

THE MILITARY, ISI AND 'HYBRID'
GOVERNMENTS IN PAKISTAN: FROM
INDEPENDENCE TO MUSHARRAF
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ABSTRACT While most analysts have tended to view Pakistan's domestic politics and political system as authoritarian and label it as a military dictatorship, this article highlights the concept of political 'hybridity'. Emphasising the potential for more democratic elements from within Pakistani society in relation to politics, the article traces interactions that have taken place in the interface between democratic forces and authoritarian/military elements. Using the concept of political hybridity and 'hybrid government' brings to light the inherent complexities and potential contradictions of interactions between democratic forces and authoritarian elements in Pakistan, from the Ayub era soon after independence to the more recent times of Musharraf.

KEYWORDS: Afghanistan, *Democracy, Governance, Hybridity, Kashmir, Military, Pakistan, Political Islam, SAARC, ISI/Inter-Services-Intelligence*

Introduction

Ever since 9/11, the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, AF-PAK,¹ has been at the centre of international affairs and remains today one of the focal areas of international media attention. Most of the debates currently revolve around the rise of Political Islam/Islamism in the region. They concern questions about the extent to which the rise of Islamism has been and still is adversely impacting on regional as well as

global security. However, another important feature in the politics and governance of this region is the role played by the military backed by the ISI/Inter-Services-Intelligence since Pakistan became independent in 1947. It is well-known that Pakistan's military along with the ISI has been a key feature of the political system,² in contrast to neighbouring India.

It is assumed that one of the key requirements for the maintenance of security and stability in a specific area is the number of democracies present in that region. Other key factors are the levels of economic interdependence amongst countries in the region, the role played by regional organisations to maintain stability in the concerned area, and the balance of power between the various countries. It has been argued by Asian security specialists (e.g. Segal, 1997: 235) that democracies tend to be more open to negotiation and compromise, appreciating the healthy role of criticism, in contrast to more conservative authoritarian regimes that tend to follow a policy of highhandedness and coercion. As democracies tend to be more transparent, this leads to more confidence building, in contrast to military regimes, which tend to believe in a policy of 'might is right' and use of coercion.

South Asian countries seem to be struggling with democratic principles and, except for India and Bhutan, most nations in the region have faced intermittent periods of military rule. This is perhaps one reason why, South Asian states have failed to develop an effective security community in the region. Enmity between India and Pakistan is surely a major reason why the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as a regional body does not fully manage to contain security threats. The recent focus on Pakistan in academia and in the news has been primarily on the rise of Islamic radicalism, scrutinising to what extent the country has become the global epicentre of Islamism, without paying sufficient attention to the role played by the military and the Inter-Services Intelligence. While the military has always been a key feature of Pakistani politics, its very presence has impacted hugely on regional security. This tends to go unnoticed, due to the overwhelming emphasis on the activities of the Taliban. As a result, scrutiny of the activities of the military has been neglected.

This article aims to offer a deeper understanding of how military regimes function in relation to governance in South Asia, a part of the world with profound implications for both regional as well as global security. The main objective is to focus on the military in Pakistan and to highlight the concept of 'hybrid'

government. While Pakistan is often simply associated with the term ‘military rule’, it is argued here that as far as its domestic politics is concerned, the situation has always been much more complex. Whether military generals have been ruling the country or a civilian government was at the helm, we can actually see elements of both democracy and authoritarianism in each type of governmental arrangement. Although in each of these phases there is more of a tilt towards authoritarianism, it is still important to recognise the shades of grey that exist within Pakistan’s ‘hybrid’ political framework. Giving readers an overview of the country’s domestic politics since 1947, close attention is paid to the interactions and engagements that have been taking place in this hybrid space between democratic elements and military forces/authoritarian interventions in each regime.

The Background: Pakistan as a Deeply Divided Country

When Pakistan came into existence in 1947, it faced very difficult conditions. For a start, there were two parts of the country, West Pakistan and East Pakistan, separated by hundreds of miles of Indian territory, a fact which was bound to set up a tense relationship with India. Indeed, as Wolpert (2010: 1) has famously noted, on 14/15 August 1947, India and Pakistan were born to remain engaged in conflict. Ahmed (1997: 192) has observed with regard to Pakistan:

The influx of millions of refugees and the exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from West Pakistan caused a dramatic upheaval. The emergence of new classes, new political and social elites, and the clash of languages and cultures were reflected in politics and found ethnic expression.

Pakistan, ever since it was formed, has also been a deeply divided society in terms of socio-cultural structures and socio-economic patterns. From the moment of its creation, Pakistan was struggling to define its national identity, partly influenced by Indian hostility over Kashmir (Schofield, 2010) and Afghanistan’s irredentist claims on some Pakistani territory. The Muslim League, which played a major role in the creation of Pakistan, had a rather divisive approach to begin with. Their demand for the partition of South Asia was based on the ‘two nation theory’, which stated that the two main religious groups of the region, Hindus and Muslims, represented two separate and distinct nations in the Indian Subcontinent (Hussein, 2005: 56).

Furthermore, the Pakistan movement itself was divided. Those who participated in the movement saw themselves as responding to the political aspirations of South Asian Muslims. Those who did not participate saw the country's creation as 'temporary madness', even as an 'aberration' of history (Adnan, 2006: 201). Apart from racial, ethnic and sectarian cleavages within the country, there were huge disagreements over the management of the new country's political system. All of this has left the country fragmented at different levels. In addition to the Shia-Sunni divide, there has always been a great deal of hostility between the Bareilvis and the Deobandis (Talbot, 1998: 28-9). Even one of the main Islamic political parties of Pakistan, the Jamat-i-Islami,³ could not bring about a semblance of unity (Joshi, 2003). The Jamat was started by the *muhajirs*, Muslim migrants from India after the Subcontinent was partitioned in 1947. Because those who started the Jamat were new arrivals from India, they had great difficulty in reaching out to the local people of the various regions of Pakistan, Sindh and Baluchistan, Punjab and the North West Frontier Provinces (NWFP), now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). These areas are peopled by Muslims who considered themselves to be sons of the soil and felt no sense of connection with those new political leaders from a different ethnic background (Hussain, 1983: 53).

Further, during the formative period, the Jamat leaders also could not decide firmly whether or not the country should have an Islamic identity or a more secular orientation. Thus, politically, two major camps developed in the country. Broadly speaking, while the Islamists preferred developments along Islamic lines with the imposition of Sharia law, the secularists favoured development in keeping with the western path to modernity (Baxter et al., 1993: 174-5). The divisions arise not just between secularists and Islamists, however. There are also fundamental tensions within those who adhere to Islamic principles, with certain interpretations of this religion being moderate and some being more militant.⁴ Don Belt (2007: 32) thus observes correctly that '[s]ixty years after its founding as a homeland for India's Muslims, Pakistan straddles the fault line between moderate and militant Islam'. Particularly during the Zia regime of 1977-1988, we see state and society in Pakistan going through significant changes in the name of Islamisation (Akhtar, Amirali & Raza, 2006: 387). The use of Islam as the main tenet in Pakistani nationalism managed neither 'to curb the forces of regionalism nor piece together the most rudimentary form of a democratic political system' (Bose & Jalal, 1998: 202).

Since its creation, the country has also struggled with secessionist movements and ethnic nationalism, especially in more peripheral parts of the country like Sindh, Baluchistan and NWFP/KPK (Bansal, 2012; Beg, 2009). Everywhere, there were differences between the *muhajirs* and the original inhabitants of the country. When massive refugee migrations took place in and after 1947, the newly created Pakistan rapidly filled up and viewed this migration with considerable alarm (Zamindar, 2007: 39). Muslims from Indian Punjab, Gujarat, and other parts of northern India migrated to West Pakistan, while Indian Muslims from Bihar and Bengal migrated mainly to former East Pakistan. The *muhajirs* from India were often more progressive and liberal in their outlook towards economics and politics, whereas the original residents, mainly Punjabis, were more conservative. It caused conflicts between the two sides and divided the society further that the new arrivals wanted to bring change to Pakistani society, while the original residents wanted to hold on to the status quo and tended to be the more reactionary, orthodox elements of society.

Out of all divisive and secessionist movements troubling the country, the one which caused the largest pressure on the political and military establishment arose during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. At that time, former East Pakistan seceded from West Pakistan to become the independent country of Bangladesh. All these various divisions within Pakistan allowed the military generals to argue that the army needed a stake in power to act as a bulwark against internal turmoil, otherwise the country would disintegrate and finally collapse. Rather than seeking a Constitution as a protective mechanism, the preferred framework was military might, a significant difference between ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’ styles of safeguarding good governance. In addition to the internal problems Pakistan has had to grapple with, the country continues to face major external challenges as well. On the western borders, it inherited territorial disputes with Afghanistan. At the eastern borders, disputes with India over Kashmir continue to this day. Despite the fact that Pakistan has meanwhile acquired nuclear weapons, it has not been able to capture Kashmir and ‘free’ it from Indian authority through conventional military methods or diplomatic efforts. Neither has Pakistan been able to normalise relations with its western neighbour, Afghanistan (Fair, 2008: 93).

Although most people think that Kashmiri Muslims would wish to be part of Pakistan, since most Kashmiris and Pakistanis share the common Islamic faith, this is certainly not the case. Interviews carried out in Kashmir found that the opinions

and views amongst the local people are actually quite varied and fragmented.⁵ A *shikara*⁶ boatman bluntly expressed his doubts about what Pakistan can really give to the people of Kashmir (*'Pakistan ham logon ko kya dega?'*). He continued that most of the money made in Kashmir is from tourism, and most tourists tend to come from India. The Pakistani military argues that, due to Indian hostility over Kashmir, they need to stay in power for defensive reasons. However, when I got the chance to interview local Kashmiris, the story was not quite the same from their perspective. They conveyed the impression that Pakistan had always been on the offensive and that it was trying to follow a policy of aggrandisement and territorial expansion through the infiltration of Pakistanis into Indian Kashmiri territory. A taxi driver who was taking me around in Kashmir stated that Pakistanis try to infiltrate Indian territory through border villages and do not take normal routes. Additionally, he clarified that these Pakistani militants are often disguised. Hence, in response, Kashmir has been militarised by the Indian armed forces, to protect India and its Kashmiris from Pakistani militants who are continuously infiltrating the country. Further interviews confirmed the widespread impression that Pakistan was on the offensive rather than being on the defensive.

The Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistan/ISI has been extremely active in Kashmir since 1947. Winchell writes, 'for most of this period, the ISI has used Islamic militants living in Kashmir to foment discord' (Winchell, 2003:379). In this connection mention must be made of Allah Tigers, al-Umar Mujahedeen, Harkat-ul-Ansar, Hizb-ul-Islam, Hizb-ul-Mujahedeen, Jamaat Hurriyat Conference and the Muslim mujahedeen. Joint Intelligence North, which is the section of the ISI that supervises Islamist groups in Jammu and Kashmir, has been largely responsible for providing financial, logistical and military assistance to the militant groups in Kashmir. One of the more recent plans to undermine Indian influence in Kashmir was formulated in 1984 by the then ISI Director General Hamid Gul. The ISI originally implemented its plan via propaganda, then gradually increased pressure in the 90's as ISI backed Islamist groups began to attack Indian interests in Kashmir and launch strikes and street rallies. According to a report compiled by the Joint Intelligence Committee of India in the year 1995, the ISI spent Rs 2.4 crore every month to sponsor its activities in Jammu and Kashmir, and although all groups receive training and arms from Pakistan, the pro-Pakistani groups are especially favoured by the ISI (Saikia, 2002:189). Although the ISI's operations in India have

been confined mainly to Kashmir, where it actively and openly aids militant organisations as discussed earlier, ‘a larger game plan of the ISI has come to light in India’s north eastern region with Assam, with its sizeable Muslim population, becoming the primary target of the agency’ (Saikia, 2002:185). Like Kashmir, the ISI is trying to provide aid to separatist groups and other disgruntled elements in Assam, in an attempt to destabilise India.

I also got the opportunity to talk to a man working for the Indian armed forces, who said that the border between India and Pakistan had always been porous, hence infiltration from the Pakistani side was easily possible. Since the region is so mountainous, it is difficult to fence or guard the border.⁷ It is also worth mentioning here that many people living in the territory called Azad Kashmir, which is part of Pakistan, do not really see much advantage of being part of Pakistan. Local views about this are deeply divided and many people would actually like to see their territory independent of Pakistan. It is not widely known that Azad Kashmir operates its own court system, law reports, and has a separate legal system which is in effect more Islamic than that of Pakistan. However, the focus of this article is not on the tensions around Kashmir, though these contested claims assist the military and the ISI in legitimising their prominent role in the governance of Pakistan.

Pakistan’s Leadership Crisis

When Pakistan came into existence in 1947, the main leader was a charismatic man, Mohammed Ali Jinnah. One of the main leaders of the Pakistan movement, he became seen as the Father of the Nation and the creator of modern Pakistan (Singh, 2010). Jinnah’s dominant personality, when he was alive and active in politics, did not allow other aspiring politicians to participate in political affairs. So when he died in 1948, shortly after the country’s founding in 1947, this proved to be a disaster for Pakistan. There had been too much reliance on him and after his death there was a major political vacuum and nobody could match his leadership skills. Furthermore, once the country had been created in 1947, the momentum of the Pakistan Movement began to fade. The Muslim League, founded in 1906 as a party to represent the political aspirations of South Asian Muslims, failed to develop roots amongst the masses. Whilst Gandhi was a strong unifying force in neighbouring India, apart from Jinnah, there was no such powerful national figure on the Pakistani

side. Most Pakistani leaders had more of a provincial outlook, came from a semi-feudal background and were not strongly socialised into the values of western democracy. Haqqani (2006: 223) argues that '[t]he existence of a feudal-like system in Pakistan continues to present a formidable obstacle to the progress of democracy in the country'.

Gandhi's various movements against British colonialism since the 1920s developed mass roots of support from an early stage in India's modern history. The Pakistan movement, by contrast, gained strength only a few years before 1947. As noted, Muslim League leaders also did not have the team experience which leaders from the Indian National Congress could rely on. The Muslim League, lacking political organisation, could not serve as an effective political machine to aggregate the various diverse interests and identities into a plural and participatory national framework. Moreover, as the Muslim League leaders who led the Pakistan movement came from Muslim minority provinces in India, they lacked a strong political base in the Muslim majority provinces of Pakistan (Rizvi, 2000: 1-16). The people of Pakistan felt no real sense of one-ness or identification with this new group of leaders.

Neither did the Muslim League develop strong state mechanisms and institutions to deal with ongoing internal conflicts. This was very necessary, considering that Pakistan was - and still is - such a hugely divided society. Not only did Jinnah die in 1948, but his lieutenant, Liaqat Ali Khan, died in 1951. Thus, many of the leaders of this newly created country did not have much time to establish, strengthen and legitimise the participatory institutions required for the smooth functioning of a democracy. They often also lacked national vision and tended to depend heavily on the military when it came to dealing with matters associated with governance and security. Another telling sign of leadership crisis is that for many years, until 1956, Pakistan could not even agree on a Constitution.

Democratising Tendencies and Military Resistance in Pakistan

The Pakistani military supported by the Inter-Services Intelligence thus became one of the key political institutions in the country. Associated with pride and prestige, it is widely seen as effective despite the fact that it has arguably led the country down a path of turmoil and failure. Throughout Pakistan's history, as Gregory & Revill (2008: 39) have put it, the military has ensured that the land of the pure has only

wandered around in the foothills of democracy. More pointedly, Gregory & Revill (2008: 40) argue that the military has by and large failed the people of Pakistan, and has provided no 'long term nation building strategy to forge the country as a cohesive and stable whole'. Whilst General Musharraf (2006) much later stated that he would move Pakistan from a sham democracy to supposedly a true democracy, Pakistan has probably moved backwards rather than forward in terms of making any political progress.

While it seems easy to become deeply pessimistic, one should not engage in too much negativity, however. The concept of political hybridity becomes clearer when one cares to take a closer look at Pakistan. Hybridity refers to a political system where there is a coexistence of democratic elements and authoritarian elements within the same system. In the specific context of the Pakistani political system, it may seem at the surface level that democratic leaders are increasingly playing a part in politics. But in actual fact, the real power rests with the military and the ISI, which now controls the society from the side lines. In other words, in the Pakistani context, hybridity does not refer to a direct military takeover, but refers to a form of indirect rule by the military and the ISI. This can be seen as a reaction to the efforts by political leaders to assert themselves and their power bases on the basis of popular votes. Gregory & Revill (2008: 42) argue that the strengthening of the Pakistani military in almost all spheres of Pakistani life and society has happened by the 'shuffling of political actors to ensure those in power are sympathetic towards the military'. In their view, the most overt demonstration of this trend has been the banishment of political competitors capable of mounting a serious challenge to the Musharraf regime (Gregory & Revill, 2008: 42). General Zia, who ruled from 1977-1988, went earlier to the extent of co-opting his political opponents by encouraging them to form loyal opposition parties and also provided them with incentives to participate in 'partially free elections for new local, provincial and national assemblies' (Wilkinson, 2000: 203-4). There have also been more subtle insertions of the military into posts within the political administration. Gregory & Revill (2008: 42) observe some deeper roots:

The allocation of civilian roles for retired military personnel was formalised through a ten per-cent quota fixed by former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali

Bhutto....Military control has been further entrenched through a revision of the political system and blatant interference in the electoral process.

Waseem (2012: 20) argues that in the 1990s, elected governments faced interventions from extra-parliamentary forces in the middle of their tenure ‘in the form of the rule of the troika comprising the President, the Prime Minister and the Chief of Army Staff/COAS’. However, there have also been recent pockets of resistance against such abuses of political power in Pakistani society. For instance, a popular Supreme Court Chief Justice, Iftikar Mohammad Choudhury, challenged Musharraf in 2007 when the latter, as President of Pakistan, decided to dismiss him. The issue was over Musharraf’s privatisation of public assets at below market rates and also over the ‘illegal detention of citizens and rendering them to the United States’ (Fair, 2009: 74). Choudhury insisted that Musharraf accounted for the ‘missing people’, and with the passage of time, this movement gained much popularity. Fair (2009: 74) recounts how Musharraf’s extra-constitutional removal of Choudhury galvanised a limited but highly effective mobilisation of civil society which came to be known as the ‘Lawyers’ Movement’ (Ahmed, 2010; Waseem, 2012).

Despite pockets of democratising tendencies, then, the military along with the ISI remains well-entrenched in Pakistan. One way of understanding the situation in Pakistan when it comes to democratic elements is viewing the country as a ‘temporary democracy, in which democracy emerges as a short term outcome that is not likely to be sustained’ (Hoffman, 2011: 75). This could be related to the point that Pakistani society prefers continuity over change, as argued recently by Evans (2012: 213):

...the nature of Pakistani society and the way in which the political system operates encourages continuity over radical change. Gradualism is ingrained in Pakistani politics because of the extent of patrimonialism, the sway of political, bureaucratic and economic élites, and the triumph of political symbolism over substance.

On the other hand, some of the barriers to effective civic activism within Pakistan include fear of the high-handedness of the military and the ISI, and repressive

measures taken by the military/ISI to deal with subversive elements, citizen apathy, poor governance and also terrorist violence (Ahmed, 2010: 492). Some scholars argue that the military's policies since 1947 have been based primarily on colonial practices and colonial logic. Daechsel (1997: 41) observes that the military leaders in Pakistan, just like the earlier British colonial administrators, saw the vast majority of the Pakistani population as backward and as a deeply religious population, not open to progressive ideas and change. Since the population or the average man was seen as politically immature, legitimate politics had to remain in the hands of the westernised political elite (Daechsel, 1997: 41), which included the military class and ISI members.

Another important debate relates the current tense situation in Pakistan to the British colonial legacy. British colonial administrators could never successfully penetrate the more remote parts of Pakistan, especially in the NWFP. Such problems continue today, as this part of the country also has very mountainous terrain. Hence the British colonial administrators 'relied on a strategy of outsourcing responsibility for security to a network of tribal groups, reinforcing such agreements with brute force when necessary' (Ganguly & Fair, 2013: 123). These regions have always faced major challenges with respect to governance, and smooth functioning of the political system was simply not possible. Related instances of internal turmoil were often used by the military as an excuse to stay in power. Had the British colonial administrators made more of an effort to establish a strong state apparatus and a solid bureaucratic structure to deal with recalcitrant elements in the NWFP, perhaps today the military would not have so much power in this part of the Subcontinent. To suppress the more subversive elements in Pakistani society, it was felt by earlier political leaders that a strong military would have to stay in place. As discussed, the military and the ISI has also used the Kashmir issue to stay in power.

The current political situation in Pakistan, which is by and large authoritarian, can also be related to British colonial legacy in other ways. Shah (2013: 4) clarifies that Jinnah and his successors founded a 'readymade governing formula in the iron fist of vice-regalism, a colonially inherited system with a powerful governor general wielding emergency powers and a weak legislature'. Backed by the military, the vice-regal executive sacked a non-compliant cabinet in 1953, delayed constitution-making and then dismissed parliament after it drafted a constitution in Pakistan in 1954 (Shah, 2013: 4). Khan (2000: 182) similarly discusses these linkages between

the contemporary state power in Pakistan and the colonial legacy. In this context, he explicitly mentions the three prominent sections of the ruling classes, the military, the civilian bureaucracy and the feudal landlords. In the absence of a sound leadership immediately after 1947, the civil and military bureaucracy joined hands with other members of the elite. After just ten years since independence in 1947, as Nazir (2010: 330) writes, ‘whatever nascent democratic institutions Pakistan had inherited were wound up by the army’.

Despite the strong presence of the military and associating Pakistan with military rule, however, a more nuanced way of looking at the political system needs to pay close attention to the concept of political ‘hybridity’, which refers to the existing connections between the military and civilian governments.

Key Features of the Military and ‘Hybrid’ Governments

Since Pakistan came into existence in such difficult conditions, scholars like Rizvi (2000: 1-16) have argued that state survival became the key concern. Providing an excellent analysis of the military in Pakistan and of contemporary Pakistani society in general, Rizvi (2000: 1) explicitly maintains that the leaders at the time associated state survival with monolithic nationalism, an assertive federal government, a strong defence posture and high expenditure when it came to defence. Hence, he notes, the shift from the primacy of the civil to the military becoming a dominant force in Pakistan was a gradual, shared arrangement, which comes close to saying that it is of a hybrid nature. The senior commanders gradually became more powerful actors in decision making processes and they made strong alliances with the senior bureaucracy as well as with feudal, industrial and strong commercial stakeholders. The fragmentation of political forces and whatever participatory institutions existed paved the way for the military elite, along with senior bureaucrats, to gradually entrench themselves to pursue their own interests. The appointment of Ghulam Mohammed as governor general in 1951, and then of Iskander Mirza in 1955, also as governor general of Pakistan, set an early stage for the ascendancy of a bureaucracy backed by the military. Military leaders actively engaged in alliance building, excluded those who questioned their political decisions and removed provincial governments at their own will.

Since Pakistan’s creation, the military has maintained a professional, disciplined, and task-oriented profile. As their powers strengthened, they strongly disliked the

interference of civilian rulers in day-to-day governmental affairs and administration. Most army chiefs since the 1950s served for extended terms and Ayub Khan and General Zia, in particular, should be mentioned in this context. Their imposition of martial law was not really questioned by civilian rulers, who did not use the time between periods of military rule to establish strong civilian and democratic structures of governance. The military also redefined the parameters of political competition through executive orders and decrees, manipulating political forces to suit their own needs. They only favoured those civilian leaders who would not resist them. Both sides benefitted from this symbiotic relationship. Khurshid Ahmad (2006: 374), from the Institute of Policy Studies in Islamabad, writes that '[t]he bureaucratic and military hold over power has come in the way of the proper decentralisation of authority'.

In the post-Zia period, from the late 1980s onwards, the nature of military rule in Pakistan changed considerably and the military began to exercise political power more from the sidelines rather than directly. Instead of direct intervention in political affairs, military generals along with ISI members now followed a policy of 'soft intervention', another element of hybridity. This process of interaction between the military and the civilian leaders was often characterised by major bargaining between the two sides on policy issues (Rizvi, 2000: 2). This engagement between the two sides would often be strained and its durability is questionable. This kind of relation between the military and civilian leaders is indeed a 'hybrid government'. Rizvi (2000) observes the coexistence of democracy and authoritarianism within the same political system. Rizvi's understanding of hybrid government relates to the concept of mixed or ambiguous regimes. In such regimes, we see the coexistence of elements of democracy and authoritarianism within the same political system. Rather than being 'black or white' these are shades of grey, often oscillating from one extreme end of the political spectrum to the other.

The arrangements are so subtle that the military's presence cannot even be seen at a superficial level. One needs to probe deeper to see and feel its presence. Since Zia's time the military's long presence of power and authority has allowed the generals to spread their tentacles far and wide and to penetrate deeper into the different levels of Pakistani society, whether state or non-state sector. The military's ubiquitous presence is also seen in state and semi-government institutions, the private sector, business, industry, agriculture, education, transportation and

communications. The primary concern of the military is not direct control anymore, which would also cause international disapproval, but is now more focused on the protection and strengthening of its corporate interests, and thus to some extent negotiation of their interests with the civilian leaders. They accommodate civilian leaders, but will not accept them if they attack the military's interests directly. Although the military also mediates conflicts between civilian leaders, they will not allow civilian leaders to use the military's name to further their own needs and interests in their own civilian power struggles. If civilian leaders make inroads into the military, then the military rapidly argues that these interferences undermine military professionalism. The military is thus very careful about guarding its autonomy. Civilian leaders, to be able to stay in power, have to maintain a relationship of trust and friendship with the military generals. Apparently, it may thus seem that non-military elements are ruling the country, but in actual fact, the military along with the ISI is still a formidable force that calls the shots from behind. We see here indeed different shades of grey, often favouring military power and interests over civilian elements.

The military in Pakistan is also very conscious that India's hegemonic agenda is likely to increase and uses this as an excuse to justify massive military spending. India is part of the prestigious BRICS, formed by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and the EAGLE (Emerging and Growth Leading Economies) group of nations. Further, India was classified as an industrialised country in 2011. The Pakistani military is concerned that India's growing economic power will further strengthen its military might in the region. Pakistan's military, on the other hand, has acquired some international prestige since its participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations.

Another important feature of the Pakistani military is its influence over the intelligence services, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Military Intelligence (MI), and the Intelligence Bureau (IB) (Rizvi, 2000: 14). The IB, as the main internal intelligence agency of Pakistan, deals with key security concerns like sectarian violence and capturing Al Qaeda terrorists. Since it handles such hard core security issues, it has strong linkages with the military. Finally, different military leaders and military governments have appointed a large number of retired army officers to civilian jobs, and the civilian leaders have been too weak to reverse this trend. It

could be argued that the military's presence is not only pervasive, but its political opportunities increase if the government's general performance falters.

Because of Pakistan's perennial insecurity syndrome, it appears that such hybrid arrangements will stay in place. The reasons for the military to stay in power, whether indirectly or directly, include the nuclearisation of the Subcontinent and the proliferation of weapons in the region, the spill-over or ripple effects of Islamism from neighbouring Afghanistan, the sectarian and ethnic cleavages within Pakistan, the spread of narcotics and drugs. The massive influx of Afghan refugees into Pakistan has been an additional problem since the Americans started to bomb Afghanistan after 9/11, which forced many Afghans to flee to neighbouring Pakistan for protection. This led to new quarrels between the original residents in Pakistan (who had already accommodated many earlier migrants from Afghanistan) and the new arrivals, which the military would now need to control.

More recently, the potential for some of the most peripheral parts of the country to rise in revolt against the Pakistani establishment has generated further arguments for the military to retain its power. For instance, despite long-standing demands, Pakistan 'refused Gilgit-Baltistan representation in the Pakistani parliament, the Council of Common Interests, the National Hydro-Electric Board, the Indus River System Authority, the National Judicial Council, and the National Finance Commission' (Serling, 2010: 354). This means that local people from the Northernmost semi-autonomous territory of Pakistan have been deprived of a large number of their most basic rights. As observed earlier, people from the neighbouring Azad Kashmir region have also felt dissatisfied with the government's treatment of them and of the Azad Kashmir region in general (Snedden, 2013: 184). This is because Azad Kashmiris lack influence even in their own region. Despite their massive contribution to the Pakistani economy through remittances and their mass dislocation for the Mangla Dam project, 'no serious effort had been made to stimulate economic and infrastructural development in Azad Kashmir as a whole (Snedden, 2013: 184). Such policies of Pakistani highhandedness are likely to stir up problems in the various Northern and peripheral parts of Pakistan.

Maley (2003) finds that terrorism has significantly undermined the capacities of the state in Pakistan. Bansal (2012: 121) similarly argues that Talibanisation is having a corrosive impact on the already weak state institutions in Pakistan. According to Gunaratna & Iqbal (2011), the conceptual and operational structures of

terrorist groups and extremist groups located in Pakistan have affected similar groups within and beyond the region. Gunaratna & Iqbal (2011: 7-8) clarify that in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan (FATA), there have been reports about the presence of terrorists of Chinese origin, especially Uyghur militants, whom the Beijing administration has long considered a security threat. Baker (2007: 18) shows that Islamic militants have turned the borderlands between Pakistan and Afghanistan into a new base for Al Qaeda. The rise and mushrooming of new 'terrorist' groups, especially in the FATA region, gives the military additional excuses to stay in power, although military generals, like Musharraf, have not always been successful in dealing with 'terrorist' threats (Ahmed, 2013: 69).

The Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistan: The ISI

The inability of democracy to take root in contemporary Pakistan has provided scope for martial law to entrench itself, which in turn gave rise to the ISI as an adjunct of the military to get involved in domestic politics. One of the key features of Pakistan's hybrid government, as mentioned in the earlier section, is the ISI. The ISI, which is a branch of the Pakistani Army is most certainly one of the most powerful and influential political institutions in the country. Over a span of fifty years of Pakistan's nationhood it has emerged into a powerful institution and has acted as an active organisation both under military rule as well as civilian regimes (Chengappa, 2000:1857). It would be fair to say that the manipulative behaviour of Pakistan's political elite in collaboration with the military and its spy agency, the ISI, have collectively undermined democracy in Pakistan. It has already been discussed that throughout Pakistan's contemporary history the army has always played a central role in the country's domestic politics even behind elected governments, holding the real power and the capacity to control the fate of Pakistani society. But it should also be noted that the military has been able to do so because it had joined hands with the powerful ISI right from the start. The ISI has always backed up the military, and the military has also supported the ISI. They are like different sides of the same coin. Like the army, the ISI has been able to stay in power for so long because of the perceived threats to Pakistan's national security since 1947. From its headquarters on Khayban-e-Suharwady street in Islamabad, the ISI has worked to crush political opposition to the military that have dotted Pakistan's political landscape since it gained independence in the year 1947. Thus, the ISI deserves special mention in this connection.

The ISI was founded in the year 1948, shortly after Pakistan came into existence. The founding father of the ISI is considered to be Walter Joseph Cawthorne and since Cawthorne there has always been an Army professional heading the ISI as Director (Kiessling, 2016:14-15). He was then serving as the new state of Pakistan's Army Deputy Chief of Staff. Its aim was to assist the national government and the military in security matters. Its headquarters are in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. 'Created from the three branches of Pakistan's military, and modelled after Iran's intelligence services, the SAVAK, the ISI coordinates with the Army, Navy and Air Force intelligence units of Pakistan's military in the collection, analysis and dissemination of military and non-military intelligence focussing mainly on India' (Winchell, 2003: 375). The ISI has a 'monolithic organisational

structure which oversees both external and internal intelligence operations in the country' (Chengappa, 2000:1857). That said, the ISI has concentrated more on internal matters rather than external for the first thirty years since independence. Till the 70's the ISI had a limited external agenda which was predominantly focussed on India. This was mainly because Pakistan had fought three wars with India over the disputed province of Kashmir. However, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the ISI changed its focus and since then its external focus has expanded and is no longer India-centric. The ISI was very closely linked with the guerrilla warfare against the Soviets in Afghanistan throughout the 80's. In other words, the ISI supported the mujahedeen against the Soviets whole heartedly (Winchell, 2003:374). Despite its external orientation since the late 70's, the ISI still tries to focus on internal elements within the country who could pose to be potential threats to itself and to the army.

Before the setting up of the ISI, Pakistan had the IB or the Intelligence Bureau as the sole intelligence agency, which was a quasi-police organisation led by a senior police officer. The IB's poor performance in the first Indo-Pak war over Kashmir which took place in 1947 resulted in the decision to create a more powerful institution and hence the ISI came into existence with a focus on India. The setting up of the ISI was crucial particularly in the aftermath of the first Indo Pak War, which took place in 1947-48. Initially, the civilian governments depended on the IB for its intelligence inputs but with the switch to military rule and with the rise of Ayub Khan in 1958, the ISI has been on the ascendant primarily because the military generals preferred to rely on an organisation which had a military character rather than a quasi-police character. 'To an extent the ISI-IB relationship was an extension of the civil-military equation in the country wherein the civil bureaucracy had weakened due to political interference, corruption and lateral entries from the armed forces, besides other sectors' (Chengappa, 2000: 1858). Ever since the two countries, India and Pakistan came into existence, they have been continuously involved in territorial disputes over Kashmir. Thus, the sharing of military intelligence between the three branches of Pakistan's Armed Forces ie the Air Force, the Navy and the Army became essential. However, with the passage of time, we have seen that the ISI instead of providing Pakistan with more security has caused more instability in South Asia and most of Pakistan's leaders like Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto abused the ISI for political ends.

'The assumption of martial law in Pakistan for the first time in 1958 under Lt. Gen. Ayub Khan brought the ISI into the political realm' (Gregory, 2007: 1014). It was tasked by Ayub to perform three roles, which continue to define it: to protect Pakistan's interests, to monitor political opposition, and finally to sustain military rule in Pakistan. It is clear from these functions that from 1958 onwards, the ISI viewed its main purpose first and foremost in terms of the Pakistani military rather than in relation to any broader concept of defence and security of the nation state (Gregory, 2007:1014). During the time of Ayub Khan, the ISI warned social organisations with potential political influence like student groups, trade organisations, and unions not to become involved in politics and kept these groups under a tight watch (Winchell, 2003:375). Islamist groups and clerics were also advised to leave any political rhetoric out of their speeches. Ayub Khan expanded the ISI's powers when he began to suspect the loyalty of Bengali officers in the IB's Dhaka branch in former East Pakistan. Former east Pakistani politicians were monitored. For instance, during the 1964 general elections, the ISI became especially active keeping an eye on candidates running for office in former East Pakistan. Throughout the late 60's and 70's, the ISI worked along with the American CIA, under the Nixon administration to provide aid and support to the Khalistan movement in Punjab. The CIA and

the ISI once again joined hands to discredit the then Indian prime minister, Indira Gandhi who had granted naval facilities to the former Soviet Union at Vizag and on the Andaman and Nicobar islands. The program came to an end with the death of Gandhi in 1984 (Winchell, 2003:376). Under President Yahya Khan, the ISI once again increased its domestic intelligence collection activities in former East Pakistan, today's Bangladesh. It sought to guarantee that no Bengali candidate from former East Pakistan would win the presidential election but the operation proved to be a complete fiasco. Although Bhutto was a civilian leader, he has been credited with strengthening the ISI's role in Pakistan's domestic politics when he created ISI political cells in the mid 70's in places like the North Western Frontier Provinces and Baluchistan because he did not trust the Pashto and Baluch IB leaders there when nationalist secessionist movements broke out. Although Bhutto is believed to have strengthened the ISI's role in domestic politics, the ISI kept a watchful eye on the Bhutto family whilst they were in Pakistan or when they were abroad in political exile in places like London. General Zia who executed Bhutto came into power with the aid of the ISI. The ISI's powers expanded and were expanded to collect domestic intelligence on political and religious organisations that were opposed to the Zia regime. The CIA through the ISI channelled about three billion dollars' worth of arms to the Afghan mujahedeen during the Zia years, thus providing them with logistical support and both financial and military assistance. In the post Zia period when the military generals did not directly interfere in politics, the generals used the ISI 'as a lever to manipulate the course of politics to suit their interests...The ISI was variously used to prop up friendly political persona who enjoyed good relations with the military leadership and conversely to minimise the chances of success for a hostile leader through the creation of unfavourable conditions' (Chengappa, 2000: 1866).

It has been argued that that the ISI has been a major player in the radicalisation of Pakistan. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the ISI along with the American CIA supported the Islamist mujahideen (freedom fighters or holy warriors) against the Soviets. It is well known that a lot of today's Islamist groups originated from the mujahideen after the Soviet-Afghan War came to an end in 1989. The ISI has also supported Islamist terrorist groups in neighbouring countries like India (Lieven, 2011:197). 'Because of its support for terrorists in neighbouring countries, especially Indian controlled Kashmir and Afghanistan, it has offered Islamist forces a huge space in the country to operate without opposition' (Paul, 2014:147). For instance, the ISI has actively supported groups like the LeT, Lashkar e Taiba and the JeM, the Jaish e Mohammed, two of the prominent extremist groups in South Asia. Both these groups have been involved in the well-known Mumbai attacks of November, 2008. The ISI has also collaborated with the Pakistani Taliban, whose most prominent faction, the Haqqani network, has emerged as 'the most potent insurgent group in Afghanistan' (Paul, 2014: 147). Led by Jalaluddin Haqqani, their group consists between 5000 and 15, 000 fighters who are spread all over the AFPAK/Afghanistan-Pakistan region. They are known to cause problems in the region since they obtain money through kidnapping, smuggling and extortion. Harsh Pant writes that 'Pakistan's sponsorship of the Haqqani network had been an open secret for quite some time as was the fact that the Haqqani's were responsible for some of the most murderous assaults on Indian and Western presence in Afghanistan' (Pant, 2014:87). The Afghan leadership has also pointed out that the ISI has been involved in attacking Indian installations and India's developmental work in Afghanistan over the past few years, which of course the Pakistani leadership has very quickly denied (Pant, 2014: 34). The message of these Pakistani attacks, supported by the ISI, was clear to India: to leave Afghanistan. Pakistan has always viewed India's developmental programmes in Afghanistan since 9/11 with considerable suspicion since the Pakistani leadership thinks India is

increasingly trying to gain more strategic depth in Afghanistan. Under the protection of the ISI and the Taliban, Osama bin Laden began to expand the activities of Al Qaeda and other transnational Islamist terrorist groups for global jihad (Gregory, 2007:1019). Gregory further writes, 'focussed on its regional agenda-Kashmir, the support of the Taliban, and a growing determination to stake a strong hand in the oil rich southern Caucasus-the ISI colluded with bin Laden to establish further training camps inside Afghanistan, and to facilitate the spread of bin Laden's influence in existing camps on both sides of the border, in order to host, indoctrinate, and train foreign fighters who could reinforce Kashmiri separatist/terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Toiba, support the Taliban, and promote a pro-Pakistani Islamist agenda from Chechnya, through Uzbekistan, to China' (Gregory, 2007:1020).

Since the ISI has actively supported terrorist groups in both of its neighbouring countries, Afghanistan and India, this policy has exacerbated an already complicated situation and has made the region more insecure. Although the ISI was originally founded to provide South Asia and Pakistan in particular with more security, it has done the opposite. The region has become more insecure and unstable as a result of their policies. In fact the AFPAK region is now one of the most fragile and volatile regions of the world. This instability has in turn allowed the military to stay in power who have always argued that they need to stay in power till the country becomes more secure and stable. Needless to say this has gone a long way in weakening democracy in Pakistan.

Support for the Military

Some further factors have helped the military to stay in power. Both civilian leaders and the military generals are claiming to be convinced that Pakistan has been perpetually in a state of emergency since its creation. Indian hostility over the disputed region of Kashmir and Afghani irredentism are presented as serious threats to Pakistan's national territorial integrity, justifying that substantial shares of the national resources are allocated for the military. Refugees from Kashmir expressed concern over the Kashmir issue (Rizvi, 2000: 5) and were keen to maintain a strong defence. The American security establishment has always supported the Pakistani military, especially during the Cold War phase. The Americans became especially concerned when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979 and they needed the region for strategic reasons. The USA had earlier supported General Ayub Khan to check the spread of communism, and also backed General Zia and supported the Afghan mujahidin against the Soviets (Mukherjee, 2010b: 74). More recently, in the Global War on Terror, the American security establishment has again needed the region's air space to carry out attacks on the Taliban and other Islamist groups in the region. For the USA's AF-PAK strategy to be successful, as Beg (2009: 149) stresses, 'Pakistan's cooperation is vital to any success in Afghanistan'. Haqqani (2006)

argues that the American establishment has always found it much easier to control one man in power, like a military general, than to get involved in messy democratic politics. Of course such interventions happen to further US interests in the region, whether during the Cold War phase or now in the Global War on Terror.

Traditionally, the image of Pakistan's military has been a good one. Firstly, the military and its spirit of strength and valour were connected to the martial traditions of Punjab and the NWFP. Military generals, as Rizvi (2000: 5) notes, were often associated with positive images arising from the Islamic concepts of *jihad*,⁸ *gazi*,⁹ and *shayeed* (martyr), which arose through British rule. During the peak times of British colonialism in South Asia, the military played an important role in consolidating the East India Company's domain. It served as a strong shield that protected the British Empire not just in the Subcontinent, but also abroad. The military strengthened its positive image over time and in particular after 1947, because it was largely successful in dealing with ethnic nationalism and thus with internal as well as external threats. For instance, in alliance with the Shah of Iran repressive measures were taken to quell Baluchi separatism.¹⁰ Finally, the common Punjabi and/or Pathani ethnic background of the military generals and senior bureaucrats helped both groups to stay in power and played a crucial role in providing support to the Pakistani military.

From Ayub to Musharraf

This section turns to some individual leaders and the interactions that have taken place between military and democratic forces over the years. Muhammad Ayub Khan, dictator of Pakistan from 1958 to 1969, had a strong agenda for socio-economic transformation and also aimed to restructure the political system. His regime was widely seen as a showcase of economic development and political stability. However, one problem that he ignored was redistributive justice associated with economic development, which led to worsening economic inequalities. He created a strong centralised presidential system with an emphasis on clientalism and his system showed the military's organisational ethos of hierarchy, order and discipline (Rizvi, 2000: 1-16). Ziring (1997: 252-3) observes that 'in an age when civilian politicians are supposed to control and direct the men in uniform, Ayub's power grab, his liquidation of the political system, and the banishment of his civilian superiors, were a breach of faith and discipline'. Despite his authoritarian ways and

his policy of high-handedness, he has been credited with introducing the idea of 'basic democracies', set up as primary governing units to manage local affairs. This network of self-governing bodies in effect acted as an intermediary between the people and the state administration and created a veneer of democracy.

Agha Yahya Khan was the third president of Pakistan from 1969 to 1971. He considered himself to be the natural heir to Ayub Khan. His regime favoured the Islamist parties because of their conservative approach and attachment to the ideal of a strong centralised government (Mukherjee, 2010a: 340). He managed to address certain demands made during the anti-Ayub agitation, including reconstitution of the four provinces of West Pakistan, allocation of national assembly seats to the provinces on the basis of population, and removal of corrupt civil servants. He also tried to make the establishment in Pakistan more transparent and democratic. Holding general elections in 1970, however, plunged the entire country into civil war when the results returned a majority for the Awami League, the strong majoritarian party of East Pakistan. Refusal to accede to demands for a transfer of power caused the breakaway of Bangladesh (Rizvi, 2000).

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the ninth prime minister of Pakistan, from 1973 until 1977, is often regarded as the 'People's Leader' and founded the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). The civilian government of Bhutto succeeded in asserting his government's authority over the military, though only for a very short while. In retrospect, this was a hybrid arrangement that went drastically wrong. Bhutto started with three advantages when he came to power. Firstly, the break-up of Pakistan through the creation of Bangladesh had undermined the military's image. Secondly, a Supreme Court judgement in 1972 had delegitimised the assumption of power by Yahya Khan.¹¹ Finally, Bhutto had much popular support. He managed to remove a number of senior army officers and restructured the senior high command. He changed the position of Commander-in-Chief to Chief-of-Staff and reduced the tenure of the post holder from four to three years. However, the military continued to stay powerful and Bhutto's vision of an 'active Pakistan' also required Pakistan to have a strong military. During his time, one sees the expansion and modernisation of the defence industry and the allocation of more resources for defence. Despite popular rhetoric, Bhutto did not actively take part in empowering political/democratic institutions and processes. His government, too, heavily relied on the military to deal

with both external and internal threats. Bhutto became a different man after he gained power. Khan (1983: 53) has written:

In the field of administration, Bhutto swiftly moved to establish his authority. In his broadcast to the nation shortly after his assumption of office, he announced the dismissal or retirement of a number of civil servants and defence officers. This number soon rose to 1400. Amongst them were many who were known for their opposition to or distaste for the PPP.

Benazir Bhutto, the daughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, became the first female Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1988. Her comments on the Pakistani political system corroborate the theory of the presence of both democracy and authoritarianism within the same Pakistani political system. Bhutto (2008: 120) wrote:

Certainly, my homeland - the Islamic Republic of Pakistan - has experienced both thriving competitive democracy and brutal dictatorship. Although much attention has been given to the brutality of the Zia dictatorship in the 1980's, and the illegitimacy of the Musharraf dictatorship over the last eight years since his coup against an elected civilian government, democratic institutions - political parties, NGOs, independent media - have been sustained, developed, and strengthened. These key democratic institutions have managed to survive even the most violent and targeted assaults by authoritarian regimes. Indeed, frontal attacks have often triggered popular responses that have rekindled the call for democratic change. Certainly the sacking by General Musharraf of the chief justice of the Supreme Court led to a public protest in Pakistan. People in Pakistan remain optimistic that democracy can be sustained, and I have devoted my life to that goal.

Much before such hopeful words were written, Muhammad Zia-ul-Haque, usually identified as General Zia, was the sixth president of Pakistan, ruling from 1978 to 1988, calling himself the Chief Martial Law Administrator. Hiro (2011: 191) comments: 'By issuing a provisional constitutional order that "temporarily" transferred power to himself, Zia ul Haque bypassed the legal requirement of having to approach the National Assembly for legitimacy'. Because of Pakistan's arduous experiences of nation building, the existence of sectarian divisions, and the uneasy coexistence of democracy with military rule, the power of Islam became

increasingly appealing, often employed as a unifying force to hold the disparate sections of Pakistani society together (Nasr, 2001: 94). General Zia believed in the unifying power of Islam and is best known for his Islamisation programme. His military regime implemented various reforms designed to establish 'true' Islamic rule in the country (Richter, 1986: 129). He opposed Bhutto's 'secular' government and forged links with the Islamist Jamat-i-Islami, which started to expand its role in public life. Mayer (1993: 124) observes: 'Having overthrown the elected government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1977, Zia badly needed a justification for his repeated rebuffs to popular demands for a return to democracy'. Hence Zia focussed on Islamisation. He had family ties with the Jamat (Saeed, 1994: 99), which during his time started to play a prominent role in government. It also started to influence administration, the media, schools and education. From the 1980s onwards, the number of Islamic seminaries in Pakistan rose considerably (Metcalf, 2004: 276). While since Pakistan's birth the Jamat has been trying to permeate and take over senior positions of power in the state apparatus (Joshi, 2003: 62), Islamist groups like the Jamat provided Zia the political legitimacy which his government lacked. As one of the longest serving army chiefs, he presided over the longest period of martial law (1977-1985), crushing dissent in the name of Islam.

Muhammad Rafiq Tarar served as the ninth president of Pakistan and came to the political forefront in 1998. He was a senior jurist linked with the Supreme Court of Pakistan, the only president to have come from the judiciary, with the distinction of having secured a maximum number of votes from the electoral college. He stayed in power until 2001, resigning in favour of Musharraf, who had seized power through a military coup d'état in 1999 and then served as the tenth president of Pakistan (2001 to 2008). Musharraf (2006: 154) paid lip service to democracy, claiming that 'no country can progress without democracy, but democracy has to be tailored in accordance with each nation's peculiar environment'. One of the dominant themes from Musharraf's time is the need for good governance, achievable only through a process of accountability and introduction of structural administrative reforms. In turn, it was argued, this will replace the 'sham' democracy of the past with 'real' grassroots democracy (Talbot, 2002: 311). Despite his so-called faith in democracy, Musharraf barred two former prime ministers, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, from elections, which helped Islamists to secure a substantial number of votes in 2002. The Mutahhida Majlis Amal (MMA), coming into existence as a political

alliance of Islamist groups, right-wing parties and other reactionary, orthodox elements in Pakistani society in 2002, was given freedom to organise rallies and manifest its street power, more so than the popular, liberal and secular PPP. Such state patronage in the form of an unholy alliance between the military and the mullahs resulted in an unprecedented rise of radical Islam (Mukherjee, 2010a: 345). While maintaining close alliance with the USA, Musharraf increasingly relied on the religious right to counter liberal opposition. Under a veneer of democracy, this ‘tailoring’ of the nation’s peculiar environment ultimately went too far.

Formal Withdrawal of the Military

Of course, military leaders find it hard to surrender and give up their own power. They have to think of a political framework to replace direct military rule, while ensuring that their own position and interests are not adversely affected when political transitions take place. In Pakistan, the military withdrew on three occasions. First, the military withdrew abruptly when the Bangladesh Liberation War took place in 1971, during the time of Yahya Khan, following the defeat of the Pakistani army. Then the military withdrew twice through a process which Rizvi (2000: 10-12) discusses as ‘planned disengagement’, which first happened at the end of Ayub’s time in 1969 and then again at the end of Zia’s rule in 1988. This process refers to the restructuring of the political system and political arrangements according to the preferences of the military, co-opting a section of the political elite and ensuring a continuity of major policies and key personnel in the post-withdrawal period. In other words, though the military has apparently formally withdrawn from power, it still calls the shots from behind and retains real power, also in the post-withdrawal period. Post-Zia army leaders like Mirza Aslam Beg (1988-1991) decided to abide by the constitution, which again facilitated holding democratic elections and permitted a constitutional transfer of power to civilian leaders like Benazir Bhutto. But despite such formal withdrawal, the military in Pakistan today still plays a powerful role in politics and remains influential in bringing about change.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it could be said that in contemporary Pakistan, as Rizvi (2000) rightly identifies, a ‘civil-military hybrid’ is emerging. The current article shows that there is more to military or civilian rule in Pakistan, and that there is a much more

complex and bigger picture here if one looks at the situation more carefully. There is indeed an intricate form of hybridity which characterises the Pakistani system of governance. The article showed that since its creation, Pakistan has struggled with governance and with defining its identity; at times its very existence seemed threatened. The country had to deal with both domestic problems as well as external pressures. Because of this virtually constant emergency situation, the military has been able to stay in power for extended periods of time, whether directly or indirectly, all the way since 1947 until now.

Given this constant involvement of the military in Pakistan, whether directly or indirectly, a better analysis does not rely upon the monist labels 'military rule' or 'democracy'. Rather it recognises the shades of grey that have always existed within Pakistan's political framework. On closer analysis, there has always been this hybrid coexistence of both democracy and authoritarianism in Pakistan. As we have seen, military generals like Ayub Khan made efforts to introduce 'basic democracies' in Pakistan. Civilian governments, even if they enjoyed much popular support, which goes specifically for Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's government in the 1970s, were not in fact that democratic.

That said, the tilt has arguably been predominantly in favour of military rule and the ISI in contemporary Pakistan. Considering the pressures which the country still faces, especially with regard to economic and security issues, it would be a seriously challenging task for the political elite to introduce real reforms in the years to come while dispensing completely with the involvement of the military. The present situation in the AF-PAK region remains characterised by the rise of Islamism and the presence of numerous terrorist groups with their own political agendas. The military along with the ISI will have to stay in power, directly or indirectly, to deal with the on-going crises in the region, which remains vulnerable to all kinds of threats. Furthermore, as the Global War on Terror drags on, any political vacuum that may be created is likely to cause further instability. Local actors will compete for power, which will only exacerbate the situation. In war-torn societies like Afghanistan, Islamist groups took advantage of this vacuum, and we see similar worrying developments at the moment in parts of the Middle East. Until Pakistan's internal sectarian divides are resolved, and external relations with India (mainly over Kashmir) improve, and Afghanistan settles down, if that is ever possible, the AF-PAK region is likely to be characterised by instability and political turmoil.

Considering these overall circumstances in the region, it is unlikely that Pakistan will transform into a truly democratic society free from military/ISI intervention in the near future. Seen in this light, political hybridity might very well be a necessity, given the current situation, and further studies on this phenomenon would appear to be useful.

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Notes

¹ The expression 'AFPAK region', a term coined during the Obama administration, refers to the two countries of Afghanistan and Pakistan collectively, as a single theatre of operations during the War on Terror. It was believed that the political situation was similar in both countries. Accordingly a joint policy could be adopted by the American security establishment, to deal with security threats from the region especially the rise of political Islam, and transnational terrorist groups.

² For details see Baxter et al. (1993); Gregory & Revill (2008); Mukherjee (2010b).

³ The Jamat-i-Islami is an Islamist political party which was founded by Maulana Mawdudi in South Asia in the first half of the twentieth century. Today, there are Jamat-i-Islami adherents in all South Asian countries, with daughter institutes set up abroad in Great Britain, North America and elsewhere in the world.

⁴ Notably, when one looks at this issue from the perspective of traditional Islamic jurisprudence, one quickly identifies significant conflicts and tensions (on which see succinctly Coulson, 1969) between those who prefer a more textually based interpretation of Islam (*ahl al-hadith*) and those who more readily admit the necessity of human interpretation of the divine sources (*ahl ar-ra'y*).

⁵ Research fieldtrips were carried out by the author to Kashmir in December 2012 and 2013, funded by the University of Lancaster, whose support is gratefully acknowledged.

⁶ A *shikara* is a Kashmiri boat, popular with tourists especially on the Dal Lake in Srinagar.

⁷ That this border is very easy to cross, especially at night, is also known from significant court cases conducted in the UK in relation to immigrants from Pakistan, who turned out to be Indian Kashmiris, but had travelled on Pakistani passports. Most Pakistanis in Britain today are actually Kashmiris, originating mostly from the Mirpur region of Azad Kashmir.

⁸ The original meaning of *jihad*, often called 'Greater Jihad', is struggle or exertion, the effort to become a better person, very strongly associated with moral and ethical values. 'Lesser Jihad' means waging war against non-Muslims, supposedly only for defensive reasons, but there are huge disagreements over its interpretation.

⁹ This term refers to a soldier or a warrior, and thus is also associated with bravery and courage.

¹⁰ Baluchistan occupies a strategic position and is located between the AFPAK region and Iran, which partly explains the irredentist nature of Baluchi nationalism. The movement in Pakistan lacked the support of a middle class intelligentsia, since literacy levels are very low in this region. To suppress the nationalist movement, the Pakistani Army deployed 80,000 men aided by the Shah of Iran, who did not wish to see the spill-over effects of the movement onto Iranian territory.