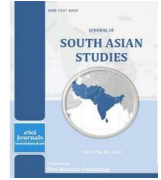




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## THE DESTINY OF PAKISTAN AND PAK-US RELATIONSHIP

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### ABSTRACT

Pakistan has been full of surprises since its inception. Although contrary to Jawaharlal Nehru's predictions, Pakistan did not disintegrate and merge with India "six months" after its emergence, but within twenty-five years of its existence, it lost its eastern wing (East Pakistan), which emerged as Bangladesh; and within another two decades, the country became one of the most ungovernable and dangerous places in the world. In view of its checkered history of unpleasant surprises for the country itself, its neighbors and others, one can take unpredictability as the main variable for Pakistan. The country went through thirty-two years of military rule and other thirty-odd years of authoritarian, oligarchic democracy, a democratically elected government completed its full-term and was succeeded by another in May 2013 in its history. One may assume that Pakistan will functionally remain a democracy, albeit under the waning influence of the military and "feudal" aristocracy. Whether Pakistan remains an Islamic "garrison state", a civilian "illiberal democracy", or transforms itself into a liberal democracy in the coming years are important questions today. However, it appears that in the coming years the Pak-US relationship will remain as awkward and unpredictable as it has been since the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Pakistan's identity crisis – "the mother of all conflicts", to one scholar – is reflected in the state-sponsored Islamization process and the country's hovering between civilian and military rule.

**Keywords:** Pakistan, Islamization, Jihad, Militancy, Jamaat-i-Islami, Tehrik-E-Taliban Pakistan, Lashkar-E-Taiba And Mumbai Attacks.

### THE LEGACY OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY "JIHAD"

Despite the beginning of a democratic transition of Pakistan, there are reasons to be pessimistic about the short- and long-term future of the country, and at least three regions that transcends the boundaries of the country, South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East. As the sole nuclear-armed nation in the Muslim World is the most terror-infested unstable country in South Asia (ahead of Afghanistan), one has reasons to worry about possible nuclear proliferation and even a militant Islamist takeover of the country to the peril of world peace. Then again, there are different ways of looking at the problem-infested country. We may accept Ishtiaq Ahmed's "garrison state" and Hamza Alavi's "post-colonialism" theories – which are complementary to each other – as possible answers to the question: What went wrong with Pakistan? Fareed Zakaria's thoughts on

"illiberal democracy" may be insightful in this regard. However, Bernard Lewis's thesis on "*What Went Wrong?*" with Islam (considered Islamophobic by many), that explains the root causes of the decay and degeneration of Islamic civilization and the clash between Islam and modernity in the Middle East may not be relevant to explain the rot in Pakistan.

Whether Pakistan will remain ungovernable for an indefinite period is an important question. Whether the country poses potential threat to the region through nuclear proliferation is another. Whether Islamist militants are likely to take over the country, by controlling its armed forces and nuclear weapons in the coming years, is another vexing question often raised by Western analysts and policymakers. This paper is not a historical appraisal of Islamic movements in the country. It addresses the pressing problem of the so-called global jihad in historical, contemporary and futuristic perspectives. It also addresses the problem as to why and how America's Pakistan and Af-Pak policies have

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been counterproductive to global peace and order. In short, this paper is about understanding the present state of affairs in Pakistan, and what is likely to happen in the coming decades in the spheres of peace and conflict within and beyond the country, and the region of South Asia.

The so-called South Asian “Wahhabis” bear the legacy of their predecessors who in the early 1820s started an anti-British movement to liberate India and re-establish Muslim rule in the entire Subcontinent. Their leader Sayyid Ahmad Brelvi (1786-1831) was a charismatic figure that believed in Islamic reforms, revival and restoration of Muslim rule in India in accordance with the teaching of his mentor Shah Abdul Aziz (1745-1823). Shah Aziz, a radical Sufi from Delhi considered British India *Dar ul-Harb* (House of War) and justified taking up arms (waging jihad) against the British and the rising Sikh power in northwestern India. What is Pakistan today had witnessed itinerant mullahs and mujahedeen from Bengal, Bihar and northern India during the 1820s and 1870s, who tried to mobilize support from local Muslims for their “jihad” against the Sikh rulers of northwestern India, Kashmir and southeastern Afghanistan. Islamist militants wanted to establish their “caliphate” in northwestern India before overpowering the British to re-establish their cherished Muslim rule in India. However, the mujahedeen, with lukewarm support from Pashtun tribes, lost series of battles, got their “caliph” Sayyid Ahmed Brelvi killed (1831) by Sikh troops and were finally defeated by the British. The militant Islamist reformers/revivalists in British India, for their similarities with Arabian Wahhabis, such as their opposition to showing reverence to dead saints, are also known as “Indian Wahhabis”. Their successors are still known as “Wahhabis” among scholars and laymen across the board (Ahmad, 1994).

Soon after the abortive First Liberation War of India in 1857-58 – which was, to some extent a “Wahhabi” inspired rebellion mainly by Muslims – some “Wahhabi” leaders continued preaching the dogma of violent “jihad” or total war against the British till the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in what is northwestern Pakistan, southeastern Afghanistan and northern Bangladesh today. Incidentally, these sub regions still provide the bulk of al Qaeda and Taliban supporters in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. However, after the establishment of the famous Deoband Madrassah (Islamic seminary) in 1867 by some “Wahhabi” clerics at Deoband in northern India,

the bulk of “Wahhabi” supporters started favoring peaceful dissemination of Islamic orthodoxy and Hindu-Muslim solidarity against British Imperialism. They also remained ardent Indian Nationalists, followed Mahatma Gandhi and his bid for united and free India, against Mohamed Ali Jinnah-led movement for the establishment of Pakistan as a “Muslim Homeland” for Indian Muslims.

A small but influential section of Deoband clerics under the leadership of Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani (1886-1949) supported Jinnah’s “Two-Nation-Theory” for a separate Muslim homeland of Pakistan. Soon after the Partition of 1947, Usmani moved to Pakistan, which he considered the “New Medina”, likening it with the state Prophet Muhammad had established in Medina after migrating from Mecca in 622. Usmani also believed that the “New Medina” or Pakistan would eventually annex the Hind-majority India as part of his Caliphate. As one historian explains, “Usmani bridged the gap between the aspirations of the Muslim masses and the vision of the westernized Muslim League leadership”; and his “Islamic Pakistan”, where Muslim clerics would play an important role, would be achieved in course of time (Dhulipala, 2010). Usmani led the breakaway faction of the Party of Indian Islamic (‘Wahhabi’) Scholars or the *Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Hind* (JUH), called the *Jamait-i-Ulama-Islam* (JUI) or the Party of Islamic Scholars. Thanks to the “Islam-loving” first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan’s (1947-19510) inviting Islamic clerics into the Constitution-making process as members of the “Objective Resolution” Committee in 1949 (after the death of the secular Governor-General Jinnah in 1948) JUI along with some other Islamic parties like the *Jamaat-i-Islami* (JI) played an important role in “Islamizing” the first Constitution of Pakistan. The Constitution (adopted in 1956) gave a new name to the country: *The Islamic Republic of Pakistan*.

It would be a hackneyed assumption that Islam emerged as the most important political factor in the country only after the demise of Jinnah, often glorified as a champion of secularism. Three days before the emergence of Pakistan, on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1947, Jinnah as its first Governor-General addressed the Constituent Assembly in Karachi. Those who consider Jinnah an ardent secularist love to cite the following section of the Speech: “You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place or 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” (Rais, 2011).

South Asian Muslims in general always considered Shariah an indispensable part of their legal system, at least in family matters, especially marriage, divorce and inheritance. A decade before the creation of Pakistan, the Indian Legislative Council in 1937 adopted Shariah as the Personal Law of Indian Muslims. Jinnah played an important role in the enactment of the law. Most importantly, Jinnah in 1945 gave assurance to the Pir of Manki Sharif (a spiritual leader of Muslims in the NWFP, now Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan) in writing that Shariah would be the “law of the land” and would apply to all Muslims of Pakistan. Jinnah’s unambiguous support for Shariah led to the mass support for the Pakistan Movement in northwestern India. The *ulama* (Muslim clerics) played an important role in the mass mobilization of Muslim support for Jinnah’s Pakistan on the eve of the Great Divide in 1947 (Ahmed, 2012). The *ulama* in East Bengal played similar role in mobilizing Muslim support for Pakistan in the name of Shariah and the revival of the lost glory of Islam, including a Caliphate (Hashmi, 1992). Pro-Pakistan Muslim clerics or *ulama*, especially those of the *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Islam* of Usmani, succeeded in “Islamizing” Jinnah’s rhetoric for a separate homeland for Indian Muslims. In the long run, many conservative *ulama*, including those who opposed the creation of Pakistan, such as leaders of the *Jamaat-i-Islami* party, succeeded in converting Pakistan into an illiberal Islamic State. In view of the six decades of gradual Islamization of the polity, it is least likely to become a secular state as envisioned by Jinnah and his secular associates, in the foreseeable future.

#### **THE JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI FACTOR IN PAKISTAN**

As Pakistan stands for different things to different people in the country, so is Islam. While liberal Muslims in Pakistan consider the creation of their country a historical necessity to preserve the socio-political and economic interests of Muslims in the Muslim-majority provinces in post-British India, thanks to the use of Islamic rhetoric and promises of establishing an Islamic Caliphate by many Muslim leaders – especially, pro-Pakistan clerics – many Pakistani Muslims believe that Pakistan was attained in the name of establishing an Islamic theocracy. Pakistani Christian, Hindu and other minorities no longer feel they have equal opportunities in every sphere of life in their country. Even the Ahmadiyya Muslims in Pakistan, since 1974, have

forfeited their right of identifying themselves as “Muslims” or even calling their places of worship “mosques”. Thus non-Muslim minorities and liberal Muslims in Pakistan have no reason to believe that religion has no role to play in running the country, despite what Pakistan’s founding father promised in 1947. Although politicians and generals played important role in Islamizing the state machinery and the polity of Pakistan, the *Jamaat-i-Islami* or the Party of Islam played the most important role in this regard.

What is Muslim Brotherhood to the Arab World, the *Jamaat-i-Islamic* (JI) is to South Asia. It is difficult to understand political Islam in Pakistan without understanding the ideology and the ideologue Maududi, the founder of the JI. Maulana Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979), an Indian-born madrassah-educated journalist, author and political thinker established the JI in 1941, with the motto of promoting Islamic values and practices in the light of his way of interpreting Islam. He was a maverick. His ideas were quite radical and different from the mainstream Sunniclerics in the Indian Subcontinent. Interestingly, like most leading Muslim clerics in British India, he was opposed to the concept of Pakistan, as he did not believe that Jinnah, a secular Shiite Muslim, with his “Anglo-Mohamedan” associates, would establish an “Islamic State”. Maududi knew it well that Jinnah and his associates strove for a “Muslim” not “Islamic” Pakistan in Muslim-majority territories to be carved out of British India. Although he decided to stay back in India after the Partition of 1947, with no signs of abatement in the Great Punjab Killing (which started immediately before the Partition), as a Muslim he no longer felt safe in the Indian Punjab and migrated to Pakistan. Afterwards, till his death in 1979, he worked for establishing an “Islamic State” in Pakistan. In early 1950s Pakistan went through mass agitations and anti-Ahmadiyya rioting in the Punjab, especially in Lahore. Maududi is said to have incited Pakistani Muslims in support of his demand that the minority Ahmadiyya Muslim community (also known as *Qadianis*) be declared a “non-Muslim” minority because of their alleged disbelief in Prophet Muhammad to be the last prophet of God. The 1953 rioting in the Pakistani Punjab was followed by mass arrests of agent provocateurs, including Maududi. The court found him guilty and condemned him to death for inciting anti-Ahmadiyya rioting, but later got clemency (Nasr, 1994).

We find ideological similarities between the Muslim

Brotherhood (MB) and *Jamaat-i-Islami* (JI), especially the way Maududi and Qutb drew a line between Islam and *jahiliyya* (or the “ignorant” West) is difficult to tell apart. Like Qutb, Maududi also strove for God’s sovereignty, but he came up with a new theory of democracy. It was “theo-democracy” or a theocracy run in a democratic manner, quite an oxymoronic concept indeed. He also wanted to establish a caliphate. In Maududi’s “theo-democratic” caliphate, minority non-Muslims would remain *zimmis* or protected people with inferior rights. Interestingly, he was willing to accept inferior rights or *zimmi* status for minority Muslims in Hindu-majority India. He also believed that Islam was not just another religion about faith and rituals but a movement, a comprehensive code of ethics, government manual and guidance about running life from cradle to grave. He was quite ambivalent about the concept of jihad. On the one hand, he did not consider jihad to be a holy war, and on the other, he considered the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war a jihad per excellence to establish God’s order for Pakistan. Like the MB, JI also believes that Muslims and Islam transcend national boundaries. Considering jihad to be “the best of all prayers”, Maududi believed that his “theo-democratic” transnational caliphate was only attainable through “global jihad”. His “theo-democratic” caliphate would be capitalistic with welfare and social justice. It is noteworthy that as the MB influenced the JI, the latter also influenced the former in many ways. They are, in many ways, different as well. While Maududi admired fascism, Banna had admiration for socialism, and wanted social justice for the poor.

While the MB in Egypt, since its inception, had been either proscribed or marginalized politically till the end of Hosni Mubarak in 2011, the JI outfits in Pakistan and Bangladesh have been politically influential, and on several occasions, were parts of the government. As Muslim clerics in Pakistan had the privilege of registering their opinion in the Constitution making process in the 1950s, the JI played an important role in incorporating “Islamic Principles” in the Constitution of the “Islamic Republic”. After General Zia ul-Haq staged a military coup and formally took over the administration of Pakistan, the country implemented Shariah almost in every sphere of life and administration in the country during his rule, 1977-1988. Zia was believed to be an ardent follower of the *Jamaat-i-Islami*. Since Zia did not believe in democracy, political parties, secularism, and

equal rights for women and minorities, the JI had its heydays under him. Even after Zia’s death, Pakistan did not revert to what had existed there before the Zia regime in the realms of politics, administration, judiciary and education. The JI played an important role in the rapid Islamization and radical Islamism in Pakistan. As many radical Islamist militants – including top al Qaeda leaders in the Arab World – had MB connections in the past; similarly, alienated and more radical JI members organized or joined radical Islamist terror outfits in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Despite flirting with democratic methods and institutions, the JI does not believe in democracy or people’s sovereignty. It strives for establishing “God’s sovereignty” through violent, unconstitutional means. The acting JI chief of Bangladesh, Abbasuddin Khan, told this writer in 1991 that his party did not rule out the “other options” (besides democratic means) to come to power in Bangladesh (Khan, 1991). It may be mentioned that in 1971, the JI in erstwhile East Pakistan collaborated with the Pakistani occupation army during the Liberation War of Bangladesh, to protect the integrity of “Islamic” Pakistan. Many JI leaders and followers are believed to have committed “war crimes” and allegedly their “storm troopers” actively took part in killing several secular and leftist Bengali intellectuals and professionals having soft corner for Bangladesh. Several JI leaders in Bangladesh are in jail, facing “war crime” charges at a tribunal since 2009.

The not-so-hidden fascist ideology of the JI is reflected in the following assertions by Maududi, the founder, who like Sayyid Qutb of the Brotherhood believed in a totalitarian “Islamic State”, which would eventually devour the sovereignty of all neighboring states run by non-Muslims or not in accordance with Shariah. Maududi spelled this out without any ambiguity:

“Muslim groups will not be content with the establishment of an Islamic state in one area alone. Depending on their resources, they should try to expand in all directions. On one hand, they will spread their ideology and on the other they will invite people of all nations to accept their creed, for salvation lies only in it. If their Islamic state has power and resources it will fight and destroy non-Islamic governments and establish Islamic states in their place” (Maududi, 1964).

He also believed that:

“Jews and Christians ...should be forced to pay Jizya (poll tax) in order to put an end to their independence and

supremacy so that they should not remain rulers and sovereigns in the land. These powers should be wrested from them by the followers of the true Faith, who should assume the sovereignty and lead others towards the Right Way. That is why the Islamic state offers them protection, if they agree to live as *Zimmis* by paying *Jizya*, but it cannot allow that they should remain supreme rulers in any place and establish wrong ways and establish them on others. As this state of things inevitably produces chaos and disorder, it is the duty of the true Muslims to exert their utmost to bring an end to their wicked rule and bring them under a righteous order”(Maududi, 1993).

As with fascism, Islamist extremist parties mostly flourish in countries under autocracy and corruption with mass unemployment and poverty. These parties strive for the “Islamist secularization of society” by raising socio-economic rather than Islamic issues as the biggest problems confronting the Muslim World. Interestingly, unlike the MB, Wahhabis and their ilk, Islamist parties in Turkey seem to be more secular than religious. Under secular-educated leadership, they are quite comfortable with traditional Turkish culture, music, food and festivals (Fuller, 2004). Again, Islamist parties do not necessarily flourish under poverty. Some of them grow in affluent societies drawing well-to-do people within their folds. Al Qaeda is a glaring example in this regard. However, it is difficult to draw a line between Islamist parties that are “designed” and those who have emerged by “default” due to bad governance and poverty. While al-Qaeda and its ilk are in the “designed” category, ideologically motivated to oppose democracy, human rights and equal rights for women and minorities; pragmatic Islamists like the MB and JI fall in the latter category with ideological orientation as well. They apparently call for democracy and some rights for women and minorities, but oppose the freedom of expression and secular law and institutions. It is noteworthy that America has been trying to make friends with the MB and its offshoots, only because they take part in elections and condemn terrorism (Mintz and Farah, 2004).

#### **ISLAMIZATION BY DESIGN**

While Islamization of Afghanistan was by default, that of Pakistan was by design. From 1949 onward, in Pakistan, mullahs, liberal-educated, practicing and non-practicing Muslims, including civil and military officials and politicians with few exceptions espoused political Islam.

As discussed earlier, although Jinnah spelled out in August 1947 that religion would play no role in the running of the country, yet this speech did not mean anything to the bulk of the Pakistanis, who not being aware of the speech and its implications were under the spell of the *ulama* (clerics) and “Islam-loving” Western-educated leaders, who had been projecting Pakistan as their Islamic utopia since the early 1940s. Accordingly, to most Pakistani Muslims, Islam and Pakistan have been inseparable entities.

The story of Pakistan’s cultural and political Islamization will remain incomplete without referring to the Muslim separatism of northwest Indian Muslims that began in the 1870s side by side with the Indian “Wahhabi” clerics’ Deoband Madrassah-based restorative movement for Islamic orthodoxy. Leaders and followers of the Muslim separatist movement, also known as pro-British Muslim “Loyalists”, followed the political philosophy of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1818-1898) who promoted “Islamic Modernism” and Muslim-West collaboration, not Islamic dogmatism. He advised Indian Muslims to take advantage of British rule by cooperating with the British, learning English and reviving the lost glory of Islam through European knowledge and civilization. In 1875 he established the Anglo-Oriental Mohamedan College at Aligarh in North India, which became the cradle of “Islamic Modernism” and Muslim separatism, which later led to the creation of Pakistan. The followers of Aligarh Movement were/are also known as “Anglo-Mohamedans” or anglicized liberal Muslims. Then again, despite their rhetoric of “Islamic modernism”, the proponents and followers of the Aligarh Movement who championed Muslim Separatism and eventually the creation of Pakistan, also promoted pro-Pakistan Muslim clerics (Usmani and his likes) and gave credence to their claim that Pakistan would revive the lost glory of Islam by restoring the Caliphate or the Mughal Empire. In hindsight, it appears that the “Anglo-Mohamedans” of the Aligarh Movement underestimated the wit, stamina, foresight and influence of the clerics, who eventually have succeeded in Islamizing the vast majority of Pakistani Muslims. This is evident from the Islamists’ calling the shot in Pakistan. And we know, this happened even under “secular-socialist” Z.A. Bhutto, before the military takeover of Zia, the main architect of political Islam in Pakistan (Shaikh, 2009).

As discussed earlier, a section of Deoband clerics under Shabbir Usmani favored Pakistan and migrated there

from northern India to establish their cherished caliphate through the “Muslim Homeland” of Pakistan. Another section of Deoband clerics, known as the *Lamazhabisor* “People of the *Hadis*”, who do not belong to any Muslim sect and promote Sunni extremism, have also been active throughout the South Asian Subcontinent. Some of the radical, militant and terrorist groups, such as the *Lashkar-e-Taiba* (LeT) and the *Harkatul-Jihad al-Islam* (HUJI) and the *Jamaatul-Mujahedeen* or the Party of Mujahedeen are offshoots of the *Ahl-e-Hadis* branch of Indian “Wahhabism”. Despite Pakistani government’s proscription of the LeT in 2002, this militant group re-emerges with new names and identities and has been active in promoting terrorist attacks, mainly against India. The Mumbai attacks of 2008 are attributed to this group (M. Ahmad, 2006; Sengupta and Perlez, 2008; Hussain, 2009). Besides the widely known LeT and the Taliban of Pakistan (TTP), there are several Sunni/“Wahhabi” or Deobandi Islamist outfits, who are primarily anti-Shiite, anti-Indian and anti-American. Some of them are locally based, while some are well-linked to al Qaeda and various other transnational Islamist terror groups. Among others, they include the *Harakatul-Mujahidin* (HUM); *Jaish-e-Mohammed* (Army of Mohammed); *Harakatul-Ansar* (HUA); *Harakatul-Jihad al-Islami* (HUJI); *Harakatul-Mujahedin* (HUM); *Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan* (SSP); and *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* (LeJ) (“South Asia Terrorism Portal”, 2001; Hussain, 2007).

Irrespective of their stands on British rule, both the Deoband and Aligarh schools of Islam promoted Muslim identity and pride in the lost glory of the Muslims in India and beyond, the former through disloyalty and non-cooperation and the latter through loyalty and cooperation with the British rule. Thus the cultural and political Islamization of Pakistani (Indian and Bangladeshi) Muslims began long before the Partition of India in 1947. There has been a resurgence of neo-Islamism in Pakistan since the separation of East Pakistan in 1971. As names of places have been “Islamized”/Arabized, so are Pakistan’s nuclear missiles. Thus Lyallpur has become Faisalabad (named after King Faisal of Saudi Arabia); Lahore Stadium is known as Qaddafi Stadium; Port Qasim near Karachi bears the name of Muhammad bin Qasim, the first Arab to invade Sind in 711; its long-range ballistic missile Ghauri bears the name of Muhammad bin Ghauri who in 1192 captured Delhi by defeating a Hindu king, signaling the

beginning of 700-year-long Muslim rule in India. Pakistanis are scornful of liberal/secular Muslim rulers, especially Akbar the Great of the Mughal Empire. Pakistani Muslims’ identity crisis is well reflected in their extra-territorial loyalty to the predominantly Muslim-majority countries in the Arab World, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Many of them proudly demonstrate their alien origins (to prove they are not descendants of native Hindus) by using surnames like Hejazi, Yemeni, Gilani, Hashmi, Ispahani, Gardezi, Baghdadi, Ghauri, Madani, Qureshi, Syed, Khurasani and scores of similar names associated with Arab, Turkish, Iranian or Afghan places or aristocratic families of conquerors, saints and Sufis. Many Indian and Bangladeshi Muslims are not that different from their Pakistani counterparts with regard to their extra-territorial identity.

The polity of Pakistan is again sharply polarized between the rich and powerful English-educated elite and the not-so-rich nor powerful “vernacular elite”. Thanks to General Zia ul-Haq’s Islamization and vernacularization programs, the English-educated elite’s monopoly in government jobs, including the armed forces, has eroded; and Islamic ethos, including the prohibition on alcohol, has been pervasive throughout the country. The Islamization process has also influenced the education system. At the very elementary schools students learn Urdu alphabet through Islamic and “jihadist” symbols. Thus *Alif* (first letter) for Allah; *Bey* for *Bandoq* or gun; and *Jim* for jihad is what five/six-year-olds learn at school. Under the rabid state-sponsored Islamization process, governments and regimes seem to be in competition with each other to prove their “love for Islam”.

Since its creation, Pakistan went through eleven years of undemocratic civilian rule, followed by its first military takeover in 1958. Ayub Khan’s military regime maintained a balance between secularism and Islam. In 1964, he used certain *ulama*’s fatwas to bar Fatima Jinnah (Jinnah’s sister) from contesting the Presidential Election against him as a woman. He also used Islamic and “jihadi” rhetoric to legitimize military rule. He also believed that if abandoned by America, political Islam would have found him allies in the Muslim World (Haqqani, 2005). His government modified certain provisions of Shariah, especially by according better rights to women. However, due to the concerted opposition of mullahs and conservative Muslims, Ayub

Khan had to yield to their pressure. As he had to re-insert the prefix “Islamic” before the “Republic of Pakistan”, so was he not in a position to defend his adviser on Shariah, the famous Islamic scholar Fazl-ur-Rahman, who had to resign as the Director of the Central Institute of Islamic Research in the face of bitter opposition from the mullah and leave the country. He even imposed a ban on the *Jamaat-i-Islami* but the Supreme Court overruled the decision (Haqqani, 2005). Interestingly, the four rounds of military rule for more than 33 years from 1958 to 2008 ensured better governance and more infrastructure development. While the first two military rulers did not promote Islamism for legitimacy, Zia ul-Haq (1977-1988) assiduously promoted Islamism and Musharraf (1999-2008) exploited Islamism to neutralize politicians in the northwestern sub region (Haqqani, 2005; Shaikh, 2009). Then again, as Farzana Shaikh has explained, there is nothing so precise about whose Islam or what type of Islam Pakistan espouses. She has rightly pointed out that Pakistani ruling elite’s rhetoric about the so-called Islamic or Muslim identity of the nation reflects their collective identity crisis; and that Pakistan has no positive identity but a negative one to cling to, that is, it is “Not India”. Shaikh has further elaborated that Pakistan was created to protect Muslims interests in Muslim-majority sub-regions of India, not to protect the Islamic ideology. While sections of the *ulama* (Muslim clerics) wanted to implement “real Islam” in Pakistan, the bulk of the Anglicized Muslim leaders of Jinnah’s Muslim League party wanted to exploit Islam to get a separate country, free from competition with the more advanced and dominant Hindu elites in a united and independent India. We may agree with her that so far as Pakistan’s Islamic identity is concerned, there was hypocrisy in this regard even before the creation of the country. She is right that identity crisis is the “mother of all conflicts” in Pakistan (Shaikh, 2009).

Not long after Ayub Khan’s departure in 1969, in 1971 Pakistan “lost” East Pakistan (more than a thousand miles away across India), which became Bangladesh, in the name of secular Bengali Nationalism. The separation of Bangladesh made Pakistani rulers nervous about further disintegration of the country on ethno national lines. Pakistan’s “secular-socialist” Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1928-1979) started the rapid Islamization of the country, so much so that to appease and neutralize Islamist parties, in 1974 his government

declared the tiny Ahmadiyya community (also known as the Qadiyani) as a “non-Muslim” minority. Paradoxically again, Pakistan’s civil and military elites by 1969 preferred separation of East Pakistan to the Bengali ascendancy in the administration (Haqqani, 2005). By then Bengalis (East Pakistanis) constituted around 56 percent of the total population of Pakistan.

The most extensive Islamization of Pakistan started under Pakistan’s third military dictator General Zia ul-Haq, who himself was possibly a member of the Islamist *Jamaat-i-Islami* (JI) party, soon after taking over the country in 1977 adopted a thorough Islamization process, affecting almost every sphere of government and society. Despite the changes of several regimes since the death of Zia in 1988, Pakistan is still under the spell of his Islamization program. Under his direct patronage of the JI and the pre-modern *Tablighi Jamaat* (TJ), a pre-modern and ultra-orthodox transnational Islamic evangelical movement, Pakistan Army and Pakistanis in general started believing in two things: a) besides its external enemies, their country has bigger threat “from within”, from secular forces; b) Pakistan is an “interim measure” to be succeeded by a “more broadly based Islamic political entity”, which will be transnational. Zia and many *Tablighi* military officers believed in Pakistan’s “ideological”, not “territorial” frontier, and considered the country as the citadel of global Islam (Shaikh, 2009). Before Zia, both Ayub Khan and Z.A. Bhutto used Islam, respectively against India and Afghanistan (after it became a republic in 1973). It was Zia who not only promoted political Islamic agendas of the *Jamaat-i-Islami* and pre-modern Islam of the *Tablighi Jamaat* but also patronized the Sunni extremist outfits like the *Lashkar-e-Taiba* (LeT) and some other outfits, including the *Harkatul-Jihad al-Islam* (HUJI).

In the backdrop of the subtle and unsubtle state-sponsorship of Islamization in Pakistan since 1947, militant Sunni Pan-Islamism has become an overwhelming force. So much so that the Government had to quash Maududi’s death sentence and release him from prison after being convicted for inciting anti-Ahmadiyya rioting in the Punjab in 1953; in the 1960s, the Supreme Court overruled Ayub Khan’s imposing a ban on the JI; and under tremendous pressure of the Islamists, Ayub Khan had to re-insert the prefix “Islamic” before the 1962 Constitution of Pakistan; even the “secular-socialist” Prime Minister Z.A. Bhutto had to declare the Ahmadiyya Muslim community a “ non-

Muslim minority”; and last but not least, he had to admit that he had no power to de-Islamize the country and revert to secularism (Haqqani, 2005).

By implementing the Islamist agenda of the JI, Zia declared elections and political parties “un-Islamic”; he established Shariah courts, and made provision for Shariah to supersede the British Common Law, prevalent in South Asia since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For the first time in the history of the country, *madrassah*-educated clerics became judges during the Zia-regime. He introduced the provisions of death penalty for adultery; public lashing for drinking; chopping off of a hand for stealing; pardoning of a murderer by a next of kin of the victim (she/he may demand a blood money for the pardon); two women’s testimony in courts became equivalent to the testimony by one man; and under “blasphemy law” anyone is liable to death penalty for blaspheming Islam or its Prophet. He publicly re-iterated that Pakistan was like Israel, arguing that if one took Zionism out of Israel it would crumble; similarly, Pakistan without would cease to exist without Islam as its state ideology. Last but not least, thanks to Zia’s Islamization, no rape victim can get justice unless she produces four “eye-witnesses” in support of her allegation. Her inability to prove rape also makes her liable to punishment for committing adultery. In this backdrop of almost total Islamization of Pakistan, which took the country backward by several centuries, came the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which may be considered a windfall for “Islam-loving” and hardcore Islamists in Pakistan. Scores of scholarly and popular works have already shed light on Pakistan’s pivotal role in the US-led “jihad” against the Soviet Union; and American, Saudi and other Western and Muslim nations’ role in the decade-long promotion of the mujahedeen in Afghanistan, which later became the mainstay of al Qaeda, Taliban and other Islamist extremist outfits in the world.

After Zia, General Musharraf’s cynical promotion of ultra-orthodox and radical Islamist coalition called the *MuttahidaMajlis e Amal* (MMA) or the United Council of Action in 2002 (two years after his military takeover of Pakistan) played the most regressive role by further emboldening radical Islamists, who are no longer willing to play the second fiddle in Pakistan’s politics. It is noteworthy that the MMA was a coalition of Sunni and Shiite clerics. Interestingly, despite his promotion of “*Enlightened Moderation*” or liberal Islam, Musharraf

conceded most to Islamist obscurantist forces, not out of conviction but sheer political opportunism (Haqqani, 2005). Pan-Islamist political Islam and Sunni extremism are so popular among members of the Pakistani armed forces that Musharraf frequently portrayed Pakistan as “*Islam kaqila*” or the “Fortress of Islam” against the “evil triumvirate” of Hindus, Jews and Christians (Ahmed, 2013). Thanks to Zia’s promotion of extreme Wahhabi Sunni Islamist parties, who are avowedly anti-Shiite, even half-Shiite Benazir Bhutto, as Prime Minister during 1994 and 1996, had to back anti-Shia sectarianism. Both “secular” Benazir Bhutto and Zia’s protégée Nawaz Sharif – as successive Prime Ministers – nurtured pro-Taliban forces in Afghanistan, albeit under the dictates of the ISI, Pakistan’s powerful military intelligence. We may agree with Haqqani that while Zia’s Islamization was not an aberration but the “extension of a consistent state ideology”, and that despite Islamists’ dislike for him, thanks to the pressure of his Islamized generals, General Musharraf had to prefer Afghan Taliban to the Karzai regime in Afghanistan and consider the Kashmiri Islamist militants “freedom fighters” not “terrorists”. Islamists in the region, in return favor Pakistan’s quest for “strategic depth” in Afghanistan and pressure on India (Haqqani, 2005). So, strategic rather than pure ideological commitment to Islamism has been the main factor behind Pakistani military’s and ruling elite’s support for Islamism, and Islamist militancy across the border.

Since two former Prime Ministers, Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) and Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan Muslim League (PML) had been Musharraf’s main political adversaries, he restricted their political activities by implicating them in corruption charges made them incapable of running for office. Musharraf simply ensured the MMA victory in the provincial elections. The MMA formed government in the northwestern provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and captured second highest number of seats in Sind and Baluchistan legislatures. It also captured 58 out of 342 seats in the National Assembly of Pakistan. MMA candidates gave inflammatory speeches through loud speakers (others were not allowed loud speakers) in favor of introducing Shariah at public rallies. MMA leaders put a 15-Point Program, which included the revival of fear of God, affection to Prophet Muhammad and service to people to make Pakistan an Islamic welfare state to ensure justice to people and eradicate



corruption; to ensure bread, clothes, shelter, education, jobs and marriage expenses to all citizens. Last but not least, the MMA urged Pakistanis to fight Western imperialism and support all suppressed people in the world, especially Kashmiris, Palestinians, Afghans, and Chechens (Haqqani, 2005).

Soon after forming the government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, MMA leaders publicly denounced democracy and General Musharraf for his support of the US-led "War on Terror" in Afghanistan. The American invasion of Iraq in 2003 further angered the MMA and other Islamists in Pakistan. Musharraf became their worst enemy as a "quisling" and agent of Imperialism. Within three years of MMA's forming the government in Khyber Pashtunkhwa in 2002, due to internal differences among leaders of the coalition, the MMA was out of power in 2005. Since the MMA was a coalition of Shias and Sunnis, "Wahhabis" and "Barelvis" (followers of Sufis Islam), extremist Ahl-e-Hadis and transnational Islamists belonging to the Jamaat-i-Islami and promoters of Taliban and al Qaeda militants, its disintegration further intensified sectarian conflicts between Shias and Sunnis, "Wahhabis"/Ahl-e-Hadis and Barelvis, Jamaat-i-Islami and "Wahhabis". Since then, bomb attacks on mosques and gunning down of innocent Shia and Sunni worshippers in different parts of Pakistan became the norm (Haqqani, 2005).

Not long after, Islamists attempted on Musharraf's life and started vitriolic campaigns against his government singling it out as pro-American and anti-Islamic and anti-Pakistan. In July 2007 some radical clerics and their students amassed weapons in the famous Red Mosque of Islamabad. Their vigilantism against prostitution, drinking and massage parlors in the neighborhood of the mosque (female students of a madrassah took leading role in attacks on massage parlors and beauty salons) in the heart of Pakistan's capital city was quite embarrassing for the government. Within days Musharraf ordered military action against the Red Mosque radicals, which resulted in scores of deaths. This angered Islamists throughout the country and beyond. Even Ayman al Zawahiri issued an order to his followers to wage further attacks on Pakistan government. Not long after the Red Mosque episode, Pakistani Taliban (TTP) started a reign of terror in parts of Waziristan and Swat. Many Western analysts and even Secretary Hillary Clinton raised alarms about the "impending Taliban takeover" of Islamabad (Lieven, 2011).

## THE AFGHAN "JIHAD" AND ITS AFTERMATH

Pakistan, since independence in 1947, has been living with two hostile to not-so-friendly immediate neighbors, India in the southeast and Afghanistan in the northwest. While Afghanistan opposed Pakistan getting UN membership as it has historical claims over Pakistan's northwestern territories, annexed by the British in the 1890s; India does not believe Pakistan has any legitimate claim over Kashmir, the Muslim-majority Indian state of Kashmir, which India annexed in 1947. Furthermore, India's first Prime Minister Nehru, quite for some time after the Partition of 1947, believed in the re-unification of India and Pakistan, which was extremely discomfoting for the latter. Again, as India's close ties with Afghanistan – until the Taliban takeover of the country in 1996 – had been a security threat to Pakistan, so was the close Soviet-Afghan friendship. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was the last straw. It intensified Pakistan's age-old "Russophobia", which it inherited from the British rulers of India.

The invasion also led to the rapid Islamization of the anti-Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Millions of Afghans who took refuge in Pakistan during the Soviet occupation (1979-1989), came under the influence of Islamist extremism, nurtured by the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. America during the "Afghan Jihad" supported the Pakistani and Afghan "Wahhabis" belonging to the various factions of the *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam* who established a network of *qaumi* (national) madrassahs throughout the country, with private donations from within and outside Pakistan. These madrassahs later became the incubators of the Taliban in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and similar Islamist groups in Bangladesh. It is noteworthy that the day the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, Brzezinski wrote to Carter: "We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War". He was also candid about having no regrets whatsoever for arming Islamist militants who later emerged as the Taliban and terrorists as he thought the collapse of the Soviet Union was more important for the US than the rise of the Taliban (Lieven, 2011).

America not only supported (and promoted to a large extent) all the military dictators and undemocratic regimes in Pakistan since the 1950s, but it also was responsible for the promotion of Islamist parties and militant mujahedeen, even before the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In President Carter's National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski's own words:

“According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahedeen began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan, 24 Dec 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise: Indeed, it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention” (Brzezinski, 1998). As the anti-Soviet “jihad” eventually brought the predominantly Pashtun Islamist Taliban to power in Afghanistan with direct patronage from Islamabad in September 1996, the post-9/11 US invasion of Afghanistan turned Pakistan into another battlefield for America and its allies. Pakistan became the sanctuary and base of operation for various Islamist extremists, including the Taliban and al Qaeda. Taliban is the plural of *talib* or a madrassah student, in the common parlance of northwestern Pakistan and Afghanistan. During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan a few million Afghans fled the country and took refuge in Pakistan. Afghan refugee children – predominantly Pashtun – who went to madrassahs in Pakistan – later formed the core of the Taliban militia. However, as later discovered after the fall of Kabul at the hands of US-led NATO troops in November 2001, many Pakistani, Chechen, Arab, Uzbek, Tajik and Muslims from different parts of the world had been active fighters of the Taliban militia who ran the Kabul-based regime during 1996 and 2001. Mullah Omar (b.1959), said to be the son-in-law of Osama bin Laden, was the *Amirul Momeneen* (Leader of the Faithful), Caliph or head of the Taliban-run state of Afghanistan. Omar started his career as a “mujahid” against the Russian occupation army, was also a madrassah teacher in Pakistan, defeated Afghan warlords at Qandahar in 1994 and finally captured Kabul, with direct Pakistani political and military support. He had links with anti-Indian Kashmiri insurgent groups, the *Lashkar-e-Taiba* (LeT) and the *Harkatul Ansar*, and most importantly Pakistan’s ISI (Rashid, 2000). As Omar is shrouded with mystery so are the circumstances leading to the rise of the Taliban, their regional and international connections and last but not least, their relationship with al Qaeda. Thus it is difficult to come to a definite conclusion if the Taliban is purely a proto-Wahhabi political movement; or an Islamist insurgent group not a terrorist outfit; or a transnational

terrorist group backed by Iran, as General McChrystal imagined (“McChrystal: Evidence is ‘clear’ Iran aids Taliban”, 2010). Then again, we find this unfounded allegation’s rebuttal in Wikileaks documents (Cole, 2010). The contradictory and inaccurate assessments of the Taliban by US top brasses, experts and high civil officials reveal their lack of proficiency and understanding of the nature of the overall situation in the so-called AfPak sub-region. We need to address the Taliban, al Qaeda, LeT and the so-called “jihad” issues, said to have been “brewing” in the “AfPak” sub region and “emanating” from there with/or without Pakistan Government’s knowledge and “connivance”. We just cannot rely on government and media reports, sensational books, and irresponsible statements by garrulous people, say the likes of General McChrystal. Many post-9/11 writings, interviews and “eye-witness accounts” on the Taliban, al Qaeda and various facets of the “global jihad” smack of conspiracy theories and/or gimmicks and propagandas reflecting the proponents’/authors’ prejudice and ignorance. What is most enigmatic about the Taliban is that bands of devout, angry and dedicated Pashtun madrassah students (having little exposure to military hardware such as tanks and artillery) are said to be the mainstay of this militia. We also find out in media about their fighting skill outmaneuvering Afghan army and sometimes NATO forces. Some Pakistani military officers, who had engaged Taliban fighters in northwestern Pakistan, told me Taliban fighters seemed to be as well trained as American Marines. We have reasons to believe that the Taliban are not just a ragtag militia of madrassah students. Mere spontaneity, religious zeal and fanaticism were not good enough to defeat the well-armed Northern Alliance fighters, as the Taliban did in 1996 to capture Kabul, and later most of Afghanistan. Last but not least, despite notes of optimism by NATO commanders, the war against the Taliban is far from over as nobody has yet defeated the Taliban decisively; and there seems to be no military solution to the problem. The ambivalence about what to do with the Taliban (since the overthrow of the Taliban regime in 2001) among American and Afghan policymakers is unbelievable. After failing to contain, let alone defeat them, the US-backed Afghan regime started thinking aloud about a dialogue with the Taliban. Quite embarrassingly for the Karzai Government, it had already talked with an imposter who claimed to be a

Taliban representative in 2010 (“Taliban Leader in Secret Talks Was an Impostor”, 2010). It seems the Taliban has become so formidable and the Afghan government so nervous about its inability to defeat them that in July 2012 President Karzai asked the fugitive Mullah Omar to run for the Afghan presidency (“Afghanistan’s Karzai urges Taliban leader Omar to run for president”, 2012).

We have reasons to agree with Ahmed Rashid that the “end game” in Afghanistan requires support from six neighbors: Iran, Pakistan, China, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, who have since long been interfering in Afghanistan. He has aptly pointed out how Pakistan’s “double game” of helping the Taliban as well as Americans, and its proxy war against India in Afghanistan has been the biggest obstacle to a durable peace in Afghanistan (Rashid, 2012). Most importantly, more than two decades after the end of the “Afghan Jihad” in 1989, one wonders as to how the Taliban still manage to get young recruits who are equally good if not better than NATO and ISAF troops. Tom Friedman’s observation is very pertinent in this regard. He said (to paraphrase):

“Americans’ training Afghans to fight is like someone training Brazilians to play soccer.... Who are training the Taliban? They even don’t have maps and don’t know how to use one.... America needs nation-building at home, spending another trillion dollars in Afghanistan won’t work.... American involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan may be compared with an unemployed couple’s adopting a child” (Zakaria GPS, 2010).

As “Who are training the Taliban” is an important question, so is “Who are the Taliban”. Contrary to the popular assumption, the Taliban are not “*Taliban*”, in the literal sense of the expression, not any longer in the third decade of the post-Soviet Afghanistan. Most of them are very well trained professional soldiers, engaged in an insurgency against the American-sponsored Afghan government. We should not consider all Taliban as mere Islamist terrorists. Then there are Taliban soldiers in the payroll of drug lords, engaged in protecting poppy fields and the processing and trafficking of narcotics across the Afghan border. They may be classified as narcoterrorists, or narcojihadists as they have links with the Taliban ideologues that want to re-establish their “lost caliphate” in and around Afghanistan. Taliban are also fighting Pakistan’s proxy war in Afghanistan against India, and since the sharp deterioration of US-Pakistan relations in

late 2011, against America. Despite Taliban’s close links with al Qaeda, we should not portray the militia merely as an offshoot of the latter. Taliban originated under the aegis of Pakistani/South Asian “Wahhabism”, which is quite different from its Saudi namesake and have had totally different history, philosophy and objectives.

Nevertheless, both Saudi and South Asian Wahhabis have profound influence on Afghan Taliban leaders and fighters. It is a unique hybrid Islamist outfit, a cross between al Qaeda and South Asian “Wahhabi” ideologies. Many former *Jamaat-i-Islami* supporters, believed to have been disillusioned by the JI’s constitutional politics favor the Taliban. There are, however, differences between the Saudi and South Asian Wahhabis. While the Saudi Wahhabis belong to the Hanbali School (sect or *mazhab*) of Sunni Jurisprudence and have been traditionally pro-Western, South Asian “Wahhabis” have always been anti-Western and anti-imperialist, and its adherents either follow the more liberal Hanafimazhab of Sunni Muslims or belong to the group called the *Ahl-e-Hadisor* People of the Hadis. They are very fanatical, puritanical and some of them even espouse the cause of global caliphate through violence.

#### **THE TEHRİK-E-TALIBAN PAKISTAN, LASHKAR-E-TAIBA AND MUMBAI ATTACKS (2008): STATE-SPONSORED OR SPONTANEOUS TERRORISM?**

Since 2007, Pakistan is confronting the *Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan* (TTP or the Taliban Movement of Pakistan) formed by an almost illiterate, a former waiter of a restaurant, Baitullah Mehsud (1974-2009) of the Mehsud tribe in northwestern Pakistan (Qazi, 2009; Qadir, 2009). After the post-9/11 Pakistan army operations in the northwest, many Taliban fled to South Waziristan, home to the largest Tribal Agency (autonomous tribal territory) in Pakistan. Mehsud and Wazir tribesmen were the main followers of the Taliban. In 2002, Mullah Nazir of the Wazir tribe co-founded the TTP. Mullah Jalaluddin Haqqani, chief of the Haqqani Group of Taliban, patronized both the Afghan and the newly formed Pakistani Taliban group. In 2007, he unified various Islamist terror outfits under the TTP umbrella, which was already operational in 2002 in the wake of the Pakistani military operations against al Qaeda and its ilk in the FATA region of Pakistan (Gul, 2010).

Baitullah’s death in a US drone attack in August 2009 jolted the TTP leadership and rival factions have emerged and fighting each other. Yet another US drone

attack killed TTP's deputy leader Wali-ur-Rehman and four top leaders on May 29th 2013 in North Waziristan ("Pakistani Taliban deputy leader reportedly killed in US drone strike", 2013). However, it is too early to write off the outfit. Its transnational links with al-Qaeda can destabilize the region quite for some time. The TTP has been a shadowy umbrella organization manned by Pakistanis and foreigners: Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Chechens, Arabs and Indians. Its transnational connections and avowed goal to establish an Islamist caliphate from Pakistan to Chechnya signal more terrorist attacks and insurgencies beyond Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Jordanian suicide bomber al-Balawi who killed seven CIA officials in Afghanistan in January 2010 a double agent working for both the Americans and al-Qaeda had been in league with the Taliban as well. Both Afghan and Pakistani Taliban have al-Qaeda connections. The TTP is not affiliated with the Afghan Taliban; and unlike the Afghan Taliban, it has no soft corner for Pakistan and have no links with its armed forces. It primarily attacks targets in Pakistan, NATO troops, and aims at enforcing Shariah code in Pakistan (Abbas, 2008 ). It has already claimed it had attacked Malala Yousufzai, a 14-year-old Pakistani girl for advocating female literacy, in October 2012 ("Taliban says it shot Pakistani teen for advocating girls' rights", 2012). It is said to have attempted to bomb the Times Square in May 2010 (Mazetti, 2010).

The TTP is said to have links with various countries and drug-Islamist terror networks. Various reports and circumstantial evidences suggest American, Indian, Iranian, drug-lord, Saudi and Gulf countries, British troops in Helmand, Afghan or even the ISI and Pakistan's Frontier Corps (FC) having links with the TTP. They suggest that: the US uses the TTP to breakup Pakistan; drug-lords promote the outfit as they benefit most from troubles at the Pak-Afghan frontier; Pakistan Army and border guards also promote the TTP to justify bigger military budget. Last but not least, there are circumstantial evidences of Indian hand behind the TTP terror attacks and insurgencies at FATA and elsewhere within Pakistan, especially in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces of Pakistan (Gul, 2010). Again, there are evidences in support of the Pakistani assertion that TTP fighters killed by their troops in Waziristan and Swat in 2008 were uncircumcised, hence assumed to be non-Muslim infiltrators from India (Pakistani Military Officers at APCSS, 2009; BBC World News, 2009). Indian

leaders, media and analysts are unwilling to accept that their country has anything to do with the TTP. "Circumcision no longer acid test to identify Indian spies", so goes the caption of an Indian daily (Khan, 2009). A Pakistani Government report reveals: "The arrested commanders of TTP have confessed that secret departments of India, including RAW, and Afghanistan have been providing them weapons and funds to fight against the Pakistan Army". According to American security analyst Christine Fair, India has been actively supporting extremists and insurgents in Pakistan through Indian missions in Afghanistan and Iran:

Having visited the Indian mission in Zahedan, Iran, I can assure you they are not issuing visas as the main activity! Moreover, India has run operations from its mission in Mazar (through which it supported the Northern Alliance) and is likely doing so from the other consulates it has reopened in Jalalabad and Qandahar along the border. Indian officials have told me privately that they are pumping money into Baluchistan.... Even if by some act of miraculous diplomacy the territorial issues were to be resolved, Pakistan would remain an insecure state.... This suggests that without some means of compelling Pakistan to abandon its reliance upon militancy, it will become ever more interested in using it -- and the militants will likely continue to proliferate beyond Pakistan's control (Fair, 2009).

In view of the prevalent uncertainties in northwestern Pakistan, one may not only blame India and America for their alleged role in promoting militant groups to destabilize Pakistan, one may do some finger pointing at Pakistan too as it has been providing safe havens to various Islamist militant groups, including al Qaeda, Taliban, TTP and LeT. By turning itself into the "biting puppy" of the Army, the TTP has been targeting Pakistani civilians, military and law enforcers since 2007. The *Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi* or the Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Law (TNSM), which wants the introduction of Shariah law in Pakistan, is another Islamist outfits that since 1992 mainly attacking Pakistani armed forces and politicians. It came into being in 1992 and proscribed by General Musharraf in 2002. The TNSM is together with the TTP after the Pakistan Army had attacked the latter's base at the Red Mosque of Islamabad in 2007. In late 2007 the TNSM was virtually running a parallel government in parts of Swat ("Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi", 2001). Pakistan had to compromise with

the TNSM by signing a deal with it that the Government would not introduce any law defying any principle of the Shariah code ("Pakistan agrees Sharia law deal", 2009; Gul, 2010).

What appeared to be the "emerging changes" in US's Pakistan Policy since Pakistan's success in tackling the Islamists in the FATA and Swat and "saving Islamabad" from the "impending Taliban takeover" in May 2009 (Hashmi, 2009) seems to have dissipated in the wake of the growing misunderstanding and mistrust between the US and Pakistan after the unilateral US military action at Abbotabad that killed Bin Laden in May 2011. What US Under-Secretary of State William Burns's had told the Indian government in New Delhi on June 11, 2009 was very significant. He publicly advised India to settle the Kashmir problem "in line with the aspirations of Kashmiris"; and he stated this the day after his meeting with Kashmiri separatist leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq. Quite embarrassing for India was Burns's advice to "close or prune down" its consulates in Afghanistan, which Pakistan insists have been "fomenting trouble" in the NWFP and Balochistan (Hashmi, 2009). General McChrystal in his report to the Defense Secretary in August 2009 also pointed out how "increasing Indian influence in Afghanistan" was likely to "exacerbate regional tensions and encourage Pakistani countermeasures in Afghanistan or India" ("Commander's Initial Assessment", 2009). US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel in a speech at Oklahoma University in 2011 also suggested that India had been using Afghanistan as a "second front" against its old rival Pakistan ("Chuck Hagel stirs up India-US storm over Afghanistan", 2013).

Meanwhile, the situation in Balochistan – the least developed, thinly populated and largest Pakistani province in area – seems to be least promising. Sections of Balochis have been fighting for independence. The Baloch separatist movement has the potentials to turn the region into another Kurdistan; safe havens for transnational insurgents there could destabilize the entire region. Indian non-interference in Balochistan is not the only solution to the problem; but Indian cooperation in this regard would substantially stabilize this strategically important province of Pakistan. Most Balochis, excepting a handful of rebels under Brahmadagh Bugti, despise Indian interference in Balochistan (Qadir, 2009). Nevertheless, this mineral rich and strategically important province became a

Pakistani territory after the Pakistan militarily intervened and annexed it in 1947.

The US on the one hand is asking India to resolve the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the wish of the Kashmiris; stop opening a "second front" against Pakistan in Afghanistan; and on the other, strengthening its civil and military ties with India. Despite US reservations about Pakistan's dubious role in Afghanistan, it cannot abandon its "major non-NATO ally", which a retired Indian general considers to be the "linchpin of its exit strategy" from Afghanistan (Mehta, 2010). While Parthasarathy sounds alarmingly pessimistic about the future of Indo-US relations (Parthasarathy, 2010). We find Ganguly more balanced in this regard. He highlights how America's coming closer to Pakistan is annoying India, which the US can ill afford (Ganguly, 2010). In the backdrop of the growing tension between Pakistan and America over the latter's unauthorized drone attacks to kill militants that mostly kill Pakistani civilians (and 24 Pakistani soldiers in late 2011), and the killing of Bin Laden, purportedly, without the knowledge and permission of the Pakistani authorities, Pakistan and America are most likely to go in opposite directions.

Soon after becoming the Prime Minister for the third time in May 2013, Nawaz Sharif showed interest in talking to the TTP to make Pakistan "peaceful", but the Army Chief General Kayani was not sure if the TTP could be engaged in peace talks. Some Pakistani analysts believe that "despite its murderous campaigns around the country", many Pakistanis considered the TTP movement is an "understandable reaction to the American-led war in Afghanistan". Many members of the Prime Minister's party are said to have similar ("Dealing with Pakistan's extremists", 2013). American drone attack in early June that killed several Pakistanis days after Nawaz Sharif's condemnation of such unauthorized attacks (that violate Pakistan's sovereignty), seems to have further antagonized the bulk of Pakistanis towards the US. We know, about ninety per cent of Pakistanis consider America as their main external enemy. In view of this, it appears that both due to ideological and geo-strategic reasons, successive governments and people in Pakistan favor Islamist militants that they might use against archrival India, and of late against American interests. Pakistani ambivalence towards Islamist militancy is understandable. While Pakistan has soft corner for the *Lashkar-e-Taiba* (LeT) or, The Soldier's of

the Poor – which is primarily anti-Indian and is said to have capabilities to attack American mainland (Tankel, 2013) –it despises the TTP for attacking Pakistani military and civilian targets.

The LeT since its proscription by Pakistan in early 2002, is known as the *Jamaatud Dawa* (Party of the Calling) – is the most active transnational terror outfit in South Asia. The liberation of Kashmir to the Islamists is not about liberating the territory from India’s occupation but to liberate a “Muslim land” from non-Muslim occupation. The LeT is a champion of a Wahhabi Islamic State in South Asia. It is no longer a purely Kashmiri jihadist outfit. Having its headquarters near Lahore, the LeT “still runs its training practically in the open”; and this several thousand-strong organization in the past twenty years is estimated to have trained around 200,000 militants, hundreds from Europe and North America. Despite its ideological commitment to South Asian “Wahhabism”, nourished by the ultra-orthodox *Ahl-e-Hadis* (Adherents of Hadis or traditions of the Prophet, not Muslim jurists) sect, the bulk of LeT gunmen are from rural Punjab and NWFP, overwhelmingly from the Hanafi sect of Sunni Islam, not adherents of the *Ahl-e-Hadis* (Kahn, 2010). It is noteworthy that the main leaders of the militant *Jamaat-ul-Mujahedeen* of Bangladesh (JMB) also belong to the *Ahl-e-Hadis* sect of Sunni Islam. The JMB came to the limelight after exploding hundreds of bombs and resorting to suicide attacks for the first time in Bangladesh in 2005.

Since 9/11, the LeT seems to be the actual face of the elusive and shadowy al-Qaeda. This Pakistan-based terrorist group seems to be the most well-organized and well-connected transnational terror outfit in the world. It has cells in Europe, throughout the Persian Gulf, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Southeast Asia and North America. On the one hand, we see LeT fingerprints in terror attacks in India, on the other hand we see Lashkar men terrorizing Afghanistan, Iraq, Dhaka and Copenhagen. We have reports about Chicago- based Pakistani-American David Headley’s involvement in the 2008 Mumbai attacks and about another LeT plot to kill the officials of the Danish news- paper which published Prophet Muhammad’s cartoon in 2005. The recent arrests of people in Dhaka (February 2010) reveal the latest LeT plot to attack the US and British embassies in Bangladesh (Kahn, 2010). In view of these, the LeT seems to be the most well connected transnational terror outfit in South Asia. It has very good coordination

with another Pakistan-based Islamist group, the Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) or Soldiers of Muhammad. Having tentacles in Europe and North America, the JeM was responsible for the killing of American journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002. It was involved in a plot to bomb a New York synagogue and shoot stinger missile at US military aircraft in the US in 2009. In December 2001, it jointly attacked the Indian Parliament along with LeT gunmen. The LeT and JeM get money from rich donors from Saudi Arabia, Gulf countries, Europe and Pakistan (“US men charged over synagogue plot”, 2009; Al Baker and Hernandez, 2009).

LeT’s latest venture was the Mumbai Massacre in November 2008. Some observers trace both Islamist and narcoterrorist fingerprints in the Mumbai attacks; they believe LeT has been in league with Dawood Ibrahim. A US War College research paper has convincingly explains the LeT- D-Company involvement in the Mumbai massacre (Clarke, 2010). Having commitment to bleed India, mainly for its occupation of “Muslim Kashmir”, the LeT had no problem in killing Indians, including Dawood Ibrahim’s rivals in the name of jihad. One must not lose sight of Ibrahim’s track record. He was instrumental in the indiscriminate bombing and killing of Hindus in Mumbai in 1993, to avenge the demolition of the Babri Mosque and killing of Muslims by Hindu fanatics in Mumbai and elsewhere in India. According to one Indian “investigative” report, the “Let- HUJI-Dawood-al-Qaeda nexus” came into being in 2003, allegedly with ISI support. Pakistani army personnel allegedly bring fugitives from India and other countries to Karachi via Bangladesh and Nepal where they are indoctrinated by videos of Babri Mosque and Gujarat rioting which led to the killing of Muslims by Hindu fanatics in India (Unnithan, 2010).

Interestingly, while eight of the ten gunmen randomly killed people in Mumbai, two of them allegedly “executed” Dawood’s rivals, “Russian and Israeli members of the drug mafia” at Oberoi Hotel and Nariman House, in “a typically gangland execution method” (MacDonald, 2008; Engel, 2008; Maitra, 2009; Madson, 2010). This has been further substantiated by several TV documentaries. One comes across the cell phone conversation between a gunman at Nariman House and his mentor, presumably in Pakistan, recorded by Indian authorities. Their mentor ordered the two gunmen in charge of hostages: “Seat them upright and shoot at the back of their heads before you take care of

yourselves. God bless you!" (Zakaria GPS, 2009). The particular "gangland execution method", as one comes across at Nariman House and Oberoi Hotel, is typical drug mafia way of eliminating rivals, not typical "jihadist" way of killing.

According to Maitra, British, Russian, Indian, Pakistani and Israeli drug-barons have been busy transporting Afghan drug through Mumbai and Dubai and clandestine Sikh separatists and Hindu militant Shiv Sena are also involved in drug trafficking. He considers Dawood Ibrahim the linchpin of the mafia (Maitra, 2008). Drug barons from the region and Europe –the so-called "Dope, Inc." and terror groups, including the London-based *HizbutTahrir* and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, are engaged in narcoterrorism and Islamism from Chechnya to Pakistan, India and beyond. Analysts believe in Osama bin Laden's personal involvement in drug trafficking to finance al-Qaeda's transnational network (Maitra, 2008). Similar groups are active in Bangladesh and Southeast Asia. In short, the LeT story does not begin with attacks on India and Kashmir, nor ends with the Mumbai attacks in November 2008. Since its inception it has engaged both Pakistani and Indian troops. The emergence of the LeT and JeM as transnational terrorist organizations highlights how government-sponsored terrorism to bleed external enemies backfires. Unlike the Bangladeshi transnational Islamist terrorist groups, the Pakistani ones were mostly state-sponsored. One is not sure, if Pakistanis who once promoted Islamist terrorists are now "afraid to do anything about it"; and that "It's a delicate dance with a Frankenstein of their own making" (Kahn, 2010). However, from time to time Pakistan Army find its "strategic assets" very useful in bleeding archrival India. LeT fighters are said to have fought along with Pakistani troops against India during the Kargil War of 1999.

#### **THE PAK-US RELATIONSHIP: AWKWARD, COMPLEX AND UNPREDICTABLE**

Pakistan is an interesting case study of countries that fell out of grace of America. The "most allied country" of America during the 1950s through the 1980s became the "most sanctioned ally" in the wake of its reaching the advanced stage of nuclear program in the early 1990s. Pakistan's exploding the bomb in 1998 could be the last straw but for its strategic importance with regard to America's "war on terror" in Afghanistan following the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan re-emerged as an ally – if not a reliable friend – of America. However, US-Pakistan

relations since the 1990s have been uncomfortably awkward, complicated and unpredictable. A cursory look at the relationship reveals that it was already a bit strained in the wake of the Chinese invasion of India in 1962. Contrary to President Kennedy's desire, Pakistan did not favor India against China. India being the common enemy of China and Pakistan brought the two closer to each other. America's refusal to provide military hardware to Pakistan during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan War further embittered the relationship.

However, two external events in the following decades – the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the 9/11 attacks in 2001 – brought the two old allies together again. These events enhanced Pakistan's geo-political importance, but the marriage of convenience between Pakistan and America was not based on mutual trust, respect or long-term commitment to each other. Meanwhile, due to the exigencies of the Soviet invasion and the Afghan War, America condoned military rule and Islamization in Pakistan. Ironically, military and Islamists have been America's main nemesis in Pakistan. General Musharraf's reluctant support for America's war effort in Afghanistan, on the one hand, gave the semblance of good understanding between America and Pakistan; and on the other, it was one of the main factors behind the growing rift between the two unequal "partners". America is said to have coerced Pakistan into supporting Washington's "war on terror" by allowing America and its allies to use Pakistani port facilities and territory to facilitate the Afghan War. While former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage denied having told Pakistan following the September 11 attacks that it would be bombed "back to the stone age" if it did not cooperate with Washington on the "war on terror". President Musharraf insisted that Armitage had used very harsh language against Pakistan. Irrespective of who is right – Armitage or Musharraf – the fact remains that since 2001 Pakistan at most has been a reluctant partner in America's "war on terror". The average Pakistanis have not yet forgiven Musharraf for his alleged collaboration with Bush. Hence they refer to him with the pejorative "Busharraf".

Although always turbulent and infested with bad governance, corruption and poverty, Pakistan has been in the lime light since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. After the invasion, Pakistan remained a "frontline state" for a decade until the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. Meanwhile, Pakistan emerged as the "most important

country” for America and its allies who used the country to fight their proxy war against the Soviet Union. As we know, for Muslims in the region and everywhere in the world, the war against the communist invaders from the north was also their “jihad” against “Godless Communism” and for the liberation of Afghanistan. We also know that during the resistance against the Soviet Union, in Washington, “jihad” and “mujahedeen” were terms of endearment; in fact, President Carter’s Security Adviser Zibegniew Brzezinski was the one who in early 1980 first formally declared his “jihad” against Soviet Union at Peshawar in northwestern Pakistan. This is also not unknown to us that thanks to the erstwhile allies’ turn coat behavior not long after the “jihad”, both “jihad” and “mujahedeen” became the most repugnant expressions in the West.

While the Taliban takeover and the consequential violations of human rights in Afghanistan were shocking to the West, the Taliban’s harboring of al Qaeda leaders was the proverbial last straw for America. Following 9/11 attacks, for Washington Afghanistan replaced Pakistan as the “most important country” for the wrong reasons. However, soon after the overthrow of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, thanks to Pakistan-sponsored Afghan Taliban, the *Lashkar-e-Taiba* (LeT), and other Islamist terror groups’ activities, across the border in Afghanistan, India, Europe and America, Pakistan re-emerged as the “most important country” for America, for all the wrong reasons. The possibility of an Islamist takeover of Pakistan or the possible acquisition of Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal by extremist elements has further alarmed America. The ISI’s running an “invisible government”, which is more powerful than the one run by civilians, and its promotion of Islamist terror groups to bleed India, Afghanistan and even American and NATO troops within and outside Pakistan have been very important issues for America, India and the weak and not-so-popular Afghan government under American tutelage.

America is very perplexed about its relations with Pakistan. While Jessica Mathews of the Carnegie Endowment has indicated in her foreword to Husain Haqqani’s book (Haqqani, 2005) that Pakistan is the “most vexing and arguably the most important partner” of the US in its “global war on terrorism”; President Obama spelled out that Islamist insurgency in the tribal areas of Pakistan was “not simply an American problem.... It is, indeed, an international security

challenge of the highest order” (“Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan”, 2009) and that any major attacks in Asia, Europe or Africa could be made from al Qaeda strongholds in Pakistan. Interestingly, despite America being the most unpopular country among most Pakistanis their government (Pew Research – Global Attitudes Project, 2013) and military since the creation of Pakistan want to be in the good books of America for security reasons (against its arch rival India) and economic aid. It is noteworthy that despite Pakistani government’s public criticism of the US drone attacks in Pakistan that kill terrorists as well as innocent civilians, it appears that the Pakistan government privately condones US drone attacks in the country (ex-President Pervez Musharraf claimed that he as President had approved the US drone campaign in the country) (CNN News, 2013).

Now, as to why the US and Pakistan are no longer in the best of terms despite their past friendship and understanding, one may impute the lack of mutual warmth and trust to global events and the consequential socio-political and ideological changes that Pakistan has gone through especially since the dismemberment of the country in 1971. India along with the Soviet Union helped the transformation of the eastern wing of Pakistan into Bangladesh. Henceforth, under state-patronage, Islam emerged as the main (if not the only) basis of Pakistan. As General Zia ul-Haq would assert later: “Pakistan is like Israel. Take out the Judaism from Israel and it will fall like a house of cards. Take Islam out of Pakistan and make it a secular state; it would collapse” (Economist, 1981). As I have discussed earlier, Islamization of Pakistan brought the country closer to the Muslim World, and ominously, empowered various types of Islamist groups (including radical extremists) to such an extent that they are virtually calling the shots in Pakistan. They are everywhere – from the education sector to the judiciary, legislature, civil bureaucracy and most importantly, the armed forces. Pakistan’s Islamization process and militarization of the government machinery coincided with the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and the 9/11 attacks, which gave America no option to making overtures to Pakistan to help its war efforts in Afghanistan, first against the Soviet Union for ten years (1979-1989), and then against the Taliban al Qaeda elements in Afghanistan, since 2001.



Meanwhile, due to the growing Islamist threat against American interests at home and abroad – especially since 9/11 – America finds bigger and more powerful India more dependable than Pakistan to serve its global interests. Incidentally, India and Pakistan have not been on good terms since long. Since India's opening up of its economy in 1991 and the disintegration of its Cold War ally, the Soviet Union, America and India have found common meeting grounds. India's recognition of Israel in 1992 and its growing civil and military ties with the Zionist State since then have further strengthened the Indo-US relationship. Conversely, Pakistan has not taken these new developments – growing Indo-US and Indo-Israeli friendship – gracefully. It rather considers them as threats to its geo-political interests. The above backdrop is necessary for understanding some of the issues dogging the US-Pakistan relationship and the likely outcome of the growing rift between the two in the long run. The presence, if not the dominance, of hawks in the policymaking process in both America and Pakistan seems to be the biggest problem in this regard.

US policymakers subscribe to the hawkish view of Stephen Krasner (Krasner, 2012) that America should make "credible threats" to Pakistan to make the latter do what is in the best interest of the former, through "malign neglect or active isolation". Krasner, a former director of policy planning at the US State Department in 2005-07, is a proponent of "tough talk" to Pakistan. The "Krasner School of Thought", not that different from the "Lewis Doctrine", which advocates invasions of Muslim-majority non-compliant states by America to "seed democracy" ("A Historian's Take on Islam Steers U.S. in Terrorism Fight: Bernard Lewis's Blueprint", 2004) does not take into account any likely adverse effects of open belligerence to Pakistan on America, in the long-run. Without mincing words, Krasner argues that the US should keep the options of totally isolating and even invading Pakistan open, as Pakistan has been playing a "double game" with America, sponsoring terrorist attacks in India and Afghanistan by promoting Islamist terror outfits, especially the LeT and the Haqqani Group. He thinks America should consider using its Special Forces against Pakistan. Finally, he believes, Pakistan should be given the choice of becoming another Iran or Indonesia. Krasner believes that Admiral Mike Mullen (then chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff) was right in telling the Senate Armed Services Committee in September 2011 that Washington "must get tough with

Pakistan" as the Haqqani Network of terrorism was a "strategic arm" of the ISI (Krasner, 2012).

Alexander Evans, on the other hand, seems to be more pragmatic than US hawks. He thinks the US-Pakistan relationship cannot be on an even keel unless the proponents of the "Don't Lose Pakistan" theory influence the State Department. According to him, while US's Pakistan Policy was "thoughtful" during 1959 and 1990, Washington's "tough talk" and periodic sanctions against Pakistan are not going to work for America's benefit:

"Now, Washington is frustrated with Pakistan because once again, wooing it has not worked. If history is any guide, Krasner's threats wouldn't, either. As in the 1990s, tough talk could push Pakistan further away, making its already nationalist elite even less cooperative. An angry, isolated Pakistan could undermine the drawdown of U.S. troops in Afghanistan and Washington's efforts to forge a new consensus on regional security. As long as NATO forces depend on Pakistan's supply line, Washington will need to maintain a functioning relationship with Islamabad. Even after the drawdown, it will make sense to stay polite"(Evans, 2012).

Since America forced or enticed Pakistan into supporting the "war on terror" by allowing Pakistani territory to transport US, NATO and ISAF troops and logistics into Afghanistan, various incidents embittered the US-Pak relations. American politicians, analysts and think tanks have been persistently blaming Pakistan for harboring and even promoting Islamist insurgents and terrorists in Afghanistan and India. They conveniently forget Pakistan's decisive role in crushing Taliban and al Qaeda elements in northwestern Pakistan, which cost the country a lot in terms of money and men. They hardly acknowledge that Pakistan handed over many terrorists to America, including the "9/11 Mastermind", Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, and Ramzi Yusuf, one of the main perpetrators of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing (Musharraf, 2005). Americans, on the contrary, demonize Pakistan as a safe haven for terrorists, especially after the discovery of Osama bin Laden's den and his killing by US troops at Abbottabad (a garrison city in northwestern Pakistan) in May 2011.

The way American media, analysts and even politicians undermine Pakistan's capability to protect its nuclear weapons from "falling into the wrong hands" is America's is also very annoying to Pakistan. One may mention how American media, analysts and politicians,

including the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, sounded extremely naïve, alarmist and disrespectful of Pakistan's military capability as they thought a ragtag militia of Pakistani Taliban (without air cover, artillery and tanks) was going to occupy Islamabad in 2009. While Hillary Clinton considered "Pakistan a mortal threat to world", a top counterinsurgency expert, David Kilcullen, believed that "Pakistan could collapse within six months" ("The Taliban's Nuclear Threat", 2009; Roggio, 2009; "Why the Taliban won't take over Pakistan", 2009). America's bitter opposition to Pakistan's nuclear program and years of sanctions against the country in the wake of its successful nuclear detonation in 1998 were irritants to Pakistan. Pakistan's nuclear scientist ("Father of the Pakistani Bomb") Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan's alleged smuggling of nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea in the 1990s rocked US-Pakistan relations since the "discovery" of the plot in 2004. Pakistan still remains a "serious proliferation risk" to America (Smith and Warrick, 2009). Interestingly, to the bulk of Pakistanis, Dr. Khan is still a hero. According to a 2011 Pew poll in Pakistan, seventy-nine percent of respondents had a favorable opinion of the military compared with only twenty percent who liked their Government (Pew Research Global Attitudes Project, 2011).

We know a former NATO commander General Wesley Clark revealed the Pentagon's secret list of seven countries - Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Iran, Somalia and Sudan - America was going to invade in five years following the 9/11 attacks. Although Pakistan did not appear in the Pentagon list, Pakistan is practically under US attacks since 2004. America has been conducting drone attacks in parts of Pakistan (with and without Pakistan's approval) killing hundreds of civilians and some militants since 2004 (Ghosh and Thompson, 2009). These attacks may be considered as American way of establishing its "doctrine of pre-emptive warfare" (Chossudovsky and Cunningham, 2011). The Obama administration justified drone attacks to kill "terrorists" in foreign lands without raising the issue if such attacks violated international law (CNN's Gut Check, 2012). Scholars have cited American euphemisms for aggressive wars and "state terrorism" in this regard: instead of "war" or "state terrorism" Americans use "humanitarian intervention directed against terrorists"; instead of "offence", we hear of "defense" or "protection"; and instead of "mass murder", we hear of

"collateral damage" (Chossudovsky and Cunningham, 2011).

Meanwhile, thanks to American tough talk, occasional sanctions and last but not least, drone attacks that kill innocent Pakistanis for the past few years, America is leading among the most hated countries in Pakistan. Sixty to eighty per cent of residents in northwestern Pakistan have been mentally affected by US drone attacks. Consequently the hatred of America has gone up to phenomenal heights (Chomsky, 2011) A reliable US Government source confirms up to 535 civilian deaths (including children) due to "Predator and Reaper" drone attacks up to November 2011 alone, after Obama had come to office in January 2009 (Shane, 2012). As of November 2011 the drone attacks - often touted as "precision bombing" - killed more than 3,000 innocent Pakistanis and around 170 terrorists. One report reveals that between 2004 and 2011, the drone attacks killed 168 Pakistani children (Auken, 2012; "Drone Attacks are Acts of Terrorism", 2012). It is noteworthy that the number of drone-victims in Pakistan is fast catching up the 9/11casualty figure. Ironically, the Obama Administration classifies the innocent drone attack and aerial bombing victims as victims of friendly fire. These attacks virtually mean that America is already at war with Pakistan - paradoxically an "ally" - and is doing what Israel (and America) is likely to do to Iran in the future. Days after the election of Nawaz Sharif as the Prime Minister for the third time in May 2013, despite his strong dislike for drone attacks, American drone killed several Pakistani citizens and a couple of terrorists in early June.

Besides the drone attacks, American diplomatic highhandedness, including the killing of two Pakistani nationals in Lahore by a US Embassy staff in January 2011; and last but not least, the American unauthorized military raid to kill Osama bin Laden in Pakistani territory in May 2011 turned off many more Pakistanis against America. Raymond Davis, who killed two Pakistani nationals in January 2011 broad day light in the eastern city of Lahore, is a retired Special Forces soldier, apparently worked as a contractor at the US Embassy in Pakistan, was a spy. He worked from "a safe house in the eastern city of Lahore" and "carried out scouting and other reconnaissance missions as a security officer for the Central Intelligence Agency" ("American Held in Pakistan Worked With C.I.A.", 2011). The upshot is mass disapproval of America and questioning the

integrity of their government among the bulk of Pakistanis.

Consequently even generals who Americans had previously considered “moderates” – such as Ashfaq Kayani and Shuja Pasha – distanced themselves from the “moderate” path of cooperating with America’s war efforts in Afghanistan. Shuja Pasha, as the chief of the ISI (2008-2012) till his retirement in March 2012, “pursued the policy of strict monitoring of the US visitors” and “wanted a tight scrutiny of every visitor coming from Washington - a move that made the US administration angry”. The issue of Raymond Davis and “May 2 Abbottabad shame” (killing of Bin Laden) were the last straws bringing CIA and the ISI face to face (Abbasi, 2012). The so-called “Memogate Scandal” reveals that Pakistan’s military was unhappy with America and the “pro-American” Zardari- Gilani government. The scandal refers to the alleged memo sent to the Pentagon by Pakistani Ambassador Husain Haqqani through a Pakistani American businessman in October 2011 seeking US assistance to prevent Pakistan’s military to stage another coup against the Government (“The Pakistan-U.S. memogate scandal”, 2011). One may question the authenticity of the “Memogate Scandal” but not the state of lack of trust and understanding between America and Pakistan; and most importantly, the lack of trust between Pakistan’s civil administration and the military. Pakistan’s Supreme Court and the People’s Party Government also confronted each other in 2012, which led to the resignation of two Prime Ministers, who refused to write to the Swiss Government to investigate alleged money laundering charges against President Zardari. The lack of trust and understanding between the military and civilian authorities and between the judiciary and the executive branches of the government indicates Pakistan not a stable but a fractured country with uncertain future. The Parliamentary Elections of May 2013, which brought Nawaz Sharif to power as the country’s Prime Minister for the third time, might signal a new beginning for Pakistan as a stable democracy.

In view of the growing tension between America and Pakistan over unauthorized drone and missile attacks by America (a US helicopter gunship killed twenty-five Pakistani troops in November 2011); there is no reason to believe that American pressure on Pakistan to re-open the supply route to Afghanistan for US-NATO troops will bring any dividends. Surprisingly, instead of resolving the issue, which led to the closing of the supply

route by Pakistan, America resumed its illegal drone attacks killing more than a dozen Pakistani civilians in late April and early May 2012, alone. Meanwhile, in early April America declared a bounty of US\$10 million on the LeT/JuD founder Hafiz Muhammad Saeed for his alleged role in the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which he denies (“Hafiz Saeed Bounty: U.S. Offers \$10 Million For Pakistani Militant Chief”, 2012). However, following the bitter criticism of America for its blatant interference in Pakistan’s internal affairs by Pakistanis, including former Prime Minister Gilani, the American Ambassador to Pakistan blamed the Pakistani media for “misreporting”, denying that there was any bounty for the JuD Chief (“No bounty on Hafiz Saeed, says US envoy to Pakistan”, 2012).

America’s persistent arrogance and unrelenting provocations to destabilize Pakistan (and indirectly Afghanistan) and mounting instability in Pakistan are likely to play the decisive roles in the ongoing “Hundred-Year-War”. US Congressman Dana Rohrabacher’s calling Pakistan a “failed state” (Imtiaz, 2012), further embitters the already US-Pak relationship. In a letter to Prime Minister Gilani the senator accused his government of misusing the aid money given in order to uplift the alienated people of Baluchistan. He added: “It has become increasingly clear to members of the US Congress that Pakistan is a failed state and no amount of US aid money will ever change that” (No bounty on Hafiz Saeed, says US envoy to Pakistan”, 2012). Despite some US politicians’ wishful thinking, Pakistan is not turning into a “failed state”, let alone Islamist militants taking over the government and Pakistan’s nuclear weapons. Bruce Riedel (a former CIA officer) of the Saban Center at the Brookings Institution even sounds ridiculously sophomoric. He has written a sensational book (seems to be written in absolute haste), which has even a hyper-sensational chapter, “Thinking the Unthinkable: Implications of a Jihadist State in Pakistan”, where he cites an op-ed in the *Washington Post* to argue that the Pakistani Taliban and *the* LeT might forge ties, mobilize landless peasants in the Punjab and Sind and capture Islamabad and Pakistani nuclear bombs. Citing another op-ed he tells us that even Benazir Bhutto believed in 2007 that al Qaeda could be “marching on Islamabad in two to four years” (Riedel, 2011).

Several recent studies in America suggest the likelihood of such a scenario in and around Pakistan in the coming decades (Hussain, 2010; Constable, 2011; Fair, 2011).

Most importantly, is it American ignorance about Pakistan or its malice towards the country that breed sensational stories about Islamists taking over of the country and its nuclear arsenal? We need answer to the question before resolving the issue if Pakistan is going to be a “failed state” or has already become one. At present, the questions if Pakistan survives or remains a “failed state” are irrelevant. What is significant is the rapid alienation of Pakistani civil and military administrations from America, while the bulk of Pakistanis are avidly anti-American. However, despite her lending support to the theory that Islamists might takeover Islamabad and Pakistan’s nuclear weapons, Christine Fair sounds reasonable that a) Pakistan cannot come closer to America unless the latter distances itself from India; and b) Pakistan will continue to rely on Islamist militants unless it is at peace with India (Fair, 2011). Former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta’s unflinching support for continuing drone attacks on “extremists” in Pakistan, and last but not least, his telling India “to play a more robust role in Afghanistan” do not bode well for the already fragile US-Pakistan relationship (“In India, Defense Secretary Panetta to urge leaders to take larger role in Afghanistan”, 2012).

Besides American ambivalence towards Pakistan, the latter’s obduracy and inability to restrain hawks and Islamists are equally responsible for the widening gulf between the two. An angry and isolated Pakistan could be very detrimental to peace and stability, and American interests in South Asia, Middle East and Central Asia in the long run. In the event of further alienation of Pakistan from America, the latter is most likely to cooperate with Iran, initially in the energy sector, by allowing the Iran-Pakistan (IP) pipeline to get Iranian gas into Pakistan. Iran and Pakistan have not abandoned the IP project for mutual benefit; and India has not walked out on the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline project either (Zeb, 2012). One cannot rule out the possibility of military collaboration between the two, including Pakistan’s providing fissile materials to its western neighbor. It is significant that despite American opposition and its “nuclear deal” to India, the latter has not stopped buying Iranian oil, and is not unlikely to go ahead with the IPI project.

In view of the above, it is too early to assume that al Qaeda has withdrawn from the Pak-Afghan sub region or has no plans to return to its most hospitable sanctuary up to the killing of bin Laden. The way Pakistan’s

military, judiciary and politicians have been playing the partisan and divisive games in the most vindictive manner since the departure of Musharraf, one is not sure if the country will overpower Islamist militants and the centrifugal forces by establishing good governance and democracy in the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, American military interventions in Pakistan since 9/11, especially the killing of bin Laden without the knowledge and permission of the Pakistani government, and the controversial drone attacks that regularly kill innocent Pakistani civilians have further destabilized the country, to the detriment of good governance and to the benefit of Islamist militants, anarchists, separatists and other radical elements in the already fractured and unstable Pakistan. It is noteworthy that following the Pakistani Taliban gunman’s shooting and severely injuring a 14-year-old girl Malala Yousufzai in northwestern Pakistan for speaking out against Islamist extremism and favoring education for girls in October 2012, we find many Pakistanis debating as to who are their main enemy, “girl-shooting Taliban or drone-firing US”. Not only Malala’s father’s family friends in his village but also educated Pakistanis – both civilian and military – raise the question as to “who used Malala” and blame America for its double standards with regard to Pakistan. They argue, “every time there is a drone attack, innocent children and women are killed” (Siddiqui, 2012).

To conclude, it seems, explaining Pakistan is as difficult as explaining the proverbial elephant by six blind men. There are objective, as well as prejudicial and subjective, views about Pakistan; while some are optimistic, others are not-so-optimistic and even extremely pessimistic about the long-term future of the country, regional peace and the deteriorating Pak-US relationship. For some Western and Indian analysts and observers, whether Pakistan is emerging as a nuclear-armed failed state run by Islamist extremists in the near future is the most alarming question today. They tend to blame Pakistan and its liaison with Islamist extremists for the messy situation Pakistan is in since the end of the Afghan “Jihad” in 1989. They conveniently forget or hide the fact that countries like India, Afghanistan, and above all, the United States have been mainly responsible for the transformation of the country into a “garrison state” and a safe haven for Islamist extremism. As Afghanistan, with the blessings of the Soviet Union and India, started the first diplomatic blitzkrieg against Pakistan days after its emergence in August 1947 by voting against its

accession to the UN because of Kabul's claim on the Pashtun territories in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa since 2010), so did India annexed the disputed Muslim-majority state of Kashmir soon after. These events legitimized the ascent of the hawks and military (and eventually political Islam) in Pakistan to counterbalance the Indo-Afghan and Soviet threat to its very existence. Last but not least, the way America and its allies coaxed and armed Pakistan in the 1950s through the 1980s, and tolerated and even encouraged military rulers and political Islam, was mainly responsible for the rise and legitimacy of Islamism and military rule in the country.

Pakistan's endemic identity crisis has further aggravated the situation. The bulk of the population is not sure if it is primarily Muslim or Pakistani. Ambassador Husain Haqqani has aptly summarized the effect of the over use of Islam in the country, that before the independence Muslims in the region were in danger, but after the independence "it is Islam which has been in danger in Pakistan" (Haqqani, 2005). Farzana Shaikh's assessment of the identity crisis in Pakistan is very instructional. She thinks the expression "Pakistan" not only meant different things to different Pakistanis – "a land of the pure"; "an Islamic utopia"; "a Muslim Homeland" or even "a promised land" – but the bulk of the West Pakistan-based ruling elite also feared democracy, which would mean the "dark skinned" and "semi-Hindu" Bengali Muslim majority rule (Shaikh, 2009). The upshot was the rapid Islamization and erosion of democratic principles and institutions in the country. The ongoing ethnic and sectarian conflicts, Islamist militancy and terrorism, and separatist movement in Balochistan are corollaries to the self-inflicted identity crisis of Pakistan, further accentuated by external factors both during and after the Cold War. Last but not least, American ambivalence, opportunistic and intrusive behavior towards Pakistan is equally, if not more, responsible for the prevalent disorder in and around Pakistan. Since the war against al Qaeda, the Taliban, the TTP and umpteen numbers of Islamist and separatist groups is not over, and Afghanistan is not likely to be in peace after the NATO withdrawal in 2014; India, Pakistan and their allies will be engaged in long-drawn proxy wars in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the US-Pakistan relationship, which has remained a tumultuous roller-coaster relationship, is likely to deteriorate further in the coming years following 2014. America would run its so-called Af-Pak

policy better by paying heed to what Anatol Lieven has to say about Pakistan:

Pakistan is divided, disorganized, economically backward, corrupt, violent, unjust, often savagely oppressive towards the poor and women, and home to extremely dangerous forms of extremism and terrorism – 'and yet it moves', and is in many ways surprisingly tough and resilient as a state and society.... Pakistani democracy, the Pakistani political process and Pakistani federalism retain a measure of vitality and flexibility and the ability to compromise. None of these things is characteristic of truly failed or failing states like Somalia, Afghanistan or the Congo (Lieven, 2011).

We know the Pakistani military since 9/11 has been playing a double game by promoting Islamists and supporting America's war efforts in Afghanistan, simultaneously. We also know that the military has vested commercial interests and does not want peace with India. Again, in view of the military control of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, the A.Q. Khan episode seems to be eyewash. He could not have played the major role in the alleged nuclear proliferation scandal. As Ahmed Rashid reveals, 70,000 people work in Pakistan's nuclear industry, anyone of them could be susceptible to extremism, and hence Pakistan's bombs are not in "safe custody". Then again, the Obama administration has failed to formulate a cohesive Indo-Pak-Afghan policy as it could not convince Pakistan that strong Indian presence in Afghanistan was benign, not a security threat to Pakistan, which has been instrumental in Pakistan's support for the Taliban in Afghanistan (Haqqani, 2005; Siddiqi, 2007; Shaikh, 2009; Rashid, 2012;). America has so far failed to formulate its Af-Pak policy in accordance with the ground reality in Pakistan, that is, less than five percent of Pakistanis support Islamist militancy; and that America must not contribute to the destruction of the country, even though its army and most Pakistanis will ever give more than very qualified support to the American campaign against the Afghan Taliban (Lieven, 2011).

In sum, we may agree with M.J. Akbar that "Pakistan emerged as the twentieth century's answer to a nineteenth-century defeat (of Indian Muslims to the British and Hindu majority)"; and it evolved as "a kind of successor-state to the Mughal Empire"; we cannot, however, agree with him that America in Pakistan has forged strategic partnership with a "Vichy government", and that America would be doing better in its "war

against terror” by choosing India as its main strategic partner (Akbar, 2012). Neither America will win its elusive “war on terror” by abandoning Pakistan – the “most important country” for all the wrong reasons – nor there a durable peace within and beyond South Asia with perpetual instability in Pakistan; and above all, Pakistan’s perpetual sense of insecurity vis-à-vis America and India. Without Indo-American interventions, very similar to Sri Lanka – which crushed Tamil insurgents and terrorists after going through a twenty-six year-long civil war in 2009 – Pakistan is likely to re-emerge as a vibrant economy and democracy by overpowering the various terrorist insurgent groups.

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