

PAKISTAN'S IDEOLOGICAL SLIDE INTO *JIHAD*: CONSEQUENCES AND PROSPECTS

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Pakistan has been in existence for more than six decades but the state has not been able to define its identity till date. Pakistan has been a nation of contradictions; it has shared an ambiguous relationship with Islam, tried to embrace Western notions of modernity, and, at the same time, tried retaining the orthodox Islamic identity, has an overpowering and ambitious army which has ruled the nation for more than 30 years directly, and nearly an equal period with a civilian façade, but has still struggled periodically to go back to the democratic order controlled by the fractured political leadership and has suffered a deep national identity crisis. Lack of identity has encouraged the rise of ethnicity and pluralism within the Pakistani society. Born as a result of the demand for a separate Muslim homeland, it eventually stood as the saviour of Islam and, in the process, the military led state has adopted policies based on religion which have had severe repercussions for the state. Religion has been used in Pakistan for a range of issues from nation-building to strategic security.

Pakistan has shared a varying relationship with Islam and presently is experiencing Islamist extremism in the most violent form. It has become the breeding ground for terrorism and the extremist elements

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within Pakistan are on a much stronger footing than ever before, posing a threat to the country's very existence. Pakistan's involvement in the war on terror post 9/11, has further facilitated the blossoming of the terrorist network, not only on the frontier boundaries of Pakistan, but also in the heart of the state where the extremist elements have managed to penetrate even the Army Headquarters (HQ), the most secure place in Pakistan, and various air force and naval bases. The liberal thinking finds survival extremely challenging which is exemplified by the assassinations of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer, who tried to oppose the blasphemy law, and *Asia Times* journalist Salman Shahzad, who tried to disclose the links between the terrorists and the military. But one has to ask the question: did Pakistan fall prey to extremism just as the result of its involvement in the war on terror? The answer is clearly 'no'. Pakistan today, is actually facing the consequences of its own policies which it has believed in, and pursued, for the last five decades. Pakistan's reliance on terrorism as a foreign policy tool is, indeed, responsible for its drift into extremism. This paper attempts to study Pakistan's journey towards the present state of extremism, which the Pakistani leadership is unable to control, posing the most alarming challenge to the stability of the country.

BACKGROUND

Pakistan was born as the result of the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims of India. The All India Muslim League, led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah strongly argued that Muslims had a special identity which would not be able to survive in a Hindu dominated society, thus, a separate homeland for Muslims was the only solution. But Jinnah's dream was quite different from what Pakistan actually transformed into. There was a lack of consensus over Pakistan's ideological and territorial contours, as Ayesha Jalal has rightly pointed out:

Jinnah's resort to religion was not an ideology to which he was ever committed or even a device to use against rival communities; it was simply a way of giving a semblance of unity and solidarity to his divided Muslim constituents. Jinnah needed a demand that was specifically ambiguous and imprecise to command general support, something specifically Muslim, though unspecific in every other respect.¹

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Jinnah in his famous speech before the Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1947 outlined his secular vision:

You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the state....We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one state...In the course of time, Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state".²

Jinnah's dream was a secular state where the Muslim culture and social norms could be promoted. Jinnah's vision was the outcome of a different set of circumstances where, on the post-colonial movement, he visualised an arrangement for the Indian Muslims who could be free in an independent state. The Muslim League was looking for a Muslim homeland and the thought at the time of conceptualisation of Pakistan, if at all considered, was liberal Islam. But, Pakistan, over the decades, completely drifted away from Jinnah's spirit. It never inherited a uniformed vision and there were contesting ideas, thus, the birth of the nation itself suffered from lack of

1. Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 16.

2. *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan 1947-48* (Karachi: Government of Pakistan, 1964).

consensus and clarity on the issue of Islam. In the coming years, Pakistan hardly became a beneficiary of a committed and visionary leadership. The state was driven differently by different regimes following different objectives. Jinnah passed away on October 11, 1948, and this was indeed a deadly blow to the spirit of Pakistan, and hardly anyone would disagree that his death altered the course of history.

Many of Pakistan's political elites were uncertain about the role of Islam in defining the nation's constitutional foundations.³ It took the policy makers close to a decade to formalise the Constitution of Pakistan which dissolved Jinnah's spirit of secular Islam. There was clear lack of consensus on the meaning of Islam. Farzana Shaikh puts it very aptly:

While Jinnah's political successors, plagued by uncertainty about the public role of religion, were content to acknowledge Islam as a fundamental component of the country's identity, religious parties pressed for Islam to be embodied in an Islamic state — although they were too notoriously vague about what that entailed.⁴

This confusion about the interpretation of Islam had severe political, social, economic, educational and even military ramifications. The persistent confusion and lack of consensus gave the political and military leadership enough space to exploit the factor of religion to serve their own interests.

After independence, the most daunting task for the Pakistani leadership was to secure Pakistan from internal and external threats. Internally, Pakistan was fragmented and the two wings, West Pakistan and East Pakistan, which differed ethnically, culturally, and economically, were separated by thousand of miles of Indian territory. Pakistan faced not only the issue of East Pakistan, but also experienced insurgency in Balochistan in the 1940s itself. The Balochis were resistant to the idea of being part of Pakistan and, thus, their incorporation into the federal government has consistently remained a challenge. The Frontier Province also was opposed to the idea of

3. Farzana Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan* (London: Foundation Books, 2009), p. 5.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

being a part of the Pakistani state. Along with these internal vulnerabilities was the perceived threat from India, which the Pakistanis suspected had hegemonic ambitions, and had been unfair in providing Pakistan with its due share of resources inherited from British India. Hostility against India was the leading factor which obviously exaggerated with Pakistan's internal struggles.

THE BEGINNING OF THE IDEOLOGICAL DRIFT AND PAKISTAN'S WAR FOR KASHMIR

The factor of religion became one of the most critical in Pakistan's strategic security.

The need to control Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and incorporate it into Pakistan was felt very strongly in Pakistan even since the British declaration of India's partition. Kashmir was not only considered indispensable for Pakistan but what was more important for the Pakistani leadership was that it should not be a part of the Indian territory. The prime reasons for Pakistan's quest for J&K were economic and strategic factors. The first was that Pakistan felt that with J&K state as an integral part of India, Pakistan's security would be jeopardised. The major fear was that India would establish its military forces anywhere within a few miles of the 200-km-long vital road and rail route between Lahore and Rawalpindi. Geographically, most of West Punjab's prominent cities lie close to J&K's western border. Considering that Punjabi elites dominated Pakistan's decision-making, this factor of vulnerability weighed heavily on their minds. The second factor was economic and psychological. Kashmir going to India could seriously impact Pakistan's economy which was based mainly on canal irrigated agriculture. West Punjab particularly depended for its agriculture upon the rivers flowing from Jammu and Kashmir. Given the security and economic concerns, Kashmir for Pakistan was seen as a necessity and not just desirability. But this in no way denies that the issue of religion too was important for the Pakistanis in shaping their attitude towards Kashmir. Pakistan's demand for Kashmir was also due to the frustration of the political leaders who felt cheated with a "moth-eaten" Pakistan which

came into their share. Thus, the desire to expand the boundaries and have a Muslim majority state added to the geo-economic concerns in Pakistan.

Pakistan launched the first war for Kashmir in 1947-48 in the name of a 'tribal revolt'. The Pakistan Army, with the consent of the political leadership, invoked the tribesmen and the retired and serving army officers in the name of *jihad*, to raid and seize Kashmir. Islam was leveraged in the very beginning to respond to the Indian threat. The government in Pakistan called on religious scholars to issue supportive *fatwas* (religious decrees).⁵ The importance of the 1947-48 aggression was that it laid the basic guidelines for the future aggression by Pakistan. This was the beginning of the use of religion to forward the state policies and also conduct covert operations backed by full-fledged support by the military.

Internally, Jinnah's dream of a pluralistic society was being challenged and in the early 1950s, there were street protests calling for a declaration that the Ahmedis were non-Muslims.⁶ The protests were orchestrated in part to destabilise the ruling polity, and the resignation of Pakistan's first Foreign Minister, Sir Zafarullah Khan, an Ahmadi, was demanded.⁷ In 1974, Ahmadi were officially declared non-Muslims through a constitutional amendment. On similar lines, in 1965, during the first indirect presidential elections held under Ayub Khan, opposition was raised against Fatima Jinnah, the sister of Mohammad Ali Jinnah for contesting for power, and a *fatwa* was issued declaring that Islam did not allow a female head of state.⁸ Thus, religion became an important factor for the political groups to lead in the power struggle. Unequal rights on the basis of sect and gender became prevalent.

On the external front, the Pakistan Army's covert activities expanded in Jammu and Kashmir after the 1962 India-China War. A close study of the covert activities indicates that the factor of religion started to gain momentum in the 1960s. Pakistan's covert activities in Kashmir were now

5. Ziad Haider, "Ideological Adrift", in Maleeha Lodhi, ed., *Pakistan Beyond the Crisis State* (New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2011), p. 116.

6. Ahmedis are followers of an alleged 19th century messiah called Mirza Ghulam Ahmed.

7. Haider, n. 5, p. 116.

8. Ibid., p. 117.

gradually moving towards using religion as a driving force to gain support for the disintegration of India.

Another development in the late 1950s and in the 1960s was Pakistan's entry into a Cold War alliance with the United States. Pakistan entered into military agreements with the US and started to receive massive military aid. The US alliance provided the Pakistanis with high technology weaponry for their army, air force and navy.

This added to their aggressive instincts to acquire Kashmir. The military establishment and rule was further strengthened in Pakistan with the US assistance and it gave its military great confidence to carry on its covert war in Kashmir.

In the 1950s, Pakistan's covert operations in Kashmir Valley did not yield results and were adding to frustration and impatience in the country, even leading to the military officers' Rawalpindi conspiracy against the civilian government. In 1964, Pakistan developed a strategy that came to be known as Operations Gibraltar and Grand Slam, which were landmarks in the history of both the nations. By this time, the initial reasons for annexing Kashmir had ceased to exist: the first factor of insecurity, due to the presence of the Indian Army on the western border, was solved as a result of the ceasefire agreement in 1949. The second factor, regarding the waters of rivers which originated from Kashmir was also solved with the Indus Water Treaty signed in 1960 through the good offices of the World Bank, during Ayub Khan's regime.

Operation Gibraltar was a covert operation but achieved little success as Pakistani preparations were not in place and it did not get the expected support from the Kashmiris. Soon after the launching of Operation Gibraltar, on August 10, a body called the Revolutionary Council was formed in Kashmir, calling on the people to join hands in the revolt against the illegitimate occupants of the Valley – India. Pakistan's failure in 1965 to achieve its objectives increased its reliance on religion to achieve its

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objectives in Kashmir. In the late 1960s, a new set of *jihadis* emerged, deriving their inspiration from left wing anti-imperialist struggles. Pakistan's military and political leadership were more and more convinced about the indispensability of covert warfare in their religiously driven strategies towards Jammu and Kashmir. This new outfit was named 'Al Fatah' and it received clear instructions from Pakistan to launch intense attacks on government offices, banks, etc in Jammu and Kashmir. The outfit believed in using more aggressive means as compared to its earlier counterpart to attain its objective of creating unrest and terror in the Valley. The defeat of its aggression in 1965 only added to Pakistan's tilt toward Islamic ideology.

1971: DISMEMBERMENT OF PAKISTAN

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Pakistan witnessed the rising image of the military in the eyes of the people. Gen Ayub's era, in fact, marked the beginning of military control in the political and civil system of Pakistan. This was important as it eventually led to the splitting up of Pakistan. Ayub's successor Gen Yahya Khan, talked about the Islamic identity of Pakistan and kept defence at the top of its agenda. Yahya Khan, utilised the intelligence agencies to motivate the Islamic parties to work against the two major political parties, the Awami League and the Pakistan's People's Party (PPP). These parties were accused of being unIslamic. The military regime had close ties with the Jamaat-e-Islami and also encouraged the mushrooming of other Islamic groups.⁹

In the 1960s, the military's role expanded and also, political and ethnic tensions increased. The two wings of Pakistan, West and East, were undoubtedly very different. The only common factors between the two wings were *Islam* and *fear of India*. The central leadership could have utilised this for the country's integration and to build goodwill between

9. Ibid., p. 118.

the two parts. But the political parties and leadership struggled with their own weaknesses, failed to rise above provincialism, and exploited religion for power politics.¹⁰ Islam lost meaning as a unifying factor, as the socio-economic factor had a significant contribution in increasing alienation in the Eastern wing.

Shortly after partition, Mountbatten had predicted that East Pakistan would break away from Pakistan within a quarter of a century.¹¹ The Bengalis may have been Muslims but they had a distinct identity of their own—they had a different culture and language which they cherished and respected. Unfortunately, the West Pakistanis never valued or respected this identity of East Pakistan and what was more painful for the East was the discriminating attitude of the Punjabis who considered themselves a superior class. The tensions in the Eastern wing resulted in an insurgency and Pakistan's third war with India. Like the previous wars in 1947-48 and 1965, religion was used as a factor of motivation. During the war, Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan, drawing from Sir Mohammed Iqbal, exhorted the troops: "Allah, exalts the *mujahid* whether he lives or dies. He is a *ghazi* (crusader) if he lives, and a *shaheed* (martyr) if he dies. The *mujahid* seeks Allah's grace. He does not covet wealth and property."¹²

Even Yahya Khan, the Commander-in-Chief and President of Pakistan, boosted the soldiers by saying that they (Pakistan Army) were fighting the anti-Islamic *Kaffir* army and were upholding the highest traditions of *Mujahideen* – soldiers of Islam.¹³

What was most critical was the evolution of Pakistan's grand strategy after the 1971 War. The grand strategy incorporated two important objectives which decided the future course of action for the Pakistani leadership.

First, to expand territory eastward (take Kashmir). This implied a rise in covert activities in J&K and added emphasis on radical Islam in the name

10. Safdar Mehmood, *Pakistan Divided* (New Delhi: Alpha Bravo, 1983), p. 5.

11. Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, *Freedom at Midnight* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), p.159.

12. Quoted in unpublished manuscript, p.217, as cited in Stephen P. Cohen, *The Pakistan Army 1998 Edition* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 87.

13. Ibid.

of *jihad*. Thus, terrorism was to be adopted as a foreign policy tool.

Second, to expand control westward (to gain leverage in Kabul). This implied creating strategic depth in Afghanistan and also facilitating a Pakistan friendly governance.

GLOBAL RISE OF ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY IN THE 1970s AND 1980s

The 1970s and 1980s witnessed the reemergence of Islam as a potent global force, starting with the spread of the Saudi Wahhabi ideology. The Iranian revolution had shattered the secular basis of nationalist thinking and expectations of modernisation and development theories. The revolution drew attention to the significant changes that were taking place in many Muslim countries across the globe in the 1970s. Ironically, the revival of the Islamic ideology was most prominent in the societies which were modern or in the process of modernisation, possessing a well-trained, Western oriented, secular elite, for example, countries like Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Turkey and Algeria.

In Egypt and Malaysia, the resurgence of Islam was manifested in people's lives, the conventional religious beliefs and also the state politics. Religion came much more into practice and was reflected in the form of daily prayers, fasting and the way people dressed. Spiritualism was emphasised with the revitalisation of an Islamic ideology. Muslim rulers put stress on Islamic identity to gain legitimacy, and Islamic organisations and symbols assumed paramount importance for the state.

Bhutto's turning towards Islam has to be studied in the context of the developments worldwide. He turned towards Islam to counter his Islamic critics and also to strengthen ties with the oil-rich nations of the Arabian Gulf. Thus, Islam in the 1970s and 1980s was used as a source of protest and opposition and also to legitimise seizure of power. Ironically, it was the same Islamic ideology which was used by Zia to overthrow Bhutto.

BHUTTO'S ISLAMIC SOCIALISM

The idea of an Islamic Pakistan was pronounced by Bhutto and then subsequently nurtured and developed by Zia, who used religion aggressively in controlling

the state. Bhutto took forward the idea of *Islamic Socialism* and thus, enforced Islam as a major factor in statecraft. Stephen Cohen points out, "If the Pakistan movement and the first twenty-five years of the history of Pakistan can be characterized as a struggle to turn Indian Muslims into Pakistanis, the years since 1972 have been an extension of the process; a struggle to turn Pakistanis into good Muslims."¹⁴ Bhutto's Islamic socialism was considered insincere and it was seen more to establish the non-Indian identity of Pakistan.¹⁵ Zia put the state at the service of Islam and took steps to inculcate the Islamic practices within the state by banning alcohol and gambling, and declaring Friday as a non-working day. In 1976, Bhutto had appointed Zia-ul-Haq as the new Army Chief and allocated him the responsibility to Islamise the Pakistan Army. It was during this period that "*Jihad*" was included in the motto for the Pakistan Army apart from "*Iman*" and "*Taqwa*".

THE QURANIC CONCEPT OF WAR

Bhutto's active plan for the Islamisation of Pakistan has been supported by the interpretations of the teachings of the Holy Quran. Although Jinnah believed that Pakistan would be able to grow into a big power because of it being a Muslim state, there had been no serious strategy that the nation followed based on Islam. Eventually, in Pakistan, the Quran has been interpreted to develop Pakistan's doctrine and strategy of war through terrorism.

The most comprehensive and precise study on war doctrine and strategy in the context of the Holy Quran has been by Brig S.K. Malik in his book, *The Quranic Concept of War*. Brig Malik interprets that "the Holy Quran has given a comprehensive treatment to its concept of war" and "determines all aspects of the use of 'force' in inter-state relations."¹⁶ Brig Malik regards the Quranic philosophy of war as supreme, which provides directions for the initiation, planning and control of war. According to his interpretation, the very "initiation of war is for the Cause of God" and *jihad* is the "most glorious word in the vocabulary of Islam".

14. Cohen, n. 12, p. 89.

15. See, Stephen Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.170.

16. Brig S.K. Malik, *The Quranic Concept of War* (New Delhi: Himalayan Books, 1986), p. 1.

Gen Zia systematically reinforced the Islamisation of Pakistan which was propagated by his predecessor.

Terror, according to the author and a majority of the Pakistani military officers is central to the war strategy. Use of terror as an instrument to impose your will and decisions on the enemy has been legitimised citing examples from the Holy Quran and arriving at the conclusion that “when God wishes to impose His will upon his enemies, He chooses to do so by casting terror in their hearts”.¹⁷

The Islamic concept as derived from the Holy Quran by Brig Malik relies on the use of terror in the preparation stages of the war in order to assure victory and achieve direct results.¹⁸ Thus, terror has been legitimised in the Islamic ideology which has till today shaped the military strategy of Pakistan. Brig Malik asserts that “terror struck into the hearts of the enemies is not only a means, it is the end in itself.”¹⁹ It is emphasised that *fear* has to be an important part of the preparation for war and it determines that “the test of utmost preparation lies in our capability to instill terror into the hearts of the enemies”²⁰

The Quranic interpretation of the conduct of modern war legitimises *jihad* and the use of terror. One of the most effective modes of generating terror is through *covert warfare*, thus, creating physical and mental unrest and fear in the enemy territory. Covert warfare, as practised by Pakistan, includes different tactics like guerrilla warfare, inciting insurgencies and destruction of buildings, all of which attempt to work towards generating terror and insecurity in the minds of Indians and, thus, aim to weaken their physical and mental capabilities.

GEN ZIA'S PURSUIT OF ISLAMISATION

Gen Zia systematically reinforced the *Islamisation of Pakistan* which was propagated by his predecessor, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Zia's vision came out very clearly in his words: “Pakistan, which was created in the name

17. Ibid., p. 57.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., p. 59.

20. Ibid., p. 144.

of Islam, will continue to survive only if it sticks to Islam. That is why I consider the introduction of the Islamic system as an essential prerequisite for the country.”²¹

Zia introduced “Islamic Reforms” in various aspects of Pakistani society and economy. A number of banking and commercial practices based on Islam were introduced, a dress code in accordance with Islamic norms was stressed, new women’s universities were proposed and strict regulations were imposed on the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages.²² During Gen Zia’s regime, Islamic practices were made mandatory in day-to-day life by the state. The Pakistan Army in this period developed close links with the various Islamists groups, and religion was increasingly used in strategic thinking. Zia, in the process of reinforcing the Islamisation of Pakistan and introducing Islamic reforms, allowed the Tablighi Jama’at (an Islamic missionary society) to operate freely within the army. Zia was also the first Army Chief and the first politician in Pakistan to participate in the Tablighis’ annual convention at Raiwind.²³

Zia was entrusted with the task of Islamisation of the Pakistan Army when he took over as the Army Chief. Bhutto saw Zia as the right man to take the Pakistani military to the next stage of its evolution as the guarantor of an anti-India, Islamic ideology.²⁴ Even as a Corps Commander, Zia had distributed books written by the Jamaat-e-Islami’s founder, Maulana Sayyid Abdul Ala Maududi, as rewards for the officers who proved their calibre in various fields in his garrison. Gen Zia ul-Haq’s early steps to Islamise the army are identified by Lt Gen Jalan Dad Khan as Deputy Martial Law Administrator and Corps Commander:

A devout Muslim, it was a matter of faith with [Zia ul – Haq] to propagate Islam wherever he could. Immediately after his appointment as COAS [Chief of the Army Staff], the motto he gave the troops was *Eman* (Faith),

21. “Gen Zia ul-Haq’s Address to the Nation on July 5, 1977”, quoted in Hasan Askari Rizvi, *The Military and Politics in Pakistan 1947-1986* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1986), pp 289-93

22. Cohen, n. 12, p. 91.

23. Cohen, n. 15, p. 113.

24. Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 2005), p. 112.

The education system was deeply influenced and Islamiat and Pakistan studies became compulsory for the B.A, Engineering, Medical, Commerce and Law students.

Taqwa (abstinence), *Jehad Fi Sabeelillah* (war in the way of or for the sake of God). He urged all ranks of the army during his visits to troops as well as in written instructions, to offer their prayers, preferably led by the commanders themselves at various levels. Religious education was included in the training program and mosques and prayer halls were organized in all army units.²⁵

Zia, in his first speech as Chief Martial Law Administrator, described himself as a "Soldier of Islam" and declared his commitment to building a new political, economic and social order based on religion.²⁶ Adherence to the Islamic practices emerged as a major criterion for selection in the Pakistan Army. According to Zia, a soldier had to be a true Muslim before he took on the responsibility of defending the Islamic Republic. In the armed forces, the status of religious teachers was raised to the level of commissioned officers. This became a major attraction for the qualified individuals from the universities and religious institutions.

During Zia's regime, the observance of Islamic practices increased as compared to earlier political or military regimes in the country. The state was now being run on the values interpreted on the basis of religion. The number of mosques in the country increased. The education system was deeply influenced and Islamiat and Pakistan studies became compulsory for the B.A, Engineering, Medical, Commerce and Law students.

The Islamist parties and especially groups like the Tablighi Jamaat, linked to the Deobandi tradition, got greater access to the military officials. Zia encouraged the Islamist parties to counter the political forces. The Islamist parties received favourable treatment from the ruling militia, and members of the Jamaat-e-Islami were offered senior positions in the important ministries. The judicial system of the state was Islamised and a Shariat Council consisting of *Ulema* was established to look into constitutional

25. Lt Gen. Jalan Dad Khan, *Pakistan Leadership Challenges* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.158; Haqqani, *Ibid.*, p. 113.

26. Haqqani, n. 24, p. 127.

and legal matters pertaining to the state, which were to be conducted in accordance with the Islamic beliefs.

It was during this process of Islamisation that the Afghan War came into the picture and altered the total dynamics of Pakistan's political, military and strategic policies.

THE AFGHAN WAR IN THE 1980s

Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan became the frontline for the United States in the fight against Communism. Pakistan had already been a party to the destabilisation of Afghanistan which increased with the Soviet intervention and the reaction to it by the US, with Pakistan as its frontline state. Pakistan's threat perception from India consistently engaged the military, and the political leadership in Pakistan, worrying about the eastern border and turmoil in Afghanistan, made its western borders also insecure. Gen Arif outlined the three options available to Pakistan at the time of the Soviet invasion: "Firstly, she could accept the *fait accompli* as she lacked the capacity to challenge the Soviet Union. Secondly, she could provide open and full support to the Afghan freedom struggle, despite the risks involved. And, thirdly, she could give overt political, diplomatic, and humanitarian support to the refugees, with covert assistance to the Mujahideen".²⁷ Pakistan surely was not in a position to face the Soviet Union alone and was tempted by the American assistance which would serve its diplomatic, economic and defence interests. Pakistan opted for the third option outlined by Gen Arif and entered into a second term alliance with the United States. The status of US ally gave the Pakistan military an opportunity to fulfill its dreams for military modernisation. This major strategic development placed Pakistan in a position where it could demand the latest military weapons. Pakistan received an enormous amount of military aid from the US. It also received unlimited funds from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries to finance the US weaponry, which, Pakistan opted to procure in the 1980s.

27. Ibid., p. 314.

Pakistan offered its territory to the Americans and Zia's military regime undertook the responsibility of training the Mujahideen to carry out covert operations to fight the Soviets. The operations directed by the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) comprised one of the largest operations planned by the US and shaped a relationship between the CIA and the Pakistani intelligence agency ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence), as the two worked in coordination for about a decade.

Pakistan's alliance with the US in the 1980s led to the development of the following factors.

Religion Became a Major Driving Force

The US' war in Afghanistan led to structural and organisational development of the factor of *religion in war*. The soldiers for war were being trained to fight in a "holy war" in the name of God. The declaration of *jihad* in Afghanistan led to the legitimised structural development of the institutions preparing young fighters. It is reported that over a period of time, over 80,000 volunteers were being trained for the war; they came not only from Pakistan and Afghanistan but also other Muslim countries like Sudan, Bangladesh, Algeria and Turkey. It was the combination of courage, specifically amongst the Afghan fighters and their strong religious belief that made the Mujahideen formidable warriors.²⁸ The belief was strengthened that the Mujahideen were fighting a holy war against the unbelievers – the *Kafirs*, and "once the *jihad* was declared by their religious leaders, it was the duty of all men to fight, to save their faith, to defend their honour, to protect their independence and to guard their land and families".²⁹ The battle cry for the Mujahideen was (and is till date) "*Allah o Akbar*" – God is Great, which they shout as they are attacking an enemy camp, base or personnel.³⁰ Thus, the fighting for religion proliferated.

28. Brig Mohammad Yousaf and Maj Mark Adkin, *The Bear Trap* (Lahore: Jang Publishers, 1992) p. 32.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

30. *Ibid.*

Pakistan: Training Ground for the Guerrilla Fighters

Ever since the creation of Pakistan, the Pashtuns or the Balochis have been motivated by the creation of an independent state advocated by the Pashtun regimes in Kabul. This worried the leadership in Pakistan about the vulnerability of Pakistan and, thus, the possibility of ethnic unrest.

Following the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, in December 1979, Lt Gen Akhtar Abdul Rahman, the Director General of the ISI convinced Gen Zia that Pakistan had the capacity to defeat the Soviets in a large-scale guerrilla war. The military leadership agreed to support the guerrilla warfare with arms, ammunition, money, intelligence, training and operational advice. Gen Akhtar, also suggested to Zia that Pakistan should offer the border areas of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan as a sanctuary for both the refugees and guerrillas. The base was essential for the covert forces as without a secure, cross-border base, no such campaign could succeed.³¹

Pakistan offered its territory as a secure base for the Mujahideen guerrilla fighters and became the base for these fighters, providing them with supplies of arms and ammunition apart from food and shelter, training and intelligence.³² Brig Mohammad Yousaf and Maj Mark Adkin have observed: "The border areas of Pakistan had grown into a vast, sprawling administrative base for the *Jihad*. The Mujahideen came there for arms, they came to rest, they came to settle...."³³ Since the US assistance to the Mujahideen started as a covert affair, the ISI Directorate became the channel for not only ensuring the secrecy of the operation but also to provide expert advice and train the Mujahideen in guerrilla tactics.

In this process, Zia cultivated a venomous strain of Islamic ideology in Pakistan. The ISI, in partnership with the right wing Islamic parties like the Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam, recruited millions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and students from the *madrassas*, to join the fight in Afghanistan and be the holy fighters. In this process, these Islamic parties

31. Ibid., p. 25.

32. Ibid., p. 49.

33. Ibid.

developed an extensive network in Pakistan and also became much more influential.³⁴

Along with this *jihadi* culture what was also encouraged in Pakistan was sectarianism which resulted in the killing of thousands. On the external front, the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 played a crucial role and the Khomeini regime began exporting its revolutionary message across the Muslim world. Pakistan, invariably, became a battle ground for the transplanted war between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which worked towards restricting the spread of Iranian Shia influence.³⁵ Balochistan became the hub of hundreds of *madrassas* which were basically established to limit the Shia influence in Pakistan. On one side, were the Iranian-backed Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Fiqh-i-Jafaria and on the other side, were Sunni extremist groups within Pakistan like the Sipah-e-Sahaba, who demanded that Shias (who comprised 15-20 per cent of the Pakistani population) should be declared non-Muslims like the Ahmadis.³⁶ The Islamisation process during Zia's regime gave a totally different dimension to *jihad* and encouraged a violent *jihadi* culture and sectarianism in Pakistan.

Non-Accountability of the US Weapons: Tools for Jihad

In the 1980s, the US intelligence services followed a strategy of supplying enormous amounts of arms and ammunition to the Mujahideen leaders and commanders in the field. The weapons pipeline was under the control of the ISI which actually was responsible in deciding the recipient and the quantity of weapons. The ISI retained the majority of the weapons and equipment (reportedly 60 per cent) for its own covert war against India. The weaponry supplied during the Afghan War remained in the region after the war ended. The intelligence agencies faced the problem of concealing this responsibility of distributing the arms and the US did not want to be projected as providing direct military aid to the *jihadis*. It has been reported that the "US intelligences services set up bank accounts in Switzerland into which the US and the Saudi governments directed their contributions to the

34. Haider, n 5, p. 122.

35. Ibid., p. 123.

36. Ibid.

Afghan resistance, which were then used to pay for weapons from a variety of sources. Wealthy individual Saudis and the Iranian government also contributed to the Mujahideen.”³⁷ The Dubai-based Pakistani managed BCCI (Bank of Credit and Commerce International) and Pakistan’s own Mehran Bank where profits from narcotics trade were also recycled, stand out in this regard. Initially, the supply of US weapons was a trickle and the weapons supplied for the Mujahideen were mostly outdated but as the fighting intensified, the type of weapon supply improved. Reportedly, Washington provided over two billion dollars of covert assistance to the Afghan War.³⁸

Pakistan developed significant financial interest in the drug trade and this assisted in the development of the drug economy in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Development of the Narcotics Trade

Another important development during this period was the narcotics trade which flourished with the CIA’s assistance to fund the covert operations. The opium production went up from 200 metric tonnes in 1980 to 1,200 metric tonnes in 1989.³⁹ Initially, in the 1980s, the narcotics trafficking network was used to support the US-Pak strategy of arming and supplying the Afghan Mujahideen. Later, the military in Pakistan developed significant financial interest in the drug trade and this assisted in the development of the drug economy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The drug money was also believed to have been used by the military to support Pakistan’s active nuclear programme which was initiated by Bhutto in the early 1970s. Thus, the narcotics trade was initially developed to generate funds for the war against the Soviets but it became one of the major resources for the military to fund its weapon modernisation plans and covert operations in India, not only in Kashmir but also in Punjab.

37. “India: Arms and Abuses in Indian Punjab and Kashmir”, September 1994, Vol.6, No.10, at <http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/kashmir/1994/index.htm>

38. Haqqani n. 24, p. 318.

39. T. Raghvan, “The Narcotics Trade in South-West Asia: Geography and Production”, *Security Research Review*, at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/SRR/Volume14/raghvan.html>

RISE IN TERRORISM IN THE 1980s AND 1990s

In Kashmir, in the 1980s, religious resurgence, coupled with increasing alienation of the youth for diverse reasons, started to increase, and Pakistan's strategy of covert war through terrorism began to concretise. What was happening in Afghanistan and also happening simultaneously in Khalistan (with Pakistan's active assistance), had a direct impact in the Valley. Thus, in the mid-1980s, the disturbances in Kashmir were growing, with an unusual amount of Jamaat activity, processions and resentment against the Hindus, and the communal divide had started to be a major disturbing factor. Pakistan continued its covert war and the year 1984 witnessed substantive escalation of violent acts in J&K. In the late 1980s and 1990s, Pakistan became much more active in sponsoring terrorism in J&K. The ISI encouraged young Kashmiris to come to Pakistan for training. The ISI initially indoctrinated and trained the secular groups in Kashmir and eventually shifted to training of groups linked to Pakistan's own Islamic parties.⁴⁰

The weapons used by the terrorists had undergone a change as Pakistan had acquired modern arms in the 1980s to equip the covert fighters in Afghanistan. On one side, Pakistan had equipment for the Afghan Mujahideen which could be easily smuggled into Kashmir, and, on the other, Pakistan also acquired modern weapon systems, including the F-16s from the US during this period and, thus, felt stronger and more confident to carry out its covert strategy in Kashmir. But the most important factor for the escalation of the covert war in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir was the acquisition of nuclear weapons by Pakistan which it perceived as a security guarantee against a robust Indian military response.

PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS: SHIELD AGAINST TERRORISM

Pakistan accelerated its nuclear programme in the 1980s under Zia. The military regime in Pakistan exploited the India "threat" with the acquisition of nuclear capability to gain domestic legitimacy. It was under Zia's rule that Pakistan became a nuclear state and defined a coherent nuclear strategy. By 1987, it was

40. Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos* (London: Penguin Group, 2008), p. 111.

believed that Pakistan could carry out a full nuclear explosion. By 1992, Pakistan declared officially that it possessed the cores of nuclear weapons, and in 1998, Pakistan's nuclear tests followed India's new posture of a nuclear state.

The acquisition of nuclear capability enhanced Pakistan's capability to wage and escalate the covert war in Kashmir as nuclear weapons were believed to deter India from responding with conventional military retaliation. Policy-makers in Pakistan seem to be convinced that they will be able to carry on, or rather accelerate, their activities in Kashmir by holding out the threat of use of nuclear weapons, if required, and this would control India's strategic moves in the Valley. This thought process seems to have grown with Pakistan's "first use policy". Pakistan claimed that it had the capability of a nuclear bomb in 1987, and it is noteworthy, that during the late 1980s, the activities in the Valley also witnessed a shift. The terrorist acts increased significantly in numbers and were planned in a more organised manner, making the job of the Indian security forces more difficult.

Pakistan became more vocal about the possession of nuclear weapons in the late 1980s and in the 1990s, in order to create the impression that any radical move from the Indian side might be retaliated with the *Islamic bomb*. Pakistan's strategy has been to use the nuclear card for aggressive militancy in Kashmir and, thus, the Pakistan military now had the nuclear umbrella to shield it from an Indian military response. *Jihad* now had the protection of the nuclear bomb for Pakistan. There is a clear correlation between the progress in acquisition of nuclear weapons and the launch of the covert war during the last 25 years.

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1990s: POLITICAL TUG OF WAR

After Zia's death, Pakistan faced innumerable challenges. The nation had been under the military rule for a long period and, thus, getting back to

democracy was a challenge: the economic downslide had started to show up, the *jihadi* culture took firm roots in the country, the alliance with the US had just ended, and Pakistan stood isolated internationally. The democratic regimes between 1988 and 1999 were unstable and changed frequently, especially if the agenda of the elected governments challenged the power and functioning of the army. During this period, there were four elections and both Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif returned to power twice. There were four caretaker governments in between as neither of the elected governments could complete its term.

The ISI became an important centre of power on account of its role in the Afghan War and its involvement with the Americans. Although the fundamentalist and Islamists appeared to have lost in the elections, their influence continued to grow, especially among the intelligence agencies, military officers and the emerging middle class in Pakistan. The ISI also managed to create and sustain the differences between the political parties which hampered the evolution of a mature democratic set-up in Pakistan and contributed to the frequent changes on the political front. The intelligence encouraged and utilised the Islamist parties to counter the political groups which went against the military's interests.

On the external front, there were two developments in this decade. Both these developments were a continuation of Pakistan's existing policies. The leadership in Pakistan intensified terrorist activities on the Indian soil through their proxies and anti-India terrorist organisations became much more active in the Valley and other parts of India. The ISI was now a fully trained and equipped organisation with a ready infrastructure for *jihad* which was now fully diverted towards India to continue Pakistan's strategy to 'bleed India through a thousand cuts'. By 2002, Pakistan became home for more than two dozen militant groups operating in the neighbourhood and pursuing their own agenda, which was considered by the state to be in its favour. The largest among them were the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM) and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI). All of these organisations shared similar sources and pursued similar goals. They had the state's patronage and funds have never been a

problem. The state's patronage, in fact, helped the *jihadi* organisations to raise public funds.

On the western front, Pakistan was keen to create its strategic depth and not to have a hostile government. The Pakistan Army and ISI, along with the political leadership, came together to support a new class of warriors – the Taliban. In 1994, Afghanistan saw the outbreak of the Taliban, which was composed of the younger generation of Pakistani-Afghans. The Taliban were mainly the Afghans who grew up in the Pakistani refugee camps and were products of *madrassas* which were encouraged during Zia's time and funded by the Saudi money. Maulana-Fazl-ul-Rahman, leader of the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl-ul (JUI-F) supported the Taliban, and being a close ally of Benazir, he played a critical role in facilitating communications between Pakistan and the Taliban.⁴¹ The Pakistani leadership extended full-fledged support to the Taliban and added to their strength from Pakistani *madrassas*. The Taliban began to take over one province after another in Afghanistan and brought the whole of Afghanistan under their control in less than five years.⁴²

MUSHARRAF'S COUP AND US LED WAR ON TERROR POST 9/11

The military under the leadership of Gen Musharraf assumed control of the state in 1999 and, even though the coup was condemned by most world leaders, it was supported by a majority of the Pakistani populace. Pakistan once again witnessed a major strategic development and entered into a third alliance with the US post 9/11. Once again, Pakistan arrived at a critical crossroads. Musharraf attempted to project a path of moderation and publicly announced on January 12, 2002, that Pakistani territory would not be used for (*jihadi*) terrorism. In 2004, he announced his plea for *Enlightened Moderation* which could provide an answer to Pakistan's identity and its relationship with Islam. Defining the Enlightened Moderation, he said:

41. Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift Into Extremism: Allah, the Army and America's War on Terror*, (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2005), p. 154.

42. Ibid., p.155.

The strategy of enlightened moderation involves a win-win situation for the whole of the world as well as for the Muslim countries. This is a two-pronged strategy. One prong is to be delivered by the Muslim world itself by shunning militancy and extremism and adopting the path of socioeconomic uplift to achieve its own emancipation. The other prong is meant to be delivered by the West, and the United States in particular, to determinedly resolve with justice all political disputes in which Muslims are engaged and also assist in the socioeconomic betterment of the deprived Muslim world.....The time has come to re-think our position. What we need is a renaissance..... We have to concentrate on human resource development, and the best way for that is through poverty alleviation, greater education, better health and assured social justice..... We have to adopt the path of moderation, a conciliatory approach, a pacific approach, in order to cleanse ourselves of the charge that Islam is a religion of militancy and is averse to modernization, democracy and secularism.⁴³

Although Musharraf talked about the moderate, secular path which included rejection of extremism, the actual strategies which the military pursued were certainly not in sync with the announced enlightened moderation. It was more to appease the West and project an image of Pakistan as a moderate Islamic nation which believed in countering extremism and was focussed on socio-economic development.

The military regime came under immense pressure by the Bush Administration to act against the terrorist organisations and Musharraf issued orders to ban some of the key militant outfits and also for registering of the *madrassas*. These efforts failed to provide results and the popular consensus has been that the military's flawed approach towards the war on terror has been responsible for the rising extremism and flourishing insurgency on Pakistan's frontier borders, NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – KPK) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). These have been troublesome regions even in the most peaceful times and are now

43. Speech by Gen Musharraf, "OIC Challenge and Response: Enlightened Moderation", June 1, 2004, at <http://presidentmusharraf.wordpress.com/2005/01/18/musharraf-oic-enlightened-moderation/>

engaged in a full-blooded insurgency. Pakistan, for the first time, is facing terrorist attacks within its own territories. The military has a history of waging insurgencies (in the name of *jihad*) since the time of its creation in 1947, but, post 9/11, it has been compelled to take on a reverse role of counter-insurgency. The military has been flagrantly discriminate in dealing with various terrorist groups and has not given up *jihadi* terrorism as its state policy.

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A study by Ashley Tellis identifies four different terrorist groups implicated in this regard: domestic sectarian groups, anti-Indian terrorist groups, the Taliban and Al Qaeda.⁴⁴

The first set includes the domestic sectarian groups like the Sunni Sipah-e-Sahaba and its offshoot, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and the Shia Tehrik-e-Jafaria and its offshoot, the Sipah-e-Muhammad. These groups have been engaged in violent sectarian activities within Pakistan. Although these groups were initially supported and encouraged by the military, they became a major challenge for the military leadership, posing a serious threat to the domestic order. The global war on terror provided an opportunity to the military leadership to crack down on these elements. The state leadership was selective in suppressing these organisations and the target groups were the ones whose objectives fell out of sync with the military's perception of national interests: those engaged in the *jihadi* violence within the state rather than in support of the military's external ambitions vis-à-vis India and Afghanistan.⁴⁵

The second set of terrorist groups includes the organisations working in coordination with the Pakistan Army and the ISI against India, such as LeT, JeM and HuM. These are the terrorists groups which the Pakistan Army has trained, encouraged and financed to carry out the covert war in Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of India since the 1980s. These groups are an extension of Pakistan's military strategy to continue sub-conventional

44. Ashley J. Tellis, "Pakistan and the War on Terror: Conflicted Goals, Compromised Performance" (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2008), p.4.

45. Ibid.

warfare through various means and, thus, received different treatment from Gen Musharraf, as compared to the sectarian groups. These groups are viewed as working to legitimise the struggle for self-determination for the Kashmiri people and, thus, have been excluded from the military's campaign against violence and extremism.⁴⁶ These groups have been active not only in Jammu and Kashmir but also in other parts of India, creating occasions to spark a war or to precipitate action from India.

The third group of the extremist elements comprises the Taliban, who were forced to leave Kabul after the initial success of Operation Enduring Freedom.⁴⁷ The Taliban, after their defeat by the Northern Alliance, reverted to their villages in the southern and eastern Afghan provinces, as well as along the border areas on the western side of the Durand Line separating Afghanistan from Pakistan.⁴⁸ A significant number of the Taliban leaders, along with the Pakistani Pashtuns, being the prime targets in the global war on terror, took refuge in the FATA. Most of the Taliban fighters were originally mobilised by the ISI from the Gilzai confederation of Pashtuns who dominated southeastern Afghanistan and from other Pashtun tribes belonging to FATA, and thus, their going back to a relatively secure place, their original homeland, was natural after the Pakistan military decided to join the US in the aggressive military operation against the Taliban.⁴⁹ The Taliban has made Pakistan's tribal belt the base for training camps and for conducting action plans in Afghanistan and the Pakistani territory. The Taliban leadership has manoeuvred an independent administrative set-up in FATA and the locals are in no position to oppose them.

From the beginning in 2008, there have been reports of the Taliban extending their conservative extremist norms to the civilians in the region, controlling even their day-to-day lives. Pakistan's former Interior Minister, Aftab Khan Sherpao, whose ancestral village is in the foothills of the tribal region, very categorically stated that there is a serious risk of "total

46. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 6

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*

Talibanization” in the NWFP.⁵⁰ It is tough to believe that the Taliban is able to regenerate to this extent without the support of the Pakistan military and the intelligence units which have allowed them to flourish and operate in cities like Karachi within Pakistan. Because the Pakistani leadership was so deeply involved in the making of the Taliban, it has undeniably avoided the killing or capturing of the senior Taliban leadership in southern Afghanistan or in the FATA. The Taliban has enjoyed leverage from the Pakistan Army and has expanded the *jihadi* terrorists network within Pakistan, resulting in massive suicide bombings and revolts.

The fourth group, Al Qaeda, which also found sanctuary in FATA, received a much more aggressive and firm response from the military.⁵¹ Although Al Qaeda commands some sympathy within the Pakistani society, the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US were conclusively attributed to this terrorist outfit, and the US embarked on a worldwide campaign against it. Pakistan too extended support to the US by conducting various law enforcement and internal security operations targeting the terrorist financing, and apprehending and rendering terrorist targets for prosecution abroad.⁵² The massive military operation resulted in the arrest of around 700 terrorists from Al Qaeda and other extremist organisations. Although the aggressive military operations led to the arrest of many Al Qaeda operatives, the top leader, Osama bin Laden, was not touched (till May 2011). The operations forced the militants to disperse further into Pakistan areas, as the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa areas, while considered secure for the Taliban, became unsafe for these operatives. Also, the cities in Pakistan provided them with a more advanced mode of communication in order to connect them to the extremist network.⁵³

In May 2011, Osama bin Laden was killed in an operation carried out by the US Navy SEALs from the US Special Operations Command. Bin Laden has been living for years in a military compound in Abbottabad,

50. Ibid.

51. See, Zafar Abbas, “Pakistan Army Confronts Al Qaeda”, *BBC News*, January 8, 2004, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3378395.stm

52. Ibid.

53. Tellis, n. 44, p. 10.

Pakistan, where he was holed up in a two-storey house just 100 yards from a Pakistani Military Academy. Abbottabad, is located just 50 km from the capital, Islamabad, and is home to three Pakistan Army regiments, and thousands of military personnel. The area is relatively affluent, with several retired military men residing there. Although Gen Kayani has repeatedly claimed that he was unaware of Osama's location, it is tough to believe that bin Laden was residing in the army compound without the knowledge of the Pakistan military and intelligence officials. President Obama's chief counter-terrorism adviser, John Brennan, said it was "inconceivable that Osama bin Laden did not have a support system in the country that allowed him to remain there for an extended period of time".⁵⁴ The end of bin Laden has marked a major shift in the Pakistan-US relationship. The level of trust between the two allies has been deteriorating, bringing the relationship between the two nations to the lowest level.

After almost a decade of blatant military operations, the Americans appear increasingly frustrated with the results of the operations. Not only have the numbers of the extremist acts escalated, but the terrorists attacks are also much more intense, better planned and persist with deadly regularity, making it difficult for the American intelligence to detect. Increasing drone attacks by the US and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces have increased anti-US sentiments in Pakistan tremendously.

TALIBAN INSURGENCY : EMERGENCE OF THE TTP

The Taliban insurgency began as early as 2003 when the Al Qaeda and Afghan Taliban fighters were flushed out of Afghanistan by the US armed forces. In 2007, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) emerged as an entity in the context of a series of military operations (that took place post 9/11): Pakistani military operations in FATA as well as US Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) strikes in FATA. Until then, most of the component groups of the TTP were loosely organised, with ties to the Afghan Taliban. The TTP started to professionally organise itself when Abdullah Mehsud of the Afghan Taliban returned to Waziristan from the Guantanamo Bay camp. He

54. "Inconceivable that Osama had no Support System in Pakistan: US", *The Hindu* May 3, 2011.

blew himself up in Pishin, Balochistan, during a siege by Pakistani forces in 2006.⁵⁵ After Abdullah Mehsud's death, Baitullah Mehsud, a leading member of the Afghan Taliban, organised all the groups operating in FATA who professed similar ideologies and knit them into one of the most dangerous terrorist/insurgent groups called the TTP.⁵⁶

The organisation consists of a number of militant groups (around 20 of them) and is rooted in the tribal belt of Pakistan. The TTP's creation in December 2007 marked a new development arising out of the realisation among the local and foreign militants that a central command was required in order to attain their objectives, and Baitullah Mehsud provided them the unifying force. The main objectives of the TTP are: (i) foreign troops must leave Afghanistan; (ii) Pakistan must end its cooperation with the US and NATO forces; and (iii) the *Sharia* must replace the existing legal system. The TTP has adopted a strictly anti-state and specifically anti-military agenda and has been conveying its message by consistently attacking the government/military offices. In other words, the TTP has organised itself as a true insurgency, ideologically as well as organisationally.

The TTP draws its ideological guidance from Al Qaeda, and also provides safe havens to the Al Qaeda allies in FATA. Given the mutual cooperation between the two organisations, it would not be wrong to state that the TTP is a force multiplier for Al Qaeda.⁵⁷ The TTP has launched numerous attacks against US, NATO and Pakistani targets. The organisation regards the Pakistani state as an enemy of Islam for siding with the US. It has adopted an anti-state posture and has claimed responsibility for most of the terrorist attacks, including the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. The organisation is growing in influence among the young and unemployed youth and is using the *Sharia* to promote its political and ideological agenda.

55. Imtiaz Gul, *The Al Qaeda Connection: the Taliban and Terror in Pakistan's Tribal Areas* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2009), p. 51.

56. TTP was the revival of an older organisation of the same name founded in 1998 in Orakzai Agency.

57. "Tehrik-e-Taliban Is a Terror Group", *VOANEWS.com Policy*, July 9, 2010, at <http://www.voanews.com/policy/editorials/Tehrik-e-Taliban-Is-A-Terror-Group-102393269.html>

CONCLUSION

Presently, Pakistan is facing a broad landscape of militancy. A variety of terrorist groups with varying agendas operate from Pakistan and share a varied relationship with the state. Some of these organisation like the TTP regard the state as an enemy of Islam for joining hands with the West and killing their own people. On the other side are the deadly groups like the Jamaat-ud-Dawa, which are flourishing in the heart of Pakistan and are under the state patronage. For the first time, militancy has managed to penetrate the interiors of Punjab and Sindh, and the Army General Headquarters (GHQ) became one of the terror targets in the recent past. In fact, the bases of all the three forces have been attacked — the air force bases have been frequent targets. The impact of the Afghan War has allowed Al Qaeda, the Haqqani network and the Taliban inside Pakistan where they have been expanding their influence. The Pakistan military and the ISI have nurtured some of the terrorist organisations which it categorically grades as “strategic assets” and is clearly not willing to act against them. These so-called “friendly”⁵⁸ groups as Ayesha Siddiqua Agha terms them, include: the Good Taliban, Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM). The Haqqani network which has strongholds in the bordering Afghan districts of Paktia and Khost and is involved in anti-US and anti-NATO operations, has enjoyed state patronage for long.⁵⁹ The military has desisted from acting against these groups and has been “selective and partial” in its counter-terrorism approach, which has been the root cause for the lack of success in the war on terror.

The frontiers borders – NWFP and KPK—have become the breeding ground for terrorism and the region presents a conglomeration of various insurgents and terrorists groups to the Pakistani military and NATO forces. Al Qaeda, Haqqani and the Taliban have established their sanctuaries in these area. Insurgency in Balochistan,, which became active in 2004, has aggravated much more after the killing of Akbar Bugti in 2007. The Balochis have always suffered a deep sense of alienation from the state and resisted it

58. Ayesha Siddiqua Agha, “Pakistan’s Counterterrorism Strategy: Separating Friends from Enemies”, *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2011, pp.149-162.

59. Ibid.

regularly, which the leadership has tried to curb with brute military force in the past, starting in the 1940s. Added to this deadly mix of extremists is the TTP. The TTP has posed a real danger to the state and, in a way, is an extension of Sunni Deobandi militancy. It has absorbed members of radical Sunni organisations, and this has further exaggerated the problem of Shia-Sunni violence not only in the tribal belt but also in other parts of Pakistan.

Islam has remained extremely critical for Pakistan in its domestic and foreign policies. But the interpretation of Islam has varied under different regimes. Jinnah's vision was that of a secular nation where Muslim culture and norms could be protected and practised freely by the Muslims. Obviously, his vision was shaped under a different set of circumstances, and, eventually, as one can see, the state adopted a very different interpretation of Islam, completely deviating from Jinnah's spirit. Religion under Zia found its most extremist expression and Pakistan's ideological posture was reshaped. The underlying problem is that the state has not been able to define its relationship with Islam till date. The Pakistani leadership has allowed itself to become entangled in contradictions, where it talks about enlightened moderation on one side, and simultaneously, patronises the terrorist outfits which brainwash the young Pakistani minds to join hands in fighting a holy war in the neighbourhood. Pakistan is facing a deadly *jihadi* consequence of its own long stated policies based on terrorism, threatening the very survival of the state. The leadership in Pakistan now needs to seriously reconsider its strategic calculus and refrain from using terrorism legitimised by religion as a foreign policy tool.

The impact of the Afghan War has allowed Al Qaeda, the Haqqani network and the Taliban inside Pakistan where they have been expanding their influence.