Chapter VII
Prior to relinquishing their imperial obligations, the British partitioned India along religious lines by creating a new nation in the subcontinent. Pakistan (an acronym created from the names of the territories to be included: Punjab, Afghani (NWFP), Kashmir, Iran, Sindh, Tukharistan, Afghanistan, and Baluchistan) came into being on August 14, 1947 to provide a haven (Dar al-Islam) and homeland of the pure, the Muslims in South Asia. Between 1947-1971 Pakistan had two political/administrative wings, the East and the West, separated by 1600 kilometers of Indian territory. Besides this geographical separation “the people of the two wings were estranged from each other in language and cultural traditions” (Blood 1995: xxxi). The common bond of Islam proved to be fragile in keeping these two wings together. “A culture of distrust grew between the two wings, fueled by imbalances of representation in the government and military” (Blood 1995: xxxii). In 1971 after a brutal civil war the East wing became the independent nation of Bangladesh. The present day Pakistan consists of four major provinces: (1) North Western Frontier Province (NWFP), (2) Baluchistan, (3) Sindh, and (4) Punjab. It has a population of 130.6 million people, making it the seventh most populous country in the world. According to the 1998 census 32.5 percent of the population lived in urban areas. A majority of Pakistanis (67.5 percent) lived in rural areas and are mainly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. At least eight cities have a population of more than one million people (Table 1). Urban growth in one million plus cities has been far higher than that for the entire country. Small and medium sized towns have been the fastest growing settlements in Pakistan over the last two decades. They have dominated its economy, politics, and institutions of central, provincial, and local governments (UNESCO 2001: 3).