the information presented in this dissertation as “white papers” and the basis of training manuals for the Church of Pakistan.

2. Target and recruit laity gifted in evangelism and cross-cultural ministry to work alongside the Sindhi Muslim Converts, expatriate missionaries, and experienced Pakistani workers to form and to support Sindhi Muslim Convert Fellowships. These lay members may be involved in either direct or indirect evangelism.

3. Create and maintain both formal and informal working relationships with the Sindhi Muslim Convert Fellowships.

Use of these strategies might prevent a strong rupture between the Church of Pakistan and the emerging fellowships.

The possibility of reconciliation between traditional Punjabi Christians and Sindhi Muslim converts is very tenuous at best because of political and legal considerations wherein Sindhi Muslim converts continue to be treated by the wider population and
government as if they were Muslim. Reconciliation cannot occur between Christians and Muslims. Christians do forgive Muslims, (Naaman N.D), but Shari’ah law divides Christians and Muslims politically, socially, culturally, ethnically, and religiously while preventing and denying reconciliation.

Kingdom purposes would dictate that efforts be made to bridge these gaps and to understand that bridging these gaps is, indeed, the task of reconciliation (Schreiter 1992, 1997). Schreiter has synthesized much of the Christian literature on reconciliation, and has even noted how to move toward reconciliation (Schreiter 1992:69-79). For this material to be meaningful and useful for Christians living in Muslim Pakistan, this material would need to be considerably adjusted and modified to fit this “glocalic,” the concrete political, historical, and religious situation of Christian life under the Shari’ah Law.

Irwin (1999) emphasizes that nevertheless:

Recognition of these strategies for Sindhi Muslim outreach is nothing less than giving recognition to the bicultural reality that is the Church in Pakistan. To allow for and embrace: Sindhi Convert Fellowship, Christian pir, Hospitality, Women Workers open the door to diversity. To permit “tentative believers” and establish “safe homes” is to trust Christ who is the Lord of the Church, and the Holy Spirit who discerns and protects his own. This is a spiritual advance toward maturity for the Church of Pakistan. To risk is to be in mission. These [strategies] are means.

Despite the fact that reconciliation and witness to the ends of the earth is mandated for Christians, given the past hundred years of history--and even more recent church history--and given the reality of persecution, and the complexity of ethnic misunderstandings, the likelihood that the Church of Pakistan would adapt these strategies
appears to be very small. This means that these strategies may have to be implemented outside of the structure of the Church of Pakistan.

Blessing the Work of God Outside the Church of Pakistan

It would be desirable for the Church of Pakistan to give its blessing to this work. As we have already mentioned, based on our research into the history and our interviews—we could get only one interview from the Church of Pakistan, the likelihood of the Church’s implementing our proposals is not very strong. In all likelihood, moreover, even fraternal relationship with indigenous Sindhi movements seems highly unlikely. Hopefully the Church of Pakistan could give its approval and blessing to individuals and groups willing to undertake an effective outreach to Sindhi Muslims. In this hope we extend our proposals to the Christian movement outside the Church of Pakistan. Therefore it seems that these strategies would need to be implemented in structures outside of the Church of Pakistan.

Proposals Beyond the Church of Pakistan

In order to implement these strategies five steps are necessary. The first step is to promote an interest in the evangelizing Sindhi Muslims among national Christians and in national and expatriate agencies. The second step would be to identify people and agencies that already have an interest in reaching Sindhis. The third step would entail extensive conversations among these aforementioned people and agencies to build consensual support and even partnerships.

The fourth step would be gathering models of successful partnerships to be drawn upon in building these partnerships in Sindh. For example models of successful
partnerships that could be used would include “North Africa Partnership, United Missions to Nepal, and International Assistance Missions of Afghanistan” (Douglas 1999). The fifth and last step would be to assign and give ownership of various aspects of this strategy to the appropriate qualified expatriates and nationals.

Since the writing of this dissertation has begun, several groups have come to the reality of developing partnerships because it is difficult to work with the Church of Pakistan. At this time I can say no more for security reasons. On July 12th 1998 a code of secrecy was adopted which cannot be violated.

When we think about communicating the Gospel to Sindhi Muslims, there are many theories, which come to mind. Many modern missionaries try to present their own-views in the light of their own studies and evaluations. Phil Parshall offers an interesting study:

There is a raging current flowing between the banks of Islam and Christianity. In certain places, the river is narrow and the banks are close to each other, while in other areas the gap appears totally unbridgeable. One could postulate that inadequate attention and energy have been devoted to building bridges to Islam, understanding and communication between the two largest religions on planet earth. There is One, however, who set the example. (Parshall 1980:128)

Further more Bethmen comments:

Why did God send Christ to bridge the gulf between heaven and earth, between divinity and humanity? The people of this world did not ask for it, and when Christ came, He was not accepted even by those who should have been prepared for His coming. God’s love constrained Him to do so, and the same love constrains Christians to do likewise. “God Himself built the bridge to humanity . . . just as Christ Himself became the divine blessing. In like manner we must become bridges to our fellow Muslims--and channels through which the life giving waters flow. (Bethmen 1953: 201-202)
The best example for us is the incarnation of Jesus Christ. God humbled himself to such an extent that He became human in order to save us from eternal death. Humility is very important if we are to win Sindhi Muslims. Jesus’ life is a model for us to follow. He Himself associated with different classes of people. He sat with sinners (in the eyes of the Pharisees) in order to show them His love and concern. Then we see the life of Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles. In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, he says, “Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone to win as many as possible. To the Jews, I became like a Jew, to win the Jews” (NIV). Further he speaks about how he communicates with different people in such a way that they identify with him.

Paul saw this important point, that he had to identify with different peoples of different levels to save them. How far are we Christians going? Are we not keeping ourselves at too great a distance to reach the Sindhi Muslims? Many times we speak of love and concern for Muslims. When we see the problems of rejection, humiliation and persecution, however we develop bad feelings toward them. This takes us far away from the real goal, which we should have in our lives. Paul says in verse 23, that he does all these things only for the sake of the gospel. Whatever we do, our goal and intention should always be for the spread of His kingdom.

Our love, concern and humility for Sindhi Muslims can break all barriers. Zahniser offers an insight about the model of Jesus in humility, “While his contemporaries admired the virtuous, Jesus empowered the rejected; while they legitimized the strong and wealthy, he exalted the weak and poor; while they called the victims of disease sinners, he healed them by engaging their faith, and forgiving them their sins; while they saved their
reputation, he lost his to save them” (Zahniser 1989:79). God gives us strength if we are humble in our spirit.

According to my informants, the present Church of Pakistan is not following this model. It is tragic that we are not reaching the Sindhi Muslims with the Gospel. But the Lord has raised many new change agents who are willing to take risks for the Gospel. They are not the mighty leaders of the Church of Pakistan, but simple people who are convinced that they have to take the Great Commission seriously. These people believe that Muslims should be saved as Jesus died for them too. Perhaps by using the strategies discussed in this research these new change agents (both from within and outside of the Church of Pakistan) will be able to present the Good News in ways that are compelling for the Sindhi Muslim and so create a stable fellowships of believers and Christian unity in Pakistan.

Conclusion

To summarize, Chapter 1 presented the socio-political and historical background of Sindh; Chapter 2 discussed the cultural and religious context of Sindh; Chapter 3 presented the Christian witness of Sindh. In Chapter 4, I presented the results of the interviews and research among four groups of people: former missionaries, Sindhi converts, Sindhi Muslims and Christian workers. In Chapter 5 I analyzed the themes that emerged from the research: (1) Hospitality (2) Spirituality, (3) Colonial and Punjabi Power, (4) Persecution, (5) Women’s Needs, (6) Contextualization and (7) Strategies for Reaching Muslims. Chapter 6 presented seven strategies that the Church of Pakistan could use for effective witness to Sindhis: (1) Developing Sindhi Convert Fellowships, (2)
Allowing for Christian Pirs, (3) Providing more elaborate Hospitality, (4) Women workers, (5) Working with Tentative Muslim Believers, (6) Safe Home for Muslim Converts and Inquirers (7) Giving Blessing to the Word of God Beyond the Church of Pakistan. The first four strategies grow directly out of the informants' comments; the last three strategies grow out of informants' stories and needs, but also take into account political and historical realities. Chapter 6 also presented strategies for witnesses that move beyond the work of the Church of Pakistan.

I have been limited in this study by the number of responses from the Church of Pakistan's workers—no one was directly involved in Muslim evangelism. I had very few Sindhi Muslim converts respond, as not many have come to the Lord, and not a single woman. This shows how far we have to go to reach Sindhi women and what little effort has been made to address this issue. This study shows that we need to further address the needs of difference, diversity, and of reconciliation.

This dissertation, however, and the strategies I propose grow out of over twenty years of close observation, research and experiences being involved in Muslim ministries in Sindh. I know some of the proposals may sound radical and non-traditional from a Western perspective, and may receive some criticism. On the other hand, this will be the first document written by a Pakistani national that offers proposals for reaching the Sindhis.

To enact these strategies would be a massive undertaking. It might not involve large numbers of people, but it would involve massive changes in the theology of the Church of Pakistan. It is my deepest belief that these proposals will
not compromise the Gospel, but present it in a powerful way that will appeal to Sindhi Muslims.
APPENDICES

The sample questions for interviews (Appendices A, B, C and D) were sent to research assistants in the four different groups. A) Former Missionaries, B) Sindhi Muslim Converts, C) Sindhi Muslims and D) Christian workers in order to garner responses. The research assistants and I gathered the data both orally and in written forms. I interviewed the Sindhi Muslims and converts myself in 1996 and 1998. Some of my informants shared their views in Sindhi and Urdu. My research assistant and I translated these for this study. Initially the questions were mailed and hand delivered to over 15 Church of Pakistan workers. We received no response as none of the Church of Pakistan workers were directly involved in Sindhi Muslim evangelism. I received one response from a former Hindu Sindhi evangelist Patel whose comments are included in our data.

Appendix A

Interview questions for former Missionaries.

1. Please state your name (optional).

2. How long were you a missionary in Pakistan?

3. For which mission organization did you work?

4. Describe the people you worked with.

5. Describe the nature of your work.


7. What factors played an important part in these Christian conversions?
8. What factors do you think are obstacles to the Church of Pakistan in evangelizing and witnessing to Sindhi Muslims?

9. What factors are essential for the Church of Pakistan to be effective in its evangelistic witness to Sindhi Muslims?

10. Imagine you were hired by the Church of Pakistan today and asked to suggest strategies that will make it effective in its evangelistic witness to Sindhi Muslims. What would you suggest? List as many suggested strategies as possible with brief explanations for each.

11. How should the Church assimilate (accept, disciple or teach) new Church members?

12. What follow-up is essential for these new converts?

13. How can these new converts become a part of the life and witness of the Church of Pakistan?

14. Should new converts be used in the Church of Pakistan's witness to Sindhi Muslims? If yes, how? If no, why not?
Appendix B

Interview questions for Muslim Converts to Christianity.

1. Describe how you became Christian?

2. What were your previous religious beliefs/experiences? Please be specific.

3. What was it that attracted you to the Christian faith?

4. What person(s) was/were instrumental in your becoming a Christian? (Please list role of each of these persons in your life and type of position held by each person.)

5. Of the above persons instrumental in your becoming a Christian, how many of those are:
   a. Church leaders
   b. Church members
   c. Friend
   
   d. Medical worker
   e. School teacher
   f. Other

6. What role did the people of the Church of Pakistan play in your becoming a Christian?

7. What specific things happened to you that led you to consider the Christian faith as your faith?

8. Were there some external factors that made you more receptive to the Christian faith? If yes, please check all that apply.
   a. sickness
   b. death of loved one
   c. education
   d. political instability
   e. other
9. What part did the Bible play in your becoming a Christian?

10. Prior to becoming a Christian, what circumstance (political, social, economic or other barriers) or person, if any, kept you from becoming a Christian?

11. Did you have a meaningful opportunity to hear and respond to the Christian faith?

12. How did you overcome these obstacles or negative influences, if any, to become a Christian?

13. Are you a member of a local Church? If so, what was the process you went through to join a local Church?

14. Would you consider yourself a growing Christian?

15. What helps you in your growth? If so, in what ways?

16. What hinders growth? If not, why not?

17. How has the Christian faith helped to meet your needs? Be specific?

18. If you were giving suggestions to the Church of Pakistan as to how they could be more effective in evangelizing Sindhi Muslims what would they be?

19. What should the Church of Pakistan stop doing or do in order to attract Sindhi Muslims to Jesus and His Church?
Appendix C

Interview questions for Sindhi Muslims.

1. You are a Sindhi Muslim, what are some of your beliefs?
2. What is your understanding of the Christian faith?
3. What images come to your mind when the word "Christian" is mentioned?
   a. Is there a dominant image?
   b. If so, why is this your dominant image?
4. What image(s) come to your mind when you hear the phrase "Church of Pakistan?"
5. In the light of your understanding of the Christian faith and your Muslim beliefs, are there any similarities between the two? If yes, what are they?
6. In what ways can these similarities be built upon to establish friendly relationship between Christians and Sindhi Muslims?
7. Do you believe the Church of Pakistan has made a positive impact in your life or has it had little influence in your life?
8. If the Church has had a positive impact in your life, please share some stories about its positive influence.
9. What can the Church of Pakistan do or stop doing in order to make a positive contribution to your life and/or your community?
10. What is your personal response to the Church of Pakistan's evangelistic witness to Sindhi Muslims?
   a. tolerant
11. What would it take for you to become a follower of Jesus Christ?

12. What may be some first signs or experience that you are moving in the direction of becoming a Christian?

13. Of the family members or friends you know, how many have become Christians and why do you think they became Christians?

14. Of the above, how many are still Christians? Why are they still Christians? How many are not still Christians? Why?

15. Describe how they became Christians?

16. How long did it take for them to become a Christian? Why?

17. How has society looked upon them since they became Christians?

18. Have they reverted to their former religious affiliation?

19. Have they mixed their new Christian belief with their former religion?

20. What would you suggest that people of Church of Pakistan do in order for them to have more followers of Jesus Christ?
Appendix D

Interview questions for Christian Workers.

1. What is your ethnic background?

2. What languages do you speak fluently?

3. What languages do you use in evangelism?

4. Why did you join the Church/organization?

5. When and where were you first involved in church work?

6. Are you employed full- or part-time in your position in the Church/organization?

7. What were the kinds of qualifications, gifts the Church/organization required of you?

8. Do you remember your selection process? If so, please describe it for me?

9. What kinds of experiences did you bring to the Church/organization?

10. Describe the people you work with. Are they?

   ___ a. students

   ___ b. professional workers

   ___ c. others (please list: __________________________)

11. Describe the nature of your work.

   ___ a. evangelism

   ___ b. social work

   ___ c. medical

   ___ d. education

   ___ e. other (please list) __________________________
12. How do you feel when you approach a Muslim with the purpose of sharing the Gospel?

13. Do you feel that a Muslim, if presented with an opportunity to become Christian, would respond?

14. If your witness is rejected, do you feel it was because of the message or messenger?

15. Do you feel you have credibility with Muslims?

16. How have the people benefited from your work and ministry?

17. Have there been conversions as a result of your work? Why?

18. Do you disciple your converts? If so, what plan do you follow? (Please share the teaching, training and strategies you use to disciple, as well as any resources used for developing your plan.)

19. Describe barriers to discipling new converts. Please include in your answer barriers that may be sociological, political and economical in nature.

20. How did you form the church in your area?
   a. What facilitated its development?
   b. What obstacles did you have to overcome?

21. What has been done to develop indigenous support, worship and church life?

22. What should be done in order for Christian witness to be more effective in reaching Sindhi Muslims?

23. Would you be comfortable if Sindhi Muslim converts used their own style of worship in your church?
24. Would you be comfortable if they had this worship in their own social gatherings?
REFERENCES CITED

Aftab, Muhammad.

Ahmad, Aziz.

Ali, Khadim.

Ali, Michael Nazir.

Asif, Sheikh.

Badar, Sehto.


Baily, Kenneth D.

Baluch, Sher Muhammad.

Banuazizi, Ali and Myron Weiner, eds.

Bethmen, Eric. W.

Brown, Tom.

Cardon, John.


Chopra, Hira Lall, and N. B. Butani.

Christensen, Jens.

Clark, Robert.


Crawford, Trudie.

David, Mitchell

Douglas, Robert C.
1999 Personal communication with the author, April 7th.

Elliot, Sir Henry M, and John D. Dowson, eds.
1867 The History of India as told by its own Historians. London.

Esther, Gulshan.

Farukh, Ghorī.
Farukh, Ghori.

Francis, Andrew.

Frisch, Michael.

Gilliland, Dean S.

Green, Dora.

Gregory, Kenneth.

Haggai Institute News Letter.
1983

Haq, Hanooq

Hargreaves, A.C. M.

Harrison, Selig S.

Haskell, C. W.
1957 A Sinner in Sind. Wellington, New Zealand. Wright and Carman Ltd.

Hayward, John.
Hiebert, Paul.

Hoebal, E. Adamson

Hoffman, Valerie, J.

Ikram, S. M.
1993  History of Muslim Civilization in India And Pakistan 5th ed. Lahore, Pakistan. Institute of Islamic Culture.

Irwin, Eunice.
1999  Personal communication(fax) to the author. January 18.

Ismail, Zafar

Jalal, Barnabas.

Jones, Violet Rhoda and L. Beavens Jones.

Karam, Anwarul.

Kellock, James.

Kessing, R. M, and F. M. Kessing.

Khairullah, F
Khalid, Shah

Khokhar, Barkat

Korson, J. Henry.

Kraft, Charles A


Kroeber, Alfred, and C. Klukhohn

Kureshy, K. U.

Lal, B. B.
1997  The Earliest Civilization of South Asia (Rise, Maturity and Decline). New Delhi, India: Aryan Books International.

Larson, Frederick Warren

Lawrence, Phil.


Leghari, Shaheen.

Lewis, P.
Lings, Martin.  

Livingstone, Gregg.  

Love, Fran.  

Majumdar, R. C.  

Malik, Imam  

Mallouhi, Christine.  

Mark, Mahmood.  


McClintock, Wayne.  

McGavran, Donald A.  


Miller, Roland.  

Mujeeb, M.  
Musk, Bill.
1989 The Unseen Face of Islam. Monrovia, CA: MARC.
1995 Touching the Soul of Islam. Monrovia, CA: MARC.

Naaman, G.M
N.D My Grace is Sufficient for You. Rikon, Switzerland. The Good Way.
1996 Personal interview with the author. August 12.

Nadvi, Sulaiman

Nasr, Seyyed Hossain.

Negotiating Committee on Church Union.
1953 The Plan of Church Union in North India and Pakistan.
Unpublished Material.

Nicholson, Reynold A.
1921 Studies In Islamic Mysticism. Cambridge: At The University Press.

Nielsen, Nils C., et al. eds.

Panikkar, K. M.

Parshall, Phil.
Parshall, Phil.

Patel, Hiro.

Paul, Bill

Pohl, Christine.

Price, Ena.

Quddus, S. A.

Qureshi, Ishtiaq Hussain.
1962 The Muslim Community of Indo-Pak Sub-Continent. The Hague: Mouton.

Rossman, Gretchen B., and Sharon F. Rallis.

Roy, Harris.
Saal, William J.  

Sadiq, Muhammad.  

Savarkar  

Sawyer, Forest  

Schimmel, Annemarie.  


Schreiter, Robert.  


Shah, Khalid.  

Shahid, S. M. N.D  
*A Short History of Muslim Culture.* Lahore, Pakistan: Publishers Emporium.

Shahida, Maher  

Sheikh, Bilquis.  
Sher, A. Q.

Smith, Montgomery W.
1976  "Homogeneity and American Church Growth."  D. Miss. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Soomro, Abdul

Stacey, Vivienne,

Stock, Frederick and Margaret.

Stott, John.

Subhan, John A.

Symonds, Richmond.

Syrjanen, Seppo
1984  *In Search of Meaning and Identity: Conversion to Christianity in Pakistani Muslim Culture*. Vammala, Finland. The Finish Society For missiology and Ecumenics.

Tabatabai, M. H.

Tabitha, Khulda


Tahir, Muhammad
Talpur, Mahmood Ali.

Teeter, David.
1990 "Dynamic Equivalent Conversion for Tentative Muslim Believers."

Titus, Murray T.
1959[1930] Islam in India and Pakistan: A Religious History of Islam in
India and Pakistan. Revised Reprint. Madras, India: The
Christian Literature Society.

Travis, John
1998 "Must All Muslims Leave 'Islam' to Follow Jesus." Evangelical

Van Rheenan, Gailyn.
1991 Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts. Grand Rapids,

U. S. Department of State. Central Intelligence Agency
1999 Country Listing Factbook Homepage. Pakistan April 9th.
www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/pk.htm

Wakil, Pervez A.
1970 "Explorations into Kin-networks of the Punjabi Society: A
700-707.

Weekes, Richard V, ed in chief.
1978 Muslim Peoples: A World Ethnographic Survey. Westport, CT:
Greenwood Press.

Whiteman, Darrell L.
1977 "Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge."

Wink, A.
1991 "The Islamisation of Pakistan and its International Context."
In Islam Politics and Society in South Asia. Andre Wink, ed. Pp. 29-
55. New Delhi, India: Manohar Publications.

Wirshing, Robert G.
1988 "Ethnicity and Political reforms in Pakistan." Asian Affairs an
Wittenbach, H. A.
1963 Missionaries are Our Business CMS Popular Report No. 2.

Zahner, R. C.

Zahida, Baluch

Zahnisser, Mathias. A.H.
1997 Symbol and Ceremony Making Disciples Across Cultures.
Monrovia, CA: MARC.

Zaidi, Hasan

Zelenka, Gena. K.
1999 Personal communication with the author, April 8th.

Zwemer, Samuel M.