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The Making of Terrorism in Pakistan

Historical and social roots of extremism

Eamon Murphy

ROUTLEDGE

The Making of Terrorism in Pakistan

This book explains the origins and nature of terrorism in Pakistan and examines the social, political and economic factors that have contributed to the rise of political violence there.

Since 9/11, the state of Pakistan has come to be regarded as the epicentre of terrorist activity committed in the name of Islam. The central argument of this volume suggests that terrorism in Pakistan has, in essence, been manufactured to suit the interests of mundane political and class interests and effectively debunks the myth of 'Islamic terrorism'. A logical consequence of this argument is that the most effective way of combating terrorism in Pakistan lies in addressing the underlying political, social and economic problems facing the country.

After exploring the root causes of terrorism in Pakistan, the author goes on to relate the historical narrative of the development of the Pakistani state to the theories and questions raised by Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) scholars. The book will therefore make an important contribution to CTS scholarship as well as presenting an analysis of the many complex factors that have shaped the rise of Pakistani terrorism.

This book will be of great interest to students of Critical Terrorism Studies, Asian history and politics, Security Studies and IR in general.

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Foreword

Richard Jackson

After a decade of war on terror – and notwithstanding recent terrorist attacks by Right-wing nationalists in Northern Ireland, Norway and Germany, and the killing of several leaders of al Qaeda, including Osama bin Laden – terrorism and international security threats continue to be narrated and understood, largely in terms of the unprecedented danger posed by 'Islamic terrorism' (Jackson 2007). The notion that religious extremism – specifically, Islamic extremism – is the primary driver of contemporary terrorism and one of the prime security threats facing Western countries and its allies remains the dominant perspective of Western political leaders, the media and a great many Western academics and 'terrorism experts'. In particular, the mainstream Western media continues to report and explain acts of terrorism, largely in terms of their roots in religious extremism and without reference to political or historical context, employing a limited set of simplifying frames. In particular, the media frames acts of terrorism largely as sudden, unprecedented and inexplicable violence, seemingly unrelated to the specific history or ongoing political developments of the actors involved.

Within this pervasive and entrenched discursive field, Pakistan looms large in the Western imagination as the epitome of current security threats – an impoverished, politically unstable, nuclear-armed state, threatened by fanatical and bloodthirsty Islamic terrorists, who would not hesitate to use weapons of mass destruction, who sit at the centre of a global network of terror and who are likely supported by elements in the military. Narrated and understood in such apocalyptic terms, Pakistan thus represents the quintessential nightmare of the contemporary Western collective imagination. In the words of President Barak Obama:

> So let me be clear: Al Qaeda and its allies – the terrorists who planned and supported the 9/11 attacks – are in Pakistan and Afghanistan. […] They have used this mountainous terrain as a safe haven to hide, to train terrorists, to communicate with followers, to plot attacks … For the American people, this border region has become *the most*

> *dangerous place in the world.* But this is not simply an American problem … The safety of people around the world is at stake.
>
> (Obama, 27 March 2009; emphasis added)

Such a widely accepted and entrenched discourse is not without real world consequences. Continuing military operations by Pakistan and US military forces against militants in the tribal regions, an expanded drone programme, targeting militant activity across large parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan, the secret US raid to kill Osama bin Laden, which was undertaken without informing the Pakistan authorities and ongoing efforts to capture and render militants suspected of links to al Qaeda, among many other measures and security programmes, have all directly emerged out of such well established discourses of the security threat posed by Pakistan. In consequence of such a paradigm and the policies it produces, cycles of violence between militants, Pakistan and US military forces have, in recent times, intensified and spread across ever larger areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In this context, where a widely accepted 'knowledge' of a particular security threat feeds a series of violent counter-measures, which appear to sustain and feed the very insecurity it is designed to counter, Eamon Murphy's book is both important and timely, aiming, as it does, at deep and sustained analysis of Pakistan's history of terrorism – state and non-state – since the country's independence. Taking seriously Critical Terrorism Studies' (CTS) admonition to question and challenge accepted wisdom (Jackson *et al.* 2009), Murphy begins his study by adopting the position that understanding terrorism necessarily requires close attention to history, context and the dynamics of political conflict between antagonistic social actors. More importantly, he starts with the assumption that terrorism is a strategy of contention, employed as part of a wider struggle, not some kind of incomprehensible evil or broader religious ideology.

As a consequence of adopting such an approach, *The Making of Terrorism in Pakistan* offers an incisive, textured and multi-layered analysis of political development and violent struggle in Pakistan, from independence to the present day. Over the course of what is a fascinating and trenchant analysis, a number of important lessons about the nature, causes and responses to contemporary terrorism can be discerned.

First, in direct opposition to the dominant perspective expressed by the media and Western politicians, terrorism in Pakistan is neither an apocalyptic threat, nor the result of religious extremism, nor has it burst onto the scene unpredictably. Rather, it reflects complex political developments and a series of contingent social factors over several decades of political struggle. In particular, it reflects the way elites in Pakistan – military, religious and political – have taken major risks over a long period in their mutual efforts to consolidate power and influence; risks which have directly led to the current state of ongoing violent conflict. In other words, terrorism in Pakistan has become an ingrained part of a dynamic political

relationship, in which manipulation and coercion have often been employed to serve entrenched political and economic interests. In the process, it has become a central element of the political repertoire of contentious politics – the violent reaction of antagonistic social actors struggling for dominance in a situation of extreme political competition.

Second, Murphy's analysis reveals that the role of external actors looms particularly large in the evolution of terrorism in Pakistan. Specifically, one cannot understand terrorism in Pakistan, without reference to the role of India and Kashmir, the history of Afghanistan and US efforts to defeat the Soviet occupation during the 1980s, and the US-led war on terror, which began with the invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001. These interventions are all deeply related and are crucial to understanding the development of violence in Pakistan. As such, recognizing the role of external actors fits a long-standing pattern, noted by some terrorism scholars: violent foreign intervention can provoke militancy and violent conflict, either by destabilizing a fragile political system or by encouraging violent resistance against foreign interference (see Pape 2005; Eland 1998).

Last, *The Making of Terrorism in Pakistan* makes it clear that terrorism does not appear out of nowhere; it is neither sudden, nor is it unexpected. Rather, in the context of a deep understanding of the history and context of political struggle in Pakistan, terrorism appears to be highly predictable, as part of a dynamic, contentious relationship. That is, violent politics, more often than not, leads to violent resistance, sometimes in the form of terrorism. In a sense, this kind of observation helps to close the discursive circle: viewing acts of terrorism as sudden, unwarranted and irrational violence by religious fanatics leads directly to the deployment of violent forms of counter-terrorism and security politics, such as torture and extra-judicial killings, which, in turn, intensifies violent resistance and further acts of terrorism. This appears to be the cycle of violence, currently witnessed in Pakistan and the surrounding region. It is a painful lesson for the discourse and practice of war on terror.

In the end, we are left with an important question: how can cycles of political violence – between social groups competing for power and influence, between militants and state counter-terrorists, and between militants and foreign military forces – be broken? There is no easy solution, but the first requirement clearly involves finding new ways of knowing, speaking about and understanding the emergence and nature of political violence in Pakistan. In my view, *The Making of Terrorism in Pakistan* provides a crucial step in the process of revising our understanding of this important arena of international conflict. By demolishing prevalent myths and exaggerations about terrorism in Pakistan, this volume leaves the reader with a deep, multi-layered, historical understanding of the development of political violence in that country. Such a foundation provides the crucial foundations for thinking about how peace could be constructed in the future. I highly recommend this book.

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Preface

I first considered writing this book after I conducted a seminar in Pakistan on December 2005 with International Relations students from the University of Peshawar, which is located close to the border of Afghanistan. The students come from very conservative religious backgrounds, including some from areas controlled by the Taliban. As a non-Muslim Westerner in such a staunch Islamic area, I felt somewhat apprehensive beforehand, but the seminar was most stimulating and informative. Far from being hostile, as I had feared, the students emphasized their love of Islam with its message of peace and were very keen to have closer contacts with people from the West. I received a similar warm message when I conducted a seminar with International Relations students from Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad. Many students expressed concerns that outsiders have a largely distorted perception of Islam, particularly in Pakistan, as an intolerant, aggressive religion. They were particular concerned that Pakistan seems to be all too often perceived in the West as a nation of terrorists.

The motivation that came from the Peshawar and Islamabad seminars was reinforced by history and politics courses on the Middle East and South Asia that I have taught at Curtin University in Western Australia for many years. Initially, many of the students had a very superficial understanding of Islam and the richness and diversity of its history and teachings. Some had only the vaguest concept of the differences between Sunnis and Shias, while others knew little of the role of the Sufis in the peaceful spread of Islam from the Middle East to South Asia and elsewhere. Many were very interested in my research and encouraged me to write this volume.

The third motivation arose out of a volume on state terrorism that I co-edited with Richard Jackson, then Reader in International Politics at Aberystwyth University and one of the leading scholars in Critical Terrorism Studies theory, and Scott Poynting, then a sociologist from Manchester Metropolitan University. *Contemporary State Terrorism*, which was published in 2010 by Routledge, contains both theory chapters and case studies based on original research from (mainly) PhD students or early career researchers. I co-authored a chapter on state terrorism and the military in Pakistan. I decided to write this more detailed case study of Pakistan drawing upon the theory and the case studies in the volume. There are many excellent

overviews of the origins of terrorism in Pakistan, but none, to my knowledge, are theoretically based.

I would like to thank Richard Jackson for introducing me to Critical Terrorism Studies theory and for encouraging me to write this volume as part of Routledge's Critical Terrorism Studies series. As an old fashioned narrative historian, I was, initially, rather sceptical of the value of theory, but Richard convinced me otherwise. He also kindly agreed to write the Foreword to this book. Scott and his family made me very welcome in their home in Manchester on a number of occasions. Besides discussing terrorism over many pints, Scott also introduced me to the class history of Manchester. His suggestions for improving the introduction have been most useful.

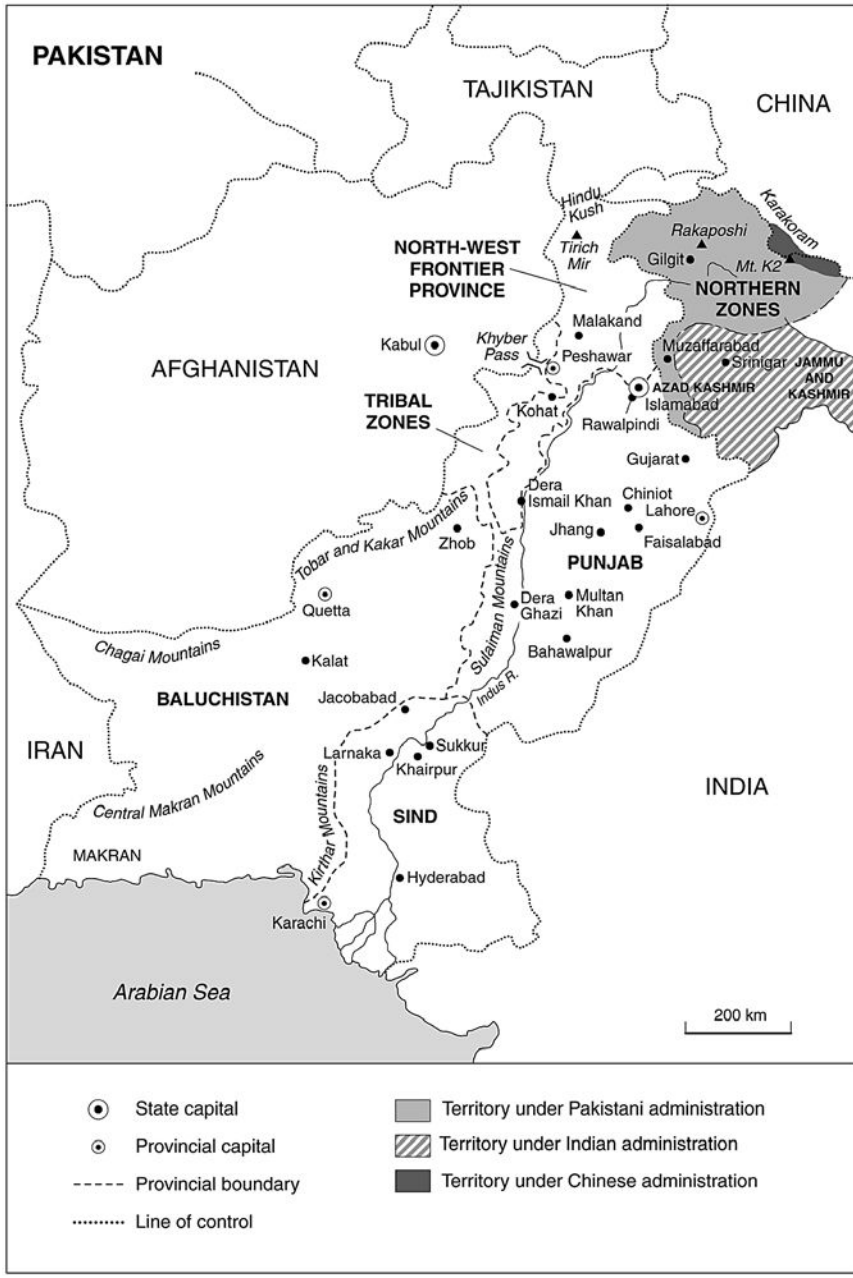
I am also very much indebted to my former students, particularly my PhD students Victoria Mason and Sandra Nasr, for their friendship and support over many years, both before and ever since their graduations. I am very proud to have played some part in their development as fine, critical academics. Sandra has critiqued the text and made some very useful suggestions for which I am most grateful.

My greatest debt is to two of my former PhD students Mavara Inayat and her husband Aazar Tamana. Mavara first interested me in Pakistani history and politics, when, quite by chance, I ended up as her PhD supervisor. Mavara and Aazar made my daughter Alyssa and me most welcome in their home in Islamabad during research trips to Pakistan in December 2005 and April 2008. We spent many hours in their home discussing Pakistani politics with their friends, only interrupted by numerous phone calls from Mavara's students late into the night. Mavara patiently resolved the conundrum that Alyssa and I were vegetarians in an enthusiastic meat-eating society.

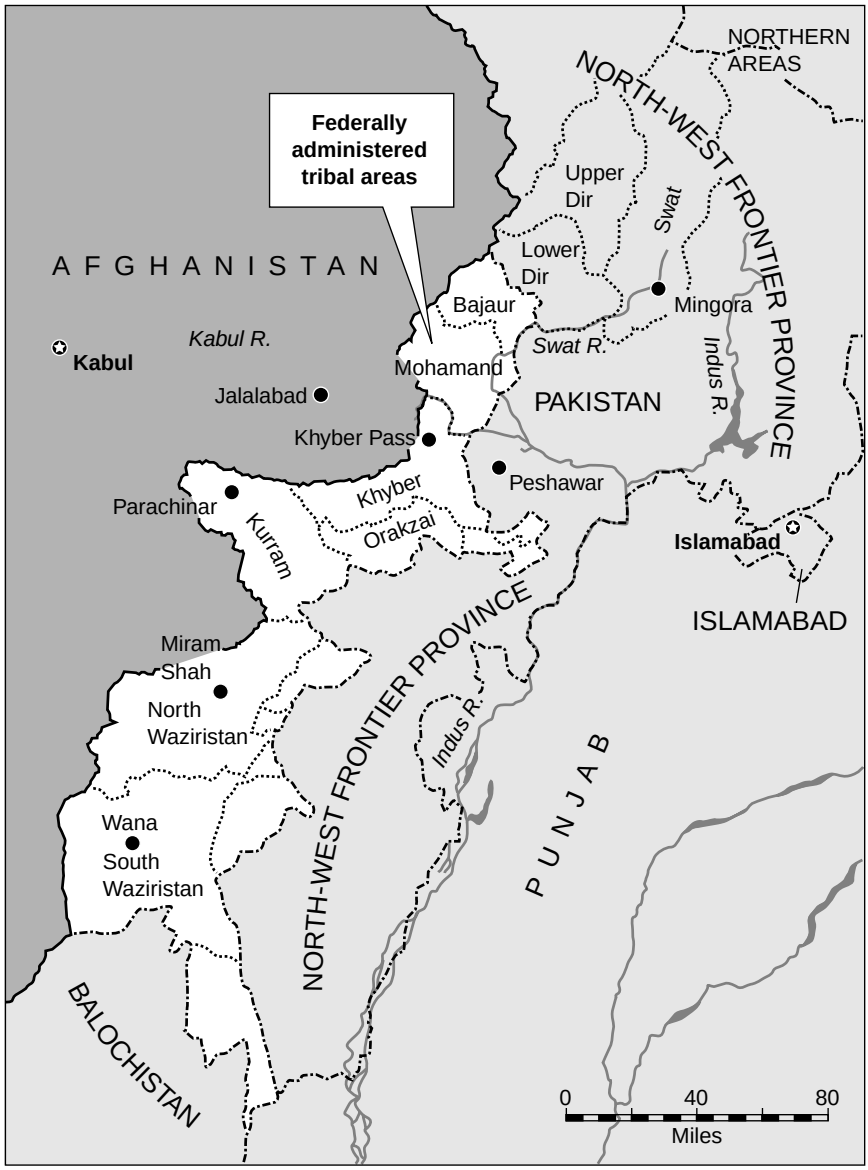
Besides introducing me to politicians, journalists and scholars, Aazar and Mavara organized and accompanied Alyssa and me on research trips around Pakistan. Mavara also arranged for me to interview her students from the classes that she taught at Quaid-i-Azam University and also facilitated my visit to the University of Peshawar, making sure that I came to no harm. Aazar and I also made a short, but very eventful, visit to Uzbekistan. The kindness, courtesy and generosity of so many people from all walks of life whom Alyssa and I met in Pakistan was nothing short of overwhelming. The only time that I felt threatened in Pakistan was when I attempted to take on the crazy traffic and cross the main street – the Mall – in Lahore.

I also thank the professional staff at Routledge for their support, especially Annabelle Harris and Elizabeth Welsh, who have been most enthusiastic about getting the text into print.

I especially thank my wife, Leola, and my daughters, Siobhan, Ilanna, Aislinn and Alyssa, for their patience and support when I was so often preoccupied and obsessed with the research and writing. Alyssa accompanied me as my research assistant on my first trip to Pakistan which made the visit more enjoyable and more rewarding. Finally, I want to thank my granddaughter, Kira, for her patience and understanding when 'Bumpy' all too often monopolized the computer and was too busy to come out and play.



Map 1 Pakistan, 2004 (Source: *A History of Pakistan and its Origins*, Anthem Press, Paperback Edition, 2004)



Map 2 Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)

Introduction

Overview and theory

Since the attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, the state of Pakistan has come to be regarded as the world's epicentre of terrorist activity committed in the name of Islam. The cover of the 22 October 2007 edition of *Newsweek* proclaimed that: 'The Most Dangerous Nation in the World is not Iraq. It's Pakistan.' In his speech on 27 March 2009, President Obama spoke of the extreme danger of the geographically wild and politically unstable frontier between Pakistan and Afghanistan – a haven for Afghan and Pakistani terrorist groups. He warned that this region has become for the American people, 'the most dangerous place in the world'.[1] Also in 2009, the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, warned the US Congress that: 'Pakistan poses a mortal threat to the security and safety of our country and the world.'[2] In similar vein, the Pakistani journalist Imtiaz Gul in his book *The Most Dangerous Place*, argues that the frontier between Pakistan and Afghanistan is the centre of terrorist activity in the world today.[3] There are fears that Pakistan has become a weak failing state, armed with nuclear weapons which could easily fall into the hands of terrorists and, thus, pose a terrifying threat to other countries.[4] Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, for instance, has warned that the greatest potential threat facing humanity is a radical Islamic state with nuclear weapons if the Taliban took over Pakistan.[5]

The assassination on 2 May 2011 of Osama bin Laden – the world's most feared and wanted terrorist – by US Special Forces in the military town of Abbottabad, close to Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, demonstrates that Pakistan has, in fact, become a haven for transnational al Qaeda terrorists.[6] These have been drawn from neighbouring Afghanistan and, more widely, from Arab, South-East Asian and Central Asian Muslim states, as well as from the US, Britain, Australia and various other Western states. The Pakistani historian Ayesha Jalal commented that the failed bombing attack on Times Square by a Pakistani-born American, 'has strengthened international opinion that, while not all Pakistanis are terrorists, most acts of terrorism in the contemporary world carry the Pakistani paw print'.[7] Terrorist groups in Pakistan, allegedly supported by the Pakistan military, particularly the controversial Inter-Services Intelligence Service, have been

regularly accused of encouraging, training and supporting terrorist groups in India-ruled Kashmir and in other parts of India.[8] One of the most chilling and graphic terrorist attacks, which was captured on video, was that on the Indian city of Mumbai on 26 November 2008 during which two Pakistani-trained terrorists indiscriminately mowed down commuters at Mumbai's central railway station.[9]

Despite foreign concern about the export of terrorism from Pakistan, the main victims of terrorism have been, overwhelmingly, the citizens of the state of Pakistan. Threats of violence, kidnappings, assassinations, bomb blasts, attacks on religious processions and places of worship and, the most recent phenomenon, suicide bombings, have killed, maimed and psychologically scarred thousands of innocent men, women and children, as well as creating a climate of fear and instability throughout much of the country. Over 3,000 Pakistanis died as result of terrorist attacks in one year alone: 2009.[10] Numerous non-human targets, such as hospitals, bridges, roads and dispensaries, have been destroyed and damaged in bomb blasts. Schools for girls have been key targets for terrorists opposed to the education of females. One of the most newsworthy attacks was the bombing of one of Islamabad's most expensive hotels – the Marriott – on 20 September 2008, which killed more than 60 people. The goal of that particular terrorist attack was to send a clear message to foreigners to get out of Pakistan. As a tactic, the terrorist action was very successful with the exodus from Pakistan of foreign diplomats, United Nations personnel and aid workers.[11]

Although Pakistani terrorists have targeted non-Muslim Westerners in Pakistan, most of the violence has been committed by extremist members of the majority Sunni sect of Islam against other Muslim sects and other religions in Pakistan. The first beginnings of sectarian violence, which is closely associated with terrorism in Pakistan, began in 1953, soon after the state's foundation, with politically motivated attacks on the tiny Ahmadiyya sect, which has been reviled because its enemies hold that the founder claimed to be a new prophet – a claim largely regarded as blasphemous by most Muslims. More recently, the largest minority sect – the Shia who comprise about 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the population – have been also subject to terrorism attacks perpetrated by Sunni extremists who view the Shia as infidels. These attacks include the assassinations of leading Shia professionals, religious leaders and politicians and regular assaults on Shia processions and places of worship. The violence between the two sects has escalated, as Shias have fought back and retaliated. The tiny community of Pakistani Christians, and their respective churches, have also been among those targeted.

A new, and very dangerous, phase in Pakistani terrorism emerged after 9/11, when Pakistan, led by General Musharraf, was coerced into supporting the US and its allies in the global war on terrorism. The Pakistan state and its agents consequently became the new targets of terrorist threats.

Ironically, the Pakistan military had been among the strongest supporters of some Sunni terrorist groups, but many of them have violently turned on their former patrons. Musharraf and his government were seen as traitors who were betraying Pakistan and Islam because of the forced alliance with the US and its allies, who are regarded by many in Pakistan as enemies of Islam. Pakistan's military and civilian rulers, the bureaucracy, the judiciary and members of the security forces have all been targeted for assassination since 9/11. While the terrorists pose no immediate threat to Pakistan's survival as a state, they have been highly successful in creating a climate of extreme fear, which has had very serious consequences for Pakistan's internal security, peace and politics, as the following example vividly demonstrates.

On 4 January 2011, in the trendy, affluent centre of Islamabad, Pakistan's capital, a policeman, Malik Mumtaz Hussain Qadri, suddenly and without warning, repeatedly fired bullets from his automatic weapon into the body of 66-year-old Salmaan Taseer – the controversial governor of Punjab province and a member of Pakistan's nominally secular ruling Pakistan People's Party. Qadri, who belonged to an elite police unit which was supposed to protect Taseer then calmly surrendered to his colleagues. The reason that Qadri gave under interrogation for the assassination of Taseer was that his death was 'punishment for a blasphemer'.[12] Taseer had been labelled a blasphemer by Qadri because he had courageously defended a poor Christian woman, Aasia Bibi (Noreen), who had been languishing in prison after being condemned to death under Pakistan's notoriously harsh blasphemy laws for allegedly insulting the prophet Muhammad during a row with her Muslim neighbours. The blasphemy laws have been criticized by human rights activists in Pakistan and abroad because they have been repeatedly misused in order to settle personal vendettas and to persecute Pakistan's tiny population of Christians, most of whom come from very impoverished backgrounds.

The reaction to the murder of Taseer was a damning indictment of the degree of religious intolerance that has swept over Pakistan in recent years. Mass street rallies, organized by religious leaders of various Muslim groups, fulsomely praised Qadri and demanded his release. These demands were backed up by many journalists, particularly in the vernacular press. In addition to this, many clerics were also publicly jubilant at the killing. Not only was there little support within Taseer's own party, which stated that it had no intention of amending the controversial blasphemy laws, but the Interior Minister, Rehman Malik, publicly stated that he would, himself, unhesitatingly shoot any individual found guilty of blasphemy. Even clerics from the mainstream Barelvi sect, which is generally regarded as being moderate, forbad their followers to offer condolences to Taseer's family.[13] One of the most bizarre images in the Pakistan media was that of dark-suited lawyers congratulating Qadri and showering him with rose petals as a mark of respect, as he was being led from court.[14] His

lawyer claimed that over 800 lawyers had volunteered to defend Qadri without charging a fee and that all sections of the population of Pakistan, including professionals, workers and the police, believed that his killing was justified.[15]

In contrast, very few Pakistani public figures, including the brave civil rights activists, opponents of religious bigotry and secular critics of violence perpetrated in the name of religion, publicly condemned the killing or supported the repeal of the blasphemy laws. The reason for their silence was very simple: they were too frightened. They were terrorized into silence. The only Muslim scholar to have publicly and vehemently criticized the blasphemy laws as having no justification whatsoever under Islamic law – Javed Ahmad Ghamidi – had to flee with his family to Malaysia after multiple threats to his life, including the timely foiling of a bomb plot outside his home in Lahore.[16] Despite the concerns and opposition of many politicians, academics and human rights activists to the blasphemy laws, there seems little hope that the laws will be amended or abolished in the near future. The reaction to the Taseer murder, and to the violence regularly perpetrated against other opponents of the blasphemy laws, is just one example among many of how Pakistan has become a state in which terrorism – intimidation through threats and violence – is playing a major contributing role in contemporary politics and civil society. As one human rights campaigner, Asma Jahangir, stated:

> Nobody is safe anymore. If you are threatened by the government you can take them on legally. But with nonstate actors, when even members of Parliament are themselves not safe, who do you appeal to? Where do you look for protection?[17]

One of Pakistan's most respected journalists, Ahmad Rashid, has been unjustly sentenced to death by the Pakistan Taliban.[18]

The main question that this book considers is why Pakistan has come to be regarded as the most dangerous centre of terrorism in the world. The second, more specific, question is in regards to the role that Islam as a religion has played in the rise of terrorism in Pakistan. It might be that there is something about the teachings of Islam, particularly Islam as practised in Pakistan, which has somehow motivated individuals and groups to engage in terrorist activities. In other words, is Islam the primary cause of terrorism? Alternatively, the explanation may be found in an understanding of the historical, political, economic and social factors that have, together, shaped Pakistan as a nation ever since independence.

While acknowledging that Pakistan's history since its foundation in 1947 has been very difficult and fraught, the journalist Imitiaz Gul states that: 'I do not believe that extremism and terrorism are part of our DNA.'[19] Most scholars, and others who have a basic understanding of Pakistani history, would agree with Gul's statement. The early history

of Pakistan gave no indication whatsoever that terrorism committed in the name of Islam was to emerge as such a formidable and enduring force. The secular politicians who founded Pakistan, particularly its most esteemed leader – Muhammad Ali Jinnah – would have been astonished and horrified to view the extent to which bigotry, hatred and violence, perpetrated in the name of religion, has come to play such a prominent role in Pakistani public life. Religious ideology played little role in the foundation of Pakistan, which was intended to be a secular state in order to adequately protect the economic, political and religious rights of Muslims living in South Asia. The dream of Pakistan's founders was that in the new state of Pakistan, Muslims of all sects and other religious communities would live together peacefully with full rights as citizens. For a time, it seemed that this dream would be realized, and Pakistan remained a comparatively liberal state, until around the 1970s. Sadly, the dream of Jinnah has faded away since then.

Critical Terrorism Studies

The questions asked, and the methodological approach taken, in this volume have been strongly influenced by the insights provided by the new subfield of terrorism studies – Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS), which emerged around 2006. The CTS approach draws upon a wide variety of theoretical approaches and research traditions.[20] In a nutshell, as its name implies, CTS came into being because its proponents were concerned about the quality and reliability of the research conducted into terrorism in recent times. Until the 1970s, there had been little scholarly activity on terrorism, but, since then, there has been an explosion of much-needed research and the emergence of a virtual terrorism industry, with the publication of numerous books, journal articles, conference papers and PhD theses devoted to it. Academics have received research grants and obtained lucrative government consultancies on the basis of their reputations as researchers and experts on the study of terrorism. According to the critics, much of this research – which CTS theorists label 'orthodox terrorism research' – and the conclusions derived from it, has, too often, been dangerously flawed. The ill-judged invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq by the US and its allies have been justified on the highly contentious grounds that terrorism posed a major threat to the West. CTS scholars argue that orthodox terrorism research is far too often biased towards supporting the foreign and domestic policies of Western governments and has been used to justify the curtailment of civil liberties leading to great abuses of human rights in the name of the war against terror.[21] CTS research, therefore, has an ethical, as well as an intellectual, dimension. CTS scholars are particularly scathing of the *instant expert*, who is not engaged in research and who lacks even a sound grasp of the existing literature.[22]

CTS scholars also identify the problem of definitions: there is no agreement as to the definition of the loaded term 'terrorism'.[23] Terrorism has become a highly pejorative, loosely used term, which carries the misguided assumption that all terrorists are evil savages.[24] Interestingly, the mujahideen, or holy warriors, were called gallant 'freedom fighters' in the Western media when they were fighting the Soviet forces in Afghanistan, but turned into 'terrorists' when they started resisting the attacks of the US and its allies. The following definition of terrorism will be used throughout this volume.

Terrorism can be defined as the use of violence, or the threat of violence, by state or non-state actors against specifically targeted civilians, groups or states.[25] It is a rational strategy of violence designed to achieve a political outcome. The strategy, of course, can always be abandoned if there are more successful nonviolent strategies available. Terrorist actions are designed to communicate. A terrorist assassination would have a much wider goal than the elimination of a political opponent. The assassination of Salmaan Taseer, for example, can be regarded as a terrorist act because it was intended to send a clear message to all Pakistani citizens, particularly influential politicians, namely, that it is highly dangerous to oppose the blasphemy laws. As a tactic, it was, of course, extremely successful in its purpose. Consequently, the main victims of the violence are not the immediate victims, but a much wider audience who are often so frightened and intimidated by the act of violence that they enable the terrorists to achieve specific political or economic goals. Most terrorist attacks are on civilians, but they can also include attacks on the military and police. For example, suicide bombers in Pakistan have targeted army cadets in order to warn off possible military recruits.[26]

The misuse of labelling is particularly prevalent in the writings on terrorism and religion in Pakistan and other states. One scholar has commented that the use and application of terms such as 'fundamentalism' as synonymous with 'extremism' has created 'a dangerous intellectual mess'.[27] The prominent Islamic scholar Ahmad Moussalli agrees, pointing out that terms like Islamism, fundamentalism, Salafism, Wahhabism, *jihadism* and political Islam are frequently and mistakenly lumped together as a way of describing terrorists, when, in fact, there are very important ideological, tactical and long-term political goals and differences between each of them.[28] For instance, both Salafism and Wahhabism advocate a return to a purified Islam based on the original teachings of Muhammad and his close companions, but both have a different history and beliefs. Using either term as a synonym for terrorism, as often appears in the current literature on terrorism, is highly misleading and confusing, as while the followers of both traditions may be doctrinally intolerant, most do not resort to violence.

CTS research starts with the assumption that terrorism as a specific field of study has been socially constructed.[29] In other words, it has been

developed by human beings, and, thus, it is liable to hold a range of different interpretations which are naturally subject to human fallibility and biases. While one may be personally appalled at the violence associated with terrorism, it is also crucially important that we do not allow our feelings to cloud our scholarly judgment. The whole subject of terrorism is highly emotive, but, as CTS scholars argue, our task is 'to try and understand it, to ask difficult questions and to challenge dominant and embedded forms of knowledge about the subject'.[30]

One of the major values of the CTS approach is that it challenges many of the common assumptions that are held concerning the acts of political violence which are labelled as terrorist. It emphasizes, quite correctly, as this study of terrorism will repeatedly demonstrate, that: 'terrorism is a complex and multicausal phenomenon'.[31] Treating terrorists simply and naively as either mentally unbalanced extremists, misguided followers of religious leaders or as cowardly evil criminals does nothing to help us understand the underlying causes that motivate individuals and groups to resort to terrorist actions. This does not, in any way, condone terrorist actions, particularly those that maim or kill innocent men, women and children, but it is important that we critically examine the underlying causes of terrorism in order to better understand the phenomenon if we are to develop successful strategies to combat it.

One of the major criticisms made by CTS theorists is that the term terrorism only refers to violence perpetrated by individuals or groups but ignores acts of terror committed by states, particularly those perpetuated by Western states and their allies.[32] This oversight is very surprising given that terrorist actions committed by states, including those from the West and their allies, have had far more devastating consequences than those committed by non-state groups.[33] As will be discussed later, the Pakistan state has periodically resorted to state terrorism of which the most horrific example was the attempt to crush a separatist movement in East Pakistan in 1971 by engaging in mass murders, rape, torture, ethnic cleansing and other state-initiated terrorist activities.[34] The issue of Pakistani state terrorism, therefore, while not a central theme of this volume, is, nevertheless, important.

Yet another valid criticism made by CTS scholars concerns the assertion that non-state terrorism poses an extreme danger to the world at large. Richard Jackson, for example, takes issue with the government officials, academics, media and policy-makers who see contemporary terrorism threatening 'to destroy Western democracy, social stability, the entire Western way of life, and the international system itself'.[35] The picture of Pakistan as the single most dangerous country in the world, as depicted on the cover of *Newsweek*, is just one – in this case, very visual – example of what many commentators, especially those in Pakistan, regard as nonsense and hysteria. The view that al Qaeda or the Taliban in Pakistan can somehow either seize control of the state or capture nuclear materials

from the highly armed and well-trained Pakistan military is regarded by many informed analysts as ludicrous. Despite its many weaknesses and problems, Pakistan is not at imminent risk of collapse and overthrow by extremists. In the words of Anatol Lieven, who worked as a journalist in Pakistan for many years, while Pakistan is 'home to extremely dangerous forms of extremism and terrorism', it is also '[i]n many ways tough and resilient as a state and a society'.[36]

One of the major criticisms of many of the orthodox approaches to the study of terrorism is that they are ahistorical in that they tend to focus on the moment when the particular terrorist group physically engages in violence, but ignore the pressing historical preconditions for the later emergence of violence. One of the major assumptions is that, somehow, terrorism became a major concern only after 9/11.[37] The orthodox approach to terrorism studies often focuses on when the terrorist groups begin to commit violence and, by doing so, ignores the multifaceted historical roots, which have, in essence, created the terrorist movement in question.[38] An ahistorical approach, thus, often ignores the crucial social and historical context in which terrorism develops.[39] By ignoring the historical roots of terrorism, the research ignores, or fails to fully acknowledge, the history that has provided the necessary preconditions for the emergence of terrorism in modern times.[40] Consequently, this volume attaches great importance to the historical development of Pakistan.

One of Pakistan's most eminent historians, Ayesha Jalal – Professor of History at Tufts University – agrees that academically sound history is extremely important in understanding contemporary developments. She laments the fact that the Pakistani state has distorted Pakistani history for political and ideological reasons. Jalal cites the telling example of Pakistani school textbooks which assert that the movement for Pakistan was religiously inspired when, in fact, it was almost entirely a secular movement.[41] She calls for an honest rewriting of Pakistani history as a prelude to solving the country's problems, including that of regional identity and needs, which are submerged in the promotion of an Islamic identity and national unity. She argues that: '[g]rasping the reasons for the Pakistani tendency to paranoia and violence requires assessing its troubling present in the light of a troubled past'.[42] This volume attempts to provide such an assessment.

The greatest single value of CTS theory for this volume is its critical examination of how many scholars attempt to analyse and explain the role of religion in motivating terrorists. Since 9/11, there has been growing interest in the religious origins of terrorism, particularly in relation to Islam. Jereon Gunning and Richard Jackson, however, warn against accepting the artificial distinction that is often made between so-called 'religious' and 'secular' terrorism.[43] They warn that the term 'religious terrorism', as used in the media and by many academics, is highly misleading because it implies that, somehow, those who resort to violence in the name of religion are all fanatical, extremely violent and eager to destroy the existing

order in order to create a utopian society based on religious teachings, or to pave the way for the *mahdi* – the promised redeemer of Islam, who will return to earth before the Day of Judgment. Such an assumption implies that religious terrorists are all, by nature, highly irrational, only motivated by religious beliefs and have little interest in practical politics. Consequently, they are far more dangerous than 'secular' terrorists because they will not compromise nor will they negotiate.[44] Such a view sees only one solution to solving the problem of terrorism: eliminate the terrorists. It is this blinkered assumption that was, in part, responsible for the US refusing to negotiate with the Taliban to hand over Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan, instead resorting to the disastrous invasion. While these assumptions will be challenged throughout the volume, it is useful, at this stage, to mention suicide bombings, which are often used as an example of the power of 'religious terrorism', particularly the justification for their use as found in the teachings of Islam which, according to some interpretations of the Koran, promises a life of sexual bliss in the next life for those who sacrifice their lives for Allah. In fact, the use of concealed explosives belts and vests – the favoured technique of most suicide bombers – was first used by the secular Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (Tamil Tigers), who are of Hindu background and hail from Sri Lanka. In contrast, despite the long and troubled history of violence to achieve political goals in the highly Islamicized societies of Afghanistan and Pakistan, suicide bombings have only begun to occur very recently and were, in fact, introduced by outsiders belonging to al Qaeda. Gunning and Jackson do agree that we should not ignore religion altogether in discussions of terrorism, but that we should be very careful to fully explore the complex links between religion and political violence, and we should not assume that there is necessarily a direct causal link between religious belief and behaviour.[45]

One of the dangers, then, is to assume that because particular terrorists live in a Muslim state, they must be primarily motivated by the teachings of Islam. By using the term 'Islamic terrorism', one makes the assumption that terrorism has somehow emerged from out of Islamic teachings and practices and that there is a strong and sequential connection between a believer in Islam and one's political behaviour.[46] The term implies that the terrorists are primarily driven by religious ideology rather than more worldly social, political, economic or personal motives. In some cases, individual terrorists may well be persuaded by Muslim teachers, or through reading the Koran or various other religious texts, to resort to violence in the name of Allah, but this is seldom the case in Pakistan. Terrorists may justify their behaviour by reference to Islam, but this may well be merely the justification for their actions, not the cause.

Therefore, CTS scholars strongly argue against the view that 'contemporary terrorism is primarily rooted in and caused by religious extremism and fanaticism', but, rather, need to consider 'political, cultural, and

sociological factors'.[47] Many groups labelled as religious terrorists have clearly defined materialistic and practical goals. In Pakistan, for example, many leaders of terrorist organizations have had careers in politics by winning seats in Parliament. Categorizing a group as Islamic terrorists encourages the researcher to focus solely on the group's religious aspects and to neglect its secular or political dynamics.[48] The category of Islamic terrorism is, therefore, inaccurate, highly misleading and analytically unhelpful.[49]

Another problem is that the term 'Islamic terrorism' assumes a unified, global community of Muslims, with similar beliefs, practices and behaviour. Such an assumption ignores the fact that over one billion people profess the faith of Islam from more than 50 different countries with very divergent cultures.[50] Within Islam itself, there are numerous different sects with their own doctrines, traditions and practices, as is very evident in the state of Pakistan. As in most parts of the Muslim world, the major difference among Muslims in Pakistan is between the numerically dominant Sunnis and the 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the population who belong to Shia sects. But the divisions go far deeper. One of the major divisions within Sunni Islam as practised in Pakistan is between those who belong to the Deobandi tradition – a narrower, more literal form of Islam, which is closer to the Islam that is practiced in the Middle East – and those who belong to the Barelvi School, whose beliefs and practices are more deeply rooted in Pakistani, non-Islamic traditions. The unique history and nature of Islam in Pakistan, including its many divisions, is the subject of the first chapter of this volume.

A final problem to address in regards to the term 'Islamic terrorism' is the Western implicit, or explicit, view that Islam, as a religion is inherently violent, in contrast to Christianity, which has disregarded the concept of the holy war. Critics of Islam argue that secularism, democracy and human rights are foreign to Islam because there is no separation between religion and politics, and, thus, all Muslims cannot help being influenced by their religion in how they view the world and how they act politically.[51] In particular, as has already been mentioned, it is incorrectly claimed that forms of Islam which emphasize a narrow doctrinal and legalistic approach – labelled Wahhabist or Salafist – are, by their very nature, prone to violence.[52] Underpinning this claim is the view that is all too often portrayed in the Western media, namely, that Muslims, in general, are fanatical religious extremists.

The intellectual roots for the prejudiced view of Islam lie, in part, in Orientalist scholarship – popular during the 1970s and 1980s and revived again after 9/11 – which claims that there is a fundamental, irreconcilable difference between the backward-looking Islamic orient (East) and the modern Christian occident (West). In its more crude manifestation, Orientalism depicts the highly negative image of Islam as irrational, backward, untrustworthy, anti-Western and violent.[53] Perhaps the most widely read

and influential Orientalist text was the 1993 article by Samuel Huntington, with its provocative title 'The Clash of Civilizations?'. Huntington argues that future conflict will be along religious and cultural lines between different civilizations, particularly between Islam and the West. He writes that: 'the conflict between Western and Islamic civilization has been going on for 1,300 years'.[54] This claim ignores, for example, the great contribution that Islamic scholarship in Spain made to the revival of learning in Western Europe after the Dark Ages. It also ignores the fact that violence has played little part in the spread of Islam, particularly in Asia. Huntington also claims that Western concepts, such as the separation of church and state, democracy, individual rights and free markets, are alien to non-Western civilizations.[55] Put bluntly, such assertions imply that the problem with terrorism lies squarely with Islam itself because it has prevented Islamic societies from modernizing. Such anti-Islamic discourse has prevented the West from responding positively to the challenge posed by terrorism perpetuated in the name of Islam.[56]

The general aim of the volume, then, is to relate the historical narrative of the development of the Pakistani state to the theories and questions raised by CTS scholars. In line with CTS theory, this volume's approach makes use of a wide range of sources, primarily historical, but also drawing upon other disciplines, including, but not restricted to, politics, anthropology, sociology, international relations and religious studies. From more recent times, it draws upon incisive newspaper articles and books written by investigative journalists, particularly those working in very dangerous locations. Many have been killed, making contemporary Pakistan one of the most dangerous places in the world for journalists.

This book, therefore, focuses on the general question regarding what forces have come together to create terrorism in Pakistan and, more specifically, what role has Islam played in this. The narrative and the analysis assume that the reader does not necessarily have a strong background in either CTS theory or in the rich, complex history, politics, religion and culture of Pakistan or, indeed, in Islam itself. It is hoped that the volume will make a contribution to CTS scholarship, as well as presenting a sound, concise account and analysis of the many complex factors that have shaped the rise of Pakistani terrorism. It is hoped, also, that the volume may encourage other scholars to undertake more in-depth historical research into terrorism in Pakistan. Only by developing a series of in-depth case studies can scholars rigorously test the assumptions that the CTS theorists hold concerning the complex phenomenon of terrorism – in particular, terrorist acts committed in the name of religion.

Overview of the book

Chapter 1 – Islam in Pakistan: an overview – provides an essential background chapter to the unique historical development and contemporary

nature of Islam in Pakistan. Understanding the great diversity of Pakistani Islam is crucial for understanding its relationship with contemporary politics and terrorism.

Chapter 2 – The colonial legacy and the making of Pakistan: class, regionalism and factional politics – explores the movement for an independent Muslim state, whose origins can be traced back to the late nineteenth century. An understanding of the history of the Pakistan independence movement helps explain the later problem that faced the new state.

Chapter 3 – Birth pains: the decline of democracy, sectarian violence and the intractable problem of Kashmir, 1947–1958 – looks at the many problems facing the new independent state of Pakistan. The most serious issue was the beginnings of a long struggle with India over control of the troubled Kashmir region. The other issue of importance in this chapter relates to the origins of sectarian violence in Pakistan.

Chapter 4 – Jinnah's dream fades: dictatorship, state terrorism and the corrosion of secularism, 1958–1977 – analyses the growing power, autonomy and frustration of the military which led to the first of Pakistan's military dictatorships. The major political crisis during this period was the successful breakaway independence movement in East Pakistan, despite the savage use of state terrorism by the military. During this period, both military and civilian politicians began to appeal to Islam in order to gain political support and legitimacy for their respective governments.

Chapter 5 – The turning point: Zia ul-Haq and the Islamization of Pakistan, 1977–1988 – discusses the military dictatorship of one of the most important and controversial Pakistani politicians – the military dictator, General Zia ul-Haq. One of the more disastrous consequences of his policies was the rapid growth of sectarian violence between the Sunni majority and the Shia minority which was to lead to a terrorist war between the two sects which is currently still ongoing.

Chapter 6 – The Afghanistan *jihad* and the making of terrorism, 1979–1989 – explains why the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was the single most important catalyst in the growth of terrorism in Pakistan, Afghanistan and, eventually, globally. This chapter is crucially important for understanding the roles that the US, Saudi Arabia and Iran played in Afghanistan and Pakistan and how it has contributed to the rise of sectarian violence and terrorism.

Chapter 7 – Reaping the whirlwind: politics, terrorism in Kashmir and sectarian violence, 1988–2000 – discusses the failures of democratically elected parties. This chapter also examines the economic, social and political factors which underpin the violence between Sunnis and Shias. In addition to this, it also analyses the growth of terrorism in India-controlled Kashmir.

Chapter 8 – The fallout from the US invasion of Afghanistan: politics, terrorism and sectarian violence in Pakistan since 9/11 – discusses the dire

consequences for Pakistan's security, when, following the events of 9 September 2001, the US coerced Pakistan into supporting the highly unpopular invasion of Afghanistan and, later, Iraq.

The conclusion of this volume – Critical Terrorism Studies, Islam and the making of terrorism in Pakistan – relates the historical discussion and analysis in the light of current CTS theory. It summarizes the many factors that have contributed to the growth of terrorism, particularly evaluating the role of Islam.

1 Islam in Pakistan

An overview

A major feature of Islam in Pakistan, at least until recent times, has been its tolerance and acceptance of rival sects and religions, particularly in the rural areas of the state. The other major feature of Islam in Pakistan is its extraordinary sectarian and doctrinal diversity. Linguistic, cultural and other differences among the diverse ethnic groups that make up the Muslim communities in Pakistan have added to this diversity. Beyond holding a few common beliefs and rituals – particularly the belief in the one all-powerful God Allah, the prophetic mission of Muhammad and the obligation to pray regularly – there is little that creates the sense of a united, cohesive Muslim community. In fact, it is more appropriate to talk about the many 'Islams' present in contemporary Pakistan, rather than a monolithic religion. The major sectarian division in Pakistan, as in other parts of the global Islamic world, is between the majority Sunnis and Shias, but there are also important, and sometimes bitter, doctrinal subdivisions among both Sunnis and Shias.

Because Islam has had such a major impact, it is necessary to understand the major differences within Islam in Pakistan and the ways in which these manifold divisions have influenced Pakistani history and politics. This chapter, therefore, provides a very broad introductory overview of the nature of Islam in Pakistani society and politics. Later chapters will analyse, in more detail, how these divisions have been played out and have impacted, along with a combination of other factors, upon the emergence of terrorism and sectarian violence.

In addition to this, in order to effectively explain these differences in Islam it is also extremely important to understand the historical forces that have shaped the spread of Islam throughout the Indian subcontinent in the period before the establishment of Pakistan in 1947. Particularly important is an understanding of the developments within Islam during the period of British rule in the Indian subcontinent and how these influenced the movement for a separate Muslim state. The historical context also enables one to more fully appreciate the diversity of Islam in contemporary Pakistan.

The coming of Islam to the Indian subcontinent

Just prior to the partition of the Indian subcontinent into Hindu-dominated India and Muslim-dominated Pakistan in 1947, the Muslims of British India were distributed very unevenly throughout the subcontinent. At approximately 20 per cent of the total population of British India, the vast majority of Muslims lived in northern India, mainly in the north-west, which subsequently became West Pakistan, and in the north-east, which became East Pakistan.[1] In the north-west, they comprised over 75 per cent of the population, co-existing generally very peacefully with sizeable communities of Hindus and Sikhs. Further East, down into the highly fertile Indo-Gangetic plain – the heartland of the great Muslim empires – concentrations of Muslims ranged from around 50 per cent to 10 per cent, with the largest concentrations centred around the old Muslim capitals, such as Delhi, Lucknow and the area extending west from Delhi to Lahore. Further East, in Bengal, concentrations of Muslims ranged from approximately 20 per cent to 75 per cent of the population, with the highest proportion in East Bengal, which became East Pakistan in 1947 and is now the independent state of Bangladesh. Central and southern India had a much lower concentration of Muslims, except for small pockets around the old Muslim capital of Hyderabad and other former capitals of Muslim regional kingdoms and along the south-west, or Malabar Coast, near the main port city of Calicut.[2] Some Muslims in India and Pakistan are descendants from the numerous groups and single individuals who entered India as invaders, merchants and migrants by land and by sea, particularly Persians, Turks, Afghans and Arabs. The vast majority, however, are converts from Hinduism and tribal peoples, particularly, but not exclusively, from among the lower castes and the untouchables.

Understanding the historical background to the spread of Islam is important in order to understand the regional diversity and complexity of Islam in contemporary Pakistan. Islam came to the Indian subcontinent in numerous waves, beginning in the late seventh century. In brief, we can identify four major regional trends of Islamization in the Indian subcontinent: the north-west, the north-east, the Gangetic plain, and the centre and south. The process by which inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent adopted Islam was a complex one, which took place over a long period time, involving trade, conquest, migration, intermarriage and the proselytizing activities of Sufi mystics, as well as a myriad of more worldly considerations, such as the quest for political power and self-interest. The term conversion, then, is somewhat misleading when used in the context of the Islamization of India, as it implies an immediate adoption of Islamic beliefs, habits and practices and the total and instantaneous rejection of the pre-Islamic past, whereas, in reality, it was a very long, complex process, which, even today, is often still incomplete in many ways.

However, with this qualification in mind, the term conversion will be used for lack of a suitable alternative synonym.

While Islam has had a major impact on the Indian subcontinent, there is no single explanation for the process of Islamization.[3] Contrary to what is sometimes assumed, the spread of Islam within the Indian subcontinent, as in other parts of the world, was not by force. Samuel Huntington's 'Clash of civilizations' theory, which emphasizes the continuing violent conflict between an aggressive Islam and other religions, has little direct relevance to the Indian subcontinent. The belief that Islam was spread by force and was a direct consequence of military conquests and the introduction of Muslim rule – what is often termed the 'Religion of the Sword' thesis – holds little weight in the Indian context. It is correct that some of the early Muslim invaders and rulers were intolerant bigots who massacred Hindus and Buddhists and destroyed numerous temples and monasteries particularly across northern India. Some Muslim leaders may well have offered Hindus and followers of other religions captured on the battlefield the choice to convert to Islam or be put to death, but this seems to have been rare. At any rate, it would have been physically impossible for a small minority of Muslim rulers to impose Islam on the vastly numerically superior numbers of other religions.

Most Muslim rulers, either by necessity or choice, were, in fact, pragmatists, often irreligious and were concerned with seeking allies, irrespective of their religion, and effectively taxing their subjects, whether Hindu, Muslim or adherents of other religions. Some rulers, such as the Mughal Emperor Auranzeb, attempted to rule according to Sharia – Muslim law. Others were not only tolerant of other religions, but were actively interested in drawing inspiration from them. The great Mughal Emperor Akbar was extremely tolerant and, indeed, discussed and debated with religious teachers of all faiths, including the Catholic Jesuits.[4] The majority of rulers, however, cared little about religion and were largely concerned with maintaining and increasing their power, much to the chagrin of the conservative *ulema* (scholars) who were keen to introduce Sharia law and gain conversions. Muslim rulers readily employed Hindus in their administration and sought out Hindu allies when waging war with other Muslim rulers in India. The 'Conversion by the Sword' thesis also fails to explain why Muslim numbers were concentrated in Eastern Bengal and the Western Punjab where Muslim political control was relatively weak. In contrast, in the heartland of Muslim power – namely, the upper Gangetic plain – Muslims comprised a minority of the population.[5]

Explaining Islamization in the Indian subcontinent, therefore, needs further, detailed analysis which rests on three major assumptions. First, the process of Islamization took place over a very long period of time. Second, the process largely depended upon the specific social, religious and economic circumstances that prevailed in different regions. Third, the ritual process, in many cases, was very simple – just the public

recitation of the *shahada*, in which the individual stated that he, or she, believed in the oneness of Allah and the acceptance of Muhammad as the Prophet.[6] The new convert, or group of converts, to Islam, in most cases, still maintained the same status, authority and power as before in respect to other groups, as well as holding on to, and merging, many of their former religious beliefs and practices.

Islam has long had a foothold in the Indian subcontinent.[7] The first settlements of Muslims took place as a consequence of trade. Soon after the death of Muhammad in AD 632, Islam reached the west coast of India, including Sindh and Gujarat in the north-west and the Malabar Coast in south-west India. Islam was brought to these regions by Muslim–Arab seafarers and merchants who had long traded in the spices from southern India and South-East Asia. Encouraged and protected by local Hindu rulers because they brought huge wealth to the regions, traders settled down in India, often marrying local Hindu women. In addition to this, low caste and untouchable agricultural labourers were often attracted to Islam, probably, in part, because of the very oppressive nature of the caste system. Embracing Islam was undoubtedly a symbolic way for low caste groups to reject their lowly status, even if little else materially changed in their lives.[8] Therefore, the Muslims of the Malabar Coast – or Moplahs, as they are known – comprised the descendants of both the Arab traders and the economically deprived low status Hindus and untouchables, who were usually landless labourers.[9] From the very beginning, then, Islam in the Indian subcontinent was characterized by its diversity.

The first converts to Islam resulting from military conquest took place in Sindh. As in other parts of the Indian subcontinent, the spread of Islam in Sindh took place over a very long period of time and occurred gradually in differing waves. The catalyst for Islamic conversions was the invasion of Sindh by Arab armies in the eighth century after local pirates attacked and plundered vessels carrying women and children returning to Arabia. When the ruler of Sindh refused to punish the pirates or return the prisoners or their possessions, an Arab army sent by the Ummayad caliph in Baghdad under General Muhammad ibn Qasim consequently invaded and defeated the local ruler and established Muslim rule in lower Sindh. Later, ibn Qasim was, eventually, to become master of all of Sindh and part of southern Punjab.[10] The Arabs set up their own military colonies and garrison towns, which eventually became centres of Islam, but they had little interest in converting the indigenous Hindus and Buddhists to Islam. The successes of the Arabs were due, in part, to their superior military tactics, but they were also welcomed by many Buddhist and Hindus who were hostile to the former local ruler. These included some chiefs, administrators and other nobleman who were courted by the new rulers with lavish gifts and promises of positions of authority.[11] It is hardly surprising, then, that some individuals and groups accepted Islam – the religion of their new rulers – out of conviction or self-interest.

The tolerant attitude of the Arabs towards non-Muslims also helped them win support. Hindus and other religious groups were treated as honorary Zimmis, monotheists or 'the People of the Book',[12] and thus were entitled, under Muslim law, to the protection of life, property and freedom of religion and thus were allowed to practise their religion without any interference from agents of the state.[13] Later on, in the ninth century, Arab missionaries of the Shia Ismaili sect won over converts in Sindh. In lower Sindh, an Ismaili dynasty ruled until the fourteenth century, during which even more of the local inhabitants converted to Islam. Over time, most of the inhabitants of Sindh became Sunnis, and, consequently, Sindh became a strong centre of Islam in the subcontinent.[14] Muslim rule also attracted legal experts from other parts of the Islamic world, many of whom claimed to be Sayyids or descendants of Muhammad.[15] Nevertheless, Islam in Sindh, as in other parts of India, was strongly influenced by pre-Islamic Hindu, Buddhist and other practices and traditions, which were gradually and naturally absorbed into local Muslim practices. For instance, for a long period of time, the prophet Muhammad was identified with the great Hindu god Brahma, while Muhammad's son-in-law, Ali, was seen as the incarnation of the great Hindu god Vishnu.[16]

In northern Punjab and across the Gangetic Valley the impact of Islam was more violent and traumatic. The region was more strongly exposed to regular invasions from Afghanistan, Persia and Central Asia. The conversion of Turks from Central Asia and Afghanistan to Islam resulted in the spread of Islam into north-west India, from around the year AD 1008, with the establishment of a military headquarters at Lahore by the Turk Mahmud of Ghazni in the 1020s. Thus, the parts of the Punjab that were most exposed to Muslim influence from the outside world became, over time, more strongly Islamic. In the central and eastern Punjab, Muslims were more concentrated in the urban centres, while, in the rural regions, Muslims controlled land along with both Hindus and Sikhs.[17]

Many of the early Muslim raiders and invaders were iconoclastic destroyers of Hindu temples and Buddhist monasteries, although greed, more than religious fervour, appears to have been the major motivator. Mahmud of Ghazni has a particularly bad reputation among Hindu nationalists today for his fierce bigotry and wanton destruction of Hindu temples and Buddhist monasteries. Following the Islamic conquest of the region, many administrators, scholars, artisans, traders, craftsman and camp followers from other parts of the Islamic world settled in the Punjab and in urban Muslim centres across the plains of northern India.[18] The western part of the Punjab closest to Afghanistan became more devoutly Muslim, but the East was inhabited by Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landlords and peasants until the migration and ethnic cleansing, which occurred soon after the Partition of the subcontinent in 1947.

Further east, in the heartland of India, between the Ganges and Jumna rivers, the United Provinces and Bihar, Muslims comprised around 15 per

cent of the population. The distribution of Muslim communities varied, with higher concentrations in the old Muslim centres of power, such as Delhi, Agra, Allahabad and Lucknow, now ruled by foreign Afghan, Turkish and Persian dynasties, such as the Sultans of Delhi and, later, the Mughals – the high point of Muslim civilization in the Indian subcontinent. A minority claimed descent from those who had migrated into India. In contrast to other parts of India, Muslims in the United Provinces and Bihar contained elite, powerful feudal landlords, administrators and, later on, professionals, such as lawyers, journalists and teachers. But even in the area of the Indo-Gangetic plain, where there was a relatively high proportion of Muslims of foreign descent and former rulers, most of the population were originally converts of agriculturalists, skilled artisans, petty merchants and landless labourers.[19] With the collapse of Muslim political power in the nineteenth century, and with increased competition from Hindus, particularly when the British replaced Persian with English as the language of administration, many Muslims in the United Provinces and Bihar felt threatened by the threats to their economic and political dominance. In fact, the movement for a separate Pakistan state to protect Muslim interests came, largely, from the elite in the United Provinces whose class and social interests were most threatened.[20]

The numbers of Muslims in central and south India were very low – around 5 per cent – although, again, the numbers in different regions varied widely. Many were descendants of traders who lived in urban centres. Others were converted from the low castes and untouchables. Larger numbers were concentrated around the capitals of regional kingdoms, such as Hyderabad and Mysore, where, again, the Muslim centres of power attracted many Muslims from other parts of India and even overseas.

The complex process of Islamization in the regions that came to constitute the state of Pakistan can be better understood by an analysis of the role of Sufism in the Islamization of Sindh, the Punjab and East Bengal. Sarah Ansari has critically examined the role of Sufis in Sindh.[21] She argues that the spread of Islam was largely the work of individual Sufi saints and, later, under Sufi orders, mystical fraternities, mainly the Chishti, Suhrawardy and Qadri, which were founded by saintly individuals, whose tombs became shrines. Because many devotees believed that the Sufi saints had a special relationship with Allah, they were given great respect from both rich and poor alike, as were their natural descendants, called *pirs*, who, by virtue of their descent from the original saints, were deemed to have inherited their religious charisma. This charisma was not dependent upon the behaviour or morality of the *pirs*, whose main concerns were their land, status and feuds with other members of the ruling elite and the powerful. By virtue of this ancestral links to the saints, the *pirs* were believed to have a special, divine-inspired sanctity and purity and, as a consequence of this, were able to intercede with Allah on behalf of their

devotees.[22] Many Muslim devotees, as well as Christians, Hindus and followers of other religions, visited Sufi shrines in order to ask the saint to intercede with Allah to grant favours, such as the conception and birth of a son, success in examinations or being cured of an illness. Sindh consequently saw the erection of numerous Sufi shrines, which, in time, became significant centres of Muslim culture and Islamic spiritual and political authority.[23] Many castes converted to Islam *en masse*, attributing their conversion to the influence of a particular saint.[24] It seems that conversions came about, in many instances, not so much by the preaching of holy men but by the strong political links forged between Sufis and resident local chiefs, who in return for being blessed by the holy men had their right to rule duly sanctified. When the leader of a caste or tribal group converted, most of his followers quickly followed suit. The conversions, however, took place over a long period of time, and the differences between Islamic practices and those of pre-Islamic religious traditions remained markedly blurred.

The success of the Sufi saints in winning over converts, however, was not due only to their piety and their proselytizing activities. There were also more practical political and economic considerations to be taken into account. The Sufis and their followers were given extravagant gifts, including land from their grateful followers, and many of their shrines became extremely wealthy as a direct result. Because of their influence over the majority of the population, *pirs* were co-opted by local rulers, who also rewarded them with grants of land and honours. Just as they were intermediaries between God and human beings, so, also, they became intermediaries between rulers and subjects.[25] They were often accepted as independent arbiters of disputes between conflicting tribes, acting, in effect, as local rulers seated on the throne, wearing a turban symbol of royalty.[26] When the British conquered Sindh in 1843, they, also, relied heavily on *pirs*, as well as other significant and powerful landlord groups, in order to consolidate their power. The power of the Sufi saints and their descendants, derived from the combination of land holdings, large numbers of followers and religious charisma, has continued into contemporary politics.

David Gilmartin provides a similar account of the Islamic conversion of much of the Western Punjab.[27] As in Sindh, the majority of conversions were attributed to the work of Sufi mystics, particularly after the establishment of permanent Muslim rule under the Sultans of Delhi in 1210, which attracted many Muslim scholars, holy men and Sufi orders to India from Central Asia and Persia. The setting up of Sufi shrines and Khanqahs (residencies for spiritual retreat), built by members of Sufi brotherhoods, became outposts for the diffusion of Islamic ideas. Sufi Dargahs (tombs of Sufi saints) became extremely important centres of folk religion, attracting both Hindu and Muslim pilgrims. The ceremonies marking the anniversary of the death of the original Sufi saint (*urs*) were highly important for

reinforcing the symbolic importance of the ties between the saint and Allah and between the *pir* and the saint.[28] The ties between the *pir* and his disciple – the *murid* – were extremely important, both economically and politically. The disciple accepted the religious leadership of the *pir* – spiritual guide, holy man and wielder of political power. In return, the disciple paid for the favours conferred with generous gifts of cash, honours, appointments and land.[29] The Mughal Dynasty, which preceded British rule, also relied on *pirs* to maintain control over the countryside.[30] The Sufi centres, therefore, were not only important in the spread of Islam but also for creating political unity and stability.[31] There was little sectarian violence during the colonial period, largely because of the steady Sufi influence.

An analysis of the conversion of the inhabitants of Bengal in north-east India to Islam also raises many important questions about the process of Islamization generally and for India and Bengal, in particular. Islam came late to Bengal, but by the middle of the twentieth century the eastern parts, in particular, were predominantly Islamic.

In his brilliant revisionist analysis, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760*, Richard Eaton demonstrates the complexity of the Islamization process and challenges many of the common assumptions made about the conversion of large groups to Islam, particularly in Bengal.[32] In particular, he challenges two popular assumptions concerning the process of Islamization: the view that Islam was spread either by the sword, by force or, the polar opposite, that Islam was successful primarily because of its teachings and egalitarian appeal of the Sufi holy men. As Eaton also demonstrates in Bengal, the process of Islamization was far more complex than is generally assumed and was deeply rooted in down-to-earth political and economic issues.

When Islam was slowly spreading through northern India, Bengal was a densely forested, marshy region, with a vast network of great rivers – the Ganges and the Brahmaputra and their tributaries – whose annual flooding within the deltaic region had deposited thick layers of extremely rich soil. These geographical features ensured that Bengal, particularly in the East, was, for a long time, geographically, culturally and politically cut off from the rest of the subcontinent. Consequently, Hinduism had made little in-roads into Bengal for a long time. It is believed that Islam first surfaced in the region, as it did in the Punjab and in Sindh – through the work of wandering Sufi saints. Conversions, it appears, were initially sporadic. In 1204, Persianized Turks defeated the local Hindu rulers and subsequently annexed the region, although conversion remained an extremely slow process until the advent of Mughal rule during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In order to bring the potentially extremely rich agricultural land under cultivation, Mughal governors representing the Mughal Dynasty provided free grants of land to Hindu and Muslim officials, who, in turn, subleased these to entrepreneurs – the majority of whom appear to be religious

figures, either Sufis or the *ulema*. The numerous mosques and shrines throughout Bengal became the 'agents for the transformation of jungle into arable lands'.[33] These institutions served the dual purpose of creating local societies that were fiercely loyal to the representatives of the Mughal state and widely spreading Islamic ideas and beliefs.[34] Many *pirs* received tax-free lands with the provision that they cleared the jungle, built mosques and helped establish peasant communities, dependant on rice growing.[35] These lands were often assigned to mosques and religious shrines, and their custodians became the controllers of large tracts of land. These state-endowed mosques and shrines, supported by agriculture, consequently helped implant Islam in the region. Another consequence of this development was that entrepreneurial Sufis and *ulema* combined religious credentials with their control of land which gave them great societal influence. Needing a large labour force to clear and cultivate their lands and to develop labour-intensive irrigation systems, the *ulema* and Sufis, through their institutions, employed indigenous workers many of whom had been tribal peoples living nomadic or semi-nomadic lives and, thus, had not been influenced by Hinduism. Consequently, over time, the vast majority converted to Islam, at least nominally.

Eaton warns, however, that one must not see the process of Islamization in Eastern Bengal as some sort of sudden conversion to Islam. He argues that: 'the process of Islamization as a social phenomenon proceeded so gradually as to be nearly imperceptible'.[36] Conversion also involved extensive interaction with local pre-Islamic Hindu, Buddhist and other indigenous religious cults and beliefs. In the initial stages of Islamization, Allah, Muhammad and prophets from the Old Testament were included among Bengali holy men. Eaton states that the line separating Muslim from non-Muslim 'appears to have been porous, tenuous, and shifting'.[37] Islamic divine agencies were merged with local Bengali gods and goddesses. One such figure was seen as half-Krishna and half-Muhammad.[38] The Bengalis, particularly in the initial stages of Islamization, were pragmatic about choosing the gods or goddesses who would assist them in overcoming obstacles and obtaining otherworldly favours.

The Islam that became characteristic of the majority of Bengalis was far removed from the original teachings of Muhammad and the orthodox Islam of the Middle East. In Bengal, Islam was largely a mixture of Hinduism, Islam and local animist cults, whose worship was based upon local jungle goddesses. In the early days, in particular, Muhammad was regularly invoked, along with the Hindu gods Krishna and Shiva, as well as several other major local deities. Thus, Islam in Bengal acquired a distinctively regional character.[39] When East Bengal then East Pakistan, attempted to secede from the rest of Pakistan in 1971, state terrorism on the part of the West Pakistan military, was, in part, justified, because the East Pakistanis were stigmatized as degenerate Muslims and traitors due to their close association with Hindus.

While the vast majority of South Asian Muslims were syncretic and influenced by Sufism, a minority were hostile to what they regarded as the corruption of original, pure Islam. Their goal was to purge Islam in South Asia of non-Muslim influences. These revivalists included the *ulema* (scholars), *muftis* (jurists who interpreted the Sharia) and *qadis* (judges) attached to the courts of the rulers. Many of these revivalists came from the Middle East. Their attempts to introduce Sharia were generally unsuccessful, as most rulers, out of necessity or conviction, were religiously tolerant or indifferent. Rulers such as the great Emperor Auranzeb were the exception, rather than the rule.[40]

Islam in Pakistan today

The main division in the Islam that is practised in Pakistan, as in most of the rest of the Muslim world, is between the Sunni majority, who make up between 75 per cent and 80 per cent of Muslims, and the minority Shia sects.[41] The main doctrinal difference between the Shia and Sunni is that the former believe that the legitimate political leader of the Muslim community must be a direct descendent of the prophet Muhammad. Sunnis, on the other hand, recognize the legitimacy of the first three caliphs, chosen from among the entire Muslim community who succeeded Muhammad as leaders of the young Muslim state. In contrast, Shias argue that after the death of Muhammad, the leadership of the Islamic community should have gone to his cousin and son-in-law, Ali, and Ali's divinely ordained descendants or *imams*. Shias regard the *imam* as a human being with semi-divine characteristics acquired because of his descent from Muhammad. Shias follow the same religious rituals as the Sunni, but, in addition to making the pilgrimage to Mecca, they also attach great importance to visiting the tomb of Ali at Najaf and that of his son, Hussain, at Kerbala in Iraq.[42]

The major division of Pakistani Islam into Sunni and Shia tends to obscure the differences, not just *between* the two main sects, but *within* each sect. Both Sunnis and Shias are themselves divided into a bewildering number of sub-sects. Further complicating this diversity has been the recent growth in influence in Pakistan of the puritanical Wahhabi Islam, which originated in Saudi Arabia. Wahhabism is a very austere, narrow and legalistic sect which sees virtually all other Muslim sects as being infidels. Wahhabism has been gaining substantial influence in recent times in Pakistan, promoted mainly through Wahhabi-influenced *madrassas* – Islamic education institutions – financed by Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states and also by individual rich Arabs.

The two major groups within Pakistani Sunni Islam are the Barelvi School of *ulema* – so-called traditionalists, who represent the popular face of Islam in Pakistan, particularly in rural regions – and the Deobandi who see themselves as reformers, promoting what they claim is

a purer form of Islam. Each of these groups claims to represent the true Sunni Islam, criticizing their opponents as mistaken or even as apostates.[43] Since the mid-1970s, there has been a rapid increase in the number of *madrassas* belonging to the Deobandi, Barelvi and the Wahhabi-influenced Ahl-e-Hadith schools of Sunni Islam. A small minority of such *madrassas* are aggressively sectarian and are linked to terrorist organizations.[44]

Precise figures for their numbers vary, but the Barelvis comprise about 50 per cent of Pakistani Sunnis. The Barelvis are particularly strong in the Punjab – the largest and most heavily populated province of Pakistan. They are also dominant in parts of Sindh, where saint worship is very common, particularly in the rural areas.[45] The Barelvi attach great importance to the veneration of the prophet Muhammad, who is regarded as a semi-divine being whose presence is everywhere. The celebration of his birthday is a particularly joyous celebration. Like many Shia, the Barelvis are strongly influenced by mystical Sufism. The Barelvis follow many Sufi practices, such as the use of music (*qawali*) and dance in religious worship – a practice which is very much frowned upon by the Wahhabis.[46]

One of the most famous Sufi mystics was Ali bin Usman al-Hajveri – an eleventh-century mystic, who came to the former Muslim capital Lahore in the Punjab with Central Asian invaders. After travelling extensively throughout the Middle East and Central Asia studying with other Sufis, he settled in the city of Lahore and started a meditation centre. His shrine, known as Data Ganj Baksh (The Giver of Treasures), regularly attracts thousands of worshippers from most Muslim sects, but also Hindus and Christians from all over Pakistan. Devotees pay tribute to the saint through joyous dancing, the beating of drums, playing and listening to sacred music, singing and, in some instances, the smoking of hashish. Other devotees quietly pray, meditate and read the Koran. Women also attend the shrine and pay tribute to the saint, although this occurs separately from men. As one devotee, who is a chef, explained: 'It's a festival of happiness. People feel comfort here.'[47] The joy and peace of the Data Ganj Baksh shrine was shattered just before midnight on 1 July 2010 – the peak time for worship and when the shrine was most crowded with devotees. Two young suicide bombers detonated explosives in the shrine. The first reports of the incident indicated that at least 37 were killed and 175 were injured. A television programme showed the shrine littered with bodies and pools of blood on the white marble floor. The attack on one of Pakistan's most sacred places – a symbol of love, tolerance and peace – stunned and angered most Pakistanis. Militant Sunni extremists opposed to Sufism had previously warned about a possible attack, forcing the closure of the shrine for some time. Similar attacks have been made on other Sufi shrines throughout Pakistan.[48]

Unlike the Deobandi, the Barelvis, along with the Shias, supported the movement for the formation of the state of Pakistan. *Pirs* played a

prominent role in the mass mobilization of Muslims in the events leading up to the formation of Pakistan, although, as we will see in the next chapter, it was practical politics and self-interest, rather than religion, that were the key factors in their decision. *Pirs* have also played a very important role, particularly in the countryside, because of their hereditary endowed sanctity, reinforced by their position as powerful patrons, stemming from their large land holdings.[49] Despite their tolerant reputation, however, the Barelvis regard themselves as orthodox Sunnis and have supported moves to make Sharia law applicable and enforced throughout Pakistan.[50]

The Deobandi Sunni School of Islam takes its name from the town of Deoband, located about 10 miles to the north-east of Delhi, in the former United Provinces in British India, where the first *madrassa* was founded in 1867.[51] The movement was the most influential of the nineteenth-century Muslim revivalist movements in India. Deobandi scholars, along with other reformers, argued that the Islamic world needed to return to the original teachings of Muhammad and reject the materialism and the corruption of Westernization, as well as non-Islamic beliefs and rituals.[52] Their goal was to promote a reformed Sunni Islam. As such, they espouse a more literal and markedly austere interpretation of Islam. They claim that many Barevli practices are superstitious and, thus, deviate from the true path of Islam, as set down by Muhammad. They particularly deplore the veneration of saints, which they regard as an innovative, non-Islamic practice.[53] They are particularly influential in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan among the Pashtun tribes. More recently, they have established *madrassas* in the Punjab where they are trying to expand their influence and to break the hold that Sufism and the Barelvi have on the majority of the population, especially in the rural areas.[54] They strongly opposed what they regarded as the corruption of British rule of India, which ended Islamic power in the subcontinent, and joined with Hindus in the nationalist movement. Ironically, they also initially opposed the movement for the state of Pakistan because of the secular orientation of the movement's leadership and because they argued that as Islam acknowledges no borders between Muslims, Islam could never be the basis of a modern state.

In recent times, many Deobandis have become strongly influenced by Wahhabi Islam. Unlike more extreme groups, however, they do not promote the wanton destruction of Sufi shrines. In fact, they praise the saints and their miraculous powers.[55] In recent times, more extreme Deobandi groups associated with terrorism have emerged. Many Taliban leaders have studied in the Deobandi *madrassas*, which have been strongly influenced by Wahhabism, and, consequently, the term Deobandi has become a term for sectarian hatred and terrorism. Most Deobandi in Pakistan, however, have little to do with either acts of terrorism or any forms of violence. For example, on 25 February 2008, a conference of Islamic

scholars issued a *fatwa* (religious edict) at Deoband condemning terrorism, particularly suicide bombings.[56] In sum, to use the term Deoband as a synonym for terrorism or sectarianism is both incorrect and unfair.

An even more puritanical extremist sect than the Deobandi is the Ahl-e-Hadith, whose followers are often called Wahhabis in Pakistan. The sect, which developed in pre-independence India with its own mosques and *madrassas*, was strongly influenced by Wahhabism.[57] The Ahl-e-Hadith regard themselves as true monotheists, faithful to the original teachings of Muhammad, and, thus, they claim that they alone are the 'People of the Tradition of the Prophet'. They follow a very literal and simplistic religious tradition, based solely on the Koran and the *hadith* (the sayings and customs of Muhammad and his followers).[58] Over the past few years, the Ahl-e-Hadith has been aggressively supported by the Wahhabi Saudi Arabian state. Although a very minor sect, the Ahl-e-Hadith has benefited from lavish Saudi funding in recent years, which has given them an importance far in excess of their following among the mass of the population.[59] In competing for Saudi funds, both the Ahl-e-Hadith and the Deobandi have moved much closer to Wahhabism.

Followers of Ahl-e-Hadith are implacably hostile to Sufism, and some of the sect's *ulema* promote the destruction of Sunni and Shia shrines and even regard other Sunni sects as wildly mistaken, if not heretical.[60] A minority of their *madrassas* espouse sectarian violence and have played a major role in fuelling Sunni–Shia conflict. The Ahl-e-Hadith is supported predominantly by merchants and professionals in the northern Punjab and in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city and the capital of Sindh province.[61] Many scholars of other sects are contemptuous of their simplistic teachings and regard the Ahl-e-Hadith as heretics, refusing them entry to mosques, schools and graveyards, as well as denying them the right to marry Sunnis.[62]

Within Pakistani Islam, there has also been a tradition of *jihad*, in the narrow sense of waging holy war in defence of Islam, but this has been, in the past, confined largely to the tribal regions bordering Afghanistan.[63] During the nineteenth century, there was fierce resistance to non-Muslim rule – initially, reaction to the rule of the Sikhs and then to British rule in the tribal areas. Pashtun tribesman, led by charismatic religious leaders and their followers – the mujahideen (holy warriors) – waged *jihad* against the infidel invaders, whose very presence on Muslim soil was considered blasphemous.[64] The recourse to religious symbols and beliefs was highly important in providing unity for the rival tribes against their common enemy. According to the British, one of the most notorious of these religious leaders was Mullah Saidullah, whom the British termed 'the mad Fakir'. He claimed that Muslim saints had ordered him to force the British out of Swat and the Peshawar Valley, and they would assist him in this act by transforming the British bullets into water. After a number of fierce and bloody battles, the mullah and his followers were defeated.[65] The

fierce hostility to non-Muslims was, according to the British, attributed to Wahhabi influence.[66] The campaigns by small groups of guerrillas against technologically superior regular forces in the name of religion was to be echoed, again, in the *jihad* against the Russian forces in Afghanistan and, later, by the continued resistance to the Pakistan state and its US ally in the Pashtun-dominated tribal areas. Contemporary *jihadi* groups derive much of their ideology, such as the sacredness of martyrdom and the compulsion to fight injustices perpetuated by enemies of Islam, from the nineteenth-century *jihadis*.[67]

Although there is some disagreement about the exact numbers, Shias make up about 20 per cent of Pakistani Muslims and are the second-largest group of Shias in the world outside of Iran.[68] Until General Zia ul-Haq took power in 1977 and attempted to impose a narrow Sunni form of government, the relationship between the Shias and the majority Sunnis was generally peaceful. Mixed marriages between Sunnis and Shias were acceptable, and many Sunnis participated in Shia rituals.[69]

The majority of Shias are called the Twelver Shia, because they recognize a direct line of 12 *imams*, but there are also smaller sects of Shias, such as the Ismaili Khoja and Bohra Shias.[70] Despite their numerically low numbers, however, Shias have been particularly important in Pakistan because many have been extremely wealthy and influential as large landlords, professionals, merchants and politicians.[71] Shias were very powerful throughout the various Muslim kingdoms that were set up in the Indian subcontinent from the twelfth century onwards. Many were Persian nobles who migrated to the Indian subcontinent to take up senior administrative positions at the courts of Muslim dynasties. Shias were also powerful during the golden age of Muslim civilization – the Mughal dynasty (AD 1526–1857) – despite calls from some Muslim scholars, influenced by the anti-Shia Wahhabism from Arabia, to have both Shias and Hindus excluded from government.[72] As an elite group, the Shia also prospered under the period of British rule.

Thousands of Urdu-speaking Shias migrated to West Pakistan in 1947 mainly from the United Provinces and Bihar, where many settled in urban centres in Sindh and the Punjab. They were often resented because of their foreign origin, their sect and the fact that they were relatively better educated and financially more prosperous than their neighbours. Many Shias are powerful landlords. For example, they often own large estates around Jhang in the Punjab, controlling their Sunni and Shia clients. Sunni attempts to break the political and social dominance of Shia elite in the Punjab became an important factor in the gradual development of sectarian violence in modern times. Some of Pakistan's most important political figures have been Shia. The prominent Bhutto family, who own vast tracts of land in southern Sindh, belong to this sect.

Among the most important of the other Shia sects is the Ismaili, who recognize only seven *imams*. Ismailis broke away from the mainstream Shia

sect some several centuries ago. They are regarded as being very westernized, with women not being expected to wear the customary Islamic veil. Men and women also pray together on adjacent carpets in the same mosque. They are regarded with suspicion by orthodox Muslims – both Sunnis and Shias – and are not regarded as proper Muslims by some. For instance, the belief in reincarnation is one that is very close to Hindu beliefs.[73] Recently in Pakistan, there has been a movement to declare the Ismailis infidels and they have been persecuted by extremist Sunni and some Shia groups. In 1982, for example, in Chitral, in north-western Pakistan, about 60 Ismailis were killed by a Sunni mob.[74]

The Khoja sect follows the Aga Khan. They have been extremely important economically and politically until recent times. The founder of Pakistan – Muhammad Ali Jinnah – belonged to this sect.[75] Many of his closest supporters and financiers were Shia, including Liaquat Ali Khan – the first Prime Minister of Pakistan.[76]

Another sect which claim to be Shia – the Ahmadiyyas – also have a very unorthodox interpretation of Islam and have been the target of violence and discrimination, virtually from the very foundation of the state of Pakistan. They are not recognized as Muslim by most Shias and Sunnis because it is alleged that their founder claimed to be a prophet.[77] In 1953, large numbers of Ahmadiyyas were attacked and killed and their homes and businesses destroyed in mob riots in the Punjab. In 1974, the Pakistan Constitution was amended to declare the Ahmadiyyas as non-Muslims because their critics claimed that they do not consider Muhammad to be the last prophet of Islam but rather their founder. In Pakistan, it is now illegal for Ahmadiyyas to pray in mosques or to inscribe Islamic prayers on their gravestones.[78]

The extraordinary diversity of Islam in Pakistan has led to rivalries between the two major Sunni sects – the Deobandi and the Barelvi – but these disputes were generally confined to debates among scholars and were of little interest to the rest of the population. However, extremist splinter groups have emerged from these groups, among the Deobandi tradition in particular. In recent times, there has been growing sectarian violence, which, in the past, has been largely absent in Pakistani history – pitting Sunni against non-Sunni Muslims and also against religious minorities, particularly Christians.[79]

There were occasional violent clashes between the Sunnis and Shias in British India well before the formation of Pakistan. These tended to occur spontaneously during the Muharram festival, when Shias publicly, and with great passion, mourn the death of Ali's son and his companions. Shia hostility to the first three Caliphs of Islam, who are regarded as usurpers who denied Muhammad's descendants their right to rule, have led to many violent clashes in the past. The most serious acts of violence, however, were in the regions of non-Muslim majority, particularly urban centres in the United Provinces, such as Lucknow.[80] Since 1979, doctrinal

differences between Sunnis and Shias have escalated into extreme acts of sectarian violence, including assassinations and bombings in Pakistan.[81] In recent times, complicating the sectarian divisions among Pakistani Muslims are the fraught issues surrounding the quest for political power. For instance, a study of the district of Jhang, in central Punjab, where the rising Sunni urban commercial classes were locked out of local politics by Shia landlords, found that the steady growth of sectarian violence was, in part, due to political rivalries.[82] On the other hand, many Sunnis still join in Shia ceremonies, attracted by the emotional intensity and colourful rituals.

An understanding of the rich history and complex contemporary nature of Islam in Pakistan, therefore, strongly supports CTS (Critical Terrorism Studies) scholars' rejections of the claim that Muslims throughout the world are a monolithic community. For example, Islam as practised in Pakistan is a far cry from that of the Shia theocratic state of Iran, which, in turn, is radically different from the Wahhabi-dominated state of Saudi Arabia. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia have a history of regularly victimizing other sects, and, consequently, they reject the diversity that is so characteristic of Islam in Pakistan. As we shall see in later chapters, one of the reasons for the growth of sectarian violence in Pakistan has been the result of Iran and Saudi Arabia attempting to promote their own narrow interpretations of Islam.

Conclusion

When Pakistan was established in 1947, there was little hint that sectarian violence and terrorism were to emerge as serious problems facing the Pakistan state and its people towards the end of the twentieth century. Indeed, many Pakistanis, particularly in the early years, were irreligious. Most Pakistanis were influenced by Sufism and, thus, were tolerant of other sects and religions. Most had little interest in the doctrinal differences between Sunnis and Shias and between the Barelvi and the Deobandi and other Sunni sects. The influence of a more intolerant Wahhabi Islam was miniscule and the sect was generally regarded as a heretical lunatic fringe of Islam. The tradition of *jihad*, in the narrow sense of 'holy war', was confined to the Pashtun tribes, living in the wild tribal frontier region which was fiercely independent of the rest of Pakistan. An understanding of the growth of sectarian violence and terrorism must, therefore, be found in other non-religious aspects of Pakistani society and history, including the set of events that led up to the foundation of Pakistan which is the subject of the next chapter.

2 The colonial legacy and the making of Pakistan

Class, regionalism and factional politics

The history of Muslim separatism during the twentieth century, which led to the partition of the Indian subcontinent and the formation of Pakistan on 14 August 1947, is full of inconsistencies and paradoxes. The most striking fact is that the new state was geographically very unusual: it was divided into West Pakistan and East Pakistan, which were separated by about 1,000 miles of hostile Indian territory. Second, the main driving force for the creation of Pakistan came from Muslims living in areas where they were in a minority. And, perhaps most surprising of all, while Pakistan was established as a nation for the protection of Muslims, Islam, as an ideology, played very little role in the events leading up to its formation, except towards the very end of the struggle for independence.

The partition of British India and the emergence of Pakistan and India as independent sovereign nations in 1947 were two of the most important political developments of the twentieth century, yet, until almost its moment of birth, the possibility of an independent Muslim state in the Indian subcontinent was in serious doubt. The events that led up to the formation of Pakistan have been the subject of much scholarly debate, and many issues surrounding this formation are hotly contested, particularly in India and Pakistan. There are, however, a number of generalizations that most nonpartisan scholars, by-and-large, accept.

First, ever since the nineteenth century, individuals and groups of elite Muslims living in British India felt threatened as a minority by the overwhelmingly numerically superior Hindus. Their fears of Hindu domination grew over time, as British rulers began to devolve political power, initially at the local and, later, at provincial levels, finally leading to independence. The second major trend was the extraordinary dominant role that a single individual, Muhammad Ali Jinnah – a secular lawyer – played in shaping the creation of Pakistan. Jinnah is revered as the founder of Pakistan and is known reverentially in Pakistan as Quaid-i-Azam (Great Leader). The third main trend was that Jinnah and his supporters, most of whom were from Muslim minority provinces, in the quest for some sort of state for Indian Muslims had to convince the Muslims of the Muslim

majority provinces – the Punjab, Bengal, Sindh and the North West Frontier Province – to support the drive for the new state.

The major focus of this chapter, then, will be to explain how, in the key years from 1937–1947, the politicians from the Muslim majority areas came to accept and actively support the partition, which had been previously advocated by Jinnah and his supporters, who were mainly from the United Provinces. The regional histories of the Pakistan movement during these years are crucially important for explaining the success of the movement for Pakistan and for understanding the kind of state that the new rulers of Pakistan inherited at independence in 1947. These histories are also highly important in order to understand the inherent structural weaknesses of Pakistan as a modern democratic state. As I will argue in later chapters, these weaknesses were one of the preconditions that have led to the growth of terrorism in Pakistan in modern times.

The origins of Muslim separatism

In 1947, before the formation of the separate states of India and Pakistan, Muslims comprised about 50,000,000 people, approximately 20 per cent of the total population of British India.[1] The vast majority of Muslims lived in the north-west and north-east of the subcontinent. As we have seen in Chapter 1, a minority of Muslims living in the Indian subcontinent were descended from foreign traders, conquerors, holy men, scholars and other migrants, but the vast majority were descendants of converts, mostly from the poor, lower Hindu castes and untouchables, but also from land-owning peasant castes. Although there were deep linguistic, sectarian, ethnic, class and other differences among the subcontinent's Muslims, they formed a distinct and separate religion. While Hindus and Muslims had lived generally peacefully side-by-side for over one thousand years, often sharing music, poetry, worship at both Hindu and Muslim shrines and religious festivals at the local level, Islam had remained a separate religion, with Muslims generally not partaking in mixed marriages or eating together with those of the Hindu religion. The differences between Hindus and Muslims were most pronounced at the elite level. One of the great tragedies of the partition of the subcontinent was that Hindus and Sikhs, who had been neighbours with Muslims for many generations, became caught up in the dreadful communal violence during the ethnic cleansing over the course of partition and, thus, viciously turned on each other.[2]

Muslim rulers had lost the political domination of most of northern India with the decline of the Mughal Dynasty during the eighteenth century. After the abortive so-called Indian mutiny of 1857, which, in part, was an attempt to restore Muslim rule to India, many Muslims, particularly those among the elite, were on the defensive. In 1885, the formation of the nationalist Indian National Congress posed a potentially serious challenge to the Muslim elite. Congress emerged as the most powerful

nationalist organization in British India by far and became a highly organized political party during the early twentieth century. Membership of the Congress was open to all Indians, irrespective of religion, but many Muslims were suspicious of an organization which was largely dominated by Hindus. A major question of pre-independence British Indian politics concerned whether Congress as a mass nationalist party would represent all Indians, including Muslims, or whether religious minorities, such as the Muslims, needed their own organizations in order to protect their specific communal interests.

Understanding Muslim politics in the United Provinces (The United Provinces of Agra and Oudh) is crucial for understanding the Pakistan movement. The United Provinces, whose territory covered a large part of the fertile and densely populated upper Gangetic Plain, had been the centre of Muslim political power in India. As the heartland of Muslim civilization in India, the United Provinces contained the great Muslim capitals – Delhi, Agra and Lucknow. Symbolic of the power and wealth of the Muslim rulers of the United Provinces were the great Mughal monuments, such as the Taj Mahal, the Red Fort in Delhi and Akbar's tomb, which are among the most popular tourist attractions in India today.[3]

In contrast to other parts of the subcontinent, the Muslims in the United Provinces were better educated and more prosperous. They comprised just over 15 per cent of the population, but a significant number belonged to the elite, consisting of landlords, administrators, government servants and the intelligentsia. For instance, in 1882, they held about 45 per cent of government administrative positions, particularly at the higher levels.[4] Muslims in the United Provinces were the best educated British Indian Muslims, and they saw themselves as socially and educationally superior to the Muslims living in the Muslim majority provinces. They shared with the Hindu elite a rich cultural heritage based on Urdu – a composite language, with its vocabulary drawn from indigenous Hindi and foreign Persian, Arabic and Turkish vocabulary.

The personal and class interests of the Muslim Urdu-speaking elite were threatened in the nineteenth century with the spread of Western education, bureaucratic reforms and modernization. Hindu revivalism and reform movements, which aimed to purify and strengthen Hinduism and which were often critical of Islam, were also a threat. In addition to this, in the nineteenth century, the power and economic conditions of the Muslim elite were declining, as many landlords sold their lands, while in the government service their numbers fell from about two-thirds in 1857 to one-third in 1914.[5] The United Province Muslims felt threatened as Hindus in the province were more quickly and successfully adapting to new educational opportunities provided under British rule. For example, in 1899, Urdu, which had been the language of administration during Muslim rule, had to share equal status with Hindi – the major indigenous language. Likewise, with the beginnings of democracy in India brought about by the

gradual devolution of power, Muslims feared that Hindus might not only interfere in religious practices, such as slaughter of cows, but also discriminate against them in education and employment.[6] Some also feared anti-Muslim prejudice would lead to communal violence in which the numerically inferior Muslims would suffer the most.

Under siege, the United Province Muslim elite began to define themselves more strongly, both politically and culturally, on the basis of their religion. Much of the leadership for this Muslim separatism came from the graduates of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College, which later became the Aligarh Muslim University. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who is regarded as the greatest nineteenth-century Muslim educator, reformer and statesman, was suspicious of the Hindu Nationalist Congress and was loyal to the British.[7] Aligarh Muslim University was modelled on Oxford and Cambridge, and its students were educated in Western learning and dedicated to the reform and modernization of Islam.[8] Many Aligarh students sought employment in government service and competed for jobs with Hindu graduates. Consequently, Aligarh University became the driving force for Muslim political activity aimed at providing safeguards for the subcontinent's Muslim community. The graduates and students of Aligarh were to provide the leadership and motivation for the formation of Pakistan under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, particularly when there was little interest in Muslim separatism in the Muslim majority provinces.

Protecting Muslim interests: the All India Muslim League and the rise of Jinnah

In 1906, the All India Muslim League was established, with its first President, Sir Aga Khan – the spiritual leader of the Ismailis, a Shia sub-sect. It is significant to understand that while, in modern times, Shias in Pakistan have been victims of sectarian violence from Sunni militants, many of the leaders of the Pakistan movement were Shias. In its early years, the Muslim League was an elite organization made up of Muslim nobility and landlords, along with a few lawyers, educators and journalists. It was a very conservative organization, with few organizational links among the masses of the Muslim population. At the first meeting, the members proclaimed their loyalty to the British Crown and demanded the protection of the political rights and interests of Muslims. For much of its early history, the Muslim League was a largely politically irrelevant organization made up of a tiny elite, supported mainly by Muslims from the United Provinces with little contact with the mass of the subcontinent's Muslims with whom they had very little in common. In contrast, the Muslim League's main rival – the Indian National Congress – was becoming a well-organized political party.

In the 1930s, the rise to power of a new leader – Muhammad Ali Jinnah – changed both the direction and the fortune of the Muslim League. In

the history of the Pakistan nationalist movement, the figure of Jinnah stands out, above all others. He was a highly controversial, but enigmatic, figure, whose admirers saw him as a statesman of great vision and courage who single-handedly guided the development of the new state of Pakistan. In Pakistan, his face appears on banknotes and in portraits in government offices and other public buildings.[9] His opponents among the Indian nationalists portrayed him as a sinister Machiavellian figure bent on destroying the sacred unity of Mother India.[10] There is no doubt, however, that his strong leadership and highly developed negotiation skills were crucial in the establishment of Pakistan, although there is considerable disagreement among historians as to what exactly his goals were and whether, in fact, he wanted an independent Pakistan state at all.[11]

Jinnah came from a middle-class family in Sindh, born into the Khoja community – a Shia sect, many of whom were traders and merchants. As a member of a small minority sect often criticized for its unorthodox beliefs, Jinnah was particularly sensitive to religious intolerance and bigotry.[12] He appears to have been a very half-hearted Muslim at best. He initially adopted the dress and manners of an upper class English professional gentleman, with impeccable fashion sense, who enjoyed whiskey, good food and cigarettes. He studied law in England, where he became influenced by British liberalism. He was a strong constitutionalist, espousing the values of democracy, social justice and the right of self-rule. He was critical of the racial discrimination and exploitation of British rule in India and became a fervent Indian nationalist.

Jinnah returned to practise law in Bombay, and, in 1906, joined the Indian National Congress. In 1913, he joined the Muslim League, while still a member of Congress. In 1916, he helped broker the Lucknow Pact, in which Hindus and Muslims pledged to work together for Indian self-rule, thus earning him the reputation as a champion of Hindu Muslim unity. In 1919, he became President of the Muslim League, as well as still managing to remain a prominent figure within Congress. His initial motivation in politics was to promote Hindu–Muslim unity, to work towards self-rule and the eventual independence of India and to establish a democratic new nation in which all religions would have full and equal rights.

By nature, and through his early training as a lawyer, Jinnah was moderate in his views, arguing that self-government for India would come about by peaceful means. However, he became increasingly disillusioned with the Indian Nationalist Congress, which, by 1920, had come under the leadership of the charismatic politician, social worker and religious figure, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Under Gandhi's leadership, Congress became more aggressive in its demands that the British grant independence to India. Jinnah despised Gandhi for what he regarded as his dangerous, populous tactics and his attempts to appeal to Hindu sentiments in order to win the support of the Indian masses. Jinnah resigned from the Indian National Congress after Gandhi inaugurated a mass, nonviolent

non-cooperation movement in 1920. Jinnah was concerned about the dangers that were inherent in developing a mass movement. His fears were justified when Gandhi's campaigns became out of control, resulting in mob violence. Jinnah had become highly disillusioned with Indian politics, and, in 1931, he returned to London to his highly successful legal practice.

At the Muslim League's annual conference in 1930, the poet, philosopher and mystic Muhammad Iqbal suggested the formation of a Muslim-dominated state in north-west India. This was a vague formulation of the two nation theory – namely, that Hindus and Muslims comprise separate nations – but, at that time, this had little practical political significance. In 1933, a student in London, Choudhary Rahmat Ali, coined the name Pakistan from the Muslim-dominated areas – P (Punjab), A (Afghan, referring to the North West Frontier Province), K (Kashmir), S (Sindh) and Tan (Baluchistan).[13] Significantly, the new name ignored the Muslim-dominated region of East Bengal.

Jinnah was persuaded to return to India in 1934 to lead and revive the moribund Muslim League. The need for organization was particularly urgent, as under the Government of India Act of 1935 the British had started to devolve power at the provincial level. With very limited time at his disposal, he toured India trying to find suitable candidates for the forthcoming provincial elections meeting with very limited success.[14]

In 1936 and 1937, elections were held for the 11 provinces that comprised British India. The election results were a clear victory for Congress, which was, by far, the oldest, richest and best-organized political party, with active branches at the provincial, district, town and village levels, unlike the Muslim League. Congress won power, either directly or in coalition, in nine of the 11 provinces. It won 750 of the 1,771 seats in the central legislature. Significantly, however, Congress had little support from Muslims, winning only 26 of the 491 Muslim seats. Congress had been unable to win over the Muslim vote, particularly in the Muslim majority areas.[15] Therefore while Congress could claim to be by far the most important all-India political party, the 1937 elections demonstrated that it did not have a mandate to rule from the Muslim community.

But neither could the Muslim League claim to represent the interests of the majority of Indian Muslims. In the same elections, the Muslim League results were abysmal. It won a miserly 106 seats of the 491 seats set aside for Muslims. Significantly, the Muslim League failed miserably in the most important Muslim majority region – the Punjab – winning only one seat.

Congress rule in the provinces 1937–1939

In the 1937 elections, the success of the Congress Party was the much-needed wake-up call to Muslim politicians and acted as a catalyst for

Jinnah and others who were concerned about the fate of Muslims under a Hindu-dominated government. During the 1937 elections, Congress, led by the socialist strongman and future Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, refused to take the Muslim League and its concerns seriously, claiming that the League had little contact with the mass of the people. Nehru, arrogantly and unwisely as it turned out, stated that: 'It is the Congress alone which is capable of fighting the government.'[16] The Congress was particularly powerful in the United Provinces, where it was able to form a ministry. Members of the Muslim League had anticipated sharing power with the Congress, but the leaders of Congress in the United Provinces, including Jawaharlal Nehru, insisted that members of the Muslim League must accept Congress discipline. The 1937 provincial elections, therefore, demonstrated two important lessons to Jinnah and his supporters: the Congress Party was, by far, the most organized of political parties in India and that it had no intention of sharing power with any other political party.

Congress rule in the United Provinces from 1937–1939 seemed to justify Muslim fears that under Congress rule Hindu Raj (rule) would be imposed upon Muslims.[17] Congress attempts to introduce new education reforms were seen as an attempt to destroy Muslim culture. For instance, the attempt to force schoolchildren to sing Vande Mataram – a hymn to the Goddess Durga as the personification of India – as India's national song was regarded by many Muslims as idolatrous and anti-Muslim.[18] Although the leadership of the Congress – figures such as Gandhi and Nehru – were firmly committed to Hindu–Muslim unity, many of the Congressmen in the United Provinces sympathized with the rise of an aggressive Hindu nationalism during the 1920s. The Hindu nationalists argued that since most Indians were Hindu, they should be governed according to Hindu principles.[19] Many of the United Province's Congressmen were aggressively anti-Muslim, seeing them as descendants of invaders who had destroyed Hindu temples and persecuted Hindus. Jinnah and the Muslim League also strongly opposed a Muslim Mass Contact programme by Congress and viewed it as an attempt to take support away from the Muslim League and, thus, destroy Muslim unity.[20] When, in November 1939, the Congress ministries resigned in protest because Britain had unilaterally declared war between India and Germany, Jinnah and his supporters were delighted. Jinnah proclaimed that for Indian Muslims this was a day of deliverance from 'tyranny, oppression and injustice'.[21]

With the resignation of the Congress ministries and Congress' attempts to force Britain out of India during the Quit India campaign launched in 1942, Jinnah became an ally of the British, which gave him a key role in the negotiations over the future of India as the British planned their exit. In 1940, at the annual session of the Muslim League held at Lahore, Jinnah delivered his now-famous speech in which he made clear that the

differences between Hindus and Muslims were so great that they comprised separate nations. Any attempts to force them to exist under one government, he argued, would only lead to ongoing tensions and conflict and, ultimately, result in the destruction of the state. What is significant is that Jinnah makes no mention of Pakistan in this speech or in the vague five-paragraph resolution passed by the League. A very convincing argument has been made by prominent Pakistani historian Ayesha Jalal which states that Jinnah did not want an independent Muslim state, but rather that the Lahore Resolution was a bargaining chip to force Congress to agree to some sort of federation in which a significant amount of power would be devolved to the provinces, thus protecting Muslim interests.[22] If Jalal's argument is correct, then Congress called Jinnah's bluff, as the Congress leaders were prepared to accept the loss of the Muslim majority areas in return for a strong, centralized, united India.[23] If, therefore, we except Jalal's powerful thesis, it was Congress, not the Muslim League, that was responsible for partition.

While scholars have continued to debate over what exactly Jinnah's motives were,[24] the Lahore Resolution is celebrated in Pakistan as the declaration of Muslim independence and a clear call for an independent state of Pakistan. Although most Congress politicians accepted, and even came to welcome, the concept of Pakistan, Gandhi continued to reject the two nation theory, claiming that conversion to Islam did not make Indian Muslims a separate nation.[25] After negotiations between Congress, the British and Jinnah got bogged down over the future of the subcontinent, on 16 August 1946, Jinnah called for a Direct Action Day, involving protests and meetings in support of Pakistan. This led to savage communal violence in Calcutta, which quickly spread to other parts of India.[26] Amidst growing tension and increased communal violence, the two independent states of India and Pakistan came into existence in August 1947.

The partition of the Indian subcontinent was accompanied by terrible communal killings, as millions of Hindus and Sikhs were forced to move to India, while many Muslims moved to Pakistan. It is estimated that over ten million people were forced to move, with about one million being killed along the way.[27] The violence was at its most extreme in the Punjab where ethnic cleansing, consisting of savage killings, rape and beatings, forced Muslims to migrate to the safety of Pakistan in the west and Hindus and Sikhs to India in the east.

Although Jinnah had provided the leadership for the Pakistan movement at the all-India level, it was the political developments in the Muslim majority provinces from 1937–1947 that were crucial for the success of Jinnah and his supporters and for understanding the politics of the new state of Pakistan. Each of the four provinces – the Punjab, East Bengal, Sindh and the North West Frontier Province – had their own distinct regional identity and politics.

Winning the Punjab: the heartland of Pakistan

If Jinnah were to be successful in being accepted as the leader of Indian Muslims, it was crucial that the Muslim League win control of the key province of the Punjab. Without the Punjab, a workable, independent Muslim state would be impossible. The fertile alluvial plain of the great Indus River, with its many tributaries and one of the world's most extensive irrigation system developed during the British period, had made the Punjab one of the most prosperous regions in British India. Without the large population and economic wealth of the Punjab, any future Muslim state would be weak and irrelevant. Today, the Punjab contains almost 56 per cent of Pakistan's population, and its industry and agriculture make it much richer than the other provinces.[28] Most of Pakistan's political and military elite are Punjabi, which causes resentment in the other provinces. As a non-Punjabi senior official commented, sourly, the Punjabis 'think and behave as if they are the whole damn country'.[29] As one analyst succinctly put it, the Punjab is 'the heart, stomach and backbone of Pakistan'.[30]

In the 1937 Punjab provincial elections, the Muslim League put forward only seven candidates and won only one of the 85 Muslim seats.[31] The Muslim League's main rival, the inter-communal Unionist Party, founded in 1923, was dominated by Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landlords, whose class interests cut across religious differences but who had little grassroots support or organization. By 1946, however, Punjabi politics had changed dramatically. In the elections of that year, the Muslim League had a resounding victory, winning 75 of the 85 Muslim seats.[32] With this decisive victory, the Punjab was soon to be the cornerstone of Jinnah's new Muslim nation of Pakistan.[33] Understanding how Jinnah and his United Province supporters were able to win over the voters of the Punjab and defeat the Unionist Party is essential for understanding the success of the Pakistan movement.

The Unionist Party, which was founded in 1927, was the major political force in the Punjab until the 1940s. It was an inter-communal party, supported by Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landlords and their clients who were the major political power brokers in the province. The British deliberately boosted the position of the most important landowners in the Punjab, by richly rewarding them with honours, appointments to local boards and involving them in administration. The Unionist Party power base came about by cultivating *biraderis*, or kinship networks, and exploiting the client relationship between landlords and their tenants. Consequently, they also won the support of the most important land-holding *pirs* – the politically powerful descendants of Sufi saints and their disciples. This strategy enabled the Unionist Party to win the 1937 provincial elections and to rout the Muslim League. The Muslim League was a shallow, defeated party with very low membership; its main support coming from students from the Punjab and the United Provinces.[34] However, political

developments at the all-India level, along with the growing power and prestige of Jinnah as the main representative of Muslim separatism, combined with the effects of the Second World War and the imminent departure of the British from the Indian subcontinent, dramatically changed Punjabi politics.

By 1946, the Muslim League had beaten the Unionist Party at its own game, winning over the support of the land-holding power brokers by appealing to their personal, factional and class interests. It had become clear that the Congress Party was determined to introduce land reforms, which would involve confiscating lands belonging to very large landlords and redistributing them to peasants. The events surrounding the advent of the Second World War were important in that the Unionist Party had to enforce unpopular measures, such as the requisition of grain. The inflation of the war years also created dissatisfaction. As Jinnah became recognized as the sole spokesman for Muslims in the majority Muslim provinces, it became apparent to the power brokers in the Punjab and other provinces that it was time to switch sides. The Muslim League leadership was very careful to win over the support of the powerful landlords and their supporters. Particularly important was the support of the *pirs*, who used their moral and spiritual authority along with their status, wealth and power as landlords. They urged their clients to vote for the Muslim League and its goal of a Muslim state. Some *pirs* stood for election themselves or ordered their clients to vote for Muslim League candidates. But it was self-interest, not religious ideology, which motivated the majority of the *pirs* to switch their support to the Muslim League.

As independence approached, Jinnah and the Muslim League began to appeal to Islam in order to gain mass support. A vote for the Muslim League was seen as a vote for Islam and a 'vote for the Koran'.[35] Muslim League meetings were held at important Sufi shrines, where devotees were urged through speeches, pamphlets, newspapers and wall posters that it was their religious duty to vote for the Muslim League.[36] By 1946, support for the Muslim League now came from the masses, who enthusiastically supported Muslim League political rallies, processions and strikes in protest against the policies of the current government.[37]

The growth of communal violence between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, which was particularly ferocious in the Punjab as independence drew near, further strengthened a sense of Muslim identity and unity. What this Muslim identity meant, in real terms, was very shadowy and unclear, and this is still the case today in modern Pakistan. The Muslim League had no clear ideology beyond a vague appeal to support Islam, but in the excitement and euphoria of the prospect of a Muslim state, this was largely forgotten. As independence grew closer, and communal tensions heightened, the Muslim League leadership mobilized emotional mass meetings and processions, culminating in the resounding electoral success in 1946.

Despite the Muslim League's success in the 1946 elections, Jinnah was faced with the very difficult task of trying to maintain discipline and unity in the Punjab. Individual rivalry, factionalism and self-interest were, and still are, the driving forces of Punjabi politics. This legacy has continued since independence, with no political party willing or able to break the economic and political power of the landlord class that has dominated Punjabi politics.[38]

East Bengal: regional identity, Muslim separatism and mass politics

The United Provinces provided the leadership of the Muslim League and the ideology of Muslim separatism, while the Punjab, with its large population and wealth, became the cornerstone of the new state. It was in East Bengal, however, that support for the Muslim League was strongest among the masses. Bengal was very different from the other Muslim majority regions. It comprised a low-lying, very heavily populated deltaic region containing major river systems, including the Ganges, Jamuna and their many tributaries. The rich alluvial soil, brought down from the Himalayas by these rivers, was ideal for the growing of rice. East Bengal was one of the most heavily populated regions of the world predominantly made up of small peasants. When Pakistan was formed in 1947, East Pakistan contained slightly more than half of the state's total population.[39]

In the 1937 provincial elections, the Muslim League in Bengal was the best performing of all the Muslim League provincial parties, winning 39 of the 82 seats and sharing power in the province in a coalition government with a peasant-based party, from 1937 to December 1941.[40] From 1937, the Bengal Muslim League began to organize aggressively at the grassroots level, so that, by 1946, the Bengal Muslim League, with a membership of over one million, had the largest grassroots support of all of the provincial branches of the Muslim League. This support came from all classes from rich landowners and wealthy merchants to the very poor, with branches of the league in small, remote villages. The Muslim League's significant appealing feature was the Muslim separatist tradition in Bengal, which was supported by small peasants, tenant farmers and craftsmen who were exploited by the predominantly Hindu landlords and money-lenders.[41] This mass support was apparent by the overwhelming victory of the Bengal Muslim League in the 1946 provincial elections when the party won 104 of the 111 rural seats.[42] Ominously, the leader of the Muslim League in Bengal stated at the party's annual conference that the Muslims of Bengal were different, not only from the Hindus, but also from the Muslims from other provinces because, culturally, the Bengalis were unique.[43]

Despite the euphoria that came with the mobilization of the masses, the highly enthusiastic support for Pakistan and the sweeping electoral

successes, the differences between East Bengal and the North West provinces, which, together, comprised Pakistan, were very deep and, ultimately, to prove fatal for the unity of Pakistan. Bengal was culturally, linguistically and religiously unique. Bengalis had very little in common with the Punjabis, Sindhis and other ethnic groups living in the West. One of the first major issues to arise was the question of what was to be the national language of the new state of Pakistan. For Jinnah and his allies in Bengal it was to be Urdu, but this was rejected by the overwhelming mass of Bengalis, who had a very strong emotional attachment to their beloved Bengali language. Moreover, Jinnah and the All India Muslim League favoured the creation of a small Urdu-speaking elite among the Bengali Muslims. This accentuated the differences between Bengal and the other Muslim majority areas and was, ultimately, to culminate in the Bengali separatist movement, which led to the establishment of the independent state of Bangladesh in 1971.

Factionalism, corruption and politics: the Muslim League in Sindh

Geographically, Sindh can be divided into two regions. The irrigated areas around the great Indus River which bisects the province are, agriculturally, very rich. Most of the rest of Sindh is arid, with poor soil, in contrast to the Punjab and Bengal. Much of Sindh is, therefore, socially and economically backward. There is a huge economic and social gap between the mass of the rural poor and the large feudal landlords, who are, in almost all respects, absolute rulers of the land that they own.[44] The rural poor, whether tenants or landless labourers, have no security, can be evicted from their lands, are forced to pay illegal taxes and levies and, often, are required to provide unpaid labour. The crops that they cultivate are shared with their landlords, who, very often, are only interested in extracting as much income as possible.[45] The very large landowners are *de facto* rulers, with their own private armies which are used to intimidate rivals. They also regularly make demands on their tenants and labourers in terms of voting for their landlord or his nominee.

As in the Punjab, the British boosted the wealth, power and prestige of the large landlords, many of whom were descendants of the chiefs who had ruled Sindh before the region was conquered by the British. The British granted them revenue-free grants of land, titles and honours provided that they maintained law and order and remained loyal to the Crown. They acted as collaborators or intermediaries between the small minority of British administrators and the masses of the population. As in the Punjab, many important landowners in Sindh were *pirs*, whose power rested not just on the land that they controlled, but also on their hold over the incumbent masses, who venerated them as descendants of holy men and the controller of shrines of the Sufi saints. *Pir* loyalty to the British

had resulted in honours, power, economic wealth and privileges. This religious prestige and authority, along with their high status as landlords, meant that many *pirs* became influential politicians who were elected to the legislative assembly.[46]

Another complicating factor in Sindh was that the Muslims were deeply divided by ethnic origin, language and culture. Around 30 per cent of the Muslim population were immigrants or descendants of immigrants and less than half used Sindhi as their native tongue. These immigrants included Hindu and Muslim traders. Also important were the Punjabis who had settled in Sindh in order to take advantage of the economic opportunities following the development of irrigated agriculture during the 1930s. Their prosperity made them a natural target for native Sindhi jealousies.[47]

In Sindh, the three main features of politics were the endemic factionalism, corruption and a strong sense of Sindhi regional identity, which naturally resulted in very weak support for a Punjabi-dominated Pakistan. The strong sense of Sindhi nationalism has remained a threat to Pakistani unity. Sindhi politics were dominated by personal rivalries, the pursuit of power for its own sake and the benefits derived from access to power and patronage. In the 1937 provincial elections, Jinnah was unable to persuade the important landowners and *pirs* to contest the election as Muslim League candidates. Consequently, the Muslim League failed to win a single seat.[48] The main support for Pakistan and the Muslim League came from Punjabi settlers who had settled in the province[49] but who were resented by the local Sindhis.

While the Muslim League in Sindh did not face strong opposition, unlike the Unionist Party in the Punjab, it was opposed by the Sindh United Party, founded in 1936, in order to bridge the gap between largely wealthy, urban Hindus and the Muslim power-brokers in the countryside.[50] Legislative politics, however, were characterized by shifting factional alignments and scant loyalty to a particular political party or ideology, which remains a feature of contemporary Sindhi politics.

Jinnah despised the Sindhi politicians. The Governor of Sindh, writing to the Viceroy, commented that Jinnah once told him: 'You could buy the lot of them for five *lakhs* (500,000) of rupees.'[51] Nevertheless, as in the Punjab, with the imminent departure of the British and the growing communal tensions between Hindus and Muslims in Sindh, popular support for the Muslim League grew during 1946. Many *pir* families came to strongly support Pakistan by organizing meetings and encouraging their clients to support the Pakistan movement. The flag of the Muslim League then morphed to become 'the flag of the prophet of Islam'.[52] As in the Punjab, it was self-interest and the quest for power, rather than any religious sentiment, that motivated the *pir* politicians to support Pakistan. In contrast to the sordid self-interest of the Sindhi politicians was the enthusiasm of the Muslim League supporters in the cosmopolitan city of Karachi – Pakistan's largest city, with a strong middle class and student presence.[53]

The North West Frontier Province and the demand for a Pushtun nation

The North West Frontier Province had little in common with the other Muslim-dominated provinces and had no interest in becoming part of Pakistan. Historically, geographically, ethnically and culturally, the region is much closer to Afghanistan. Much of the province is mountainous and inhabited by the Pashtuns (Pathans) – a tribal society with a ferocious reputation for opposing invaders. Currently, approximately 35,000,000 to 40,000,000 Pashtuns live in Pakistan and approximately 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 live in Afghanistan.[54] The tribal region was cut off from Afghanistan by the Durand Line – an artificially constructed over-1,600 mile-long border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, demarcated by the British in 1893. The Pashtuns, both then and now, refuse to recognize the highly porous border. The Pashtuns in Pakistan identify with those in Afghanistan, rather than with the other ethnic groups in Pakistan, particularly the Punjabis whom many despise as exploitative, effete foreigners. Many Pashtuns dream of their own independent state made up of those Pashtuns living in both Pakistan and Afghanistan.

As in other parts of the Muslim majority regions, the Muslim League in the North West Frontier Province was institutionally weak.[55] Although a provisional branch of the Muslim League was formed in 1912, it received little support, being dominated by a small minority of urban lawyers. The Muslim League faced a very strong sense of regional identity, particularly among the politically and economically dominant Pashtuns who made up about 40 per cent of the population, but who comprised the elite. Non-Pashtuns were not allowed to own land, nor were they allowed to belong to the tribal councils (*jirgars*) – the main decision-making bodies.[56] The pre-Islamic Pashtun code of Pashtunwali – a Pashtun code of conduct, which emphasized pride, hospitality, dignity and revenge – strengthened Pashtun individuality and their sense of independence. Politics were characterized by factional rivalries among the dominant land-holders with little party allegiance. If one faction of landowners joined the Muslim League, their rivals would be just as likely to swing their support to the Indian National Congress.[57] Pashtun nationalism was directed against the British, who had resorted to brutal repression when faced with resistance to their rule. The Pashtuns had little competition from the small minority of Hindus in the province, and, thus, the appeal of the Muslim League – particularly the argument that Islam was in danger – had little resonance in the region.

The North West Frontier Province was the only Muslim majority area where the Indian National Congress remained the dominant party until after the Second World War. A major reason behind the success of Congress was the strong support that the party received from the legendary statesman and social worker Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who initiated a Pashtun

mass-nationalist movement.[58] He was an extremely devout Muslim who founded the Khudai Khidmatgars (Servants of God), known as the Redshirts for their crimson shirts that they regularly wore. His goal was to work for the independence of India through nonviolent methods.[59] Khan was very committed to social reform and improvements in areas such as education, health and hygiene. He was a very strong supporter of Congress and a very close confidant of Gandhi, thus earning him the title 'Frontier Gandhi'.[60] He envisaged a democratic, secular united India in which there would be a strong degree of regional autonomy in the Pashtun-dominated region. He despised the Muslim League, which was controlled by the powerful land-owning *khans*, and was a vehement opponent of the Pakistan movement.[61]

On first sight, the support of the tribal Pashtuns with their warrior tradition and history of independence for the pacifist Gandhi and his Hindu supporters seems very strange. In addition to the personal charisma and leadership skills of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, it seems that the Pashtuns hated British rule so much that they were prepared to ally with the Indian National Congress – the only effective nationalist party. They rejected the Muslim League because they considered, correctly, that Jinnah and his powerful land-owning supporters were more concerned in doing deals with the British than in trying to expel the infidel foreigners.[62]

Trying to make sense of the highly confusing legislative politics of the North West Frontier Province is extremely difficult, and we need only be aware of the general developments for the purposes of this volume. A Congress ministry ruled the province from 1937–1939. In attempting to carry out Congress commitment to land reforms, the party alienated many of the large *khans* or landowners. In May 1943, many of the prominent Congressmen were imprisoned, which gave the Muslim League the opportunity to form a ministry. Corruption, in-fighting and lack of discipline characterized the ministry, shocking and alienating the more idealistic party members of the Muslim League. Bribery of ministers was flagrant, particularly with the awarding of lucrative contracts of wheat and other supplies during the wartime shortages. In despair, a Muslim League activist wrote to Jinnah, stating, 'The whole Khanite class flocked into the Muslim League like vultures over a corpse.'[63] In 1945, Jinnah's appeal for unity for the creation of Pakistan was largely ignored, in contrast to other Muslim majority regions.

The sorry state of the organization and unity of this branch of the Muslim League was demonstrated by its failure in the 1946 provincial elections, in contrast to the League's success in the other majority areas. Not only did Congress win the majority of the seats, but it also won nine out of 36 of the seats reserved for Muslims. Congress was able to build upon the resentment against the large landowners and their alliances with the British, along with the support of Ghaffar Khan and his Redshirts.[64]

Because of his loyalty and unwavering support for Congress, Ghaffar Khan and his supporters felt bitterly betrayed by Congress when Nehru and most of the Congress leadership agreed to partition in 1947.[65] The location of the North West Frontier Province being surrounded by other Muslim areas ensured that partition would inevitably make it part of Pakistan. Only a handful of Congress leaders, who included Gandhi and Ghaffar Khan, opposed partition. Congress also agreed that a referendum be held in the North West Frontier Province, giving voters only two options: either integration into India or Pakistan. The passionate plea of Ghaffar Khan and his supporters for an independent Pashtun state, Pakhtunistan, was ignored by the Congress leadership and by the Pakistan governments ever since.[66]

A majority of North West Frontier Province Muslim voters voted for Pakistan in the 1947 referendum, but this success was, in part, due to the Congress Party and Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his supporters boycotting the referendum.[67] While the provincial Muslim League benefited from the defection of former Congressman to the party, their loyalty to the Muslim League, and, indeed, to Pakistan itself, was very tenuous. Ghaffar Khan's fears concerning the corruption of power were justified, and he was appalled by the greed, factionalism and blatant abuse of power that had become characteristic of Muslim League politics in the North West Frontier Province.[68] In addition to this, the question of an independent Pushtun nation – Pakhtunistan – was to remain a divisive political factor in in the province. Ghaffar Khan continued to work for a Pasthun nation after 1947 and spent years in Pakistani jails because of his campaigns for a Pashtun state.[69] In 2008, Pakistan made a concession to Pashtun regionalism by renaming the province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The legacy of partition

The Pakistan that emerged in 1947 was an unwieldy fragile state facing huge problems, which have continued to confront the various governments that have attempted to rule the state. The partition of the Punjab and Bengal was a bitter disappointment for Jinnah and resulted in a 'maimed, mutilated and moth-eaten' Pakistan.[70] First, was the weakness of democracy. The Muslim League emerged politically victorious, but was institutionally very weak. Its branches were either non-existent or riddled with factionalism. In West Pakistan, the Muslim League was dominated by large landlords, their allies and clients, in which faction, family, self-interest and the quest for power were far more important motivations than more idealistic and vital issues of nation-building and democracy. Because of the institutional weaknesses of the regional branches of the Muslim League, central authority under Jinnah was necessarily authoritarian. This authoritarian tendency of Pakistan governments has continued to be the norm. Pakistan's limited political development contrasts strikingly with

India, where the Congress Party was able to develop a powerful grassroots organization, with a strong, secular nationalist ideology, under a powerful leader, Jawaharlal Nehru. Unfortunately for Pakistan, Jinnah – the only Pakistani leader to command widespread obedience and respect – died in 1948, whereas Nehru remained Prime Minister of India until 1964. But even if Jinnah had lived longer, it is highly unlikely that the depressing history of its ineffective, corrupt governments would have been any different in the long term.

Second, the creation of Pakistan involved compromises with regional identity. The strongest regional identity was most pronounced in East Pakistan and was to result in the breakaway of the province in 1971. However, regional separatist aspirations have also survived in Sindh, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province. Ethnic and cultural differences between the Punjabis and other major ethnic groups – Pasthuns, Sindhis and Baluchis – have persisted and threatened to break up Pakistan. After Jinnah, no strong national leader was able to successfully tackle the issue of national integration.

While the leadership for a unified Muslim state came from the minority elite in the United Provinces, it was the compromises that Jinnah and his supporters were forced to make with the regional power-brokers, particularly landed interests, that enabled the formation of Pakistan in the first place. Jinnah and Pakistan, however, had to pay a high price: the weakness of democracy and the continued dominance of the land-owning elites.

The third major issue that has continued to plague Pakistani governments has been the role of Islam in the state. The Pakistan movement was characterized by the lack of any strong ideology, except a vague commitment to the protection of Muslim interests. The Pakistan movement was led by largely secular politicians, with the aim of protecting Muslims, who had no interest in creating an Islamic state. In fact, most of the conservative Islamic Deobandi political organizations had strongly opposed Jinnah and his followers.[71] The religious leaders argued that as Islam knew no national boundaries, the concept of an Islamic nation state was illogical and unacceptable. One of the most prominent opponents of Pakistan was Abul Ala Maududi, the founder of the Jamaat-i-Islami – the oldest and most powerful of Pakistan's religious parties. Maududi feared that Jinnah and his westernized leaders would establish a secular state along Western lines as has happened in Turkey. He criticized the Muslim League for cynically using slogans representing Islam in danger so as to gain support. According to Maududi, the only individuals who could be entrusted to the building a proper Islamic state should be those who are well-versed in Islamic learning and who are pious.[72]

Finally, while the cry of Islam in danger was an important rallying point, particularly during the Hindu–Muslim violence of 1946 and 1947, the place of Islam, in both the movement for Pakistan and its role in the new state, has remained highly ambiguous. In contrast to the strong Shia

support for Pakistan, many Sunni organizations have been tainted by their opposition to Pakistan.

The rulers of the new state of Pakistan inherited a number of serious structural problems, which, ever since, have presented severe problems in relation to governance and the development of Pakistan as a modern, prosperous, democratic state. The history of the movement for Pakistan enables us to better understand the nature of politics in Pakistan, which has been characterized by the weakness of government, the failure of democracy and the endemic corruption that affects all aspects of public life. As we have seen, with the exception of Bengal, ideology played very little role in the Pakistani movement, nor did loyalty to the Muslim League win the support of the landed elites in Sindh, the Punjab or the North West Frontier Province. The key, then, to understanding Pakistani politics is kinship and patronage, which have long been features of the politics in the lands which now make up Pakistan. Pakistan's political parties have continued to be dominated by the families of landlords, clan chiefs and urban bosses whom Jinnah had been forced to co-opt. Rewarding one's own family and supporters has remained the overriding concern of Pakistani politicians.[73]

As we shall see in later chapters, the weakness of democracy and the failure of a strong, effective government were to turn out to be important preconditions for the rise of terrorism and the emergence of sectarian violence in modern times. Weak governments, for example, which have been more interested in survival and self-interest than in making tough political decisions have found it extremely difficult to take necessary, strong action against terrorists. Moreover, no government – whether civilian or military – has been able to prevent landed interests which dominate political decision-making from blocking land reform and other necessary structural changes to Pakistani society.

3 Birth pains

The decline of democracy, sectarian violence and the intractable problem of Kashmir, 1947–1958

At independence, despite many problems, there were high expectations that Pakistan would develop into a strong, prosperous democratic state. A contemporary observer, the historian Ian Stephens, commented that: 'It was inspiring to visit Pakistan, and to feel the enthusiasms that did away with difficulties, in those early days.'[1] In 1948, Muhammad Ali Jinnah confidently commented on 'the soundness of Pakistan's finances and the determination of its Government to make them more and more sound and strong'.[2] Unfortunately, this optimism was premature, and, by 1958, democracy in Pakistan was virtually dead, sectarian violence had emerged and, most ominously, war with India over control of the Kashmir Valley was to lead to ongoing bitter conflict between the two states. The conflict continues to poison the relationship between these two neighbours and, eventually, led to Pakistan's state-supported terrorism in the Valley.

Pakistan faced many complex and difficult challenges which threatened the very survival of the new state. Politicians and bureaucrats were unable to resolve urgent problems relating to effective government, and as democracy weakened and Pakistani politics developed into farce and, ultimately, chaos, the military seized power for the first time in a bloodless coup in 1958. During this period in particular two other developments were to have a particular relevance for understanding the later growth of terrorism and sectarian violence. The period saw the first serious outbreak of sectarian conflict in the new state's history with the persecution of the minority Ahmadiyya sect. The most serious problem, however, was the conflict with Pakistan's powerful neighbour, India, over control of the disputed territory of Kashmir.

The decline of Pakistan's democracy and unity

Until the overthrow of General Musharraf in 2008, which was followed by the government of Asif Ali Zardari, there had been only three periods in time when civilian governments ruled in Pakistan. To some extent, the failure of democracy to take deep root in Pakistan has been due to the incompetence and corruption of politicians. While this has been an

important factor, corruption alone does not explain the failure of democracy. After all, politicians in neighbouring India have also had a notorious reputation for corruption, yet democracy has managed to work, for the most part, in that country.

At independence, Pakistan faced severe economic problems.[3] Over seven million refugees had to be successfully absorbed. The state was far less developed and substantially more economically vulnerable than its hostile neighbour, India. Partition had disrupted the transport system, communication networks and trade which had existed during British rule. The economy was largely subsistence agriculture, which provided a precarious livelihood for the majority of the population. At times, droughts and flood led to acute food shortages, even in highly productive regions such as the Punjab which normally produced a surplus.[4] Education and health services were totally inadequate to cater for the needs of the vast majority of the people, especially in rural areas, where only about 60 per cent of the population were literate. Initially, there was very little industry, most of which was located in India. In addition to this, the large majority of the commercial houses and banks were also located in India, where they were dominated by either Hindu or British capital. To compound Pakistan's economic problems, the most important entrepreneurs, managers and technicians were mainly Hindu, most of whom quickly relocated into India. The economic problem was most severe in East Pakistan, which had to send its most lucrative crop – jute – to be processed in Calcutta, which was in India.[5] In West Pakistan, which produced 40 per cent of the raw cotton crop of pre-partition India, only 14 of the 294 cotton mills were located in Pakistan.[6] The government at Karachi had to cope with a shortage of the most fundamental tools of administration, such as typewriters, telephones, desks and stationery. The state also severely lacked trained administrators.

To compound the economic problems, the new state had to cope with the aftermath of the terrible communal violence and the massive large-scale migrations of Muslims to Pakistan. The migration problem was particularly acute in the west Punjab, which saw an exodus of Hindus and Sikhs being replaced by Muslims from the East Punjab. In the Punjab, because of cultural, linguistic and kingship ties, the refugees from the Eastern Punjab were relatively easily able to integrate and become accepted as Pakistani citizens, unlike the immigrants from the Indian states of the United Provinces and Bihar. In the southern province of Sindh, the influx of large numbers of Urdu-speaking Muhajirs – migrants – from the United Provinces and Bihar, mainly to the large urban centres of Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur, has created ongoing ethnic tensions and rivalries between the Sindhis and the descendants of the migrants, which has led to widespread violence, including numerous assassinations, bombings and arson.[7]

Another major threat facing the new state of Pakistan was its peculiar geographical make-up. The most striking and unusual feature of the new

state was its division into west and east, each with their own distinctive historical traditions, language and culture. According to the 1961 Census, there were 51 million people living in East Pakistan and 43 million people distributed throughout the West. With a land area of approximately one-sixth of that of West Pakistan, East Pakistan had a slightly larger population.[8] Separated by over 1,000 miles of hostile Indian territory, the two halves grew wider apart, as the Eastern part became increasingly disillusioned with – and resentful towards – the Punjabi-dominated West. Compounding the regional problem was the growing resentment of Sindh, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province, each with its own ethnic and linguistic identities, towards the Punjabis who dominated the military and civil bureaucracy.

Unfortunately, for Pakistan, the single most important, respected and powerful political leader, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who almost single-handedly created Pakistan, died soon after independence on 11 September 1948. With his death, the dream of a democratic, tolerant and prosperous modern Pakistan began to fade rapidly. Jinnah had been 'the glue that kept everything together',[9] and many Pakistanis felt that had he lived, the history of Pakistan would have been far different and much more positive. The assassination of Jinnah's very competent former right-hand man and first Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaqat Ali Khan, on 16 October 1951, compounded the loss of Jinnah.[10] The death of the able Liaqat Ali Khan, so soon after the death of Jinnah, was another terrible blow to Pakistan democracy, from which it has, arguably, never recovered.

Without Jinnah's authority and strong leadership, the organizational and ideological weaknesses of the Muslim League were exposed. There is the possibility that Jinnah could have been able to prevent the disintegration of the severely factional-ridden Muslim League, which was largely dominated by large, powerful landlords, with little mass support except in East Pakistan. It is extremely unlikely, however, that even if Jinnah had survived, that democracy would have taken firm root. Pakistani politics were largely dominated by opportunistic self-seeking individuals and characterized by ever-changing factional alliances and allegiances. Ian Stephens describes the 'the much-publicized muddles, the shameful intrigues, the self-seeking and disillusion of 1952–1958'.[11] Between 1947 and 1958 alone, Pakistan had seven prime ministers.[12] By 1958, Pakistani politics were plagued by widespread corruption among politicians themselves, but also in the higher ranks of the civil service. In addition to this, the state's finances were in severe trouble.[13] In the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly in Dhaka, the members of the opposition rioted using chairs as weapons and killing the deputy speaker in the chaos.[14]

As democratic politics faltered, there was an increasing tendency towards authoritarianism. Jinnah, himself, was all powerful, combining the roles of Governor-General, President of the Muslim League and head of the constituent assembly. Despite his commitment to democracy, by virtue

of Jinnah's enormous prestige and authority, there was little democratic decision-making that took place while he was alive.[15] On his death, decision-making, by default, fell into the hands of a small group of well-educated bureaucrats from the British period who ruled in conjunction with the non-elected governor generals and the military.[16] This development continued after 1956, when Pakistan became a republic under powerful presidents. In October 1958, many Pakistanis were relieved when a group of generals, led by the Commander-in-Chief of the military, General Ayub Khan, seized power, dissolved the central and provincial legislatures, abrogated the Constitution of 1956, abolished all political parties and imposed martial law.[17]

Pakistan never had a nationwide general election until 1970, in contrast to its neighbour, India, which had its first national election in 1951. Many factors help to explain the failure of Pakistan's democracy. The military stressed the need for intervention because of the corruption and failure of the politicians in power.[18] However, another explanation emphasizes the authoritarian nature of the governor generals and later presidents, who so readily dismissed elected governments.[19] The decline and virtual disintegration of the Muslim League meant that there was no strong, disciplined political party that had nationwide popular support. Politics and policy were dominated by factionalism and self-interest. With the resulting vacuum of power, the bureaucrats and the military, with their strong authoritarian tendencies inherited from the British Raj, took over.[20] Ayesha Jalal states that: 'the institutional balance of power shifted in favour of the military and the bureaucracy'.[21]

One of the most vexed issues facing Pakistan was the drawing up of a constitution. There is speculation that had Jinnah lived his prestige and authority would have enabled him to quickly push through a secular and democratic constitution. Alternatively, he might have simply decided that the whole constitution issue was too difficult and controversial and, thus, had it indefinitely shelved.[22] The major constitutional question, which has continued to plague Pakistani politics, has been the issue of whether Pakistan was to be a home for Muslims or an Islamic state. Fear of Hindu domination and the protection of Muslim interests were the only common bonds uniting the very disperse ethnic, regional and cultural differences among the Muslim groups in Pakistan. In order to attempt to forge national unity and discipline, the leadership of the Muslim League and other politicians were forced to invoke Islam – a task taken up by even those hard-nosed politicians who were secularists or irreligious and opposed to the introduction of religion into the field of politics. This dilemma opened up opportunities for the religious parties in Pakistan to demand an Islamic state with an Islamic constitution.[23] The Muslim political parties managed to include a clause in the Constitution of 1956 stating that Pakistan would, henceforth, be called the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and that no laws could be passed that were contrary to the teachings

of Islam.[24] It was a minor victory for the religious parties and their political supporters, but an ominous sign of the future political clout of the religious.

During its early history, Pakistan was considered a very tolerant, moderate Muslim nation that could serve as a model for other newly independent Muslim states. Pakistan's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, was a Shia Muslim. The first law minister was a Hindu. Its foreign minister belonged to the controversial, minor Ahmadiyya sect.[25] Although Pakistan's birth was accompanied by religious riots and communal violence, the country's founders intended to create a non-sectarian state that would protect religious freedoms. Initially, the small number of Hindus, Sikhs and Christians who had remained in Pakistan, along with members of minor Shia sects, lived in peace and security with their Muslim neighbours, as they had done for generations.

Under Jinnah's firm leadership, Pakistan adopting a constitution committed to democracy and secularism would, undoubtedly, have been a possible. In a speech to the constituent assembly on 11 August 1947, Jinnah declared, in no uncertain terms, that: 'You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the state.... We are starting with his fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one state.'[26] He repeated his unwavering commitment to the creation of a secular state in a radio speech in the US, when he firmly stated that Pakistan was not going to be a theocratic Islamic state: 'We have many non-Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and Parsi – but they are all Pakistanis. They will enjoy the same rights and privileges as any other citizens and will play their rightful parts in the affairs of Pakistan.'[27] Politicians and clerics who advocate that Pakistan should be governed strictly according to Islamic law still have had to confront Jinnah's firm statement of secularism. Unfortunately, the death of Jinnah forcefully ended the hope of keeping religion out of the constitution debate and out of politics. Unfortunately, also, for the secularists, politically motivated sectarian violence soon reared its ugly head.

Sectarian violence and politics: the anti-Ahmadiyya movement

In Lahore, on 28 May 2010, seven terrorists, including three suicide bombers, attacked two mosques belonging to the Ahmadiyya (Ahmadi) sect with guns, grenades and bombs, killing 94 people and injuring over 92. A Punjabi Taliban organization – the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan – claimed responsibility.[28] This attack was just the latest of several attacks on the small community – about two million living in Pakistan – and is just one of the many examples of sectarian violence in Pakistan which has emerged in recent times. Human rights groups and members of the sect have criticized the government of the Punjab province for failing to

protect Ahmadiyyas from violence, threats and terrorist actions. They also demand the repeal of Pakistan's penal code, which discriminates against the sect by forbidding them to call themselves Muslim. Under Pakistan's so-called 'blasphemy laws', Ahmadiyyas can be charged with blasphemy for professing their faith, which carries the weight of, in theory, the death penalty.[29]

Pakistan has a long history of persecution of the Ahmadiyyas, with the first major outbreak of widespread violence throughout the Punjab from the beginning of March to the middle of April 1953, which required the military to step in in order to restore law and order. The Governor of the Punjab set up a court of public inquiry into the disturbances, which led to the publication of a very detailed 387-page document.[30] The report, known, for short, as the Munir Report, named after the Chief Justice Muhammad Munir, who presided over the inquiry, is an invaluable primary resource that details how Punjabi politicians used religious prejudice for political gain – a trend that was to become all too common in Pakistani politics.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community – the official name of the sect – was founded in 1889 by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1839–1908), who was born in the Punjabi village of Qadian.[31] (The sect is often derogatorily referred to as the 'Qadiana' community by its opponents.) Ahmad was the grandson of a Muslim general, but became a religious scholar versed in Persian and Arabic manuscripts and books. In 1889, Ahmad declared that he had received a divine revelation, which authorized him to accept the obedience of the faithful. According to his revelation, Jesus had not died on the cross, but managed to escape and travelled to Kashmir, where he lived a long and happy life.[32] In 1891, he claimed to be the expected *mahdi* or Messiah, which had been foretold by the prophet Muhammad. He claimed to be Jesus Christ, reborn to save the world. His teachings incorporated elements from Sufism, orthodox Islam and Christianity. He also claimed that the movement was to reform Islam and that he was waging a *jihad* of reason, not preaching a new religion. His goal was to revive and strengthen Islam in the face of criticisms from the British Raj, proselytizing Christians and revivalist Hindus, particularly members of the Arya Samaj – an aggressively anti-Muslim, Hindu reform movement.[33] In 1914, the sect divided into two groups – the Qadiana and the Lahori. The Qadiana, who take their name from the birthplace of the founder, regard Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet, and those who refuse to accept this they regard as *kafir* (unbelievers). The Lahori, who set up their headquarters in Lahore, revere him as a reformer and see themselves as part of the wider Muslim community. Despite the distinction, both groups have consistently experienced persecution and discrimination.[34]

Members of the community claim that they are Muslims, and the sect was registered as a separate Muslim sect in 1901. Many members of the close-knit community have a high level of education and are prominent in

civil society, particularly in government, the professions and education. Many also are small businessmen. The sect often appeals to well-educated Muslims and angers their more orthodox religious opponents by their proselytizing successes. Some of the Ahmadiyya were very active in the movement for Pakistan, and many of the key bureaucrats of the new state were drawn from this community. The most well-known was the distinguished statesman Sir Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan, who later became Pakistan's first foreign minister.[35]

While members of the community claim that Ahmad only intended to revive the true spirit of Islam, the majority of Sunnis and Shias believe that Ahmed claimed to be a prophet, in that he identified himself as the promised *mahdi* who would conquer the world for Islam, as well as being a *nabi* or messenger of God. In so doing, according to their critics, the Ahmadiyyas rejected the central tenet of Islam – namely, that Muhammad was the last of the great prophets. As such, Ahmad and his followers were guilty of blasphemy, which, under Section 295C of Pakistan's Penal Code, carries the death penalty. Ahmadiyyas claim that Ahmed's goal was only to reform Islam and that his position was that of a secondary prophet has been largely rejected by the majority of both Sunnis and Shias. Initially, however, most Muslims in Pakistan either ignored the tiny sect or regarded Ahmed as deluded.[36]

The precipitating event for the disturbances was a rejection, in 1953, by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Khawaja Nazimuddin, of a number of demands put forward by a deputation of *ulema* from the Majlis-i-Amal – a coalition of religiously based political parties. The *ulema* demanded that the Ahmadiyya must be declared a non-Muslim sect, and Ahmadiyyas who held positions in government should be dismissed from their positions, particularly the foreign minister, Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan. The demands were rejected, and leaders of the Majlis-i-Amal were arrested in Karachi when they threatened to take direct action. The arrests provoked violence in many parts of India, particularly in the Punjab.[37] This anti-Ahmadiyya movement, which initially developed during the 1950s, was a prelude to contemporary sectarian conflict and violence and, like the sectarian violence that has since plagued Pakistani society, was deeply rooted in social conflict and politics.

Although both Sunnis and Shias criticized the teachings of the Ahmadiyya, the main opposition came from the Deobandi *ulema*, who had a long history of anti-Ahmadiyya activities. Abul Ala Maududi, leader of the Jammat-i-Islami (Party of Islam) – the oldest of Pakistan's religious parties – was, in part, blamed for the unrest, although it appears that while the party supported a peaceful protest, it was opposed to the violence that followed.[38] The major goal of the party was to turn Pakistan into an Islamic state through propaganda, political action and force, if necessary.[39] The major leadership for the movement, however, came from the Majlis-i-Ahrar (Ahrar) – a middle class political party, comprising mainly of lawyers and

journalists with socialist tendencies which had been founded in 1930.[40] The party had a long history of anti-Ahmadiyya activities in British India. In fact, the very origin and foundation of the party was centred on their mutual hatred of the Ahmadiyya. They saw the Ahmadiyya not only as infidels, but also as a privileged elite, who had cooperated with, and, thus, benefited from, British rule, and, therefore, their ideology was both religious and class-based.[41] The party's political ideology was a mixture of nationalism and a puritanical and austere Islam.

As Indian nationalists, the Ahrar allied themselves with the Indian National Congress and strongly opposed partition. They also vehemently criticized the Muslim League and the movement for Pakistan and were particularly critical of its revered leader, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, labelling him an infidel and an elitist who was out of touch with the majority of poor Muslims.[42] Sandwiched between the Muslim League and the Congress, the party was routed in the 1945–1946 Indian provincial elections. They were further politically marginalized when India was partitioned in 1947, as power was transferred either to the Indian National Congress or to the Muslim League.[43]

Eventually, some Ahrars reluctantly decided to continue their activities in Pakistan, particularly their campaign against the Ahmadiyyas.[44] While some of the motivation for the agitation against the Ahmadiyyas was religiously motivated, the campaigns against the small, unpopular sect also gave them the opportunity to extend their political influence. In particular, the anti-Ahmadiyya controversy gave the Ahrar, and, indeed, other Deobandi political organizations, the chance to shift the political debate away from their highly embarrassing role in opposing the formation of Pakistan – which had made them political pariahs and traitors – to that of defining who was to be a Muslim in Pakistan. Specifically, they argued that while they may have opposed the formation of Pakistan, unlike the majority of Shias, as orthodox Muslims they had a right to a strong voice in an Islamic state.[45] As one prominent Deobandi leader put it: '[w]e are fortunate that we had no role in the sin of the creation of Pakistan, but being here we have every claim to its politics and future.'[46]

The Muslim League in the Punjab, led by the Oxford-educated Chief Minister Mian Mumtaz Daultana, sought a base of support among the religious electorate, and, in order to attain that support, they were prepared to turn a blind eye to the resulting agitations against the Ahmadiyya.[47] Daultana, and other Muslim League politicians, played the double game of outwardly supporting the crackdown on violence but secretly supporting the agitation.[48] The Ahrar campaign in the Punjab was greatly strengthened by the very difficult economic circumstances, with resulting food shortages and exorbitant food prices. Daultana was cleverly able to deflect criticism of his government's handling of economic issues by blaming the Ahmadiyyas.

The Ahrar were also able to use the underlying economic unrest to mobilize support in the name of Islam. The Ahrar linked the question of

the Islamization of the state to the economic difficulties by focusing on the privileges of the tiny elite of Ahmadiyya.[49] The Ahrar campaign was further strengthened when Zafaruullah Khan, against the advice of his Prime Minister, addressed a meeting of Ahmadiyyas in Karachi, thus confirming his membership of the sect. This strengthened the claim of the Ahrars – namely, the infidel Ahmadiyyas were in control of the government and were, consequently, responsible for the hardships suffered by the masses.[50] Shops, mosques and the homes of several members of the sect were destroyed, while some Ahmadiyyas were murdered by violent mobs. The Pakistani eminent journalist, film-maker and author Tariq Ali narrates how as a nine-year-old schoolboy, he witnessed the terrifying spectacle of a mob senselessly attacking a shoe store belonging to the father of one of his Ahmadiyya school friends.[51]

Eventually, as the civilian authorities were unable to maintain law and order, the Pakistani Governor General, Ghulam Muhammad, was forced to declare martial law in the Punjab, and the army was instructed to enter and shoot rioters on sight. These stern measures soon stopped the violence. It did, however, mark, for the first time, the involvement of the military in civilian politics and set a violent precedent for the future. Ghulam Muhammad subsequently dismissed Daultana from his position as Chief Minister of the Punjab because of his involvement with the anti-Ahmadiyya elements.[52]

Evidence was taken from all involved, including Ahrars, Ahmadiyyas and the police, and the resulting Munir Report was scathingly critical of the Muslim League politicians in the Punjab. Not only did the Muslim League government in the Punjab not take firm steps to stamp out the violence, but many senior members of the party actually took a prominent part in the agitation. Many of the Punjabi politicians were eager to win popular support by supporting the agitation. The report stated that the evidence provided by the Provincial Muslim League to the inquiry was 'a complete disappointment' in making no attempt to defend its actions.[53]

The report was just as damning in its criticisms of the groups involved in the controversy, particularly the Ahrars. It pointed out that by opposing the creation of Pakistan, they had lost popular support. However, by choosing to identify themselves with the Muslim League in the Punjab, they had regained some credibility. The populist anti-Ahmadiyya campaign won them support amongst the masses, with their highly emotional appeal to protect the honour and position of Muhammad as the last and final prophet.[54] The report was particularly critical of the cynical use of religion for political ends. It declared that the Ahrar 'consistently exploited religion for their own political ends'[55] and that the 'Ahrar brought the Ahmadiyya controversy out of their old armoury clearly as a political weapon'.[56] The report concluded that for the Ahrar, 'Islam with them was a weapon they could drop and pick up at pleasure to discomfit a particular adversary.'[57]

Finally, the report strongly attacked the view held by the Ahrars and others that because of their religious beliefs, the Ahmadiyyas were *kafirs* and should be put to death by the state, according to Ahrar interpretation of Islamic law. The report pointed out the absurdity of this position, given the fact that in the inquiry the evidence given by the *ulema* demonstrated very clearly that that was no consensus whatsoever among Muslim scholars as to what actually constituted a Muslim. It pointed out, in no uncertain fashion, that no two *ulema* 'have agreed before us as to the definition of a Muslim'.[58] Many Sunni, for example, also consider the Shia to be *kafirs*. According to the report, the logical consequence of imposing a death sentence on the Ahmadiyyas would be that if a religious group controlled government, then all others with whom it differed scripturally would then be liable for the death penalty. It summed up the argument as follows:

> The net result of all this is that neither Shias nor Sunnis nor Deobandi nor Ahl-i-Hadith nor Barelvis are Muslims and any change from one view to the other must be accompanied in an Islamic state with the penalty of death if the Government of the State is in the hands of the party which considers the other party to be *kafirs*.[59]

The question of defining who was a Muslim in Pakistan has remained a highly contentious and divisive issue, particularly during the later attempts by General Zia ul-Haq to Islamize Pakistan as a Sunni state. The 1953 movement had opened up, for the first time, the explosive Pandora's Box of sectarian violence. The anti-Ahmadiyya violence has had severe consequences for sectarian violence in Pakistan. Criticism of the cynical use of religion for political advantage, as expressed so strongly in the Munir Report, was the last-ditch, but unsuccessful, effort to keep religion out of the realm of Pakistani politics. The Ahmadiyyas continue to be harassed as a religious group. While many Shias joined with Sunnis during the persecution of the Ahmadiyyas in 1953, it was to backfire on them later, when, in recent times, they became the victims of sectarian violence. Many of the leaders of the militant anti-Shia organization, Sipah-e-Sahaba, which has a long history of violence against the Shias in contemporary Pakistan, began their career in politics during the anti-Ahmadiyya movement. The controversy raised the question of what it meant to be a Muslim in Pakistan yet again with some Sunni militants arguing that the Shia were also non-Muslim.[60] It was a lesson on how Islam could be exploited by politicians, including, as we shall see later, the alleged socialist-minded and secular Prime Minister, Zulifkar Ali Bhutto.

Troubles in 'paradise': the never-ending Kashmiri dispute

One of the great tragedies of modern South Asian history is the long-standing dispute between India and Pakistan over the beautiful valley of

Kashmir. The decision of the Hindu ruler Maharaja Hari Singh to join his principality to India, in October 1947, was bitterly resented by Pakistan and led to the outbreak of the first war between India and Pakistan and to enduring conflict between the two countries. Ever since independence, the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir has dominated the relationship between the two countries. It has led to wars in 1948 and 1965, a more limited war in 1999 and, in recent times, threatened to escalate into open conflict, with the horrifying threat of nuclear warfare always present. The Kashmiri conflict is, without doubt, one of the bitterest legacies of the partition of the Indian subcontinent. The conflict was to have very grave consequences for the growth of terrorism and sectarian violence in both Pakistan and Kashmir.

The Kashmir Valley is one of the most beautiful places in the world. It is surrounded by high Himalayan Mountains, with access to the region through more than 20 passes. It contains some of the most spectacular scenery in the world, with snow-covered mountains and fertile river valleys, but, despite this beauty, life has been very hard for the majority of those who live in this 'paradise'. Throughout its history, Kashmir has either been absorbed into great empires or had its own independent rule. It was incorporated into the Ashokan Empire under the great ruler Ashoka, who strongly patronized Buddhism – sending missionaries to Kashmir. It was later incorporated into the Buddhist Kushan Empire, whose greatest ruler, King Kanishka, held his court there.[61] Later it was ruled by independent Hindu rulers, of whom Lalitaditya was the most famous.[62]

The Kashmir Valley later came under the influence of various independent Muslim rulers; most of whom tolerated and respected the religious beliefs of their subjects. Under Muslim rule, Hindu Brahmins remained the most important administrators, and Sanskrit remained the official language of the court, until it was later replaced by Persian. During the high point of Muslim rule in India under the Mughals, Kashmir became a refuge for the Mughal elite escaping from the harsh summer of the Indian plains. The Mughals constructed numerous gardens for which the Valley became famous.[63] With the incorporation into the Mughal Empire, the Kashmiris lost their independence once again. Later, Kashmir came under the rule of Muslim Afghans, who are remembered for their harsh rule and religious oppression of the Hindus.[64] The Afghans, in turn, were replaced by the Sikhs, who were also remembered for their tough rule and the miserable living conditions of the masses of the population.[65] Pride in the independence of both their own Hindu and Muslim dynasties has helped to cement the strength of independence in modern Kashmir and build resistance to outside powers, whether these be Hindu, Muslim or secular.[66]

It is ironic that Kashmir has become a centre of terrorism and religious conflict in recent times. Traditionally, Islam in Kashmir has been generally very tolerant and highly syncretic. It is believed that Islam first began to

penetrate Kashmir from Central Asia following the trade routes. The initial slow spread of Islam accelerated with the arrival of Sufi mystics in the early 1300s from Central Asia. The Sufis and indigenous Kashmiri saints were largely responsible for the early spread of Islam.[67] The form of Islam that emerged in Kashmir had been strongly influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism. The three religions have produced a unique sociocultural and religious fusion known as Kashmiriyat, with its shared cuisine, music and language, which draws upon the mystical traditions of the devotional worship of Islamic Sufism and Hindu Bhakti.[68] Kashmiriyat had been promoted by the fourteenth-century Muslim ruler Zain-ul-Abideen in order to promote harmony between Hindus and Muslims.[69] The most popular face of worship in the Kashmir Valley are still Sufi shrines, which attract Hindu, Muslims and Sikhs. A Hindu woman mystic, Lal Dedh, is still revered by both Hindus and Muslims. A strikingly beautiful, popular myth in Kashmir is that after her death, Lal Dedh's body turned into a mound of flowers, half of which were buried by Hindus and the other half buried by Muslims.[70] The practice of *urs* – an annual festival that is held at the shrines of Sufi saints to mark the anniversaries of their deaths – is traditionally celebrated together by Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, despite attempts in recent years by extremists to stop them.[71]

The origins of the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir are clouded in controversy and have resulted in fiercely acrimonious debate between scholars, particularly from India and Pakistan. Some facts, however, are widely accepted by all parties.[72] Kashmir had been ruled by various Muslim regimes, but as the Mughal Empire declined, the region came under the control of Maharaja Gulab Singh, a Hindu Rajput Dogra, with the connivance of the English East India Company, whom he had supported in one of the battles in Afghanistan. In 1846, the English sold the Kashmir Valley to Gulab Singh.[73]

By 1850, Gulab Singh had managed to create the largest princely state in India, consisting of the Muslim-dominated Kashmir Valley, the remote, isolated Ladakh, with its Buddhist majority, and Jammu, which was mainly Hindu.[74] The Dogra Rajput clan ruled through Kashmiri Brahmin civil servants – the Pandits – of whom the most famous descendent was the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru.

In 1947, the state of Jammu and Kashmir was ruled by the Maharaja Hari Singh – Gubab Singh's great-grandson – who was an ineffectual, authoritarian and unpopular ruler, especially with his Muslim subjects. The maharaja was one of the rulers of the 550 princely states in the Indian subcontinent, who, in return for recognizing the supremacy of the British Crown, were left alone to manage their own internal affairs. A few princes were enlightened rulers, but the majority, both Hindu and Muslim, were anachronistic, feudal despots. Like many of his peers, the maharaja was more interested in horse racing, hunting and sex than in the effective administration of the state under his control.[75] The mass of the

population – who were mainly Muslims – were treated very poorly by the maharaja's administration. In fact, so bad was the discrimination and mistreatment of the Muslim poor that, in 1929, one of the maharaja's Hindu officials resigned his post because of the ill-treatment of the Muslim majority, whom he described as illiterate and poverty-stricken, and who were 'governed like dumb driven cattle'.[76] In 1941, a Hindu writer reported that most Muslims were poverty-stricken serfs working for absentee landlords. He stated that: 'The poverty of the Muslim masses is appalling. Dressed in rags and barefoot, a Muslim peasant represents the appearance of a starving beggar.'[77] Opposition to the maharaja's government grew during the 1930s, paralleling Congress agitations in British India. In 1931, police fired on a crowd of demonstrators after an agitator was jailed.[78] In August 1938, street protests against unemployment, high taxation and lack of medical facilities involved Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. Their leaders emphasized their unity and their commitment to secularism.[79]

Like the other princes of the former British Indian Empire, the maharaja had to decide whether to amalgamate his state with India or Pakistan. Apparently he refused to accept the fact that the British were leaving India.[80] Initially, he vacillated hoping that his mountainous kingdom would remain an independent state, but both Jinnah and Nehru demanded that he join either India or Pakistan. The newly appointed Viceroy for India, Lord Louis Mountbatten, was also adamant that the ruler, along with the rulers of all the other Indian states, join either India or Pakistan.

There has been a great deal of debate about the role that Mountbatten played in the events that led to the partition of Kashmir.[81] According to some historians, Mountbatten improperly used his position to persuade the maharaja to join India, despite Kashmir's geographical position being contiguous to Pakistan and its overwhelming Muslim population which should have made Pakistan the logical choice.[82] The former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chaudhri Mohammad Ali, went so far as to claim that 'while maintaining an outward appearance of impartiality, Mountbatten was playing the Congress game in Kashmir'.[83] He also claimed that Mountbatten dissuaded Jinnah from going to Kashmir, but arranged for Gandhi to visit the Valley on 1 August 1947.[84] The fact that Nehru had a very strong friendship with Mountbatten and that he had a love affair – possibly platonic – with Mountbatten's wife, Edwina, has greatly strengthened the claims of many Pakistanis scholars in particular that the Viceroy was not impartial.[85] At the very least, Mountbatten's behaviour was arrogant and foolish.

The majority of the maharaja's subjects were Muslim, who bitterly resented his heavy-handed despotic rule. Kashmiris were, and are still are, divided over whether to join with Pakistan, India or, if given the choice, to attempt to create an independent state. The major, mass-based, Muslim, pre-independence political organization, the All Jammu, and Kashmiri

Muslim Conference, led by Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, was committed to land reforms and strongly opposed the rule of the maharaja. Sheikh Abdullah had become friends with the like-minded secularist and socialist thinker Congress leader Jawaharlal Nehru. His friendship and similar ideological beliefs convinced him that long-overdue land reforms in Kashmir would have a much better chance of succeeding with Nehru and the Congress Party who were committed to supporting his socialist policies, rather than Jinnah and his reactionary landlord supporters.[86] As the most important Muslim leader in Kashmir, Abdullah's support for accession to India was crucially important in the events that followed.[87] Abdullah's strongest opponent, Ghulam Abbas, who favoured integration with Pakistan, had come from Jammu and could not speak Kashmiri which very much limited his ability to adequately challenge Abdullah.[88]

In contrast to Nehru and Congress, Jinnah and the Muslim League leadership made the fatal mistake of taking little interest in Kashmir, considering that as a Muslim majority area, it would naturally become part of Pakistan. According to Jinnah, Kashmir would 'fall into our lap like a ripe fruit'.[89] Jinnah's logical lawyer's mind probably blinded him to the highly emotive motivation of Nehru and the more pragmatic and ruthless leaders of Congress who were determined that Kashmir would go to India. Jinnah only visited Kashmir once, in May 1944, as he and the other leaders of the Muslim League were preoccupied with trying to win support for the partition in the other Muslim majority areas. In retrospect, it was a fatal error of judgment, as Nehru and Congress members worked assiduously to win support for accession to India. Nehru, in particular, was determined that Kashmir would join India, in part because of his highly emotional personal attachment to the land of his ancestors.[90]

Hari Singh was unable to make a decision about the future of his kingdom. As an authoritarian ruler, he intensely disliked the leadership of the Congress Party, particularly Nehru and his socialist policies, who provided such strong support for Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah. On the other hand, as a Hindu ruler, he was opposed to Jinnah and his Muslim supporters. He also considered creating a neutral independent kingdom – 'the Switzerland of Asia' – encouraged by a Hindu holy man, according to his son.[91] His vacillating was to have severe consequences for Kashmir, as well as for India and Pakistan. In retrospect, a strong case can be made to the effect of if Kashmir had been peacefully annexed to Pakistan, much of the subsequent tension and violence between India and Pakistan would have been naturally avoided. Other scholars, however, particularly Indian, vehemently reject this assertion.

As the maharaja vacillated, during late August and early September 1947 law and order began to break down in his kingdom. Impoverished Muslim peasants of the district of Poonch, in the south-west corner of Kashmir, resenting the oppression of the Hindu Dogra Rajput landowners spontaneously rebelled and proclaimed the area to be part of

Azad Kashmir (Free Kashmir).[92] The Pooch rebellion was joined by several thousand Pashtun tribals from the North West Frontier Province, who have had a long and fraught history of invading and looting their neighbours. The tribals crossed into Kashmir to support the rebellion, and from 24 October 1947 a ragtag army of tribals from the north moved towards the capital Srinagar in decrepit buses and trucks.[93] It is unclear what role the central government in Karachi played, but the tribals were strongly encouraged by government officials in the North West Frontier Province, who provided petrol, grain and transportation.[94] The Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, knew of the operation and did nothing to prevent it.[95] Initially, the tribesmen had great success and even threatened the capital, Srinagar itself, but their impetus was fatally delayed as they engaged in widespread looting and senseless acts of violence, including the massacre and rape of Hindus and Sikhs, which turned the locals, including Muslims, against them.[96]

With his kingdom under threat, Hari Singh could no longer prevaricate and had to call upon India to rescue him. After Hari Singh had released Shaikh Abdullah from jail, the new Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, agreed to Hari Singh's request for military support against the invaders, provided that the maharaja agreed to sign an act of secession, uniting his state with India. There is considerable, often very acrimonious, historical debate, particularly in India and Pakistan, about whether the maharaja signed the accession document on the 25, 26 or 27 of October.[97] If the accession document was signed later than the deployment of Indian troops at dawn on 27 October, then India was an illegal invader.[98] At any rate, the First Sikh Battalion was airlifted into Srinagar and effectively blocked the advance of the tribal forces. In response, the Pakistan army moved into Kashmir in May 1948, which resulted in an undeclared war between the two states. On 1 January 1949, the United Nations brokered a peace agreement partitioning Kashmir. Pakistan controlled the western area, now known as Azad (free) Kashmir, which also included the northern mountainous regions of Gilgit, Baltistan, Hunza and Nagar. To the south and east, the Kashmir Valley and most of Jammu, along with Ladak, became part of the territory of the Indian Union. About two-thirds of the former princely state of Kashmir was controlled by India, with Pakistan controlling the other third.[99]

The outcome left both nations dissatisfied, particularly Pakistan. It is difficult for an outsider to fully appreciate the deep anger, frustration and bitterness over the partition of Kashmir which is still felt by Pakistanis. It has remained a highly emotive issue, which often militates against rational discussion and decision-making. The official position of the Pakistan government, which is supported by many scholars, is that the accession to India was illegal, perhaps the consequence of a conspiracy between Nehru and Mountbatten. They argue that the instrument of accession had not been signed when the Indian troops were sent to Kashmir, and, consequently,

India was the aggressor.[100] Protagonists for the Indian position dispute this fact just as vehemently and argue that, as the maharaja had agreed to accession, it had legal right to the region. Supporters of Mountbatten point out that there was an understanding between Mountbatten and Nehru that a referendum would be held later in which the Kashmiris would decide whether to join India or Pakistan. Mountbatten stated that: 'as soon as law and order has been restored in Kashmir and its soil cleared of the invaders, the question of the State's should be settled by a reference to the people'.[101] India has never agreed to hold a referendum, demanding that Pakistan must first withdraw its so-called illegal occupation of Western Kashmir. Pakistan's other strong argument is that as the majority of Kashmiris are Muslims, living alongside their fellow Muslims in Pakistan, Kashmir logically belongs in Pakistan. Pakistanis also indignantly point out that the Muslim-ruled princely states of Junagadh and Hyderabad were forcibly annexed by India on the grounds that most of the population was Hindu. India, on the other hand, argues that the tribal armies, who infiltrated Kashmir in 1947, were not Kashmiris, but Pashtun tribesmen who were encouraged and supported by the Pakistani officials. India has consistently rejected the Pakistani claim that the rising in the Poonch district was spontaneous, directed against a highly unpopular Hindu government, but, rather, that it was instigated by the Pakistani government.[102] According this argument, India is the victim of Pakistani subversion.

Whatever the validity of the arguments, the conflict over Kashmir has had disastrous consequences for all concerned: India, Pakistan and, most of all, Kashmir itself. The people of Kashmir have long been the victims of terrorism from Pakistani-based terrorist groups. At the same time, they have suffered Indian state terrorism perpetuated by India's security services who have a shameful history of human rights abuses.

The conflict has been a continuously suppurating sore in the relationship between India and Pakistan, and it is the major cause of the long-standing and persistent hostility between the two countries. It has led to the, often paranoid, fear that India has been intent on destroying the Pakistani state. One highly respected journalist and academic Anatol Lieven has gone so far as to claim that the military's obsession with Kashmir 'has done terrible damage to Pakistan' and 'could in some circumstances destroy Pakistan and its armed forces altogether'.[103] The feelings of impotence and frustration have encouraged the Pakistani military and politicians to support anti-Indian groups in Kashmir to wage a proxy war using terrorist tactics. This, in turn, has greatly strengthened terrorist groups in Pakistan itself and, similarly, in Kashmir.

One of the other important consequences of the Kashmir conflict is that it has strengthened the authority, status and legitimacy of the military as a staunch defender of Pakistan and Islam from the predatory designs of the powerful enemy, India. A high proportion of Pakistan's national budget has been allocated for defense, amounting to nearly 26 per cent of

the total budget in 2010–2011.[104] The perceived threat from India has strengthened the non-elective institutions of the state, the bureaucracy and the military and has contributed to the failure of democracy in Pakistan.

Kashmir is symbolically and emotionally very important for both India and Pakistan. For Pakistan, it symbolizes the rationale for the very existence of the state: a place of safety for Muslims. For India, Kashmir is seen as a test case for India's claim to be a secular democratic state, in which all its citizens have full rights. Despite all the emotions and ensuing debates, the settlement of the Kashmir issue is probably one of the preconditions for the resolution of conflict in the subcontinent and for the defeat of terrorism.

Conclusion

The failure to resolve the problems facing Pakistan in the years immediately following independence meant that future Pakistani governments have had to face the same mounting problems, which, as time has progressed, have become more intransigent and interrelated. By 1958, the military, in alliance with the powerful senior bureaucracy, had a very strong hold on the state. The weakness of democracy and the continued authoritarian approach to government by the Punjabi-dominated government or military rule has continued to produce resentment throughout Pakistan, but particularly in the non-Punjabi provinces. The uncertainty of the relationship between Islam and the state and the quest for legitimacy by government has heightened religious intolerance and sectarianism, which was first manifested during the anti-Ahmadiyya riots. The riots were a clear demonstration of the huge potential of religious-based politics – a lesson that was not lost on secular and religious politicians alike. Compounding all of the above for the new state was the beginnings of the extremely destructive rivalry between India and Pakistan over the disputed territory of Kashmir, which was to drain the Pakistan state of resources, increase the authority of the military and bureaucracy and, in the long-run, greatly strengthen extremist forms of Islam.

4 Jinnah's dream fades

Dictatorship, state terrorism and the failure of secularism, 1958–1977

By 1977, Muhammad Ali Jinnah's dream of a democratic, united and tolerant Pakistan had all but faded away. Three major problems confronted Pakistan and its leaders between 1958 and 1977. The first was whether Pakistan should be ruled democratically by elected politicians or whether the state needed strong authoritarian rule by the military in conjunction with senior bureaucrats. The second problem, which was closely linked to the first, was whether Pakistan should be governed by a strong central government or whether there should be extensive devolution of power to the provinces. The final question was that of the role of Islam in the state, and, specifically, whether Pakistan should continue to support Jinnah's goal of a secular, liberal, tolerant state. The three key political leaders during this period, the military strong men, General Ayub Khan and General Yahya Khan and the charismatic populist politician, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, failed to resolve any of these key problems. Their failures, particularly those of Bhutto, were tragic in that they ushered in a new, and much more dangerous, stage in Pakistan's history.

The 'benevolent' dictator: secularism and the authoritarian rule of Ayub Khan

On 27 October 1958, Ayub Khan was the first of Pakistan's military strongmen to seize power. A Pasthun, he came from a comfortable, but not highly privileged, background. His father was a retired senior non-commissioned officer, who depended upon his small land-holding in order to provide for his family. He was educated, for some time, at Aligarh Muslim University, where he came under the influence of Islamic modernism, which emphasized the value of modern education, progress and human development. Such an approach welcomed diversity and the tolerance of other sects and religions. While not anti-religious as such, he was contemptuous and dismissive of what he regarded as the backward and outdated teachings of narrowly educated clerics, who refused to accept the need for Islam to adapt to the modern world. After leaving Aligarh, he studied at the elite Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst in Britain, where

he quickly absorbed the mannerisms and attitudes of the British officer class. He later saw active service on the Burma Front. On 17 January 1951, he became Pakistan's Commander-in-Chief.

Ayub Khan was appalled by the behaviour and ineffectiveness of Pakistani politicians during the chaotic years since independence. He spoke of the 'total administrative, economic, political, and moral chaos in the country'.[2] Like many of his peers in the military, Ayub Khan was contemptuous of politicians whom he regarded as being solely motivated by their own self-interest, greed and lust for power. He and his supporters believed that only a strong, disciplined military force could restore order to society and effectively strengthen the state against threats from both within Pakistan, particularly demands for regional independence, and from external sources, mainly from Pakistan's major enemy, India. He argued strongly, therefore, that Pakistan's very survival depended upon 'a well-trained, well-equipped, and well-led Army'.[3] Many politicians, military leaders and journalists in the West agreed with Ayub Khan – that the military alone had the unity, discipline and determination to govern the deeply divided country. His seizure of power was strongly supported by both Britain and the US, who feared that the election would lead to Pakistan adopting a non-aligned foreign policy.[4] Ayub Khan represented the elitist authoritarian paternalism – praetorianism – that had been characteristic of British rule, particularly in the north-west of British India. In a radio broadcast, he openly proclaimed that 'You must understand that democracy cannot work in a hot climate. To have democracy we must have a cold climate like Britain.'[5]

In the early stages of Ayub Khan's rule, there was a great sense of relief and enthusiasm, both inside Pakistan and in the West. Pakistanis, generally, were sick of politics and the corruption and chaos into which Pakistan had fallen. The immediate effect was a crackdown on petty crime and the reinvigoration of public transport, with trains beginning to run on time again.[6] Initially, the Pakistan economy rapidly improved during his reign, although the greatest benefits went to the small elite of senior military officers, bureaucrats and landlords, who were often all interlinked by marriage. Attempts were made to introduce land reforms which aimed at breaking up the very large estates and distributing the land to smaller farmers, but the landowners were able to circumvent the ceilings on land ownership by such subterfuges as transferring land to family members. Therefore, only around 2.4 per cent of land in West Pakistan was transferred.[7] In fact, according to one analyst, Ayub Khan's land reform was motivated mainly by his desire to break the power of the large landlords who were his main political rivals.[8]

Ayub Khan argued that Western-style constitutions were unsuited to new, underdeveloped nations like Pakistan. His solution was to introduce a system of 'basic democracies', which he saw as a compromise between the dangers of authoritarian rule, on the one hand, and the excesses of

democracy, on the other.[9] His first move was to ban political parties. Instead, in the first nationwide elections since independence in 1947, candidates for Pakistan's new National Assembly were elected by an elite, comprising 80,000 members of village and town councils – the Basic Democrats – whom Ayub Khan referred to as 'persons of status in their communities'.[10] Hardly surprising, then, that the new assembly confirmed Ayub Khan's position as president by a huge majority. The Basic Democrats also elected the members of national and provincial Assemblies in 1962.[11] Again, not surprisingly, the voters strongly endorsed Ayub Khan and his supporters, including his Foreign Affairs minister – the rapidly rising star of Pakistani politics, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was elected from a Sindh constituency. Although this constituency was dominated by feudal landlords, Bhutto supported Ayub Khan's attempt to introduce land reforms.

Despite the ban on political parties, most of the elected candidates were members of former political parties, rather than honest, new men. In reply to the criticisms over his limited democracy, Ayub Khan argued that it was, 'Pakistan's best protection against the demagogic misrule that plagued the nation for 11 years under the parliamentary system inherited from the British'.[12] The Basic Democrats, however, had two major flaws: they had little legitimacy, as they were controlled by Ayub Khan and his bureaucrats, while the same landed elite who had dominated previous assemblies were, yet again, elected.

As a modernist, Ayub Khan was a secularist by nature, believing that religion should be kept out of politics as much as possible. The voters overwhelmingly rejected the demands of Muslim politicians who objected to Ayub Khan's policies. Being a pragmatist, however, he courted the support of the *pirs* – the descendants of Sufi saints – who had enormous moral and temporal power in the countryside. This policy was continued under his successor, the quasi socialist Zulifkar Ali Bhutto.[13] He was prepared to make some concessions to those who wanted Pakistan to be governed according to Islamic principles, whatever they might be. Initially, however, he took a hard line in this respect, and, in the 1962 Constitution, the title 'Islamic' was removed from the country's name. However, growing resistance from the Islamic groups, particularly from Pakistan's most powerful religious party – the Jammat-i-Islami – forced him to backpedal.[14] As a sop to the Islamic hardliners, his government set up an Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology, in order to advise on matters relating to Islam. On 19 July 1961, a high point of Islamic modernity was reached when the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance was introduced. The Ordinance provided more protection for females by making it more difficult for men to take more than one wife or to divorce. This mild reform again alienated the conservative Muslims, led by the Jamaat-i-Islami. Initially, Ayub Khan took a hard line, and the Jamaat-i-Islami was banned, its leaders sent to jail and its funds frozen.[15] Ayub Khan's government also had plans to introduce

further reforms, especially the modernization of *madrassa* education. However, he soon backed down on these fronts because of organized resistance by the religious Right. In 1963, in the amendment to the Constitution, Ayub Khan gave in to pressure and restored the adjective 'Islamic' in the state's title.[16]

Despite his good intentions and initial optimism, Ayub Khan had not been able to redress Pakistan's basic social, economic and political problems. Inflation, including rising costs of food, had hit the poor in particular in a very bad way. The 1965 presidential elections exposed the fragility of Ayub Khan's power and legitimacy. His main opponent was Miss Fatima Jinnah – the 71-year-old sister of the revered founder of Pakistan. During her campaign, Miss Jinnah attracted huge, enthusiastic crowds of supporters. Interestingly, the *ulema* and their supporters were divided over of the candidacy of a woman for president. Some opposed the election of a woman on religious grounds, while others supported her because of political expediency.[17] In her speeches, in both East and West Pakistan, she vehemently attacked the authoritarianism of Ayub Khan. She exposed the farcical nature of Basic Democracy, in which real power rested with the bureaucracy. While Ayub Khan's control of the machinery of government ensured his re-election, the campaign and the publicity had exposed the fact that most Pakistanis were disenfranchised and that the so-called democracy from above was a total sham.[18] The rapid economic and social change during Ayub Khan's rule had not translated down to the masses, making regional and class inequalities even worse than they had been previously.

The other main issue that had weakened Ayub Khan's power and legitimacy was Pakistan's military failure in the second war with India over Kashmir in September 1965. Operation Gibraltar was launched in the first week of August 1965, when Ayub Khan's government encouraged and supported the infiltration of armed volunteers from Pakistan into Kashmir. Amongst the military strategists confidence was high that the intruders would stir up a rising of Muslims in the Indian-controlled Kashmir. They anticipated that India would then be forced to the conference table to negotiate over the future of Kashmir.[19] The strategic goal was to seize the capital, Srinagar, and call on the discontented Kashmiri Muslims to support the invasion. Pakistani intelligence, however, was flawed, as the plan received hardly any support from the local population. The poorly trained guerrillas were quickly rounded up by Indian security forces who were assisted in their task by the locals.

Pakistan then launched Operation Grand Slam, which was a full-scale invasion aimed at cutting off Jammu and Kashmir from the rest of India. The new command was given to General Yahya Khan and was launched on 6 September. Much to the surprise of Pakistan, India reacted by invading Pakistan, crossing the frontier into the Punjab, effectively threatening Lahore – the capital of the Punjab. This invasion led to fierce tank battles, but neither army could deliver a knockout blow.[20]

The stalemate and growing Indian strength forced Ayub Khan to agree to a Soviet offer of mediation, which consequently led to the Tashkent Agreement. The Agreement restored the status quo in Kashmir, which, in practical terms, meant that India had won, simply by not losing. The people of Pakistan had been led to believe that Pakistan was on the verge of victory, and, thus, the Tashkent Agreement shocked public opinion, as the Agreement was seen as a betrayal and an unforgivable sell-out.[21] The huge loss of face involved in the outcome of these events further weakened Ayub Khan's prestige and his government's legitimacy.

Zulifkar Ali Bhutto, one of the key politicians who had supported the actions in Kashmir, now astutely distanced himself from Ayub Khan's regime, resigned and formed the Pakistan People's Party in direct opposition to Ayub Khan's regime. He was supported by many workers, students, professionals and unionists who resented the authoritarian regime and the declining standard of living that had been eroded by inflation. Other groups, such as the Jammat-i-Islami, formed a broad coalition of opposition to Ayub Khan in both East and West Pakistan.

The clean image of Ayub's rule was also tarnished by corruption scandals which involved his own family. His two sons had left the army and entered the corporate world, where his eldest son, in particular, quickly developed a particularly bad reputation for corruption. It was during the rule of Ayub Khan that the military greatly accelerated the process by which they ended up as being one of the largest landowners in Pakistan.[22] Newly reclaimed state land was given to the military, with the senior officers, of course, getting the lion's share.[23] Developments during Ayub's regime, which accentuated the military's need to protect their economic interests, was a major motivation for the military to remain in politics ever since.

Protest marches continued until Ayub Khan eventually resigned, handing over power to General Yahya Khan on 25 March 1969 who subsequently declared martial law. Ayub Khan had been betrayed by former cronies and sycophants. Despite the many progressive measures and achievements, particularly the economic progress, the ultimate failure of Ayub Khan's regime demonstrated that authoritarian military governments were just as impotent and unsuccessful as their democratic rivals when attempting to resolve complex economic, social and political problems. Despite the initial optimism of Ayub Khan and his supporters, his regime had left Pakistan leaderless and directionless. While he had attempted to curb the influence of Right-wing Muslim groups, he had, like other politicians before him, been forced to make some concessions to them. To compound the political problems, the ill-advised invasion of Kashmir achieved nothing, but, rather, increased already hostile tensions with India.

The destruction of the 'two nation' theory: the break-up of Pakistan

The second of Pakistan's military dictators – General Yahya Khan – had graduated from the Indian military academy at Dehra Dun.[24] He served in the British Army during the Second World War and in the 1965 India–Pakistan war. He was widely regarded as an intelligent and competent officer, but his critics pointed to his weakness for alcohol and extra-marital sex. His hard-living lifestyle caused scandal, even among hard-nosed army officers.[25]

Like his predecessor, Ayub Khan, Yahya's first major task was to attempt to curb corruption and to improve public discipline. The Fundamental Rights, which were enshrined in the 1962 Constitution, were suspended. His regime was determined to improve the accountability and efficiency of the civil service, and, under martial law, civil servants could be punished for inefficiency, corruption or misconduct. The most important positions in government, such as governors and advisers, were held by the military. He attempted to rule through consensus, by consulting with his senior military colleagues, and he also kept his promise to hold fair and open elections in October 1970.[26]

One of the most important and sensitive problems inherited from previous governments that confronted Yahya Khan's military dictatorship was the strong separatist movement in East Pakistan, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his highly popular Awami League party. By 1970, the relationship between East and West Pakistan, separated by over 1,000 miles, was close to breaking point. The Bengali-speaking East Pakistanis had been aware, for some time, that they were, in effect, a colony of the Punjabi-dominated West Pakistan. Ever since the foundation of Pakistan, Bengalis had been stridently articulating their concerns about what they regarded as the arrogant and exploitative central government and federal bureaucracy, which were located in West Pakistan and dominated by Western and, more specifically, Punjabi politicians and bureaucrats.[27] All the important decisions were taken by the civilian and military elite in West Pakistan.[28] The Pakistan government was seen as an oppressive colonial power, which relied on the military, comprising of mainly Pashtun, Baluchi and Punjabi officers and enlisted men.[29] In addition, the East Pakistanis bitterly resented the fact that, while most of the country's foreign exchange earnings came from the export of jute from the East, only one third of the money that was subsequently spent on development projects came to the East.[30] As early as 1948, East Pakistanis were outraged by the proposal to make Urdu the sole national language of Pakistan. Jinnah himself was heckled at a meeting in Dacca when he refused to support Bengali. In 1952, there was a general strike and rioting over the now highly contentious language issue.[31]

The ruling elite in the west regarded the shorter, darker-skinned Bengalis as inferior beings. Yahya Khan allegedly referred to the Bengalis as *macchar*, the Urdu word for mosquito – in other words, a dark pest that needed to be swatted.[32] They also despised the Bengali Muslims, who were mainly descendants of converts from lower caste Hindus, untouchables and tribals and still shared some of the religious practices of the Hindus who were living in their midst.

In March 1966, Mujibur Rahman put forward a six-point programme which would greatly limit the powers of the central government in Islamabad. According to one analysis, this was 'a veiled scheme for secession'.[33] The simmering discontent and hostility felt by the Bengalis came to a head in the elections for the National Assembly on 7 December 1970, which had been called by Yahya Khan as part of the country's transition to democracy. Mujibur Rahman's Awami League, which campaigned on the plank of provincial autonomy, received overwhelming support in the east, winning a commanding 288 of the 300 seats in the East Pakistan Legislature. It also gained the majority in Pakistan's new National Assembly, winning a total of 160 of the 300 seats, much to the surprise and dismay of the West Pakistani military and politicians.[34] The Awami League, however, did not win a single seat in the West, where the major winner was the left-leaning populist Pakistan People's Party, led by the highly ambitious Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The Pakistan People's Party won an unexpected 81 out of 138 seats in the West, routing the religious parties.[35] The election result made it abundantly clear that Jinnah's united Muslim state of Pakistan was no more.

Neither the military nor Bhutto were prepared to accept a government dominated by the despised East Pakistanis. The crude, racist attitude of the West Pakistani elite was summed up in the words of a senior officer: 'Don't worry – we will not allow these black bastards to rule over us.'[36] It was no surprise, then, when the first meeting of the newly elected National Assembly, which was supposed to meet on 1 March 1970, was postponed. In the east, this action was interpreted as a sign that Bengalis would never have political freedom, signifying that Pakistani democracy was a sham. Mujibur Rahman called for a general strike in protest. Talks between Mujibur Rahman, Yahya Khan and Bhutto failed, and, thus, the scene was set for civil war. Rioting broke out in East Pakistan, and Mujibur Rahman called for civil disobedience and non-cooperation.

Rather than attempting to peacefully address the genuine grievances of the East Pakistanis, the military decided to brutally crush the protesters in East Pakistan whom they regarded as traitors. The hard-liner General Tikka Khan took over as the military governor of East Pakistan, while Lieutenant-General A. A. Niazi became military commander. Additional West Pakistani troops were sent to East Pakistan, bringing the total to about 30,000. In addition, tanks moved from the Indian border to Dacca – the capital of East Pakistan. On 25 March 1971, the Pakistani army, under

Tikka Khan, launched Operation Searchlight – a campaign of state terrorism utilizing mass rape, arson and the brutal murder of innocent people, which lasted until the middle of May.[37]

While the brutality of the Pakistani army in East Pakistan is one of the most horrific examples of state terrorism in the twentieth century, it is little known to the general public outside the subcontinent.[38] The major goals of the acts of terrorism were to exterminate the leadership within the Bengali separatist movement and to terrorize the mass of the population into submission. It saw the conflict in simple military terms: the enemy had to be destroyed or intimidated to the extent that they became impotent. Only by adopting draconic measures, the military argued, would it be possible to permanently terrorize and, thus, control a hostile civilian population of 75 million Bengalis. In addition to this, the military embarked on a policy of using state terrorism to effectively ethnically cleanse East Pakistan of the large Hindu minority of around 10 million, which, allegedly, both corrupted Bengali Muslims as well as acting as fifth columnists for India.[39] In addition to its regular soldiers and paramilitary troops, the military government organized *razakars* – armed militias, drawn mainly from former Urdu-speaking Muslims who had migrated from Bihar at independence. The Jamaat-i-Islami formed an alliance with the army, particularly the Inter-Services Intelligence in East Pakistan, and played an active role against what they regarded as the enemies of Islam.[40] For the military, the suppression of the Bengali uprising became a *jihad* against the loose-living Bengali Muslims and their idolatrous Hindu supporters. The religious dimensions of the conflict, along with the open racism, help explain the brutality of the military.[41]

The main targets of the terror campaigns were the members and supporters of the Awami League. These included Bengali intellectuals, professionals and university students, as well as rank-and-file members and supporters from among the mass of the population. The next group to be singled out were the Bengali members of the armed forces and police, some of whom had mutinied. Hindu men, women and children, in particular, were singled out for brutal killing. Both Hindu and Muslim women were pack raped and often killed afterwards. Tanks and heavy artillery were used to destroy entire neighbourhoods in Dacca and in other urban centres. Dacca University was singled out, in particular, for the widespread, indiscriminate killing and rape of staff and students.[42] By the middle of May, the army controlled most towns and cities, although, significantly, its control did not extend into the surrounding countryside. From mid-May to early October, Operation Search and Destroy had as its objective the defeat of the guerrilla campaign of the Bengali resistance, under the banner of the Mukti Bahini (Freedom Fighters). These were made up of many of the 17,000 Bengali army personnel, who had fled to India where they received training, equipment and shelter. From their bases in India, they attacked military targets, including supply routes. In response, the

army intensified its terrorist violence. Huge numbers of Bengalis fled into India as refugees.[43]

By July 1971, Indra Gandhi's government, concerned by the problems caused by the mass exodus of refugees into India from East Pakistan, had decided that the Indian army should assist the Mukti Bahini in destroying the Pakistan army. By 21 November 1971, the Indian army was digging in on Pakistani soil. In response, on 3 December, Yahya launched air attacks on nine airbases in north-west India. This gave India the excuse to launch a full-scale invasion, crossing the East Pakistan border where they were greeted as liberators by a jubilant local population. In conjunction with the Mukti Bahini, Indian forces moved rapidly through East Pakistan, bypassing the Pakistani defensive positions. The Pakistani defenders were now hopelessly outnumbered and isolated and were forced to accept a humiliating surrender to the Indian commander, leaving 90,000 Pakistani soldiers as prisoners of war.[44]

In a final act of senseless violence, the Pakistani army, in conjunction with the *razakars*, murdered around 1,000 intellectuals, university professors, doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professionals in Dacca, just two days before the Pakistani surrender. With the defeat of the West Pakistan military, brutal reprisals were taken against the former collaborators, mainly the Urdu-speaking Biharis, many of whom were innocent victims. Soon after, the independent state of Bangladesh came into existence, and Jinnah's two nation theory and dream of a strong Muslim state, embracing east and west, had evaporated.

The defeat in East Pakistan was a huge blow to the prestige and authority of the military. In 1971, the then-President of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, set up the War Inquiry Commission, headed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Hamood Rahman, to inquire into the circumstances that led to the ignominious defeat. Only the supplementary report is available, but it is a highly significant primary document, both for its condemnation of the military and for its explanation of how the military became corrupted, because of its direct involvement in politics. The report was highly critical of the moral degeneration among the senior ranks of the Armed Forces, whose 'lust for wine and women and greed for land and houses' had adversely affected their will to fight and their competence in critical decision-making.[45] The report blamed the process of the moral degeneration that took place during the two periods of martial law, which began in 1958 and 1969, during which political power had become greatly corrupted and, thus, weakened the military establishment. The periods of martial law, according to the report, hastened the 'political and emotional isolation of East Pakistan from West Pakistan'.[46]

The report was particularly critical of the senior officers' greed. It stated that during the periods of martial law the officers had become involved in commercial activities in relation to the large-scale acquisition of lands and houses, which had adversely affected their leadership and professional

competency. In giving evidence, Rear Admiral M. Sharif, commander of the Pakistan Navy in East Pakistan, stated that the foundation for the defeat in East Pakistan could be traced back to the military coup of Ayub Khan in 1958 when senior officers became greedy self-serving politicians, rather than soldiers. He stated: 'While learning the art of politics in this newly assigned role to themselves, they gradually abandoned their primary function of the art of soldiering; They also started amassing wealth and usurping status for themselves.'[47] He concluded that the senior officers were so busy being involved in civil administration that they had no time or inclination to train their men. The report singled out General A. A. Niazi, Commander of the Eastern Command, who 'came to acquire a stinking reputation owing to his association with women of bad repute, and his nocturnal visits to places also frequented by several junior officers under his command'. The report condemned Niazi for his 'utter lack of professional competence, initiative and foresight'.[48] In conclusion, the report recommended that senior military personnel, including Yahya Khan, be brought to trial on a number of counts relating to the subversion of the constitution, usurpation of political power by criminal conspiracy and professional incompetence, all of which had contributed to the ignoble defeat. The report also severely chastised several other senior army commanders whose professional incompetence and neglect had brought disgrace to the country, singling out their 'physical and moral cowardice in abandoning the fight when they had the capability and resources to resist the enemy'.[49]

The report also grudgingly admitted that the army had committed atrocities against Bengalis, although it claimed that this was due, in part, to taking revenge for earlier atrocities committed by the Awami League supporters against West Pakistan civil and military personnel who were living in the east. The report, which was highly critical of Bhutto as well as the military, was not released until 2000 when a copy was finally exposed in an Indian newspaper.[50] None of the senior personnel ever went to trial and some continued to serve in the military.

The defeat and loss of East Pakistan was a stunning blow to the morale of the Pakistani military. The Bangladesh debacle demonstrated the military's inability to solve complex political and social problems through the use of brute force. Initially, there was great anger and bitterness among the junior officers towards the senior command. According to one observer, when General Hameed, representing the high command, attempted to address officers at the army's general headquarters in Islamabad, in order to explain the shocking defeat,

> All hell broke loose. Majors, Lt Colonels, Brigadiers screamed and shouted at him and called him and Yahya filthy names. The gist of what they shouted was that the reason for the defeat was that all senior officers were interested in was getting more and more plots and more and more land.[51]

As fallout from the defeat, Yahya Khan was forced to resign and was succeeded by Bhutto who had managed to distance himself from the defeat. With military rule now in utter disrepute, Bhutto was in an extremely powerful position to strengthen civilian rule.

One of the major consequences of the defeat was even greater paranoia towards India. There had been long-held suspicions within the military and, more widely, within Pakistan that one of India's long-term goals was the eventual break-up of the state of Pakistan. According to this interpretation, the separatist movement in East Pakistan could be rationalized as the planned machinations of the Indians, rather than resulting from genuine grievances of the Bengalis. Ever since 1971, within the military in particular, a fear of India and desire for revenge for the 1971 disgrace has dominated policies and strategies. Finally, the struggle against India became increasingly portrayed as a struggle between Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India, with the military seen as the protector of both of Islam and the state.

The loss of East Pakistan, whose inhabitants comprised more than half of the population of Pakistan, savagely destroyed the myth of the two nation theory, which argued that South Asian Muslims comprised a united nation because of their religion. The loss demonstrated that Islam, by itself, was a very poor focus for national unity. The mere fact that the vast majority of East and West Pakistanis professed to be Muslim was, by itself, unable to overcome fundamental differences between the two wings. With the secession of East Pakistan, the majority of South Asian Muslims now lived either in Bangladesh or in India. The success of the Bangladeshis in winning their independence raised serious questions about the resulting loyalty and commitment of the remaining provinces of Sindh, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province, which were in the now-truncated Pakistan. With military rule discredited, power now reverted back to a civilian government, which was led by Pakistan's new great hope, Zulifkar Ali Bhutto.

The rise and fall of Bhutto: a lost opportunity

The political career of Zulifkar Ali Bhutto was one of early great promise and excitement, but, ultimately, ended in bitter disappointment and tragedy. It seemed, for a time, that Bhutto's socialist principles, political skills and leadership would usher in a new era in Pakistan in which power would, at last, rest in the hands of popular, elected politicians, rather than with the military or bureaucrats, and in which urgent genuine reforms of Pakistani politics and society could take place. Two interrelated questions arise out of this lost opportunity. Namely, to what extent was Bhutto a genuine reformer? And why did his reforms fail?

With the exception of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Bhutto was Pakistan's most important and popular politician. Bhutto played a major role in

Pakistani politics from the very early years of the state to his overthrow by a military coup led by General Zia ul-Haq in July 1977. A highly charismatic leader and dynamic politician, Bhutto founded the Pakistan's important political party – the Pakistan People's Party. His family has continued to play a prominent role in Pakistani politics, with his daughter, Benazir Bhutto, serving as Prime Minister of Pakistan on two occasions and, after her tragic assassination, her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, becoming President in 2008. Bhutto's periods, both as President and Prime Minister of Pakistan, saw many important initiatives, which, for a time, appeared to strengthen Pakistan's democracy, encourage secularism and introduce much-needed political and economic reforms.

Yet, for all his achievements and immense potential, Bhutto's career as a politician was, ultimately, a tragedy for himself, for his family and for Pakistan, particularly for the poor and underprivileged and for sectarian and religious minorities. By the time of his death, the influence of the religious Right had grown dramatically. His poor judgment in promoting the career of the army officer, Zia ul-Haq, ahead of more competent candidates, resulted not just in Bhutto's degrading death on the gallows, but bequeathed to Pakistan the rule of Zia, which was to be disastrous for sectarian harmony and future peace in Pakistan.

Bhutto came from a highly privileged family. He was born near the small town of Larkana in southern Sindh, the son of an immensely wealthy landlord, who had been knighted by the British for his services. The British had handsomely rewarded the Bhutto family with large tracts of land for their strong support of British rule. His father was the Prime Minister of the princely state of Junagadh before its incorporation into the Indian Union in 1947. Bhutto was educated in Bombay and, later, at the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied political science.[52] He then studied law at Oxford University. During his study abroad, he became interested in socialism, particularly in Islamic countries. His hatred of many of the Pakistani elite, it seems, was a reaction to the vicious attacks on his mother who was a convert from a Hindu family. Particularly hurtful was the scurrilous gossip that said that she had been a dancing girl.[53] His education and life experiences abroad strongly shaped his views about the need to modernize Pakistan, although the authoritarianism and arrogance of his feudal, privileged background, with its emphasis upon honour, revenge and a propensity to resolve disputes through violence sadly remained.[54] One of his biographers writes of Bhutto's 'schizoid personality', with its great strengths, but also its grave weaknesses.[55]

Bhutto soon made his mark on Pakistani politics. He served seven years in Ayub Khan's government and was a highly effective Minister for Foreign Affairs. He pursued an independent foreign policy for Pakistan, thus alienating the US who had regarded Pakistan as a strong ally. Although he was strongly anti-Indian, particularly in respect to Kashmir, he was also pragmatic and successful in his negotiations with Indian politicians,

negotiating, for instance, the repatriation of Pakistan military personnel from Bangladesh. He was involved in replacing the failed government of Ayub Khan, and supported the military rule of Yahya Khan.

In 1967, Bhutto founded the Pakistan People's Party, with its populist appeal to improve the living and working conditions of Pakistan's urban and rural poor. Initially he seems to have been genuine in his goal of bringing about a socio-economic revolution that would break the power of the elites, the politicians, military and bureaucrats who largely dominated Pakistani politics.[56] He was a brilliant public speaker, who attracted huge, adoring crowds, during which he articulated the grievances of the urban and rural poor. He preached a messianic populist message of eliminating poverty and misery. For a time, he was the great hope of many of Pakistan's idealistic intellectuals, students, trade union leaders and human rights workers. Although his party was highly successful in the 1970 elections, his unwillingness to share power and negotiate with Sheik Mujibur Rahman was a factor in precipitating the secessionist movement in East Bengal, and he was held, in part, responsible for the break-up of Pakistan in 1971. With the military demoralized and disgraced after the debacle of Bangladesh, Bhutto and his party had the unique opportunity to reshape Pakistani society for the better, being in a very powerful position with the military divided and dispirited after its abject surrender in East Pakistan.[57] As resistance to his regime grew, however, he had to rely on the military to suppress disorder. Ironically, and, unfortunately, by the end of his rule the military had emerged as even more powerful than before.

As President of Pakistan, from 1971–1973, and as Prime Minister, from 1973–1977, Bhutto attempted to dramatically reform Pakistan's economic and social position with the goal of breaking the power of Pakistan's feudal elites. His achievements, on the surface, at least, were remarkable. In 1972, his government nationalized banks, industries and education institutions. Trade unions were given more rights and increased power.[58] He also introduced land reforms, with the goal of breaking the power and dominance of the feudal landlords by limiting landholdings and distributing land to small and landless peasants. Through a law passed in 1972, the ceiling for irrigated lands was reduced from 500 acres to 250 acres, and on irrigated land from 1,000 acres to 300 acres.[59] The land reforms seem to have been the most successful of northern Punjab and were partly responsible for the development of medium-sized commercial farming, but much less so in southern Punjab and in Sindh, where the powerful landlords were able to distribute their lands to relatives and retainers, including members of Bhutto's own family.[60] He also attempted to reform the public service by introducing efficiency measures and cracking down on large-scale corruption. He was largely responsible for the 1973 Constitution which increased the power of the prime minister, encouraged the independence of the judiciary and gave more autonomy to the provinces.[61]

Critics of Bhutto have pointed out his arrogance, vanity and authoritarianism, derived, in part, from his feudal background. One of his most trenchant critics, Tariq Ali, has been strongly critical of Bhutto and his family's involvement in politics claiming that Bhutto's 'radical rhetoric was little more than a mask designed to win and retain power'.[62] Tariq Ali also claimed that Bhutto 'was a man of few convictions. His opinions were never firm and settled. What he lacked in this department was over compensated for by his sharp wit and intelligence, but that was never enough.'[63] To be fair, Bhutto faced the same problems that other politicians failed to resolve, namely the entrenched power of the military and the bureaucracy, regional unrest and the vexed question of the role of Islam in the state. He also had to negotiate with politicians, the vast majority of whom were only interested in power and patronage and who had little motivation or desire to engage in social and political reform and nation building. His efforts to reduce the size and influence of the military and to improve the competence and impartiality of the bureaucracy ultimately failed, as he had to rely on both in order to survive politically.

Like Jinnah's Muslim League, Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party was organizationally very weak and was largely dominated by the charisma and personality of Bhutto himself and his close associates. He needed to build up a personal powerbase by rewarding his closest cronies.[64] The Pakistan People's Party, consequently, never managed to develop a democratic character and organizational strength to transcend the status and authority of the leader. The use of thugs and police to intimidate Bhutto's opponents further added to the sordidness of Pakistani politics.[65] Increasingly, his rule became more authoritarian. As he became more paranoid and insecure, he began to rely on the Inter-Services Intelligence to spy, not only on his political opponents, but also on members of his own party and, even, his cabinet ministers. The spy agency also compiled dossiers on judges, bureaucrats and anyone else who might be supposed to pose a threat to Bhutto.[66]

Unfortunately for democracy and social justice in Pakistan, Bhutto's attempted reforms had only very limited effect. While on paper his land reforms threatened the vested interests of large landlords and their allies, ultimately, only a small amount of land was made available to landless tenants and small peasants. Like the earlier attempted land reforms under Ayub Khan, the large landlords were able to easily get around the reforms by such measures as fictitious transference of land. In fact, not only did landlords subvert the reforms, but many, opportunistically, joined the Pakistan People's Party in order to further safeguard their economic interests. In the 1977 elections, many of the party candidates were landlords which angered and alienated Bhutto's more idealistic Left-wing followers.[67] Ultimately, Bhutto compromised with the powerful landowning, business and bureaucratic elites, who dominated Pakistani politics, alienated his mass base and diluted, to the point of irrelevance, his socialist message. In addition, despite the clauses in the 1973 Constitution which were designed to curb the military's

involvement in politics, Bhutto was forced to rely on the military to maintain internal security. For instance, his government was forced to call upon the military to suppress language riots in Sindh, labour disturbances in Karachi and a regional uprising in Baluchistan.[68] He also committed Pakistan to the ruinously expensive development of nuclear weapons.[69]

By the time of the 1977 elections, Bhutto and his party, which was by then plagued by factionalism and infighting, were losing power and facing strong opposition from the Pakistan National Alliance, which was made up of a very broad electoral alliance of nine parties, ranging from secularist to Islamist. The political parties that made up the alliance had little in common, except their opposition to Bhutto and their criticisms of the inflation, the heavy-handed government and widespread unemployment. Surprisingly, given its unpopularity, the Pakistan People's Party did very well in the elections, winning 155 of the 216 national assembly seats, leading to claims by the Pakistan National Alliance that the elections had been rigged.[70]

The opposition accused Bhutto and his party of electoral fraud and embarked upon a programme of civil disobedience. A nationwide strike was launched on 11 March, and a massive campaign was launched by the religious parties, which led to confrontations with the police and declaration of martial law in Lahore, Karachi and Hyderabad. This, in turn, led to Bhutto imposing martial law. The extent of the civil unrest forced Bhutto to fall back on the army and the Commander-in-Chief, General Zia. Many protesters were killed in confrontations with the police and military. Three brigadiers refused to fire on protesters, actions which led to their dismissal[71] and was a highly embarrassing situation for both the army's high command and Bhutto.

The unrest leading to the eventual breakdown of law and order gave Zia the opportunity to overthrown Bhutto's government through a military coup. Ironically, Bhutto had promoted Zia to the post of Chief of Army Staff in 1976 by passing over at least half a dozen senior, and better qualified, officers by doing so, believing that Zia had no political ambitions and would be a pliant stooge.[72] Underestimating the cunning and survival skills of Zia was Bhutto's fatal mistake. Bhutto was initially imprisoned, but was then released; however, as his popularity was still a problem and a threat to Zia and his government, he was subsequently re-arrested and charged with conspiracy to murder a political opponent. He was hanged in degrading circumstances in Rawalpindi Jail on 4 April 1979. Pakistan can, indeed, be an extremely 'hard country' for politicians, as well as for the mass of the population.[73]

The growth of sectarianism: Bhutto and the anti-Ahmadiyya movement

Ironically, it was during the reign of the nominally secular government of Bhutto that religious groups became a potent opposition force. Although

Bhutto tried to win their support, they continued to view him as an irreligious enemy of Islam. The campaign against Bhutto was led by the Jamaat-i-Islami, which attacked the socialist policies of Bhutto, demanded the imposition of the Sharia and declared that Bhutto was a *kafir* and, thus, should be promptly removed from office. The conservative religious groups resented the social and cultural openness and the support for popular Islam apparent during Bhutto's rule.[74] When Bhutto assumed power, the possible threat from the religious Right had been weakened by the Bengali nationalist feelings in East Bengal and Bhutto's socialism in West Pakistan. Although religious parties had fared very poorly in the 1970 election, nevertheless, Bhutto feared the ability of the religious leadership to bring out the masses in protest. He consequently attempted to undercut the appeal of Islam by the religious leaders and their political supporters. The 1973 Constitution declared Islam to be the state religion. As a direct result of this, all laws had, at least in theory, to be brought into conformity with the injunctions of Islam. As a further concession to the religious Right, the Constitution stated that only Muslims could be president or prime minister and that the government should promote the teachings of Islam.[75] Bhutto's religious credentials were greatly boosted when he hosted the very successful Islamic Summit conference in Lahore in 1974. In a further effort to undermine the platform of the religious Right, his government banned gambling, nightclubs and the sale of alcohol.[76] He also made the Muslim holy day, Friday, a weekly holiday. Despite these concessions, in March and July 1977 widespread protests by Jamaat-i-Islami and other Muslim groups, particularly in the Punjab and Karachi, led to the army intervening, removing Bhutto from power.[77]

It was Bhutto's handling of the resurgence of the anti-Ahmadiyya violence, however, that exposed Bhutto's political opportunism and lack of commitment to secularism. Bhutto's support for an attack on a minority sect was surprising, seeing that his own family was Shia, although they often practised Sunni rituals publicly.[78] Quite simply, Bhutto was prepared to sacrifice the Ahmadiyyas, who had been among his strongest allies, in order to gain wider support among the mass of Muslims. The anti-Ahmadiyya movement of the 1950s had, as its main goal, that the Ahmadiyyas be declared a non-Muslim minority. At that time, the movement failed, as the state remained committed to secularism, refusing to give in to the pressure of Muslim Right-wing groups, such as the Ahl-e-Hadith and the Jammat-i-Islami.

The anti-Ahmadiyya movement was heavily supported by all mainstream Islamic parties in Pakistan and continued to simmer through public rallies and court cases. It was a highly emotive issue, as many Pakistani Muslims were sincerely outraged that the Ahmadiyyas continued to believe that their founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmed, was a prophet. The Ahmadiyya question was quiescent during the military regimes of Ayub Khan and Yahya Khan, both of whom firmly resisted the demands that Ahmadiyyas be declared non-Muslim.

The renewed agitation against the Ahmadiyyas was sparked off on 22 May 1974 at a railway station in the small Punjab town of Rabwah, which was inhabited mainly by Ahmadiyyas, by an altercation between the Ahmadiyyas and activists belonging to the student wing of the Jammat-i-Islami. The Ahmadiyyas claimed that one of the students had insulted an Ahmadiyya woman, while the students countered this by claiming that they had objected to Ahmadiyya clerics handing out their religious pamphlets to the passengers, but they were then beaten up by their opponents.[79] The incident sparked a nationwide agitation, led by the Jamaat-i-Islami and other religious parties, which lasted for a total of four months. During the agitation, Ahmadiyyas were harassed and killed, their businesses were senselessly burned, and many were forced to emigrate.[80] In contrast to the Punjab disturbances of 1953, however, the religious Right was, at last, successful, as Bhutto and his government caved in to their demands.

Ironically, it was during the rule of the Left-wing secular, Bhutto, that the Ahmadiyyas were declared a non-Muslim minority by a constitutional amendment known as the Second Amendment in 1974.[81] They were forbidden from calling themselves Muslims and using Islamic terms. While the Ahmadiyyas had experienced discrimination and violence for many years, the constitutional amendment greatly strengthened the anti-Ahmadiyya forces. Allegedly, under pressure from King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Bhutto's government set up a special committee inviting the leaders of all of Pakistan's 72 rival Muslim sects to debate with the caliph, or leader, of the Ahmadiyya community, Mirza Nasir Ahmad, on whether the Ahmadiyyas were Muslims in accepting that Muhammad was the last and final prophet. Given the long-standing prejudices against the Ahmadiyya community, it was no surprise that the representatives of the 72 sects unanimously declared the Ahmadiyyas to be non-Muslims.[82] The declaration became the basis for the amendment to the 1973 Constitution.

Bhutto had become the unlikely hero of the religious Right, at least for the moment. There were joyous celebrations when the amendment was passed in the national assembly. Bhutto acknowledged the cheering crowds when he left Parliament in an open car. A Thanksgiving Day, instigated so as to celebrate the decision, was celebrated throughout Pakistan, particularly in the Punjab. The decision was highly praised, in both the English and the vernacular press, throughout Pakistan. At Friday prayers in all of the major mosques, the clerics heavily stressed the momentous importance of the victory, which, they claimed, would enormously strengthen Islam and Pakistan, because, as they argued, both are closely interlinked. One prominent Muslim politician commented that Bhutto had achieved 'a unique and distinguished status in Islamic history', by solving the issue, which all previous governments had shelved.[83] Prayers were offered for the solidarity and prosperity of Pakistan and for the long life of Bhutto. Houses and public buildings were illuminated, while food

and sweets were distributed to the poor and children, mainly by traders. Much fuss was made concerning the apparently extraordinary unity among Pakistan Muslims. The *Pakistan Times*, of 7 September 1974, commented enthusiastically, if incorrectly, that: 'Consensus on this matter could prove a harbinger of national reconciliation on other issues.'[84] While the anti-Ahmadiyya movement had been supported by all 72 sects and, thus, provided a façade of unity, the victory of the anti-Ahmadiyya sectarian forces was to be the forerunner of later bitter sectarian conflict between the Sunnis and Shias. The many Shias who had joined with Sunnis in attacking the Ahmadiyyas were, ironically, later themselves to be attacked by sectarian Sunnis, claiming that the Shia were also *kafir*.

Hardly surprisingly, the Ahmadiyyas were bitter at what they saw as the betrayal and cynicism of Bhutto. According to the Ahmadiyya perspective, the legislation was 'a political stunt by Mr. Bhutto to appease the extremist elements in the Pakistani Legislature where he was suffering from popularity deficiency'.[85] The Ahmadiyyas had strongly supported Bhutto's party in the 1970 elections with their votes, funds and organization.[86] In fact, the Islamic parties had criticized Bhutto, not only for being a lax Muslim, but also because of the strong support of the Ahmadiyyas.[87] It was common knowledge that Bhutto at the height of his political popularity used to drink whiskey from a silver flask while addressing political gatherings and taunting the hecklers.[88] However, as his government's popularity declined, he increasingly attempted to undercut the criticisms of his religious opponents by adopting their policies.[89] In addition, Bhutto was desperately anxious to obtain the financial support of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, who wanted the sect banned.[90] Bhutto's supporters claimed that he had been outmanoeuvred by the mullahs, but, according to one critic, a cynical support for the religious Right had 'helped open a Pandora's box for the genie of divisiveness to crawl out and affect the people whose very fate depended on unity'[91] – a reference to the sectarian violence between the Sunnis and Shias which was soon to plague Pakistani society. Bhutto's Constitution of 1973 helped lay the foundations for the attempted Islamization of Pakistan, which achieved full momentum under his successor, Zia. His support of the open labelling of Ahmadiyyas as non-Muslims in effect turned them into second-class citizens, subject to persecution along with Christians, Hindus and animists.

Despite his critics, it does seem that Bhutto was, to some extent at least, initially, committed to political and social reforms which would change Pakistan for the better. But his zeal for reform soon faded away. The opposition from vested interests, including the bureaucracy and the military, which had dominated Pakistani history, politics and society ever since the formation of the state, was formidable, and it would be unfair and inaccurate to lay the blame solely on Bhutto's shoulders. The tragedy for Bhutto and Pakistan was the alienation of reform-minded professionals, trade union leaders, students, human rights workers and the mass of the

population, all of whom were desperate for change. Bhutto's party never made the transition from a populist movement to a modern political party, instead becoming increasingly reliant on his personal rule and on the support of the opportunistic landlords and others who flocked to the party only once it gained strength and power.

Bhutto's capitulation to sectarian forces, which culminated in the banning of the Ahmadiyyas, was one of the most negative legacies of his rule. It strengthened the prestige and authority of the religious parties, whose influence reached a peak during the rule of Bhutto's successor, General Zia. The alliance between the military, led by Zia, and the religious parties was soon to open a new, much darker phase in Pakistani politics in which sectarian differences emerged.

Conclusion

A number of common themes emerged during the period between the accession of power by Ayub Khan and the overthrow of Bhutto. Both the authoritarian military governments, as well as Bhutto's populist government, failed to address Pakistan's major, and increasingly desperate, structural problems: political, social and economic. In addition to this, the question of the role of Islam in the state had not been sufficiently resolved, although more hard-line religious leaders had become more powerful. Due to its increased involvement in politics, the military were able to protect its independence and growing financial power. The most important political party – the Pakistan People's Party – never became a democratic institution, but remained essentially the property of the Bhutto family. Finally, Bhutto's failure to see the danger in his support for Zia was to have disastrous consequences, not just for Bhutto himself, but for widespread peace, security and religious toleration in Pakistan. It was his greatest blunder.

5 The turning point

Zia ul-Haq and the Islamization of Pakistan, 1977–1988

Three central figures stand out in the history of Pakistan: the patrician, secular father of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the brilliant, but flawed, Left-wing leaning Zulifkar Ali Bhutto and, finally, the dour, religious, conservative military dictator and godfather of the Islamization of Pakistan, General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq. The 11-year military rule of Zia in many respects was the most important turning point in Pakistani history. His dictatorship coincided with three other major events which were to impact heavily on Pakistani politics and on the rule of Zia: the Afghan *jihad* against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the powerful financial and ideological support of Saudi Arabia for Zia and Islamization and the Shia Islamic revolution in Iran, led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

For some analysts, Zia is regarded as a courageous friend of the West, who helped Pakistan's neighbour – Afghanistan – defeat the mighty invading Soviet Empire. For many others, however, his rule will be remembered as that of a devious, ruthless dictator, who used religion to maintain power, but, in the process, created deep and widespread division and problems that have continued to plague Pakistan, even today. The developments during Zia's rule were to have continuing grave consequences for Pakistan's sectarian harmony, religious tolerance and internal and external security.

Zia's life and character

Zia's early life and career were unremarkable and gave little indication that he was to emerge as a key figure in Pakistani history. He was born into a lower middle-class family that had lived in the town of Jullunder in east Punjab, in what was then British India, before the division of the subcontinent. His family moved into Pakistan as refugees, following the partition of India. Zia's family belonged to the Arain – a clan of peasant proprietors who had benefited from agricultural improvements, particularly the crucial development of irrigation, during the British rule of the Punjab. Members of the Arian clan were known to be sober, industrious, religiously conservative Muslims. His father had a clerical position in a government department and was said to be very religious.[1]

Despite his relatively humble background, Zia received an excellent education at the prestigious Saint Stephen's College in Delhi.[2] He became a commissioned officer in the British Indian Army, where he was regarded as a hard-working officer, but not remarkably outstanding in any way. He represented a new breed of Pakistani army officers, who came from middle- and lower-class backgrounds, who saw the military as a secure career rather than an honourable profession, which was the attitude of the aristocratic army recruits drawn from the warrior clans of the Pashtuns and Rajputs, who had previously formed the bulk of the officer class under British rule. Zia was commissioned in the British Army in 1943 and served in Burma, Malaya and Indonesia during the Second World War. Physique-wise of stocky build and with a thick moustache, he was often jocularly compared to the popular contemporary English comedian Terry Thomas – a factor that led to some people unwisely underestimating him, regarding him as somewhat of a buffoon, without serious intentions. Zia was mocked behind his back for his constant reference to his humble background.[3] Bhutto treated him with contempt, which was to be a fatal error of judgment.

Zia trained with US forces in Fort Lattimore in Kansas during the early 1960s, and was later seconded to Jordan, where he played an important role in helping King Hussein crush the rising of the Palestinians during the Black September movement. Early in his career, he established strong, tactical contacts with military intelligence and political circles in the US. There is some speculation that he was influenced by the CIA while stationed in Jordan.[4]

Despite his austere personal life and his efforts to impose a narrow, doctrinal Sunni Islam in Pakistan, Zia seems not to have been particularly personally bigoted, although he strongly disapproved of un-Islamic behaviour, such as his fellow officers' indulgence in drinking alcohol. He did not, however, attempt to impose his own views on others by insisting that they join him at prayers.[5] He seems to have been a dour, humourless, puritanical individual, but, above all, a ruthless, practical politician.[6] Although critics, like Tariq Ali, claimed that Zia was an obsequious backstabbing hypocrite,[7] there seems little doubt that he was personally religious, making regular pilgrimages to holy places in Saudi Arabia and living an austere life. He adhered to a conservative Sunni Islam, coming from the Deobandi tradition, and does not appear to have had any intellectual engagement with the many diverse schools and interpretations that were characteristic of Pakistani Islam. He was involved with the international Islamic reform and revival movement – the Tablighi Jamaat. His lifestyle can be summed up succinctly in his own words: 'Drinking, gambling, dancing, and music were the way the officers spent their free time. I said prayers, instead.'[8]

State terrorism: the trial and execution of Bhutto

After the declaration of martial law by Zia in July 1977, which was, at first, supported by the religious parties, one of Zia's first tasks was deciding what

to do with the deposed Prime Minister, Bhutto. Initially, he reassured Bhutto that he would become prime minister again after fresh elections had been called, probably believing inaccurate intelligence reports that relayed the message indicating that Bhutto had lost his charismatic appeal with the electorate and that he would lose the election. On 28 July 1977, Bhutto was released from prison and immediately made a political tour of the country, speaking to large, wildly enthusiastic crowds. The degree of support for Bhutto seemed to have both surprised and greatly worried Zia and his supporters. Bhutto appears to have made a fatal miscalculation when he threatened Zia with the death penalty for overthrowing his elected government, probably regarding Zia's conciliatory attitude as weakness. This very likely sealed his fate, as it had now become the issue as to who would survive.[9] Zia remarked to a senior bureaucrat: 'It's either his neck or mine.'[10] It seems highly likely that Zia and his advisers felt that Bhutto was too dangerous to be allowed to live and, thus, had to be quickly eliminated.

On 3 September 1977, Bhutto was arrested again and charged with the murder of a former political associate within his Pakistan People's Party – an associate who had simply joined the opposition. The charge and subsequent trial were regarded, both within Pakistan and internationally, as a travesty of justice. The acting Chief Justice was a close associate of Zia, and his conduct during the trial was singularly vindictive and unfair. Bhutto's former hand-picked Director General of the Federal Security Force confessed, apparently as part of a deal to escape punishment himself, that Bhutto had instructed him to kill Bhutto's political opponent. He was pardoned and went to live in comfortable exile in the US. The evidence presented before the court was publically criticized by foreign observers, including Ramsey Clark, the former US Attorney General of the US, who stated that the case which was primarily based on evidence provided by pardoned alleged accomplices should never have come to trial.[11]

On 18 March 1978, the Lahore High Court found Bhutto and four members of the Federal Security Force guilty of murder under Bhutto's instructions. On 2 February 1979, the Supreme Court of Pakistan rejected Bhutto's subsequent appeal by a narrow margin of four votes to three. Until very late in the day, Bhutto appears to have been convinced that his execution would not, in fact, go ahead. Even when it became clear after a farewell visit from his wife and daughter, Bhutto refused to plead for mercy himself, but, rather, asked his wife to file the necessary mercy petition, which was instantly dismissed by Zia. Despite widespread protests within Pakistan and internationally, including pleas for mercy from several world leaders from many countries, including the US, China, Russia and Britain, Zia refused to pardon Bhutto. He was taken from his dingy jail cell in Islamabad and hanged under very degrading circumstances. His wife and daughter – the future Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto – who were held in detention under very harsh conditions were not permitted to attend the funeral.[12]

The ruthlessness that Zia portrayed during the trial and execution of Bhutto sent a clear warning to opponents of his regime. The execution was a brutal display of state terrorism, designed, in part at least, to terrify and silence any civilian opponents of the military regime. The harshness of the imprisonment and murder of Bhutto was to be characteristic of Zia's rule and his future treatment of any critics and opponents. Opponents of the regime, such as journalists, political rivals and civil rights workers who criticized the execution and other unjust actions of Zia's government, were imprisoned, tortured and flogged, often publicly.[13] Fortunately for Zia, his standing as a pariah in international affairs because of the brutal execution of Bhutto ended when he was soon to become the hero of the West, particularly of the US, in supporting the *jihad* against the Soviet invaders of Afghanistan.

Zia and Islamization

One of the most negative of Zia's initiatives was his attempt to Islamize Pakistani society according to his own narrow interpretation of puritanical Sunni Deobandi Islam. In February 1979, Zia's government began a process of Islamization, which was intended to transform Pakistan into an Islamic state governed according to the Sunni tradition of Sharia. Zia saw Islamization as a way of strengthening Pakistan's identity as a Muslim state, threatened by the much more powerful Hindu nation and neighbour, India.[14] He justified his religious policy as necessary in order to combat the alleged moral degeneration that had taken place prior to his rule, especially under Bhutto's socialist and secular government. He claimed that Islamization was the clear will of the people. Therefore, Islam was to provide a solution for Pakistan's economic, moral and deep political divisions. It would set the country apart from, and, by implication, be vastly superior to, Hindu India.[15] A less idealistic, but probably more pressing, motivation was that Islamization of Pakistan would strengthen his grip on power. Zia's Islamization was aimed at providing legitimisation for his long military dictatorship and refusal to hold elections for fear of losing power. Islamization, therefore, was 'an ideal pretext for retaining power'.[16]

Soon after coming to power, Zia declared martial law and set the tone for his administration by introducing a broad range of harsh punishments including public flogging, for offenses such as murder, rape, fornication and the drinking of alcohol. These laws also applied to the destruction of government property during demonstrations. These measures were designed not only to deter criminals, but also those contemplating any opposition to his regime.[17]

The problems and inherent dangers of attempts to Islamize Pakistani society became obvious when Zia's government attempted to impose the Sunni Hanafi School of legal interpretation, which was the dominant school in Pakistan but which was unacceptable to the Shia. The Court of Inquiry

into the anti-Ahmadiyya riots in 1953 had pointed out the dangers and difficulties of attempting to define and, thus, solidify what exactly it meant to be a Muslim in Pakistan, as there were so many conflicting schools of Islamic law, both Sunni and Shia.[18] Zia's attempts to create a legal system based on one particular school of Islam – the Hanafi – as interpreted by the Deobandis, and, thus, create a strong, unified Islamic state had the opposite effect to what was intended. It accentuated the differences within Sunni Islam between the Deobandis and Barelvis, between Sunnis and Shias and between Muslims and Pakistan's religious minorities. In his push for Islamization, Zia was, hardly surprisingly, strongly supported by Pakistan's religious parties, particularly the Jamaat-i-Islami which had very strong support among students in Pakistani universities.[19] The process of Islamization impacted on all aspects of Pakistani life, weakening the traditional tolerance of Pakistani Islam. Pakistani society became more intolerant and sectarian, with a growing emphasis upon ritual, the letter of the law and acts of punishment, rather than the humanistic aspects of Islam which emphasized social justice and human uplift.[20] Under Zia, the state set out to make Pakistan more overtly Islamic. Women were pressurized to dress modestly and to wear the Hijab (head covering) in public. Strict government censorship was applied to all television programmes and movies. Pakistanis were encouraged to pin up extracts from the Koran and *hadith* on the walls of educational institutions and government offices.[21]

As part of Islamization, attempts were made to introduce an Islamic judicial system based upon the Koran and the Sunnah – the way of life that is prescribed for Muslims, based on the teachings and practices of Muhammad. Zia set up a Federal Sharia court to decide whether any judicial law was contrary to that of Islam. Under the martial law regulation in July 1977 laws – The Hudood Ordinances – set out draconic punishments, laid down in the Koran and Sunnah such as cutting off the hands of thieves and execution by stoning for severe crimes. Although these punishments were never actually carried out, public floggings and harsh imprisonment certainly were.[22] Women's rights were severely restricted by the Hudood Ordinances, particularly in respect to rape, where an unfortunate rape victim could be flogged and jailed for sexual misbehaviour unless she could prove her innocence.[23] Throughout his rule, Zia rewarded the Jamaat-i-Islami supporters and other members of supporting religious parties by giving them jobs in the judiciary, the civil service and other state institutions. After his death, his appointees continued to work in their appointed roles carrying out his Islamic agenda.[24]

The introduction of blasphemy laws, which, in theory, carried a sentence of death for anybody criticizing the prophet Muhammad was often used against Christians, who were extremely vulnerable to false claims that they had insulted the prophet. The laws have continued to be used against the small Christian minority, which had, before Zia, lived peacefully and securely in Pakistan.[25] Ever since, their civil rights have been threatened by

the blasphemy laws. On 2 March 2011, Pakistan's Christian Minister for Minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti, was assassinated in Islamabad for advocating reform of the laws. The Pakistan Taliban claimed responsibility and threatened death to anybody attempting to oppose the laws. Secular-minded liberal Pakistanis were appalled by the murder, but were terrified about speaking out publicly against the laws.[26]

The religious sect that suffered the most from the marginalization of minority sects was the unfortunate Ahmadiyyas. During Zia's Islamization, the Ahmadiyyas were, yet again, singled out for discriminatory treatment, as they had been in the 1953 riots in the Punjab and during the reign of Bhutto. Under the new provisions of the Pakistan Penal Code brought in under Zia, it now became a criminal offence for the Ahmadiyyas to call themselves Muslims, preach their faith or to use Islamic terminology.[27] For instance, it was an offence to refer to their places of worship as mosques.[28] The controversy and publicity, surrounding the banning of the Ahmadiyya led to the renewed violence against the sect in several cities, towns and villages across Pakistan. Suspected Ahmadiyyas had their houses and businesses destroyed. Thousands were harassed, and many were killed by violent mobs. Far from the state clamping down on the violence, as it had done in 1953, Zia's government inflamed it still further by legal measures taken against the sect.[29] Ahmadiyyas have continued to experience widespread discrimination in all aspects of their lives, including employment. So strong is the strength of public opinion against the Ahmadiyyas that it has made it very difficult for sympathetic, tolerant Muslims to defend Ahmadiyya rights. The shameful treatment of the famed Ahmadiyya physicist Dr Abdus Salam who shared the Nobel Prize in physics in 1979 is a case in point. There was little public celebration of his outstanding achievement as the first Muslim to receive a Nobel Prize, and, indeed, a talk at Islamabad's Quaid-i-Azam University had to be cancelled because of the threat of violence from the student wing of the Jamaat-i-Islami.[30] Ironically, even Zia, himself, had to vigorously deny the accusation from some of his more extreme religious opponents, that he was a closet Ahmadiyya, and he was forced to go public in order to declare that he regarded the Ahmadiyya as *kafirs*.[31]

Recently, militant Sunni religious organizations have been attempting to have the Nizari Ismaili community, also known as Aga Khanis – a non-orthodox Shia sub-sect – declared as infidels. They are highly Westernized and also influenced by Hinduism, singing hymns in worship and believing in reincarnation and, thus, are anathema to more conservative Muslims. In 1982, in the Chitral area of north-west Pakistan, about 60 Ismailis were killed by a mob of Sunni hard-liners.[32] Not only do the Ismailis worry that they will be declared infidels, like the Ahmadiyya, but the mainstream majority Shias have become greatly concerned that the logical extension of the anti-Ahmadiyya and Ismaili discrimination would be to ultimately target them, also, as non-Muslims and, thus, subject them to the same intolerant discrimination and violence.[33]

A further consequence of Islamization, which gained momentum under Zia, was the rewriting of history to distort and overemphasize the role of Islam and its contribution to the pre-history, foundation and development of the Pakistan state. Zia's government made Islamayat – religious education courses – mandatory through to Masters level, while the former separate disciplines of geography and history were replaced by Pakistani Studies. During the late 1970s, the curriculum for public schools and the textbooks that were used in teaching provided a distorted interpretation of the past, effectively glorifying everything Islamic but reviling or neglecting the contributions of pre-Islamic religions.[34] The historian K. K. Aziz examined 66 Social Studies and Pakistan Studies textbooks and found that they largely justified military rule and glorified wars which were waged in the name of Islam.[35] Pakistani history was rewritten to emphasize the glorious rule that Islam played both in pre-independence and in modern history. School textbooks contained glaring historical inaccuracies, such as the ludicrous claim that Jinnah had set out to purposefully create an Islamic state. Important civilizations that preceded pre-Muslim Pakistan were largely ignored.[36]

Under Zia, the promotion of Islamic nationalism, which had been promoted by Bhutto, was carried further still. Former Hindu rulers of India were portrayed as cruel, oppressive and religiously bigoted, while Muslim rulers were portrayed as noble soldiers of Islam. History was rewritten to stress the Islamic roots in the foundation of Pakistan, ignoring the historical reality that Pakistan was largely brought about by secular politicians.[37] At a conference held in Lahore in 2010 marking the 22nd anniversary of Zia's death delegates were informed how Pakistan education was still being influenced by Zia's education policies. Even the study of science has been affected. Schools cannot teach scientific theories, such as evolution, that contradict the curriculum guidelines.[38]

Under Zia, Pakistan became a much more overtly Islamic country. Restaurants were, by law, forced to close during the hours between sun-up and sun-down during the month of Ramadan. Pakistani television began to feature more prominently religious programmes presented by religious scholars. Pakistan's traditional religious tolerance began to erode, as individuals became more sectarian and bigoted. Pressure to conform to the overt Islamization of society forced even irreligious Pakistanis to conform, at least outwardly. The Islamization of the education system survived Zia's death and ensured that the ideas that he supported lived on, with his successors unwilling or unable to dismantle his legacy which contributed to the continued growth of religious and sectarian intolerance.

Zia and the proliferation of *madrassas*

A major factor in the Islamization of Pakistan was the rapid growth in the number of *madrassas* – Islamic educational institutions that produce *ulema*, scholars, teachers and mullahs, who mainly work in mosques, giving

sermons, leading prayers and performing births and funeral rites. Most *madrassas* provide a basic Islamic education, based upon the reading, recitation and memorization of the Koran. They provide a community service, by providing free board and lodgings to the very poor and the *madrassa* graduates serve as community leaders.

The rapid growth in *madrassas* during Zia's reign led to a decline in the general standard of scholarship and training. In 1971, there were 900 *madrassas* in Pakistan, but by the end of the Zia era in 1988, there were 8,000 registered, and over 25,000 unregistered, *madrassas*.[39] Many of these new *madrassas* were founded by ill-trained *ulema*, with very narrow sectarian views of Islam who were often extremist rabble-rousers. One consequence of the proliferation of unregistered *madrassas* was that they became much more strongly divided along sectarian and political lines. The majority of the new *madrassas* were Deobandi, followed by Barelvi. A smaller number were run by the Ahl-e-Hadith – the very puritanical sect whose teachings are very close to Saudi Wahhabism. The Shias also had their own *madrassas*. In addition, the Sunni political party, Jamaat-i-Islami, began to develop its own *madrassas*.[40] Much of the state funding for the *madrassas* that emerged during the Zia regime went to those of Deobandi or Wahhabi traditions. Increasingly, some *madrassas* were founded by Sunni and Shia sectarian organizations. Many graduates follow a very narrow form of Islam that encourages sectarian hatred and violence towards other sects and religions.

Zia's government also encouraged the proliferation of *madrassas*, particularly Deobandi-influenced, by providing their graduates with employment in government agencies and state institutions.[41] *Madrassa* degrees are given equivalency to university level Master of Arts degrees.[42] The growth in rapid numbers was funded by a variety of sources; financial support was particularly sourced from *zakat* funds – the tax levied on Muslims for charitable purposes. From 1979, the rapid growth of new *madrassas* was also funded by Persian Gulf monarchies, especially Saudi Arabia, which was eager to promote Wahhabi-type Islam in Pakistan as a direct counter to Iran's support of Shias in Pakistan. Pakistanis working in the oil industry in the Middle East also paid *zakat* to Pakistani *madrassas*. Many of these migrant workers returning to Pakistan from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states were strongly influenced by Wahhabism.[43] *Madrassa* graduates also became active in local and national politics and played a prominent role in the Islamization of state institutions.[44] It is important, however, to keep in mind that most *madrassas* in Pakistan are wholly religious institutions.[45] Only a small minority are linked to terrorist organizations, where their influence is wildly out of proportion to their resulting small numbers.[46]

With the rapid proliferation in numbers of *madrassas*, the quality of education – particularly traditional Islamic education – declined, as a wide gap emerged between the wealthy, high-ranking *madrassas* well-funded by

government funds and the poorer *madrassas*. In addition to this, there were simply not enough employment opportunities available to the mass of students being turned out by the *madrassas*. The rapid increase in the number of graduates from the *madrassas* resulted in higher unemployment, as many were unable to find employment, either as religious teachers or as government bureaucrats. The outcome was to create a class of 'religiously-inclined, militant, unemployed, frustrated, and half educated youth'.[47] A further consequence of the rapid growth in *madrassas* was that a small minority became involved in criminal activities and provided a cover for criminals involved in extortion, kidnapping and other violent activities. Attempts to arrest and bring to trial the criminals who were associated with the *madrassas* were frustrated, as the authorities had to face the criticism that they were harassing Islamic institutions.[48] *Madrassas* have, thus, become a new source of political power and social status, controlled by often poorly educated religious leaders, aggressively pushing their own form of Sharia and competing amongst themselves, pushing ever increasingly aggressive forms of sectarianism.[49]

The war against the Soviets in Afghanistan created a new kind of *madrassa*, which, along with its emphasis upon traditional religious education, also began to indoctrinate students to undertake *jihad* against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Such *madrassas* were common in the parts of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan: the North West Frontier Province, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Baluchistan.[50] Many of these militant *madrassa* graduates were later recruited by the Pakistani military to fight a proxy war in Kashmir against the Indian state. Many others became involved in terrorist organizations, including those that were sectarian-based, often within Pakistan itself. As one commentator has put it: 'There is considerable evidence to support the view that without state connivance and support from the religious elites a *jihadi* culture could not flourish in this country.'[51] At the conclusion of the war in Afghanistan, the government of Pakistan found that it had created a monster that it could no longer control.

Islamization and the military

During the Islamization process, the military were portrayed as the dominant protectors of the Pakistan state and of Islam. Until Zia came to power, the primary role of the military had been to protect Pakistan's borders and maintain internal security, but under Zia it also became a staunch defender of Islam. Previously, the military had followed the traditions of the British Indian Army in being a secular organization, but, under Zia, they also became portrayed as soldiers of Islam. Islamic philosophy became mandatory as part of the education of the officer corps. Prayer at the regimental mosques on Fridays was also designated mandatory. Promotions were partly based on demonstrated piety, and non-pious Muslims and non-Muslims found their promotion to senior ranks

forcefully blocked.[52] Attempts were made to create a more puritanical, devout military through such measures as banning the drinking of alcohol in the officers' mess – which had been a cherished tradition since British times – the setting aside of time for prayer and fasting and the introduction of the study of Islam into the education of the officer corps.

The ensuing religious indoctrination, in combination with the growing numbers of recruits from middle and lower-middle class backgrounds, created a more conservative and religious military which strengthened the alliance between the military and the religious. The Jamaat-i-Islami was permitted to carry out propaganda work among the officers and troops. Many troops attended Jamaat-i-Islami meetings and joined Islamic missionary groups, actively recruiting young men for service. Later, a few of these younger, more religious officers came under the influence of radical *jihadist* groups. They became particularly powerful in the Inter-Services Intelligence, particularly the former Director-General, Hamid Gul, and his successor, General Javed Nasir, who were both opposed to the US and wanted Pakistan to undergo an Islamic revolution that would essentially free the country of Western cultural and political influences. Both supported the more extreme mujahideen groups in Afghanistan and the *jihadi* groups in Kashmir.[53] The links between a minority of officers, particularly those serving in the Inter-Services Intelligence, and sectarian and terrorist organizations have continued.

Proxy war in Pakistan: Saudi Arabia, Iran and the origins of sectarian violence

One of the major unintended consequences of Zia's state-sponsored Islamization was the intensification of sectarian divisions between the Sunni majority and the Shias. Doctrinal differences between Sunnis and Shias existed from the very early days of Islam, and there had always been occasional violent clashes between the two sects. During Muharram, the first three caliphs who succeeded Muhammad are vilified by Shias as hypocrites and usurpers for excluding the family of Muhammad from their rightful role as leaders of the Muslim community. Many Sunnis who revere the caliphs find the Shia attitude towards them deeply offensive. During the Day of Ashura, the tenth day of Muharram, Shias often flagellate themselves with chains or whips in public, as a mark of their sorrow at the martyrdom of Hussain ibn Ali – the grandson of Muhammad – at the battle of Karbala. In such periods of deep emotion, sectarian tensions and violence can easily spontaneously erupt. Many Sunni Muslims believe that such Shia practices are non-Muslim innovations. The Muharram processions have, throughout the long history of Islam, often led to spontaneous violence between Sunnis and Shias. In recent times, during Muharram, the crowded processions of mourners have been the target of carefully organized suicide bombings, which have claimed many more innocent victims.

There was, however, very little overt sectarian violence in Pakistan between Sunnis and Shias until the 1980s. Mainstream Muslims in Pakistan and elsewhere had generally treated Shiism as one of the traditional schools of Pakistani Islamic law. However, the Islamization under Zia, with its emphasis on a narrow Deobandi–Sunni tradition as the only legitimate source of authority, was to sharpen the difference between the majority Sunnis and the Shias.[54] The sectarian violence that was beginning to emerge during Zia's regime was to be fuelled by the rivalry between the new revolutionary Shia state of Iran, led by Ayatollah Khomeini, and the Wahhabi fundamentalist monarchy of Saudi Arabia.

A major cause of sectarian violence and terrorism in Pakistan has been the interference in Pakistan affairs by outside powers. The US has, correctly, been singled out for criticism for its inconsistent and short-sighted relationship with Pakistan, particularly in relation to its support of military regimes.[55] The role of Saudi Arabia has been largely overlooked, which, in many ways, has been far more important in the growth of sectarian violence in Pakistan. In a secret cable, signed by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in December 2009, Saudi Arabia was identified as a major source of funding for Sunni terrorist groups in Pakistan.[56] One of the major motivations for Saudi support for radical Sunni groups in Pakistan has been to counter the influence of Saudi Arabia's most feared enemy in the Middle East: the Shia state of Iran.[57] The rivalry on the international scene between Saudi Arabia and Iran was to take the form of a proxy war in Pakistan and Afghanistan during the Afghan *jihad*.[58]

The role of Saudi Arabia and, to a lesser degree, Iran, in helping create terrorism and sectarian violence in Pakistan has often been underplayed by analysts, in part, because the Saudis have maintained a low profile. The Saudi presence and influence, according to one commentator, 'is more subtle and hard to pin down'.[59] Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have had a long, deep relationship, which was greatly strengthened during Zia's push to introduce a Deobandi–Islamic state. In a 2007 cable published by WikiLeaks, the Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the US, Adel al Jubeir, boasted that: 'We in Saudi Arabia are not observers in Pakistan, we are participants.'[60] Pakistan has received more aid from Saudi Arabia than from any other country. In turn, Pakistan, with its very strong military capacity, has provided Saudi Arabia with military aid, assistance and expertise.

Saudi Arabia's ties with Pakistan long preceded the rule of Zia. In the 1960s, Pakistan helped the Royal Saudi Air Force introduce the first jet fighters. During the 1970s and 1980s, 15,000 Pakistani troops were stationed in Saudi Arabia to protect the monarchy.[61] During the 1980s, Saudi Arabia was a major financial contributor to the Pakistan-supported Afghan *jihad* against the Soviet invaders working through the Inter-Services Intelligence. According to Saudi Arabia's former intelligence chief, Prince Sultan bin Abdul-Aziz, the two countries had 'probably one of the closest relationships in the world'.[62]

Saudi Arabia, therefore, has had a highly critical, if often covert, influence on Pakistani politics. In the early 1970s, Zulifkar Ali Bhutto was desperate for Saudi funding in order to develop Pakistan's exorbitantly expensive nuclear programme. In return, Pakistan, with its much larger military presence, provided security for Saudi Arabia. Winning the favour of the Saudis was probably a factor in convincing Bhutto that he should legislate so as to declare the Ahmadiyya – who were anathema to Saudi's rigid monotheism – as non-Muslims. His purge of Left-wing elements in his party was also probably a factor that was designed, in part, to win favour with the Saudis.[63] Pakistan's gratitude to Saudi was expressed through such events as renaming the third-largest city, Lyallpur, as Faisalabad, in honour of King Faisal.[64] The Saudis, however, were much more comfortable dealing with the Pakistani military rather than with democratically elected governments, and it was during the reign of Zia that Saudi influence in Pakistan increased dramatically.[65] The Saudis strongly supported Zia's attempt to turn Pakistan into a strongly authoritarian Sunni state, dominated by the teachings of the Deobandi school of Islam which was much closer to Wahhabism – the state religion of Saudi Arabia – than the Barelvi tradition.

Wahhabism is a highly puritanical and intolerant form of Islam which is practised mainly in Saudi Arabia.[66] Wahhabism's founder was a desert preacher, Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab who lived in the Arabian Peninsula during the eighteenth century. He preached an uncompromising monotheism – Tawhid – and fought to rid Islam of the extraneous innovations that had crept in over time. He advocated a return to an original, pure Islam as preached and practised by the prophet Muhammad and his followers. His literal interpretation of the Koran allowed no place for free will or discussion. Failure to follow the laws and practice of Wahhabi Islam was met with draconian punishments. Not only was Wahhab opposed to Shiism and Sufism, but he also preached that most Sunnis deviated from the right path. According to Wahhab, most Muslims who claimed to be monotheists were, in fact, polytheists and idolaters, including the Muslims who followed the teachings of one of Islam's four great legal schools. While Wahhab was uncompromisingly hostile to Christians and Jews, the main focus of his anger was directed towards the majority of Muslims who had so deviated from the true message of Islam that they were apostates, worthy of nothing but death. Wahhabism is particularly hostile towards Shiites with some clerics openly preaching *jihad* and death to the Shia *kafirs*.[67]

Most mainstream Muslims regarded Wahhabism as a peculiar, even heretical, sect, and Wahhab would have remained an eccentric, minor preacher preaching an idiosyncratic form of Islam until he formed an alliance with a local chieftain, Muhammad Ibn Saud – the ancestral founder of Saudi Arabia who married Wahhab's daughter. In return for his support, Saud gave the Wahhabis religious and judicial control over his

kingdom. Wahhabism provided Saud with the ideological weapon to fight the orthodox Sunni Ottomans – the dominant power in the Arabian Peninsula – and to gain control of Mecca and Medina – the two great holy cities of Islam. In return, Wahhabi clerics were allowed to dictate state ideology in which only Wahhabi Islam was officially recognized. In gaining control of the Arabian Peninsula and turning most of the Arabian Peninsula into a Wahhabi theocracy, the Wahhabi slaughtered thousands of Shiites and Sunnis. Eventually, the alliance led to the foundation of the modern state of Saudi Arabia in 1932. Wahhabism was incorporated into the ideology of the new state, forming the basis of the legal system. Although a close ally of the US, Saudi Arabia has also been strongly criticized by the US State Department for its religious intolerance, particularly towards the Shia minority who have been threatened with annihilation by members of the religious establishment.[68] Saudi Arabia has been very concerned about unrest amongst its Shia population, who comprise about 10 per cent of the population, particularly as they are concentrated in the sensitive, oil-rich eastern regions.[69] In recent times, Saudi Arabia has become increasingly paranoid about the threat posed by Shia states, such as Iran.

During the corrupt secular regime of the Shah of Iran, the rivalry between Wahhabi Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran was muted. The Shah, in his concentrated attempts to develop a modern monarchical state, had marginalized religion in politics by secularizing the legal system and excluding the religious from any role in government.[70] The overthrow of the Shah and the coming to power of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1979, followed by his calls for a worldwide Islamist revolution controlled by Iran, however, greatly alarmed the Saudis.

Under Khomeini, Iran became an Islamic theocracy ruled by clerics in strict accordance with Shia-grounded Islamic law. Power rested with a small cabal of mullahs, the Council of Guardians and its supreme leader – Khomeini – who together developed a revolutionary theory of government, *valayat-e faqih* (guardianship of the jurist) in which the Shia *ulema* became leaders in matters relating to politics, as well as in religion.[71] Under Khomeini, who assumed the title of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Iran became a populist theocracy. Khomeini, who wanted to become the leader of Islam worldwide, was regarded by many of his followers as the *mahdi* or Messiah – the Redeemer who would rid the world of wrongdoing, injustice and tyranny.[72] One of the striking features of the new regime was the hatred of the 'Great Satan' – the US – which was a strong ally of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Pakistan had been a strong ally of Iran during the 1970s and, along with the US, had been a member of the anti-Soviet South-East Asian Treaty Organization. Zia, himself, had travelled to Iran to support the Shah during the Islamic Revolution. Consequently, the new rulers of Iran were deeply suspicious of Zia, especially in relation to his strong alliance with Saudi Arabia.[73]

The Iranian revolution of 1979 had, not surprisingly, greatly scared the Saudi monarchy, who feared that their authority might be undermined at home and their influence effectively diminished in neighbouring countries.[74] Khomeini was contemptuous of the Saudi monarchy, which he regarded as venal and a corrupt lackey of the US.[75] The Saudis were particularly concerned when riots and disturbances broke out in the vital, oil-rich eastern provinces, where Shias formed the majority of the workforce.[76]

Saudi policy-makers, therefore, welcomed the opportunity in both Afghanistan and Pakistan to support regimes that that favoured Saudi Arabia's narrowly legalistic Wahhabi Islam. The Saudis responded to Iranian support for Shia organizations by funnelling funds to Wahhabi and Deobandi Sunni organizations which were both openly anti-Shia and increasingly hostile towards the West.[77] These included the Jamaat-i-Islami and included the Ahl-e-Hadith sect.[78] From 1974, the Saudis had access to vast amounts of petrodollars through the rise in oil prices following the Saudi-led oil embargo of 1973, and began to more aggressively promote Wahhabi Islam internationally through financing scholars and activists from around the Islamic world to study in Saudi Arabia. Once they completed their studies, these graduates returned to teach and preach at Saudi-funded universities, schools, mosques and research institutions, such as the International Islamic University in Islamabad.[79]

The spread of Wahhabi-influenced Islam in Pakistan became a threat to the Shia who looked to Iran for support in asserting their religious identity. With the active support of Iran, Shias generally became more politically active during the 1980s, with Iran providing necessary funds to Shia organizations. Iran built cultural centres in every major Pakistani city and financed young Shia clerics to study at the great Iranian theological centres, including in the holy city of Qom, where they came into contact with politically active Shias from several Middle Eastern countries, particularly Lebanon.[80] Increasingly, during the 1980s, there was a struggle between the more traditional, politically-quiescent senior Shia clergy, who controlled most of the mosques, and the young graduates from Iranian *madrassas*, who were more politically active in public religious events, such as organizing the Muharram processions.[81] The growing assertiveness of the Shia community and its concern with Zia's Islamization and the growing influence of Saudi Arabian Wahhabism led to the formation of the first purely Shia political party – the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqhe Jafaria – in 1979. The title of the party, 'the movement for implementing Shia jurisprudence', alarmed Zia and his Sunni allies, who viewed the new party as an Iranian conspiracy intent on making Pakistan a purely Shia state.[82]

The single catalysing issue that raised Shia awareness of their vulnerability as a minor sect was the attempts by the state to collect *zakat* – the Islamic alms tax, whose payment is obligatory for all Muslims. A dispute arose because Sunni and Shia law differs, in respect to the payment of

zakat. According to the Hanafi Sunni School of Law, *zakat* should be collected by the state, and the new regulation meant that the tax would automatically be deducted from an individual's bank account. Shia law, however, maintained that the tax would be paid by the individual and not collected by the state.[83]

The government's decision to collect *zakat* created great resentment among Shias right across Pakistan. It crystallized Shia concerns about the process of Islamization under Zia which they regarded as nothing other than aggressive Sunnification. Pakistani Shias, like Shia minorities in other countries, therefore, greatly welcomed the Iranian revolution, which encouraged them to stand up for their own religious rights. Khomeini allegedly warned Zia that if he attempted to suppress Shias in Pakistan, he 'would do to him what he had done to the Shah'.[84] In July 1980, Shias assembled from all over Pakistan and virtually laid siege to the capital of Islamabad, demanding that *zakat* not be imposed upon them by the state. The huge demonstration severely shook the confidence of Zia's government, which quickly exempted Shias from aspects of the Islamization process that contradicted Shia law and practices.

The Shia victory, which had defied the military-imposed martial law, had two important consequences for the relations between the Sunnis and the Shias. First, the issue of Islamization and, particularly, the successful opposition to the *zakat* tax led to a growing assertiveness among Shias, whose demands also included that they be represented on all important government decision-making bodies, including the body advising the government on the Islamization process.[85] Shias also demanded the freedom to celebrate Muharram and to proselytize their religion.[86] The second consequence of Shia opposition to the *zakat* issue was that it angered both the military, who saw the Shia demonstration as an open defiance of martial law government, and Zia's Deobandi supporters. Shias were regarded, by the more sectarian Sunnis as nothing other than traitorous heretics, particularly as Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran had supported Shia activism in Pakistan. For those Sunnis who advocated an Islamization of Pakistan along narrow Sunni lines this was a major setback. The resulting anger of Sunni hard-liners was heightened when some Sunnis claimed to be Shias in order to avoid paying *zakat*. Many Shias who had become more Sunni in their religious practices reverted back to their original sect.[87] The subsequent tension was to quickly lead to violence between the two sects. In April 1983, Sunni extremists attacked two places of Shia worship in Karachi.[88] These attacks were soon to be followed by even more violent attacks.

The growing tension between the two sects was to lead to violence and sectarian conflict, which developed over the 1980s and greatly escalated during the 1990s.[89] One of the first rabidly anti-Shia Sunni terrorist organizations that emerged during the rule of Zia was the Sipah-e-Sahaba (Army of the Prophet's Companions). The organization was founded in 1985 in

the district of Jhang in the centre of the Punjab. It advocated a strong Sunni state in which Shiites would be classified as *kafirs* and, as such, would be considered a non-Muslim minority in Pakistan, similar to the Ahmadiyya. It also wanted to ban the Muhurram processions on the grounds that they insulted the early Islamic leaders who are revered by Sunnis. The organization has since targeted many Shia processions, places of worship and individuals. On 12 January 2002, the organization was banned by General Pervez Musharraf for its alleged involvement in terrorist activities.[90] The reaction of Sunni militants was, in part, the resentment and jealousy of what was seen as the Shia's highly privileged position within Pakistani society.[91]

Zia ul-Haq's legacy

Zia died in a mysterious air crash, along with the US ambassador to Pakistan, in August 1988. His rule left a terrible legacy for Pakistan. There is debate concerning the effectiveness of his process of Islamization, and some analysts argue that it had only a minor impact on Pakistan's political, legal, social and economic institutions, as the state was never powerful enough to fully implement it.[92] Many Pakistanis rejected or simply ignored the attempts from the state to change their religious practices and beliefs. In the countryside, in particular, the influence of the Sufis and the *pirs* has remained unchallenged. Zia would have been shocked and disappointed to learn that General Musharraf and many of his fellow officers still continued to enjoy a whiskey, both at private parties and at home. Zia's harsh reign eventually became so unpopular that even many of his former allies, such as the Jamaat-i Islami, withdrew their support, in part, because Zia was reluctant to hold elections.

Nevertheless, Zia's rule had greatly strengthened the influence of the more extreme Deobandi- and Wahhabi-type organizations, which were encouraged and nurtured by the military, for political, if not for religious, reasons. It has led to, in the words of an observer, 'the fateful alliance between the conservative Pakistani military and the equally reactionary mullahs'.[93] The efforts to create a powerful, united Islamic state had led, instead, to a society deeply divided along religious and sectarian lines. Pakistan had become a more rigid, less tolerant and, consequently, more vulnerable divided state. Zia's alliance with Saudi Arabia and its encouragement of Wahhabism had alienated Shias, who had turned to Iran for support. In the process, Pakistan and, soon, Afghanistan became the centre of a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. These developments were to lead to the growth of sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shias during the 1980s which escalated during the 1990s and which has, unfortunately, now become a feature of contemporary Pakistani politics. The proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran was also fought during the Afghanistan *jihad*. It is arguable that without the advent of the Afghan

jihad, which enabled Zia to suppress dissent domestically and withstand pressure from the outside to restore democracy, he would have been swiftly ousted from power and his Islamization programme would have been, consequently, far less effective. The combination of Zia's Islamization and the Afghan *jihad* were to be the most important catalysts for the emergence of terrorism and sectarian violence in Pakistan.

6 The Afghanistan *jihad* and the making of terrorism, 1979–1989

On 24 December 1979, the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan began. Thousands of Soviet troops crossed the Oxus River and moved across the Afghanistan border. Until February 1989, the seemingly all-powerful Soviet Union waged a war in Afghanistan against loosely connected resistance groups, collectively termed the mujahideen or holy warriors, who were well-trained, armed and supported by foreign powers, particularly Pakistan, the US, Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Afghan *jihad* was to have unforeseen and highly dangerous consequences for Pakistan; quite simply, it laid the foundations for terrorism.

Afghanistan and the Soviet Union

The modern state of Afghanistan comprises about 245,000 square miles. The country shares a long boundary with Pakistan in the south and Iran in the east. In the north, lie the Central Asian states of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. In the east, Afghanistan also shares a very short border with China. Afghanistan has a key strategic location in Central and South Asia, straddling the ancient trade routes from China in the east, right through to Europe. Because of its strategic location, Afghanistan has been subject to repeated invasions and migrations of peoples, thus creating a highly complex and divided society. The country has been described both as 'the heart of Asia' and the 'cockpit of Asia'.[1]

The modern state of Afghanistan was created in 1893 as a buffer state between the Russian Empire in the north and the British Empire in the south. It has little sense of a national identity, being made up of a proliferation of tribal groups from different language and ethnic groups.[2] More than a dozen ethno-linguistic groups are mainly Sunni, but there is also a Shia minority. Individuals from rival sects rarely intermarry, which has consequently added to the sharp divisions within society.[3] The massive Hindu Kush Mountains create a visual and geographical north-south divide.[4] In the north, the Tajiks and Uzbeks are linked to peoples living in the Central Asian states of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The Western Tajiks have close cultural, linguistic and religious links with Iran. The

Persian-speaking Hazaras are the only ethnic group that is largely contained within Afghanistan. As a Shia minority, they have periodically been persecuted by Sunni extremists, both in Afghanistan and in Pakistan, where many are refugees. Afghanistan's largest ethnic group, the Pashtuns, who comprise more than 40 per cent of the population, mostly live in the south. Roughly 35,000,000 to 40,000,000 Pashtuns live in Pakistan and around 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 live in Afghanistan.[5] The possibility of a breakaway Pashtun state, effectively unifying Afghanistan and Pakistan Pashtuns, has long troubled Pakistani politicians.

Historically, Afghanistan has always been a weak, divided state with power throughout the countryside resting with fiercely independent tribal chiefs who controlled and dominated most of the surrounding land. Most of the population has been made up of poor, illiterate subsistence farmers or nomadic herders, with strong tribal and kinship links. At the time that the communists came to power, over 90 per cent of the population was illiterate, a mere 5 per cent of the population controlled 45 per cent of the cultivatable land and the per capita income was the lowest in Asia.[6] Mullahs were a key component of society. As custodians of the local mosque – the village's communal meeting place – they acted as religious leaders, said prayers, gave sermons and officiated at both birth and death ceremonies. Although usually poorly educated in Islamic theology and sacred law, they were treated with respect and deference because of their education and status, although they were still subservient to the powerful *khans* (landlords). Mullahs served as local community leaders, effectively acting as social workers, adjudicators and judges in local disputes. The power of the central government, based in the capital of Kabul, has always been restricted to the area around Kabul and other urban centres.[7]

Afghanistan has long had a history of fierce resistance to foreign invaders, including Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan and the powerful Mughals.[8] The British Empire, at its might, conquered Afghanistan during the first Afghan war (1839–1842), but were forced to withdraw from Kabul. Of over 16,500 soldiers and civilians, only a single individual returned safely to British-controlled territory.[9] The British made the mistake of trying to occupy Afghanistan with foreign troops, installing an unpopular ruler and condoning the brutality of their temporary allies among the Afghans.[10] The Soviets were to make the same mistakes as the British, as were the US and its allies, still later.

Throughout its history, Afghanistan has been exposed to many religious influences brought by traders, mystics, saints and Islamic warriors. Muslim conquerors from Central Asia had helped establish Sunni Islam as the dominant religion. As in Pakistan, the Islam in Afghanistan was strongly influenced by mysticism and saint worship propagated by the Sufis, whose numerous shines dotted throughout the countryside spread an emotional and highly personalized form of worship. During the nineteenth century, however, more austere forms of Islam began to gradually gain influence,

as Muslim Deobandi theologians established *madrassas*, particularly among the Afghan Pashtun tribes. During the nineteenth century, British attempts to conquer and hold on to Afghanistan were fiercely resisted by the Afghans, led by the mullahs, who drew upon *jihad* as a rallying call against the infidel invaders.[11] Like the British, the Soviet Union was to confront, and eventually be worn down by, the xenophobia and religious zeal of the fierce Afghan warriors and their strong devotion to Islam, which was, and still is, a powerful ideological force used to effectively repel invaders.

By the turn of the twentieth century, Afghanistan was ruled by weak kings who had little power outside the capital, Kabul. During the 1950s, Afghanistan established close links with Russia, receiving both aid and investment in civilian and military projects. Between 1955 and 1979, the Soviet Union had become Afghanistan's leading trade partner and provided economic and military aid totalling $2.5 billion.[12] Russia's national security council – the KGB – secretly funded groups within the military and among students and staff at Kabul University, where Marxist and Islamic societies competed, sometimes violently. In addition, military personnel were indoctrinated with communist ideology during their training in the Soviet Union.[13] In 1973, the Pashtun nationalist and reformer Sardur Muhammad Daoud Khan, with the support of Leftist officers in the army and the Parcham Party, which was dominated by urban middle and upper class socialists, overthrew the Afghan monarchy and declared Afghanistan a republic. After Daud – who attempted to play the US and Soviets against each other – had begun to move Afghanistan closer to Pakistan and the US, he was deposed and then murdered by personnel loyal to the pro-Soviet Communist Party – the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. With his death, Soviet influence increased among the army, in educational institutions and in small factories. This small layer of urban, middle-class reformers, with little support in the surrounding countryside, embarked on a highly ambitious and radical reform programme which alienated the tribal elders and religious hierarchy, who were the power-brokers in the countryside.[14]

After the overthrow and killing of Daud, Soviet military and political advisers organized secret police networks and infiltrated the military and educational institutions.[15] Advised by the KGB, the Marxist government instituted terror campaigns, jailing and executing both religious and secular opponents.[16] The communists were bitterly resented by the mullahs and *khans* in the countryside who declared a *jihad*, or holy war against the infidels. In March 1979, revolt broke out in the desert town of Herat, close to the Iranian border, where rebellious military rebels murdered Russian advisers and their families. This violence led to swift retaliation from the Afghan communist government whose bomber jets pulverized the city, effectively killing thousands of civilians.[17] Despite the harsh crackdown, the revolt spread throughout the countryside and was greatly strengthened by mass desertions from the Afghan military.

The Soviet leadership, however, were exasperated and extremely concerned about the policies of the Afghan communist leaders. According to the pragmatic policy-makers in Moscow, Afghanistan, with its backward economy, largely illiterate population and extremely powerful religious influence, was not nearly ready for the kind of ambitious reforms, such as the redistribution of land, banning of child marriages and push for mandatory education for girls that the Afghan communists were attempting to implement.[18] The Afghan communists, themselves, were bitterly divided along factional and personal lines. Their leader, Nur Muhammad Taraki, had begun to develop a grandiose personality cult and was attempting to marginalize his rivals within the Afghan Communist Party.[19] Taraki ignored Moscow's advice that he should move very slowly on reforms, instead desperately pleading for direct Soviet military assistance. The revolt against the Afghan communist government and their Soviet allies intensified throughout the countryside. The murder of Taraki by a party comrade, Hafizullah Amin, did little to allay Moscow's increasing concerns. A KGB report suggested that Amin, who had previously been a doctoral candidate in the US, was, in fact, a CIA plant, who was planning to move Afghanistan towards the US and Pakistan.[20] Moreover, he was arrogant, unreliable and incompetent and, thus, had to be eliminated.[21] During the invasion, an elite Russian special unit attacked the old royal palace in Kabul where Amin hiding. As soon as he was discovered, Amin was immediately killed. Amin's exiled rival, Afghan communist Babrak Karmal, was then swiftly installed as the Soviet's puppet president.[22]

The motives for the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan were mixed. Amin was an untrustworthy and ineffective leader who simply had to be quickly replaced. The Afghan government was facing collapse as mass desertions from the military intensified. Soviet leaders feared a powerful anti-Soviet regime in Kabul, strongly influenced by the US, and Pakistan would, consequently, threaten Soviet control over its Islamic Central Asian republics. The KGB also feared that if the US and its allies – Iran and Pakistan – were able to obtain a foothold in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union would be threatened by US missiles.[23] Despite grave misgivings expressed by the Chief of Staff of the Military, Nikolai Ogarkov, who warned that the Afghans would fiercely resist, Moscow decided that communism, with all its flaws, in Afghanistan had to be saved, in spite of the risks involved.[24] The goal was to replace the bad communist regime with one that was not quite so bad. As in the situation of the US in Vietnam, the initial goal of the Soviets was simply to restore law and order, put down the rebellions, assist in strengthening the government and quickly withdraw afterwards.[25] However, just like the US position in Vietnam, the Soviet Union was dragged into a protracted, unwinnable and highly unpopular war and, ultimately, forced to make a humiliating withdrawal.

Setting the bear trap: the US response to the invasion

The US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia all saw distinct strategic advantages in supporting the Afghan rebels for different reasons. The Soviet invasion came at a time when the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the US dominated the strategic thinking of the latter. Afghanistan, therefore, provided a golden opportunity for the US to wage a proxy war in Afghanistan which would weaken the Soviet Union, with minimal risk and cost. From 1980–1989, Afghanistan, therefore, became the focal point of the Cold War, and Pakistan became the frontline state in the war against the Soviets. President Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor – Zbignew Brzezinski – saw the Soviet invasion as both a threat and an opportunity. He and his advisers feared that the Soviet domination of Afghanistan could threaten Pakistan and the Persian Gulf region and, thus, vital US oil supplies.[26] On the other hand, Brzezinski and the hawks in Congress saw the opportunity to punish the Soviets because of their support for the anti-US forces in Vietnam.[27] US policy-makers were still haunted by the Vietnamese victory of 1975. In a CBS news interview, Texas Congressman Charles Wilson – the mujahideen's strongest supporter in Congress – stated bluntly, 'I wanted to hurt them. I wanted them to count body bags going back to Moscow.'[28] Although he was initially doubtful that the ill-armed and disorganized mujahideen had the resources to defeat the Soviets, Brzezinski saw it as a golden opportunity to set a 'bear trap',[29] which would draw the Soviet bear into an unwinnable war and deplete the resources, morale and will of the invaders, as had happened to the British in the nineteenth century. It was a golden opportunity, as Brzezinski crudely put it, 'to finally sow shit in their backyard'.[30] When later asked if he had any regrets about the decision, which later led to the rise of the Taliban, Brzezinski simply stated: 'Which was more important in world history? The Taliban or the fall of the Soviet Union?'[31]

As the anti-Communist revolt began to gather pace in March 1979, the CIA proposed that the Carter administration consider providing secret support for the rebels.[32] Thus, in 1980, the US began supplying funds, propaganda materials and other forms of assistance to the Afghan rebels. Carter, who had been previously been regarded as a dove in US foreign policy, had been shocked by what he regarded as the naked aggression of the Soviet invasion. From the beginning, the US adopted a hands-off policy and left the day-to-day operations and contact with the mujahideen to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The great fear was that an open confrontation between the Soviet Union and the US and its allies could escalate into a catastrophic nuclear world war. The US was, therefore, paranoid about being implicated in providing support to the rebels. Nevertheless, CIA field officers began to explore with their Pakistani and Saudi contacts regarding the possibility of providing covert assistance to the rebels.[33] On July 1979, Carter authorized the CIA to spend the paltry

sum of $500,000 in order to provide limited support to the rebels, namely, radio equipment, medical supplies and cash.[34] Initially, the rebels were supplied with ancient .303 Lee Enfield rifles, which had been covertly purchased by the CIA from India, Greece and several other countries. They were also provided with rocket-propelled grenade launchers purchased from Egypt and China.[35]

To the surprise of many, by late 1981, the strength of the mujahideen, largely disorganized independent rival groups made up of part-time fighters, had greatly increased, because of the widespread opposition to the Soviets and their Afghan allies. The rebels were highly active in the majority of Afghanistan's provinces, successfully ambushing Soviet convoys, assassinating Soviet military and undertaking sabotage tasks in urban centres.[36] Following the election of the hawkish President Ronald Reagan in November 1980, with his well-known hard-line approach toward communism, US aid to the mujahideen significantly increased, largely through the support of hawkish Congressman, such as Charlie Wilson, who was a highly colourful representative with the infamous reputation of being a playboy.[37]

By 1984, the *jihad* was taking a high toll of the Soviets. According to CIA estimation, around 17,000 Soviet troops had been killed or wounded, 350 to 400 aircraft and over 3,550 tanks and other vehicles had been destroyed. The cost to the Soviet government was sitting at around $12 billion.[38] There was much unrest among the conscripts, particularly those from Central Asia, many of whom, as fellow Muslims, were sympathetic to the Afghan resistance.[39] By 1985, under Reagan's militant anti-Communist and staunchly Roman Catholic CIA director, William Casey, the US began to increasingly escalate the war, with the new and more ambitious goal of defeating the Soviets by providing the mujahideen with highly sophisticated military technology. Instead of merely harassing the enemy, the new goal involved defeating the Soviets militarily and forcing them to withdraw from Afghanistan. To this end, the mujahideen were provided with sophisticated cyber weapons, anti-tank missiles, highly accurate mortars, satellite data of Soviet targets, communication networks and plastic explosives. CIA operatives assisted the ISI in establishing schools for the mujahideen, teaching urban warfare, the use of heavy weapons and effective military communications. Highly accurate sniper rifles were used to assassinate senior Soviet officials and members of the Afghanistan Communist Party. The assassinations were angrily denounced by the Soviets as acts of terrorism.[40] The provision of the superbly effective Stinger surface to air missiles in 1986 greatly weakened Soviet domination of the skies and limited its tactical options.[41] Before the provision of the Stingers, the Soviets had made highly effective use of heavily armoured helicopters to transport elite special Spetsnaz forces and to terrorize the countryside. The helicopters were also fearsome weapons that were unashamedly used to terrorize the largely defenceless civilian population. The heavy losses suffered by

the helicopters and air force from Stinger strikes restricted their role in the war, although their role in turning the tide of battle against the Soviets has been overestimated.

The role of Pakistan in the Afghan *jihad*

The highly serendipitous outbreak of the Afghan *jihad* came as a godsend for Pakistan strongman General Zia ul-Haq, unpopular both at home and internationally particularly by the late 1970s. The joint US–Pakistan action against the Soviets enabled him to build a strong relationship with the all-powerful US, which effectively cemented his authority at home, as well as his international standing, enabling him to remain in power until his death in 1988.[42] Before the Soviet invasion, Zia's relationship with the US had reached an all-time low because of the criticisms by the Carter administration of his human rights policies and the development of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme. As well as this, Zia had the former Prime Minister – Zulfikar Ali Bhutto – executed, despite the personal appeals of Carter for clemency.[43]

A strong anti-Soviet alliance with the US was warmly welcomed by Zia and the military, as it strengthened Pakistan's security, both in respect to India – which was, as always, Pakistan's primary security concern – and provided protection from a Soviet-dominated, hostile Afghanistan, with its close links to India. However, like the US, Zia was greatly concerned with avoiding provoking the powerful Soviet Union, fearing an attack on Pakistan.

The support of the US also greatly strengthened Zia's rule at home. Soon after his election, President Reagan assured Zia that the US would refrain from criticizing his domestic policies in return for Pakistan's military support for the Afghan resistance.[44] In addition to this, Reagan agreed to provide massive military aid, including the sale of 16 F16-A fighter-bombers, which could be used against India.[45] Consequently, US support enabled Zia's regime to continue with his dictatorial control of Pakistan and the steady development of a nuclear weapon.[46]

The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan had been tense ever since Pakistan came into existence. The major issue between the two countries was the Durand Line – a 1,500 mile artificial border between Afghanistan and Pakistan – mapped out in 1893 and named after Sir Henry Durand, who was the Foreign Secretary of the colonial government of India. Afghanistan has consistently refused to accept the legality of the line which divides the Pashtun living in Pakistan from those living in Afghanistan, while Pakistan sees any change of the status quo as a threat to Pakistan's unity. The line runs along the borders of Baluchistan, the North West Frontier Province and the seven tribal agencies of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Baluchi and Pashtun nationalists have consistently agitated for independent states made up of the populations from

both sides of the border. Pakistan was, consequently, fearful of a pro-Soviet Afghanistan supporting Pashtun and Baluchi nationalism. Afghanistan had consistently supported the call for a Pashtun state – Paskhtunistan – comprising Pashtun-dominated areas in Pakistan and Afghanistan, while, to add to Pakistan's concerns, from 1947–1989 Afghanistan had a very close relationship with India.[47] The loss of Pashtun or the Baluchi-dominated territories would have shattered the integrity of Pakistan as a nation.[48] One of the major motives, then, for Pakistan's support of extremist *jihadi* groups in Afghanistan was to neutralize Pashtun and Baluchi nationalism.[49]

Furthermore, Pakistan was fearful of being surrounded by its enemies, which were made up of pro-Soviet Afghanistan, the Soviet Union and its ally India.[50] Daud's seizing of power in 1978 immediately spelt trouble for Pakistan, as Daud was strongly pro-India. Immediately, Daud began to interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs by reviving the Pakhtunistan separatist movement and aiding separatist rebels in Baluchistan. Pakistan's response was to organize and support religious groups which were opposed to the government in Kabul.[51] Many individuals, who later were to become the leaders of the mujahideen movement, fled for sanctuary to Pakistan. The most notable of these were the young militants Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Ahmad Shah Massud – fierce rivals and among the most prominent warlords in the *jihad* against the Soviets and the subsequent civil war, following the eventual withdrawal of the Soviet Union.[52]

From the outset, Zia insisted that the Pakistani military, through its ISI, control the allocation of weapons and funds to the mujahideen and that the CIA had no direct contact with the Afghan rebels. Initially, this suited both the Pakistanis and the US, who had only a limited number of Central Intelligence Agency officers in Pakistan.[53] Later, this decision backfired on the US, as the Pakistanis favoured the more extreme warlords who were to eventually turn on the US.[54] The training of the mujahideen was to be undertaken only by ISI officers in camps along the Pakistan–Afghanistan border. Zia was firmly determined that events in Afghanistan would be manipulated to further Pakistan's strategic interests, especially in respect to India. Zia's motivations and policies often differed from those of the US, particularly in respect to his support of the more extremist mujahideen groups and, consequently, there was an uneasy alliance between the US and Pakistani intelligence agencies.[55] In June 1979, Zia appointed General Akhtar Abdur, who was one of his most loyal supporters among the military, as head of the ISI.[56] All US aid to the ISI was funnelled through its special Afghan section, led by Colonel Mohammad Yousaf, which gave the organization a free hand to support the mujahideen groups that would act in Pakistan's best interests. One of the ISI's most important leverages was that all Afghan refugees in Pakistan were forced to join one of the seven mujahideen parties, known as the Peshawar Seven, which had been created by the Pakistani government.[57] A CIA station chief

summed up the Peshawar Seven: 'They were all brutal, fierce, bloodthirsty, and basically fundamentalist.'[58] In turn, rival Shia mujahideen were supported by Iran.[59]

One of the warlords, who, for a time, was a favourite of the CIA was Jaluddin Haqqani. He was regarded as tough and ruthless. Later, he was to turn against the US and, in recent times, has been accused of introducing suicide bombing into Afghanistan. He became the leader of the Haqqani network, which is fighting against the US and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) from its base in North Waziristan. The US has accused the ISI of protecting Haqqani because he will be a prime ally of Pakistan when the US and its allies eventually move out. In October 2011, US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, demanded that the ISI either force Haqqani to the negotiating table or join with the US forces in attacking his forces.[60] Her demand is still being ignored.

Another major benefactor of ISI patronage was the Hezb-e-Islami (The Islamic Party of Afghanistan) led by the ruthless warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar who was vehemently and openly anti-American. He was referred to as 'The Engineer', because of his time spent as an engineering student in Kabul where he was imprisoned for allegedly killing a Marxist rival. Hekmatyar was able to build up his power and status through the support of both the US and Saudi Arabia. Hekmatyar espoused a particularly extreme form of Islam, including the subjection of women. He was also notorious for his violence towards members of rival mujahideen groups. He was described by a former US ambassador to Afghanistan as a 'nut, an extremist, and a very violent man'.[61]

Hekmatyar was Pakistan's ISI favourite warlord for three reasons: he was a Pashtun, he was considered a very effective warlord, and he was a Sunni zealot. In contrast, the most effective mujahideen commander Ahmad Shah Masud, the Lion of Panjshir, was largely ignored and starved of military supplies from the ISI because he was a Tajik, not a Pashtun, and, therefore, he was not considered a reliable ally. Although he was a devout Muslim, Masud rejected the extremist Islam of his rivals, such as Hekmatyar. Despite grave misgivings, the US continued to acquiesce in the ISI's dangerous strategy of favouring extremists.[62]

Saudi Arabia, the Afghan *jihad* and the spread of Wahhabism

Saudi Arabia was the third major power to become involved in supporting the Afghan *jihad*.[63] Among the Saudis, the ruling elite despised the Soviets and their allies in Afghanistan as atheists. They also feared the threat that the Soviets potentially posed to the Persian Gulf and, thus, to Saudi's vast oil reserves. The Saudi General Intelligence Department (GID) and its chief, Prince Turki al-Faisal, soon followed the US example, funding the mujahideen in conjunction with Saudi charities through the ISI.[64] Saudi

Arabia's rivalry with its Shiite-dominated enemy, Iran, also motivated the support for more extremist Sunni groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan.[65] In the Afghan *jihad*, Saudi policy-makers saw the opportunity, in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, to create regimes that favoured Saudi Arabia's narrowly legalistic Wahhabi Islam. The Saudis responded to Iranian support for Shia organizations by funnelling funds to Wahhabi and Deobandi Sunni organizations.[66] Iran also condemned the Soviet invasion but was even more careful not to be seen to support the Shia mujahideen, for fear of antagonizing the Soviet Union – its ally – against the US.[67]

A further major motivation for Saudi involvement in Afghanistan was the opportunity to further spread its Wahhabi teachings. Saudi money and volunteers were to play an increasingly important role in the Afghan *jihad*. The Saudis spend nearly $5 billion during the Afghan *jihad*, which went to hard-line Sunni and Wahhabi mujahideen groups.[68] US and Saudi funding had ensured that, by early 1986, the ISI had both the organization and the resources to conduct military training in camps set up along the Afghan border. Between 16,000 and 18,000 students graduated each year sporting knowledge of the use of basic firearms and increasingly more complex weapons, such as anti-aircraft weapons, sniper rifles and land mines. Among those who received the training were *jihadis* from Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Palestine, Egypt and several other Muslim countries.[69]

In order to create a cadre of religious students who would both fight with the mujahideen and also serve Pakistan's interest in Afghanistan, Zia, in conjunction with Saudi charities, funded the establishment of a chain of *madrassas* along the Afghan–Pakistan border, from 1979–1989, in order to educate young Afghans and Pakistanis.[70] These illiterate and poor boys, largely from lower-middle and low class backgrounds, were provided with free food, shelter and a basic Islamic education. Many were drawn from the three million Afghan refugees, who, in the years between 1979 and 1989, had settled in camps in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan.[71] The *madrassas* became, in effect, military training camps, acting to indoctrinate the students with a narrow version of Islam, which emphasized *jihad*. From a very early age, the students in many of the *madrassas* were indoctrinated with crude Deobandi and Wahhabi teachings, which were anti-Soviet, but which were also anti-Shia. Although most of the Pakistani *madrassas* were concerned only with the Islamic education of their students, some produced fanatical zealots who were willing to die in battle. Later, many of these mujahideen were to be used by Pakistan against the Indian military in Kashmir and, still later, were to turn on their benefactors.

The CIA also supported the ISI's policy of encouraging the recruitment of Muslim *jihadis*, from over 40 Islamic countries, to fight the Soviets. It is estimated that more than 25,000 came to Pakistan and Afghanistan, although many of the Afghans regarded them as unwelcome foreigners.[72] Thousands more came to study in camps in Pakistan, which promoted

pan-Islamic *jihad*.[73] Among the foreigners who joined the Afghan resistance was Osama bin Laden – the son of a wealthy Saudi businessman, who was an important source of finance. His experiences in Afghanistan only strengthened his religious beliefs and his belief in waging *jihad* against the infidel Soviets and, later, the US and the corrupt Saudi regime. The CIA enthusiastically welcomed these highly motivated outsiders.[74] Ironically, in the light of 9/11, US money and weapons greatly strengthened bin Laden's power in Afghanistan.[75] Although the US were aware of the growing power of the more extremist mujahideen groups, obsession with the long-held rivalry with the Soviet Union effectively blinded the US to the threat that it posed. This was to prove a fatal error of judgment.

The withdrawal of the Soviet Union

By 1986, the Soviets, led by the reformer Mikhail Gorbachev, were desperately seeking a way to escape the 'bear trap'.[76] The Reagan administration, however, was still obsessed with winning the Cold War and was in no mood to help the Soviets disentangle themselves. Blinded by their hate and fear of the Soviets, the US government was completely unaware that a new threat of extremist groups had emerged in Afghanistan. Despite efforts by the Soviet Union to disentangle itself from the situation, the war in Afghanistan lingered on until 1989. Soviet atrocities continued, as did the mujahideen's, who ambushed military convoys, torturing and killing any unfortunate survivors, often in a most gruesome fashion, such as burning them alive, mutilating their genitals or skinning them. These atrocities were designed to terrify and demoralize Soviet troops. As a terrorist tactic, they were highly successful.

By this stage, the war had become extremely unpopular in the Soviet Union, and the mounting casualties were more difficult to hide with troops returning from the frontline with their own versions of the violent events.[77] The decline in morale and effectiveness of the raw recruits in the Soviet army, with many turning to drugs and alcohol, further weakened the Soviet will to win. Soviet government propaganda, which claimed the army was a peace-keeper and nation builder, was scoffed at by returning veterans who spoke out about the lack of care, demoralization and lies. Reformer Mikhail Gorbachev's coming to power as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March 1985 accelerated the Soviet withdrawal effort from Afghanistan. Gorbachev, who had declared the war a 'bleeding wound', by 1986 was seeking ways to exit Afghanistan with some dignity, with his Afghan client, President Najibullah, remaining in power, together with a Soviet-friendly government in Kabul.[78] Desire for reform and fears about the economy increased the pressure on Gorbachev and the Soviet leadership to find a way out of the impasse. Reagan and his advisers, however, remained highly suspicious of Gorbachev's reforms and blindly ignored the evidence that the Soviet

power was weakening.[79] The US failure to negotiate with the Soviet Union concerning the future of Afghanistan, once the Soviets had left, was a fatal error of judgement. Finally, on 15 February 1989, the Soviet occupation army left Afghanistan, leaving behind chaos and heavily armed and trained rival mujahideen militias who promptly turned on each other during the civil war that erupted soon after the Soviets had finally left.

The Afghan *jihad* and the making of terrorism

On the surface, the Afghan *jihad* had been a resounding success for the three main protagonists opposed to the Soviet Union: the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. President Zia, with his popularity abroad and secured power at home, benefited most directly. He did not live to see the final victory, instead dying in mysterious circumstances in a plane crash in August 1988.[80] As Pakistan had become a frontline state against godless communism, so Pakistan under Zia had become the linchpin of US strategy in the region. In order to maintain his support, Washington conveniently overlooked human rights abuses, the violent suppression of dissent and the development of Pakistan's nuclear power. Consequently, Zia was able to crush any opposition to his control and continued to promote the Islamization of Pakistan.

For the US, the Cold War had been won, and the Soviet Union was soon to disintegrate. For a relatively modest investment in funding the *jihad*, the US had been able to cripple its most serious rival without being actively involved in the fighting itself. With the break-up of the Soviet Union, following the eventual withdrawal from Afghanistan, the victory of the hawks in Congress was complete. One of the unfortunate consequences of the defeat of the Soviets was that it fostered a new-found arrogance among US decision-makers, who now assumed that, by virtue of its enormous military power, the US could dictate to the rest of the world by force if necessary. This arrogance was to be displayed during the disastrous invasions of Afghanistan, in 2001, and of Iraq, in 2003.

Saudi Arabia had been highly successful in quietly extending its influence into Pakistan and Afghanistan. Saudi funding of *madrassas* had greatly contributed to the growth of a Wahhabi-flavoured Islam, especially in the tribal areas along the Pakistan–Afghanistan border. The lavish financial and other support given to Pakistan by the Saudis also greatly increased Wahhabi influence among politicians and religious parties in Pakistan. Even today, the visitor to Pakistan is constantly reminded of Pakistan's gratitude for the financial support of the Saudis, through the physical presence of the great Faisal Mosque in Islamabad, the Faisal Highway and the city of Faisalabad.

The celebrations of the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, however, were premature. The end of the Afghan *jihad* had left major problems in the region. It had cost the lives of between an estimated 1,500,000 to

2,000,000, with millions of civilians displaced and living in squalid refugee camps.[81] Afghanistan, itself, was consequently plagued by civil war and anarchy and became little more than a fragmented society fought over by rival mujahideen groups. During the *jihad*, little attention had been given by the foreign powers as to how they might help establish a legitimate government and ensure peace in Afghanistan when the war had finally ended. In part, this reluctance to take decisive action was due to the fact that it was feared that discussions concerning Afghanistan's future would expose the strategic and ideological differences between the major powers and 'so weaken the *jihad* that a military victory might prove unattainable'.[82] Consequently, when the Soviets left, Afghanistan descended into chaos. The civil wars that followed took the form of ethnic conflict between Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Tajiks and Shia Hazaras, each heavily armed with its own militia.[83] The frontier region between Pakistan and Afghanistan had become, and still is, a wild, lawless area and home to both local and foreign terrorists. Foreign *jihadis* had developed a strong presence among the Pashtuns in particular. Supporters of the *jihad* came from all around the world in order to study and fight in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The anarchy that prevailed in Afghanistan after the defeat of the Soviets and the withdrawal of US support enabled the subsequent rise of the Taliban in 1994 which caught the CIA by surprise. The Taliban were made up of young Afghans, who were living in squalid refugee camps in Pakistan and who were educated in extremist Deobandi and Wahhabi *madrasses*, which had been funded by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Many had fought in the Afghanistan *jihad*. From Kandahar, where they had revolted against the corruption and tyranny of a local warlord, their rage, religious fervour and determination led to them controlling most of Afghanistan in less than five years. Despite their extreme religious views, the Taliban were welcomed for their restoration of peace by most Afghans. Pakistan, in turn, also supported the Taliban, because their devotion to Islam made them natural allies, particularly against India. The threat of the spread of religious extremism in Pakistan was ignored.[84]

During the Afghan *jihad*, the power and prestige of the ISI rose dramatically. Its Afghan bureau was comprised of 60 officers and 300 other ranks, many of whom were Pashtuns, who belonged to border-straddling tribes.[85] ISI officers had complete access to vast sums of money, which was to be distributed to mujahideen groups with little accountability.[86] Before the *jihad*, the ISI had been a small and largely ineffective organization, but, by the 1990s, it had become, in the words of one commentator: 'a large, clumsy, frequently blundering hydra headed monster of great influence'.[87] One consequence of the victory over the Soviets was the belief among the ISI officers that they could do to India in Kashmir what they had done to the Soviets in Afghanistan: wear India down.[88]

The ISI went on to play an extremely important role in Pakistani internal politics by bribing and coercing politicians, spying on opponents of the

ruling elite and helping to rig elections.[89] The organization was particularly hostile to the Pakistan People's Party, which was seen as a major threat to the power of the military. The ISI also regularly spied on potential troublemakers and malcontents within the military. In the long run, therefore, the war in Afghanistan weakened the democratic process in Pakistan.

It is unclear to what extent the ISI acts independently of the military high command. The ISI is always headed by a senior regular general and staffed by seconded regular officers from the three branches of the military: the army, the navy and the air force. Thus, it is subject to the same discipline as other branches of the military services in Pakistan. Intelligence agencies, however, in Pakistan and elsewhere have a tendency to develop their own agenda and to take action without necessarily consulting the higher command. It does seem certain, however, that many ISI officers became strongly influenced by Wahhabi and extremist Deobandi ideology and their association with the *jihadists*. Ever since, rogue elements within the organization have continued to support terrorist groups in defiance of both the senior command and their government. A number of retired middle-ranking ISI officers have openly supported terrorist groups and some have even joined and trained them.[90] The debacle over the killing of Osama bin Laden in May 2011 by US special forces operatives has led to questions being raised in US government circles and elsewhere as to the extent to which he had been sheltered and protected by the ISI.[91]

One of the other negative consequences of the Afghan jihad was the huge increase in the production of opium and heroin in Afghanistan. Heroin was used to fund the *jihad*, and it is estimated that by 1984 50 per cent of the heroin supply to the American market was shipped from Pakistan and Afghanistan through the port city of Karachi.[92] Not only did the supply and use of heroin in the West increase, but Pakistan also consequently developed its own severe drug problem. There were only a few hundred heroin addicts in Pakistan in 1977, but the numbers had grown to over two million by 1987.[93] Trafficking in drugs by warlords such as Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was deliberately ignored by both Pakistani and the US because of their key roles in the struggle against the Soviets. ISI operatives, themselves, were heavily involved in the drug trade. For the US, the main objective of the struggle remained the defeat of the Soviets, and, thus, the dangers of the growing drug trade were ignored. The criminal activities associated with the drug trade further contributed to the eventual breakdown of law and order in Pakistan.[94] The heroin trade consequently created economic and political links between the mujahideen, elements within the Pakistani military, particularly the ISI, and criminal gangs. In the quest for funds, sectarian organizations in Pakistan became involved in the drug trade and with criminal gangs, which has enabled them to gain influence in all of the major parties, as well as enabling them to bribe officials and the police, who are often reluctant to take action against drug crime for fear of being labelled as anti-Islamic.[95]

In addition, there was a huge build-up of arms left over from the *jihad*, and these were made available for *jihadi* organizations, student bodies, ethnic groups, criminals and sectarian groups in Pakistan who very often outgunned the corrupt and demoralized police force.[96] Not only were low-grade weapons, such as Kalashnikov assault rifles and grenades readily available, but, also, highly sophisticated weapons, such as mortars, anti-aircraft guns, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and surface-to-air missiles, were also circulating and available.[97] The prominent writer, film-maker and Left-wing critic Tariq Ali tells the story of how he jokingly asked a businessman in London about how he should go about obtaining a Stinger missile. His request was taken seriously, and he was reassured that he would have no problem getting one.[98] Many of these sophisticated weapons were to be used later on by anti-Indian terrorist groups in Kashmir and in sectarian violence within Pakistan.[99] Many also fell into the hands of criminals and contributed to a phenomenon known as the 'Kalashnikovization' of Pakistan – a culture of lawlessness and violence, in which powerful, easy-to-use, automatic weapons are readily available and can be used by individuals with a minimum of firearm training.[100] Many of the so-called terrorist groups in Pakistan are powerfully armed criminal gangs who regularly resort to 'violence, predatory behavior, and banditry'.[101] The Afghan *jihad* also led to the growth in the power and influence of extremist Deobandism and Wahhabism schools of Islam in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. It has, consequently, fuelled sectarian violence in both countries.

As soon as the Soviets were defeated, the US immediately lost interest in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Even former supporters of the US were angered and dismayed when the US simply walked away from Afghanistan and Pakistan and the problems that had been created by the *jihad*. This abandonment was bitterly resented in Afghanistan and, even more so, in Pakistan and has continued to poison relations between the US and the other states. An opportunity to help maintain stability and develop solid, peaceful government and democratic reform in Afghanistan and Pakistan was lost. The former ambassador to Afghanistan, Peter Tomsen, was among the few who strongly argued for the US to continue to play an active role in Afghanistan by combating extremists who would eventually succeed in exporting terrorism to other countries. He asked, in despair: 'Why was America walking away from Afghanistan so quickly, with so little consideration given to the consequences?'[102] Unfortunately for Afghanistan, and for its neighbour Pakistan in particular, Tomsen's fears that without a strong US presence the vacuum would be filled by dangerous extremists proved to be correct. The US decision to abandon Afghanistan and Pakistan after the withdrawal of the Soviets was, in retrospect, not only cynical but also a fatal error of judgement.

Yet another legacy of the Afghan *jihad* is the refugee problem in Pakistan. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan estimates that there are

approximately four million refugees from Afghanistan currently living in Pakistan. Most of these arrived during the Afghan *jihad*.[103] Most are Pashtun, who live in cities, towns and refugee camps, mainly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as the North West Frontier Province) and Baluchistan, with over one million living in Karachi alone. Many of the Taliban came from these refugee camps and were educated in the *madrassas* that served them. While many refugees have successfully integrated into Pakistani society recently, the Pakistani government has been attempting to forcibly repatriate the refugees, in part because they provide a sanctuary for the forces that are fighting the US in Afghanistan. Most, however, are reluctant to return to Afghanistan, because of ongoing security issues.[104]

Pakistan had initially won a major victory with the growth of radical *jihadi* groups that would protect Pakistan's interests. The Afghan *jihad* had created hordes of well-armed, trained and battle-experienced young *jihadis*. These were later to be diverted and used to tie down the Indian military in Kashmir. But Pakistan was to pay a terrible price for this pyrrhic victory. In nurturing and supporting terrorist groups, Pakistan created a Frankenstein monster, which has, ever since, become increasingly difficult to control and, more recently, has even turned on the state itself. The escalation of terrorism within Pakistan and the growth of sectarian violence since 1989 have been a terrible legacy of the misguided and short-sighted policies of Pakistan and its allies during the Afghan *jihad*. The ultimate winners of the *jihad* have been those who now resort to terrorism and sectarian violence in Pakistan and in other parts of the world.

7 Reaping the whirlwind

Politics, terrorism in Kashmir and sectarian violence, 1988–2000

Although many of the preconditions for the rise of terrorism can be traced back to the early history of Pakistan, terrorism first emerged as a serious problem during the 1980s. In its early manifestations in Pakistan, the most striking characteristic of terrorism was that it was initially largely sectarian-based, consisting of violence committed against the minority Shias by Sunni extremists in certain parts of Pakistan. The second important parallel, but largely separate, development during the same period of time was the military's support of *jihadi* groups in the Kashmir Valley, which used terrorist tactics against Indian security forces and civilians and which led to the Indian government retaliating and using state terrorism in their attempts to crush the growing unrest. The growth in terrorism and sectarian violence coincided with the restoration of democratically elected governments. Unfortunately for Pakistan's security, the weak and ineffective governments of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif were not only unable to maintain law and order or address Pakistan's numerous problems, but their policies directly contributed to the steady growth of sectarianism and terrorism. Both governments had to confront the legacy of Zia's Islamization and the fallout from the Afghan *jihad*.

Democracy in crisis again: November 1988–October 1999

From the death of Zia in August 1988 until General Pervez Musharraf seized power in yet another military coup in October 1999, Pakistani politics were dominated by two democratically elected, but bitter, political rivals: Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif. For ten years, the leaders of two political dynasties ran the country in turn. Bhutto and Sharif have been strongly criticized for their failure as leaders, but it is significant to note that they faced almost insurmountable problems in trying to govern effectively. It can be argued, for instance, that the governments of Bhutto and Sharif reaped the whirlwind of sectarian violence that had been gradually building up since the early days of Pakistan's independence. Both Prime Ministers also inherited the structural weaknesses of the Pakistani state, which made effective government or reforms virtually impossible.

On 1 December 1988, Benazir Bhutto became the first female Prime Minister of Pakistan after the Pakistan People's Party won the election.[1] Bhutto's victory was greeted with great joy and optimism by many, both within and outside Pakistan, who felt that Pakistan could now begin to move forward after the harsh years of Zia's unpopular military rule. Bhutto offered hope to the masses of the population that her government would carry out her father's promised socialist reforms. Liberals at home and abroad saw her as a strong, progressive, liberated woman, with a dedicated commitment to both political reform and democracy. In the West, she was regarded as a potential saviour of democracy in Pakistan. Both the poor and the liberals, however, were to be bitterly disappointed with Bhutto's government, as they had been with her father's.

Benazir Bhutto was the eldest of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's four children. She had a privileged upbringing, coming from an affluent land-owning family and receiving an excellent education at both Harvard and Oxford University. She was politically active between 1977 and 1979 and fought hard for her father when he was in prison. From 1977–1984, she suffered harsh imprisonment under Zia's dictatorship. In July 1987, she married Asif Ali Zardari – a Shia, who came from a Sindhi land-owning family with business interests. Allegations of rampant corruption because of her marital association with Zardari were to severely handicap Bhutto throughout her political career. Among those who were bitterly disappointed with Bhutto was her former friend, the test cricketer and politician Imran Khan, who criticized her authoritarianism, arrogance and tolerance of widespread corruption.[2] Perhaps one of the best summaries of her strengths and weaknesses is that of William Dalrymple, who depicts her as an extraordinarily courageous, secular, liberal woman, whose achievements in attempting to help the poor and discriminated never matched her rhetoric and, ultimately, like her father before her, she was an arrogant, 'flawed and feudal' aristocrat from an immensely privileged land-owning family.[3]

From the outset of her first brief period in government, Bhutto was faced with insurmountable problems. While her main basis of support lay in her home province of Sindh, she was a young, politically inexperienced politician, who had to largely rely upon sycophantic and venal advisors. Her main qualification for the job of prime minister was the fact that she was her father's daughter. As a relative newcomer to the brutal realities of Pakistani politics, she had to learn how to wheel and deal with the hard-nosed politicians who dominated the Pakistani political sphere. Many Sunnis were also hostile towards her because she was a woman from both a Shia and secular background. Her opponents had been deeply embedded in the bureaucracy by Zia's regime, thus making effective government and any meaningful reforms virtually impossible to achieve.[4] She was also strongly opposed by the military, who viewed her government as a threat, like all other democratically elected governments, to its power and vested

interests. Amongst her most fierce opponents was the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), whose power had grown rapidly during the Afghan *jihad*. Speaking to a group of journalists, she despaired, plaintively, 'How can I control the intelligence agencies?' [5] She never was able to do so.

The decline of law and order, especially in Sindh, where intense, vicious ethnic violence took place between the native Sindhis and the Muhajirs – the descendants of Urdu-speaking migrants from India – and charges of corruption gave the President, with the tacit support of the military, the excuse to dismiss the Bhutto government on 6 August 1990.[6] Her short period in office and her lack of effective political power meant that her government achieved very little of importance.

Following the 24 October 1990 elections, Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League came to power, supported initially by the President and the military. Sharif's family had migrated to Lahore from east Punjab in 1947. He came from a religiously conservative, Sunni, middle-class family and was favoured by the Saudi Arabians, who were hostile to Bhutto because of her Shia background. The family's businesses had been nationalized by Zulifkar Ali Bhutto in the 1970s, and the Sharif family never forgot, nor forgave, the Bhutto family. Zia's government returned the businesses to the family, and, consequently, Nawaz Sharif and his family became strong supporters of Zia, as well as remaining bitter enemies of the Bhuttos. With Zia's support, Sharif became Finance Minister and, later, Chief Minister of Punjab, where he proved to be a competent administrator.[7] With the encouragement of the military, particularly the ISI, Sharif allied with various religious parties in order to counter the popularity of Bhutto and the Pakistan People's Party, especially in Sindh.[8]

While Sharif faced similar problems to Bhutto, he also had to contend with the suspension of most of the military and economic aid from the US on October 1990 under the Pressler sanctions due to Pakistan's development of nuclear weapons. Pakistani public opinion regarded the US initiative as a betrayal by a former ally, who had backed Pakistan in Afghanistan. According to the Pakistani perspective, the US tactically ignored Pakistan's nuclear ambitions when both countries were in alliance and fighting the Soviets, but hypocritically applied the sanctions when the US no longer had any need for Pakistan's support. In addition, the US had walked away from Afghanistan, effectively leaving Pakistan to face the consequences of a civil war that was raging in neighbouring Afghanistan being waged by rival warring factions among the mujahideen.[9]

Sharif attempted to continue Zia's Islamization policies, but only half-heartedly.[10] As a result of this lack of enthusiasm, one of the main parties in the coalition, the Jamaat-i-Islami, became disillusioned with Sharif's government for its slow progress in enforcing Sharia and because of Sharif's pro-American foreign policy over the Gulf War with Iraq.[11] To compound his problems, Sharif had lost support among both the army and the ISI. When he attempted to curb the President's powers, his

government was dismissed by the President, whose actions, again, were supported by the military.[12]

Following the 1993 elections, Bhutto started her second period in office in a much stronger position than the first time that she had been in power. This time she was more experienced in politics, and the military was less hostile to her government. Senior officers had become alarmed with the spread of extremist religious ideas among some junior officers and had weeded out those who had fallen under the influence of the Sunni extremists, particularly among the ISI. A plot to kill the military's leading generals and introduce an Islamic state was foiled.[13] Relations with the US also improved, and the Pressler sanctions against Pakistan were reduced.

Because her Party held only 86 of the 202 seats in the National Assembly, Bhutto was forced to play the dangerous game of sectarian politics. Her Pakistan People's Party had traditionally received strong support from Shias because of the Bhutto family's Shia background and its marked commitment to secularism. However, because of her desperate need for political allies from the smaller parties and independent politicians, she also attempted to win support among the Sunnis by cultivating sectarian Sunni politicians.[14] In appealing to both Sunni and Shia, Bhutto was attempting to prevent the religious parties from joining together in alliance with Sharif's Muslim League Party and, thus, oppose her government. The consequences of this dangerous policy were, ultimately, to lose her support from many of her Shia supporters, while simultaneously failing to keep the support of her Sunni sectarian allies.[15]

Again, Bhutto's political hold on power began to rapidly deteriorate. The rampant corruption among her ministers, along with the continued ethnic violence in Sindh urban centres and the growing sectarian violence, particularly in the Punjab, all came together to clearly demonstrate her government's weakness. Corruption charges were levelled against Benazir, herself, and her husband, Zardari, whom she had appointed as Minister for Investment.[16] The joke that circulated in Pakistan surrounding his appointment was that this was like putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank. The unrest, instability and the charges of corruption against her and her husband provided the President with the grounds to dismiss her government on 5 November 1996.[17]

The coalition, led by Nawaz Sharif's right of centre Pakistan Muslim League party, won an overwhelming victory, winning two-thirds of the seats in the National Assembly in the 3 February 1997 elections. His success was more an expression of voter dissatisfaction with Benazir Bhutto's failure as a Prime Minister, particularly in respect to law and order, economic management and good government, than it was an indicator of Sharif's popularity. Significantly, only 35 per cent of the electorate bothered to vote, thus clearly displaying the cynicism of the general public.[18] Ironically, it was Sharif's right of centre party that made the first serious

attempt to end the growing sectarian conflict which had gradually become a serious problem by the 1990s.

In August 1997, Sharif's government passed anti-terrorism legislation, which gave wide powers to the police and the judiciary so as to apprehend and try alleged terrorists, free of political influence and threats. This led to an assassination attempt on Sharif by Sunni extremists early in 1999.[19] Sharif also attempted to negotiate a peace settlement between Sunnis and Shias through a committee consisting of *ulema* from both sects. Unfortunately, the peace negotiations fell apart, and sectarian violence returned during the latter half of 1999.[20]

Pakistan also faced problems internationally. On 11 May 1988, the ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan took a much more serious turn when India detonated three nuclear devices. Sharif was put under enormous pressure from the US and other world powers not to react to India's nuclear tests. However, with overwhelming public opinion in favour of testing nuclear weapons, particularly from the religious parties and the military, Pakistan detonated five nuclear devices on 28 May 1998, amidst great joy and celebrations. Sharif was also strongly supported by the Saudis, who had urged him to develop the 'Islamic nuclear bomb'. Besides raising the dreadful spectre of nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan, the nuclear programme had been exorbitantly expensive and lost Pakistan much-needed economic aid from other countries, thus making Pakistan's parlous economic position even worse.[21]

Sharif's regime, and Pakistan's experimentation with democracy under Sharif and Bhutto, were rapidly coming to an end. Growing tensions mounted between the Chief of Army Staff, General Pervez Musharraf and Sharif, particularly over the recriminations between Musharraf and Sharif in respect to the debacle surrounding Pakistan's failed military intervention in the mountainous region of Indian-controlled Kargil in Kashmir. (See below.) On 12 October 1999, as Musharraf was returning from attending a military function in Colombo, Pakistani television officially announced the appointment of a new Chief of Army Staff. Sharif ordered that Musharraf's plane to be prevented from landing in Pakistan, but Musharraf's supporters among the military took control of the Karachi airport control tower, thus allowing Musharraf's plane to finally land safely with its fuel tanks almost empty. Musharraf and his supporters in the military mounted a coup, which quickly deposed Sharif.[22] Few regretted Sharif's political demise at the hands of the man who, ironically, Sharif had appointed to the top job in the army.

During the third period of democratic rule in Pakistan, the governments of Bhutto and Sharif had much in common. Both were leaders of factionally divided political parties with little ideological cohesion and both were hugely dependent upon the support of minor parties in order to rule. Both parties were, in effect, authoritarian family concerns with little organizational depth or deep roots among the civilian masses. Both

leaders were handicapped by vested interests among the bureaucracy and the military, who relied on the president to dismiss the prime minister, if necessary. Both were captive to the legacy of authoritarian British rule by which the prime minister was democratically elected, but ultimate power rested with a president, who relied upon the support of the military and senior bureaucrats. Their governments were supported by politicians who were generally regarded as corrupt, self-seeking and without principles. Neither was able to implement significant political reforms, particularly those that might threaten the vested interests of the political elite, military and the bureaucracy.

Both ran up huge amounts of foreign debt, and both faced corruption charges which they claimed were politically motivated.[23] Bhutto, on the surface, at least, was more liberal and secular coming from a Shia background. Sharif was much closer to the religious parties;[24] but both the Pakistan People's Party and the Pakistan Muslim League cynically entered into political alliances with the leaders of sectarian political parties, both Sunni and Shia.[25] Their weak governments and unstable and ineffective politics contributed to the general decline of law and order throughout Pakistan, which provided terrorist and sectarian groups with the freedom to organize and act.[26] Sectarian leaders were protected by politicians from both the Pakistan People's Party and the Pakistan Muslim League for short-term political gain.[27] It was during their rule, also, that the ongoing simmering conflict with India, over the control of Kashmir, once again flared up.

Ethnic nationalism, state-sponsored terrorism and rebellion in Kashmir

Throughout the 1990s, Pakistan was coming under increasing criticism for its support of the Kashmir insurgency through its training and support of *jihadi* groups, both within Kashmir itself and from Pakistan. India attempted to have Pakistan labelled as a terrorist state by the international community. In April 2000, a US State Department report, for the first time, identified South Asia as a major centre of international terrorism. It singled out Pakistani support for Kashmiri extremist groups which, throughout 1999, conducted numerous terrorist attacks on both military and innocent civilian targets in Kashmir and India.[28] The report ominously stressed the fact that terrorist groups in South Asia were becoming more independent of the Pakistani military, who had initially sponsored them and, while claiming to be motivated by religion were also becoming increasingly wealthy through drug trafficking, crime and illegal trade.[29]

Ever since 1947, the Indian occupation of the Kashmir Valley had remained the major source of tension between India and Pakistan. While the issue continued to poison relations between the two countries, it had not led to outright conflict, as had occurred in 1947 and 1965. Pakistan's

attempts to create unrest among Kashmiris who resented Indian rule had little impact until late in the 1980s, when there was deepening unrest with Indian rule within Kashmir. Throughout 1988, there were demonstrations, bomb blasts on government buildings and attacks on government officials by disgruntled Kashmiri dissident groups. On 31 July 1988, the most important Kashmiri separatist group, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, exploded a series of bombs made from material that was allegedly supplied by the ISI.[30] A procession in the capital of Srinagar, mourning the death of Zia ul-Haq, led to violent clashes with the police, the burning of buses and the chanting of pro-Pakistani slogans. Clashes between the police and mourners throughout the Valley led to the death of eight people and the wounding of 13 protestors.[31]

The rebellion in the Kashmir Valley had very little to do with Pakistan initially. Rather, it came about because of the clumsy and insensitive Indian misrule of the region for many years. Between 1965 and the early 1980s, Kashmir had been generally politically peaceful. The terms of the agreement of accession that had been signed by Maharaja Hari Singh in October 1947 had given the Valley a great deal of regional autonomy, with India only controlling defense, foreign affairs and communications. Increasingly, over the years, however, India had consistently interfered in Kashmiri politics, attempting to fully integrate Kashmir into the Indian Union.[32] The Congress Party governments, led by Indira Gandhi and her son and successor, Rajiv Gandhi, had become highly authoritarian and interfered in the electoral process and politics in Kashmir. The blatant corruption and rigging of the March 1987 election in Kashmir by Rajiv Gandhi's government was the catalyst for the rebellion.[33]

Frustration with the denial of their basic political rights and anger at the blatant abuse of human rights by the Indian security services led to a violent rebellion by Kashmiris that broke out in 1989. Strikes, protests, attacks on government officials and buildings, the murder of police informers and intelligence officers all contributed to the paralysis of government in the Valley.[34] Although most Kashmiris were Muslims the cause of the rebellion, initially, had little to do with religion, but, rather, was the consequence of the political and economic grievances felt by most Kashmiris. However, the outbreak of rebellion in Kashmir in 1989 gave Pakistan the opportunity to wage a proxy war against India by supporting dissident organizations within Kashmir and by organizing, training and arming *jihadi* groups from Pakistan and other parts of the Islamic world. Pakistan's strategy was very simple: tie up the Indian military in Kashmir in a similar fashion to the way that the Soviet military had previously been tied up in Afghanistan. As the former director of the ISI General Hamid Gul put it, 'If the *jihadis* go out and contain India, tying down their army on their own soil, for a legitimate purpose, why should we not support them?'[35] For the Pakistani military, in particular, its role in allegedly defeating the might of the Soviet army in Afghanistan could be similarly

repeated in Kashmir, which would become India's Vietnam. The other advantage of promoting *jihad* in Kashmir was to divert the trained and armed *jihadis*, who were returning to Pakistan at the end of the Afghan war, from causing more trouble at home.

As the insurgency gained momentum and the violence increased, the Indian security forces reacted with excessive violence resorting to state terrorism in order to crush the unrest. India's security forces committed the most serious breaches of human rights, including extra judicial killings, torture and rape, all of which were designed to extract crucial information from suspected militants, but which often involved innocent civilians who were caught between the military and the militants.[36] Regular use was made of beatings, burning with cigarettes and electric shocks and, despite the damning evidence from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Indian-based Human Rights Commission, very few members of the military or police were ever charged for these horrific offenses.[37] Young men were picked up in the streets by the security forces and were never seen alive again. The highly unpopular Governor Jagmohan's answer to the unrest was simple, but politically disastrous: 'The bullet is the only solution for Kashmir.'[38] Jagmohan dissolved Kashmir's state legislative assembly and instituted a reign of state terrorism so severe that even local police went on strike.[39] Thousands of Kashmiris took to the streets shouting anti-Indian slogans and demanding complete *azadi* – freedom – from the Indian tyranny. The Valley had become a war zone.[40]

Initially the struggle in Kashmir was between a largely secular opposition – the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front – and the might of the Indian state, but soon the involvement of *jihadi* groups from within Kashmir and foreigners from Pakistan, Afghanistan and other Islamic countries inflamed and complicated the conflict by adding a distinct religious dimension to the struggle. By 1989, a number of rival militant groups were operating throughout the Valley, particularly in the main towns. Many of these groups that were involved were well-educated, disillusioned Kashmiri political activists who were alienated both by the Indian government's repressive policies and by a severe lack of job opportunities.[41] Other *jihadi* groups were trained, armed and encouraged by the Pakistani military through the ISI.

The numerous anti-Indian groups operating in Kashmir had different goals. Some wanted complete independence. A minority favoured unification with Pakistan. Still others wanted Kashmir to have complete autonomy in its internal affairs, while still remaining part of the Indian Union. Some were secular while others wanted the formation of a theocratic state. Yet others were more concerned about un-Islamic practices targeting civilian businesses such as beauty parlours and video stores.[42] Initially, most of the targets were members of the Indian security forces and the administration, but, soon, civilians were targeted, as well as supporters of rival groups.[43]

While the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front had emerged as the most powerful separatist group in Kashmir, its strong pro-independence stance was opposed by the ISI who openly favoured Kashmir's integration into Pakistan. The ISI, therefore, swung its support behind the front's main rival, the Hizbul Mujahideen – the armed wing of the Jamaat-i-Islami – which supported the integration of Kashmir with Pakistan.[44] Consequently, the ISI provided Hizbul Mujahideen with the necessary training and financial support, all of which was at the expense of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front. The activists in the Hizbul Mujahideen, including defectors from the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, engaged in terrorist actions against Indian military targets in Kashmir. They also added a sectarian element to the violence by actively targeting Sufis. Hizbul Mujahideen was responsible for the burning of the beautiful Sufi shrine of Charar-e-Sharif in 1995 and for the murders of Sikh and Hindu civilians. It also had contacts with Afghanistan mujahideen groups.[45]

Most of the activists in the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front and Hizbul Mujahideen were Kashmiris, but other terrorist groups supported by the ISI which emerged during the 1990s were largely made up of foreigners.[46] Not only were these battle-hardened foreign fighters different ethically, linguistically and culturally from the Kashmiris, but their extremist, Wahhabi-influenced form of Islam set them apart from the Kashmiris, who regarded them as nothing more than arrogant, foreign bullies.[47]

One of the most aggressive and militant organizations was Lashkar-e-Taiba ('Army of the Pure'), which was formed in 1989, backed by Saudi money and supported by the Pakistani intelligence services.[48] The ideology of this organization was that of the Wahhabi-influenced Ahl-e-Hadith group. Based in Lahore, Lashkar-e-Taiba was largely composed of Pakistani recruits, and, later, this organization was responsible for introducing devastating suicide attacks into the Kashmir conflict. Its ideology stated that military *jihad* was an unequivocal obligation for all Muslims.[49] The group was also involved in the murder of minority Hindu and Sikh civilians in Kashmir. It also began to target India, launching an attack on an army barracks at Delhi's Red Fort in 2000. Its headquarters near Lahore contained a *madrassa*, a residential area for scholars and students and agricultural land. It claimed to run 16 Islamic institutions, over 100 secondary schools and provide medical treatment.[50] A similar organization, Tehrik-e-Jihad, included many members who had previously served in the Pakistani military.[51] Yet another group that became involved in the Kashmir struggle was made up of volunteers from the Afghanistan Taliban, who, as battle-hardened veterans, were regarded as particularly dangerous.[52]

One of the factors that greatly assisted the militants was the abundant supply of weapons that was left over from the war in Afghanistan. Besides the omnipresent Kalashnikov assault rifles, the militants had access to grenades, rocket launchers, machine guns and other military hardware, which were easily smuggled across the porous border between Pakistan

and India. In addition, *jihadis* from Pakistan, Afghanistan and other parts of the Islamic world came to fight in Kashmir.[53] As the resistance to India continued, the political, factional and ideological differences among the resistance groups widened, eventually leading to violence between them. Besides attacking the Indian forces, Hizbul Mujahideen was also suspected of killing members of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front.[54] The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front also claimed that the rival organization was collaborating with the Indian security forces by identifying their hideouts.[55]

By the late 1990s, Kashmiris had become increasingly cynical of Pakistan's motives for supporting their movement and had grown weary of the violence. Most were now hostile towards the militants from outside Kashmir because of their violence, religious bigotry and open involvement in criminal activities.[56] In many cases, the militants demanded that Kashmiri families provide either money or a son to join the fight. As a Kashmiri waiter put it: 'The militants ask us for money and force many young men to join them and attack the security forces. But all that happens is that we get caught, tortured by the security forces and in some cases killed.'[57] Foreign *jihadis* singled out for assassination those Kashmiris that they identified as supporters of the Indian government. Damning for the *jihadi* cause were reports of attacks on women for not wearing the veil by members of some *jihadi* groups. Even more serious were the claims that women were violently raped because members of their families had been suspected of being government informers.[58] The *jihadi* groups were accused of corruption and greed, including seizing the land of both Hindus and Sikhs who had consequently fled from the Kashmir Valley because of the extreme threats of violence. Kashmiri hatred and distrust of the outsiders enabled the Indian government through bribery and persuasion to persuade Kashmiri dissidents to assist the security forces in tracking down and killing foreign intruders.[59] Many within the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front were determined that the organization would retain its secular ideology, which is based on Kashmiryat – the traditional Sufi-based culture, in which Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were regarded as true Kashmiris.[60] A three-way violent political/religious struggle took place between the largely secular Kashmiris, the Pakistani and other foreign *jihadis* and the Indian security forces, who were mainly Hindus or Sikhs.

The Kargil fiasco

The military's obsession with Kashmir resulted in a reckless invasion of Indian territory. Taking advantage of the rebellion in Kashmir, Pakistan launched a surprise military operation in early 1999 across the Line of Control that cut through the Kargil Heights – a remote, rugged area in India-ruled Kashmir. The military operation involved between 1,000 and 2,000 men who secretly crossed the unguarded border and moved ten

kilometres into Indian territory.[61] The intruders were made up of a combination of Pakistani regular forces, the paramilitary Northern Light Infantry, commandos from the Special Services Group and a few civilian mujahideens. By controlling the Heights, the Pakistan military threatened to cut off the National Highway, which is the main Indian supply route to the remote city of Leh in Ladak, and, thus, cut off supplies from the Indian troops who were confronting their Pakistani opponents further north on the remote Siachen Glacier near the Chinese border. The other motivation for the operation was that the planners felt that it would strengthen the morale of the Kashmiris, who were fighting the Indian security forces who were starting to lose momentum.[62] The decision to occupy the Kargil Heights was secretly undertaken by the army high command and clearly demonstrated how little control the civilian government had over foreign policy. The Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, was only informed of the decision after the operation was well underway.[63]

Although the Pakistani official position was that the force occupying the Heights was composed of patriotic Kashmiris who simply wanted to liberate their country, it became increasingly obvious that it was a Pakistani invasion. In fact, the Kashmiri volunteers comprised only about ten per cent of the force that was involved and were only given a minor support role.[64] The generals who planned the operation naïvely believed that India would have to accept the enforced occupation and would not risk a nuclear war by responding militarily. The plan was enthusiastically supported by the new Chief of Army Staff, General Pervez Musharraf.[65]

After initially being taken by surprise, India reacted by subjecting the Pakistani forces to sustained airstrikes and military barrages which were quickly followed up by fierce infantry attacks. Both armies fought with great skill and courage, as they were contending with the rugged, inhospitable mountain terrain, the threat of altitude illness and the crippling cold. The Pakistani forces, like their Indian opponents, fought fiercely, but were severely handicapped by limited supplies and ammunition.

Pakistan was isolated diplomatically, and Sharif was forced to make a humiliating rushed visit to Washington in order to ask the US to help resolve the crisis. While Sharif attempted to lay all the blame for the invasion on to the generals, President Bill Clinton coldly demanded that Pakistan immediately withdraw its forces. The retreat was highly embarrassing for both Sharif and the military and each blamed the other for the disastrous invasion.[66] The episode severely damaged Pakistan's political credibility, both in the region and internationally. It also tainted the Kashmiri resistance struggle, which now was regarded as nothing more than a terrorist movement.[67]

The significance of the Kashmir conflict

Pakistan's support of anti-Indian resistance groups in Kashmir has had very serious repercussions for Kashmir, Pakistan and South Asia. The most

obvious repercussion has been the possibility of an all-out war involving nuclear weapons. The bitterness of the struggle against the Indian military forces and the divisions among the terrorists, which often led to violent clashes between them, affected all those living in Kashmir, including the innocent. One unfortunate consequence was the targeting of innocent Hindus, mainly Kashmiri Brahmins, Sikhs and other religious minorities, including men, women and children. The terrorist activities against religious minorities, such as brutal killings, kidnappings and threats of violence, was part of a policy of deliberate ethnic cleansing, which has led to the mass exodus of Hindus and other religious groups from the Kashmir Valley since 1990.[68] Involvement in the Kashmir struggle gave *jihadis*, both from Afghanistan and Pakistan, the opportunity to wage war against the infidel Indians and to attempt to spread their form of an austere Wahhabi-influenced Islam in the Kashmir Valley.

The Pakistan's military crossing of the line of control at Kargil was an unmitigated disaster. Although the military put on a brave front, Pakistan had been humiliated. The military defeat was compounded by the diplomatic isolation of Pakistan, which was now viewed internationally as the aggressor. Conversely, the withdrawal of Pakistani forces was celebrated by the Indian media as a great military and moral victory. The incident strengthened anti-Pakistani public opinion in India and more widely afield, while in Pakistan there was disillusionment, sadness and bitterness, particularly over the deaths of the brave soldiers who were involved in the invasion.[69] Before the Kargil incident, both India and Pakistan, encouraged by President Clinton, had been cautiously moving towards peace, with the gradual opening up of trade and travel between the two countries. Some analysts argue that the Kargil invasion was a stunt by the military which did not want peace with India.[70] In any event, Kargil was a military and diplomatic disaster for Pakistan and for democracy and led to the military coup that deposed Sharif. Benazir Bhutto claimed, with some exaggeration, that: 'Kargil was Pakistan's biggest blunder.'[71] Most objective analysts agree that the Kargil incident was a failure, although Musharraf adamantly continued to claim that it was a success.[72]

Pakistan's support for *jihadi* groups in Kashmir was soon to rebound on Pakistan itself. The proliferation of *jihadi* groups, supported by elements within the military, became increasingly difficult to control, particularly after 9/11 when they began to turn on their former sponsors.

The political, social and economic roots of sectarian terrorism

From the 1980s onwards, sectarian violence became endemic in some parts of Pakistan. Between 1990 and 1997, Sunni extremists killed over 581 Shias and left over 1,600 injured through assassinations, attacks on mosques and bomb blasts on religious processions.[73] The preconditions

for the emergence of sectarian violence lie in the historical roots, going right back to the beginnings of Pakistan history: the campaigns against the Ahmadiyyas, the sectarian tensions between Sunnis and Shias that emerged during Zia's rule, the proxy war that had been waged in Pakistan and Afghanistan by Saudi Arabia and Iran, each striving to promote its own particular school of Islam.

More specifically, the rise of terrorist sectarian organizations during the 1980s and 1990s can be traced to the political, economic and social changes which took place from the 1970s onwards in Pakistan. The impact of these developments was, initially, most closely felt in the Jhang district in central Punjab. The major urban centre, Jhang City, became the birthplace of sectarian violence, which then quickly spread to other parts of the Punjab and, consequently, elsewhere in Pakistan.[74]

Jhang District has a population of around three million of which approximately 25 per cent are Shia. About half the population are descendants of migrants from the east Punjab, many of whom belong to the Deobandi sect and, consequently, are more likely to be influenced by sectarianism than those who follow the Barelvi tradition. Large numbers of lower class Sunnis had gone to work in the Middle East, particularly in Saudi Arabia. This led to upward social mobility by the workers and their families during the 1970s and 1980s. Many of those groups who had previously been poor had been able to remit large sums of money home and eventually returned comparatively wealthy themselves, and comfortably settling in urban centres. The quest for social recognition attracted these newly affluent groups to the ideology of Sunni sectarian groups, particularly those who had been influenced by Wahhabism while away working in the Gulf states. It is significant to note that many sectarian activists had spent time working in the Middle East.[75]

Politics in the district, particularly in the countryside, had been dominated by large Shia landlords who controlled about 65 per cent of land in Jhang District.[76] Shia political and social dominance was challenged by Sunni politicians in the urban centres and was supported by Sunni traders, shopkeepers and businessmen, as well as the new rich who had worked in the Middle East.[77] Merchant organizations supported strikes and demonstrations and financially contributed to the printing of sectarian books, journals, magazines and pamphlets, which were produced in the *madrassas* and freely distributed.[78] According to the propaganda of the Sunni sectarians, Shia landlords not only had exploited their Sunni tenants economically, but they had also lead them astray in respect to religious affairs. They campaigned to have the Shias declared to be considered non-Muslim, as with the Ahmadiyyas, to ban Shia religious processions and to make their Wahhabi-influenced interpretation of Sunni Islam the official religion of the state.[79]

In September 1985, the controversial Sunni cleric Haq Nawaz Jhangvi founded the Sipah-e-Sahaba (Army of the Prophet's Companions), which later became a major militant anti-Shia organization, as well as an

influential political party. Born in a poor, rural household, Jhangvi was educated in a government school for some time, but then moved on to study at a *madrassa*. In 1973, he became a preacher and prayer leader in Deobandi mosques. Like many other sectarian leaders, he had been involved in organizing and leading the campaign against the Ahmadiyyas.[80] He also became deeply involved in politics. As one observer commented: 'Maulana Jhangvi's struggle to get the Sunnis on one platform was again to acquire political position and he achieved it.'[81] He made an unsuccessful attempt to win an election to the National Assembly, but was beaten by a woman from a powerful Shia family. His political defeat soured his hatred of Shias even further. Jhangvi was assassinated by Shia rivals in 1990. His successor, Maulana Azam Tariq, was successfully elected several times to the National Assembly.[82]

From 1995–1996, a faction broke away from the Sipah-e-Sahaba to form the even more violent group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Army of Jhangvi),[83] which was strongly supported by Saudi money funnelled through Ahl-e-Hadith *madrassas*. The goals of the organization were to impose a Sunni state on Pakistan, to declare the Shias as *kafirs* and to drive foreign religions, such as Hinduism and Christianity, out of Pakistan. The organization also held strong anti-Western sentiments and, in 2002, was involved in the abduction and murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl.[84] Lashkar-e-Jhangvi had been active in the *jihad* in Kashmir and its extremely narrow interpretation of Islam and targeting of Hindus and Sikhs had alienated many Kashmiris.[85]

Since 1990, Sunni sectarian groups supported by Saudi money have assassinated Iranian diplomats and burnt Iranian cultural centres in the Punjab.[86] Militants from the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi attempted to assassinate Sharif in Lahore in 1999 because of his attempt to crack down on sectarian organizations by introducing anti-terrorism legislation. Since then, numerous even more extremist groups have broken away from Sipah-e-Sahaba and other major sectarian groups because of factional disputes over tactics, goals and the control of finances.[87]

Initially, the sectarian terrorism involved the assassination of prominent Shias, but by the 1990s, it had escalated into bombings of religious processions, mosques and public places, with accompanying civilian casualties. Sectarian violence spread from Jhang to other parts of the Punjab, particularly in the less-developed centre and south. In 1989, there had been 67 instances of sectarian violence in the Punjab, during which ten people were killed. By 1994, there were 862 incidents with 37 deaths.[88] In one incident alone, a bomb attack resulted in the deaths of 25 Shia mourners at a Lahore cemetery in January 1998. This escalated into sectarian violence, which claimed 78 people dead and 80 wounded in the Punjab.[89] One consequence of the violence was the subsequent formation of a terrorist Shia self-defence group, Sipah-e-Muhammad (soldiers of Muhammad) in 1991, resulting in senseless tit-for-tat revenge killings.

The political goals of those who resorted to sectarian violence were widely varied. The overall religious goal of Sunni sectarian-based terrorism was to establish a Sunni state and impose Sunni-based sharia by intimidating Shias and secularists. These Sunni terrorists not only wanted to have the Shias officially declared to be *kafirs*, but also to prevent Sunnis from eating with Shias, worshipping with Shias or marrying Shias. A Sunni who voted for a Shia politician ran the risk of being labelled an infidel.[90] Attacks on Shia religious processions and mosques were designed not just to kill or intimidate Shias, but to warn off Sunnis, particularly those of the Barelvi tradition, who had traditionally participated in Shia rituals, particularly during Muharram – the period of mourning for the death of Imam Husain.[91] The terrorist tactics, therefore, were designed to drive a dividing wedge between Sunnis and Shias. The violence was also intended to frighten Shias into converting to Sunnism or, at least, into publicly adopting Sunni rituals for protection purposes. The targeting of the Shia elite, such as professionals, was a strategy designed to intimidate the majority of Shia and to force their community leaders either to keep out of politics altogether or to emigrate abroad.

Sectarianism then spread from Jhang to other cities in the centre and south of the Punjab, such as Multan, which was famous for its numerous Sufi shrines and veneration of the *pirs* by both Sunnis and Shias. Since 1991, there have been many sectarian attacks on the Shia minority in Multan, who comprise about 40 per cent of the population. The Sipah-e-Sahaba organized anti-Shia meetings and demonstrations, bringing supporters from other cities and towns.[92] Much of the support for Sipah-e-Sahaba and other militant Sunni organizations came from the graduates of Wahhabi-influenced Deobandi and Ahl-e-Hadith *madrassas*, which received substantial financial support from individuals and Wahhabi organizations from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.[93] Saudi Arabian princes, who had been hunting in the southern Punjab since the 1970s, also funded Wahhabi *madrassas*.[94] The lavish funding from Saudi Arabia and the Middle East was a strong financial motivation for Sunni sectarian groups to step up their violence and sectarian rhetoric in order to attract more funding. Many sectarian leaders became extremely wealthy by taking advantage of the lavish funding of *madrassas* both by private and government-funded organizations in the Persian Gulf states and Saudi Arabia.[95]

While for many *jihadis* and their families, *jihad* was purely a spiritual duty, for others, especially the leaders, *jihad* had a much more material basis. Much of the leadership for sectarian organizations came from poorly educated *ulema*, who were seeking to attain power, status and wealth.[96] To put it crudely, for many Sunni extremists becoming involved in sectarian politics of violence was good for business, money and power. By appealing to sectarian interest, politicians developed successful political careers, both locally and nationally. Sipah-e-Sahaba had contested national

elections since 1988, and successful candidates were incorporated into government coalitions at both the national and provincial levels.[97] In 1990, for example, the deputy leader of the Sipah-e-Sahaba defeated a powerful Shia landlord in the contest for a seat in the National Assembly.[98]

A brief biographical sketch of one of the leaders of the Sipah-e-Sahaba, Mawlana Isar al-Qasimi, illustrates some of the social, political and economic influences on the motivations of sectarian leaders. His father had migrated from eastern Punjab at the time of the partition of India and then spent many years working in the Middle East. Al-Qasimi studied at three different *madrassas* in Lahore, and, after graduation, tried to set up a business which failed. He then set up his own *madrassa* and became notorious for his fiery speeches wherein he openly denounced Shia landlords for the oppression of their Sunni tenants. In the same year, he defeated a powerful Shia landlord in the election to a National Assembly seat. Like many other sectarian politicians, he was assassinated in Jhang in January 1991.[99] Al-Qasimi's career is just one example of how involvement in sectarian violence has become a pathway to power and success in politics, but is also highly dangerous.

Sectarianism in Jhang can, in large part, be attributed to the frustration of the Sunni middle classes who were striving to break the hold that the Shia landed elites had over local politics.[100] However, while militant organizations, such as the Sipah-e-Sahaba, were able to win national and provincial elections in Jhang city and other urban centres in the Punjab, they failed to break the power of the Shia and Sunni elite in the countryside.[101] Many of the Shia landlords were also *pirs* who controlled religious shrines and, thus, retained the respect of both Shias and Sunnis. An ongoing concern of Sunni extremists was the successful proselytizing activities of the Shia in rural and small-town Punjab.[102] Sectarian violence, therefore, was largely an urban phenomenon and a consequence of modernization, with religion providing the ideology, but not the major motivation behind the acts.

In contrast, in northern Punjab there was, initially, comparatively little sectarian violence. This region is economically more prosperous. With the spread of modern farming, the large land-owning estates have been broken up and fallen into the hands of smaller landowners. There is not, therefore, a class of large Shia landowners which had provoked resentment in other parts of the Punjab.[103] Similarly, there was little sectarian violence in most of rural Sindh, partly because there was little political rivalry between Shia landlords and Sunni urban politicians and partly because of the strong influence of Sufism.[104]

Sectarianism and terrorism in the tribal areas

During the 1980s, sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shias also spread to some parts of the North West Frontier Province and the Federally

Administered Tribal Areas. This was, in part, a consequence of the aftermath of the Afghan *jihad* which saw Pashtun *jihadis* fleeing Afghanistan and settling in refugee camps, towns and cities in the surrounding tribal areas. Many of these had been influenced by the *madrassas* which were financed by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. These new developments were to play upon long-existing tensions between Sunnis and Shias where there was economic and political conflict between these two groups.

The most serious conflict broke out in the Kurram Agency, particularly in the major administrative centre of Parachinar. Kurram is a tribal agency that is located in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and includes the beautiful and fertile Kurram Valley, with its orchards, vegetable gardens and small, fortified villages. Significantly, the Agency juts out, like a 'parrot's beak', into the middle of eastern Afghanistan, which surrounds the Agency on three sides and, thus, provides the shortest route between Pakistan and Kabul. The Agency is, therefore, strategically important. It was the natural pathway for the movement of *jihadis* between Pakistan and Afghanistan during the war against the Soviets and, more recently, against the US and its allies.[105]

Kurram is the only tribal agency with a significant Shia population, who comprise approximately 40 per cent of the region's 500,000 inhabitants. The Shias belong to the Turi tribe – the only Pashtun tribe to be made up almost entirely of Shias. The Turis live in the more fertile upper Kurram, while the Sunnis live in Lower Kurram. As elsewhere, part of the explanation for the sectarian violence is economic. Prior to the Afghan *jihad*, there had been only occasional conflicts in the Valley, particularly during the 1930s, with disputes over land, water, cultivation and the lucrative growing of vegetables, all of which were controlled by the Shias. Spontaneous sectarian violence occasionally broke out, especially during the Muharram, but this was low key and, generally, peace and harmony were soon restored.[106]

During the 1980s, the influx of refugees and fighters from Afghanistan – many of whom were imbued with anti-Shia ideology – upset the demographic balance and peace in the Valley. In 1986, the Shias in Kurram prevented Sunni mujahideen from passing through the areas that they controlled in order to wage *jihad* in Afghanistan. In retaliation, Zia's government encouraged Afghans, in cooperation with the local Sunni population, to attack Shias. In September 1996, war broke out between Sunnis and Shias, leaving more than 200 dead after a college principal had been murdered by Shia activists.[107] Contributing to the sectarian violence was the fact that many of the older, moderate Sunni and Shia *ulema* and preachers had been supplanted by recent graduates of more militant *madrassas* who preached sectarian hatred. In some instances, mosques were used to store arms.[108] To add to sectarian tensions, after 9/11 sectarian groups from the Punjab who were banned in 2002 relocated into the region, and, since then, sectarian violence has increased, including suicide bombings. The main road between the capital, Parachinar, and the rest of

Pakistan has, in recent times, been in the hands of the Taliban cutting off vital food and medical supplies. Vehicles travelling on the main road between Parachinar and Peshawar have been stopped, and any Shias found in these vehicles have been either shot or beheaded.[109] These terrorist tactics were designed to exterminate the Shias in the Agency or force them to move elsewhere.

The second major centre of sectarian violence in the tribal areas was in the mountainous far north of Pakistan. The area, known as Gilgit-Balistan, is very rugged and isolated and is surrounded by some of the highest mountains in the world, with the Hindu Kush lying to the north-west and the vast Karakoram Mountain range to the north-east. The region includes K2 – the second-highest mountain in the world. Until the recent sectarian violence, the region was a popular tourist centre.

Gilgit-Balistan occupies a highly strategic location, as it shares boundaries with Tajikistan, China, Afghanistan and Indian-administered Kashmir. Its population is around one-and-a-half to two million, with about 86 per cent being rural working small holdings.[110] In contrast to most of the rest of Pakistan, around 75 per cent of the population are Shias, many of whom are descendants of Tibetan Buddhists who converted to Islam.[111]

Until the 1970s, the region was extremely isolated and had little contact with the rest of Pakistan. The region had been largely self-governing, but in the 1970s Pakistan began to rule through a single administrative territory called the Northern Areas. Pakistan's misrule, including the failure to develop representative institutions, has led to unrest in the region, including demands for a separatist state.[112] According to the locals, it was during this period that sectarian tension began with the distribution of anti-Shia literature and preaching in mosques. Pashtun and Punjabi Sunnis were encouraged by the military and the bureaucracy to settle in the region. It has been strongly argued that the Pakistan government has deliberately supported the movement of Sunnis into the region in order to dampen any Shia-led separatist movements.[113] During Zia's rule, further migration of Sunnis occurred, as did the setting up of *madrassas* in the region, which were strongly Wahhabi- and Deobandi-influenced.[114] The Shias, in turn, became more sectarian, with the growing influence of Shia clerics who had been trained in Iran.[115] The opening up of the Karakorum Highway between India and China in 1986, which passes through Gilgit-Balistan, also led to the migration of Sunni Pashtuns and Punjabis.

During the mid-1970s, the Bhutto government prevented Shias from holding roadside meetings, which led to protests and police shootings.[116] The first major outbreak of sectarian violence in Gilgit-Baltistan took place in 1988 with violent anti-Shia rioting. Shias in the district of Gilgit were assaulted, killed and raped by an invading Sunni *lashkar* – armed militia – comprising thousands of *jihadis* from the North West Frontier Province, who had travelled a long distance to wage the attack. The local Shias accused Zia's Islamization process and his rivalry with the Pakistan

People's Party who were dominant in the region as a reason for the sectarian violence. Not only did the state take no action to stop the movement of the *lashkar*, but it openly supported the provocative action of attempting to build a huge Sunni mosque in the centre of the Shia-dominated city.[117] The Kargil conflict also led to the influx of Sunni *jihadis* into the region. As well as this, Sunni extremist organizations from the Punjab, such as Sipah-e-Sahaba, set up offices and training camps, which have subsequently led to attacks on Shias and retaliations. Between 2000 and 2005, attempts to introduce textbooks that were biased towards Sunni teachings has led to further protests and rioting by Shias which has further inflamed sectarian tensions.[118]

Sectarian violence in Sindh and Baluchistan

Sectarian violence in Sindh was largely confined to urban centres, particularly the huge cosmopolitan city of Karachi, which has attracted many migrants from other parts of Pakistan where sectarian violence was rife, such as the Punjab. Since the 1990s, Shias, who comprise about 25 per cent of the city's population, have been particularly targeted, especially professionals, many of whom have had to emigrate in order to escape the violence. Because of their high status, doctors were singled out for threats and assassinations, forcing many to migrate overseas. In Karachi and elsewhere, sectarian extremists received support from criminal gangs to provide them with protection from arrest. Authorities were often reluctant to arrest criminals who joined sectarian organizations out of fear that they would be labelled religious bigots if they arrested them.[119] Extremists from both Sunni and Shia communities found recruits from the numerous *madrassas* that were established particularly during the rule of Zia.[120] In recent times, the influx of *jihadis* from Kashmir and Afghanistan, including elements from al Qaeda, has added to further sectarian conflict.

Finally, in the huge, sprawling, resource-rich, but under-populated province of Baluchistan, there was little sectarian violence until very recently. Here, the main acts of political violence had little to do with religion but took place between Baluchi separatists, who wanted autonomy and control over the gas fields and mineral resources, and the Pakistan military. In recent times, however, the migration of Sunni extremists from Pakistan and Afghanistan to urban centres – in particular, to the capital city of Quetta – has led to attacks on the Hazara Shias of Central Asian origin, who migrated from Afghanistan, ironically, to escape the violence in that country. Banned Sunni terrorist groups, such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and members of al Qaeda have all settled in the city, while there has been a rapid growth of extremist Deobandi and Wahhabi *madrasses*.[121] The terrorist Ramzi Ahmed Yusuf, who was convicted of the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York, had been intimately associated with a Saudi-financed *madrassa* in Baluchistan and engaged in anti-Shia activities in Pakistan.[122]

Sectarianism, terrorism and religion

The emergence of terrorist activities associated with sectarianism in Pakistan has had a deep impact on Pakistani society and politics. It was the principal source of terrorist activity in Pakistan until 9/11, and, in so doing, it has undermined civil authority, social cohesion and political stability. Discussion of terrorist activity related to Islam almost invariably focuses on the attacks on non-Muslims. What is largely overlooked, particularly in Pakistan, is that the terrorist activities are associated with divisions within Islam itself.

The key question remains: to what extent was the sectarianism of violence religiously motivated? Conflict between Sunnis and Shias has a long history, which began in the very early years of Islam and, periodically, has resulted in outbreaks of violent clashes between the sects in many parts of the Islamic world, including Pakistan. The widespread sectarian violence that emerged in Pakistan in modern times, however, was undoubtedly a new phenomenon. An analysis of sectarian violence in Pakistan, from regions as diverse as the Punjab to the mountainous Northern Areas, during the 1980s and 1990s demonstrate clearly, however, that the fundamental underlying causes were not religious, but have emerged from a combination of political, economic and social roots. In the Punjab, it was the conflict between Shia landlords and the Sunni urban middle-class, particularly during election times. Leadership of sectarian organizations was one pathway by which poorly educated graduates of extremist *madrassas* could find fame, wealth and a power base, if they were successful. By widening divisions between Sunnis and Shias, ambitious clerics could find a vote bank and a power base themselves. As one commentator has aptly put it, sectarianism has 'metamorphosed from religious schism into political conflict around mobilization of communal identity.'[123] Like other politicians, sectarian politicians were faced with the problem of finding the necessary resources to pay off their clients. Competition from rivals led to the extremists competing to be seen as aggressive champions of Sunni Islam, which would win them votes and funding from wealthy anti-Shia patrons.

Under both Bhutto's and Sharif's governments, the weak state not only failed to keep law and order and dampen down sectarian violence, but, in many instances, it actively tolerated or even promoted sectarianism for political reasons. The collapse of state authority in many parts of Pakistan during the 1990s, which led to widespread disorder, crime and violence which the police were powerless to prevent, enabled violent sectarian groups to operate freely. Both the state's failure to suppress sectarian violence, along with the military's dangerous game of promoting *jihad* in Kashmir, were to rebound on the state after 9/11.

8 The fallout from the US invasion of Afghanistan

Politics, terrorism and sectarian violence in Pakistan since 9/11

At 6 am on 13 May 2011, a suicide bomber walked into a group of young paramilitary personnel in Shabqadar – a trading town on the edge of the tribal belt in north-west Pakistan – and blew himself up. The soldiers had just graduated into the Frontier Corps – a paramilitary force recruited from the tribal regions of north-west Pakistan to combat anti-government terrorists – and had just left their base to return home on leave. As other soldiers rushed out from their base to help their injured comrades, a second suicide bomber approached on a motorcycle and exploded his bomb.[1] By evening, 66 of the soldiers were among the 82 dead, with another 150 hideously maimed by the hail of ball bearings that had been packed into the bombs. Members of the Pakistan Taliban, who had been fighting the Pakistani army in the nearby tribal agency of Mohmand, were responsible for the attack. The terrorist action was a grim warning to other potential recruits not to join the military in the vicious fight against the Pakistan Taliban and al Qaeda militants being waged in nearby tribal agencies.[2]

The Shabqadar bombings are typical of new developments in terrorism in Pakistan since 9/11. What was alarming about these terrorist attacks was not only were many being conducted by suicide bombers, but, increasingly, they were directed at the military, police, government officials and other representatives of the Pakistan state, initially in the tribal regions of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Even more alarmingly, they had spread to the key province of the Punjab. Two key factors help explain these new, dangerous developments. Following 9/11, Pakistan was coerced by the US into becoming its main ally in the war against international terrorism. As a reluctant ally of the US, Pakistan was forced to support the highly unpopular and ill-considered invasion of Afghanistan by the US and its allies. This decision was to have profound consequences for state security and for terrorism in Pakistan. Second, both the unpopular military government of General Pervez Musharraf and its successor, the weak, highly corrupt civilian government of Asif Ali Zardari, were ineffective in combating terrorism directed against foreigners, Shias, religious minorities, the security forces, politicians and innocent bystanders.

Musharraf's rule pre-9/11

The military's seizure of power from the Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, on October 1999 was generally well received within Pakistan. After the failures, corruption and ineffectiveness of the governments of Sharif and Benazir Bhutto, there was great hope that the new military government of Musharraf would provide much-needed, strong discipline and leadership. Many felt that Musharraf had the attributes that would enable him to become a strong and effective ruler who would seriously address Pakistan's many problems, including those of terrorism and sectarian violence.

Musharraf was born in New Delhi in August 1943 to a middle-class, well-educated family. His family moved to Pakistan in 1947 following partition. He lived in Turkey from 1949 until 1956, where he became a fervent admirer of Mustafa Kamal Ataturk who had ruthlessly modernized and secularized Turkey. Musharraf joined the Pakistani army as a cadet in 1961 and, as a junior officer, fought in the 1965 and 1971 wars against India and later joined the elite Special Services Group as a commando. He progressed rapidly through the ranks, and, in 1998, he was promoted to the rank of general and appointed Chief of Army staff. He was very relaxed in his approach to religion, making little effort, for example, to hide the fact that he, like many of his fellow officers, enjoyed drinking alcohol in moderation.[3]

After the military coup which had overthrown Sharif, Musharraf appointed himself president in June 2001. He was then in a very powerful political position, given that he was also chairman of the military's Joint Chiefs of Staff committee. After assuming power, Musharraf committed himself to an ambitious and much-needed reform agenda, including restoring law and order, reviving the economy, improving justice, using effective land reforms to break the power of the large landlords, introducing accountability and depoliticizing state institutions.[4] These highly laudable promises had been made many times previously by civilian and military governments, but, ultimately, had never been implemented, always being stymied by vested interests. Many Pakistanis felt optimistic that, this time, Musharraf, with the power of the military behind him and the courage and tough decision-making that he had demonstrated many times before in battle, would be able to successfully carry out the reforms. Many secularists in Pakistan hoped that Musharraf would emulate his idol, Ataturk in Turkey, in developing a strong, modern, secular Pakistan. Even his most bitter opponent, Benazir Bhutto, praised his professionalism and bravery.[5] However, unlike his idol, Ataturk, Musharraf had neither the power, authority nor the ruthlessness that were needed to push through the necessary structural changes in Pakistani society and politics which would bring about substantial reforms.

Musharraf's rule began with a harsh crackdown, arresting members of opposition parties, banning public rallies and curtailing civil liberties. He

also pressurized the media and cracked down hard on any journalists who were too critical of his regime. In order to enhance his legitimacy, he attempted the delicate balancing act of restoring civil liberties, but then quickly clamped down again when criticism threatened his position.[6]

One of Musharraf's first major roles was to attempt to curb the extremism that was sweeping parts of Pakistan, particularly the sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shias. There is little reason to doubt his sincerity or courage concerning his desire to rid Pakistan of the scourge of violent sectarianism. In his public speeches and through the media, he emphasized the tolerance of Islam and the dangers of exploiting religion for political reasons. In his first public broadcast on 17 October 1999, he stated that: 'Islam teaches tolerance, not hatred; universal brotherhood, not enmity; peace, and not violence.'[7] Soon, however, Musharraf found himself facing the power of Pakistan's religious establishment. He was personally attacked by religious hardliners who openly criticized what they regarded as his immoral behaviour, spreading rumours of his alleged affairs with women.[8] He attempted to introduce a minor administrative reform of Pakistan's highly controversial blasphemy laws, but under pressure from the religious Right, which organized massive demonstrations against the proposals, he quickly backed down again.

In foreign affairs, Musharraf was also having problems. In Afghanistan, the actions of Pakistan's ally, the Taliban, were proving to be a public relations nightmare. He was unable to persuade the Taliban to moderate their narrow interpretation of Islamic law which justified the harsh treatment and discrimination towards women, religious minorities and non-Pashtuns, all of whom became 'the targets of a systematic and sustained terror campaign in the name of Islam' by the Taliban and their al Qaeda allies.[9] Musharraf had desperately, but unsuccessfully, attempted to prevent the Taliban from blowing up the huge Buddha statues at Bamiyan in March 2001; acts which resulted in international outrage at the blatant vandalism.[10] While Musharraf continued to criticize the Taliban's religious policies, he vigorously defended Pakistan's alliance with the Taliban as essential in countering India's influence in Afghanistan.

9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan changes everything

As a consequence of the 9/11 attacks, the US and its Western allies invaded Afghanistan with the four major goals of capturing or killing Osama bin Laden, destroying al Qaeda and its international terrorist network, removing Al Qaeda's ally – the Taliban – from power and installing a broadly representative democratic government in Afghanistan.[11] The reckless decision to invade Afghanistan under the unintentionally ironic title of Operation Enduring Freedom by George W. Bush's administration inexplicably ignored the lessons learnt from other previously disastrous invasions of Afghanistan, of which the Soviet's invasion was just the most

recent. In particular, the decision, which ignored the limitations on the use of brute force alone to solve complex political problems, can be explained, in part, by the arrogance on the part of US decision-makers.

After the break-up of the Soviet Union, the US emerged as the world's most dominant military power. However, the 9/11 attacks exposed the vulnerability of the US to terrorist attacks, and the subsequent outpouring of emotion and demand for justice and revenge contributed to the fateful decision to invade Afghanistan.[12] Among the most devastating consequences of the decision to invade was a great surge in terrorism which the Pakistani government is still attempting to combat. Ironically, the main beneficiary of the invasion was to be al Qaeda and its allies in Afghanistan and Pakistan. As the director of one of Pakistan's most radical *madrassas* gleefully put it: 'Bush has woken the entire Islamic world. We are grateful to him.'[13]

The US made it very clear to Pakistan that there was no choice in the matter of taking sides in the war against terrorism. The US Secretary of State, General Colin Powell, gave Pakistan an ultimatum: 'You are either with us or against us.'[14] Pakistan was presented with an extensive list of non-negotiable demands, which required total cooperation with the US. According to Musharraf, the US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, threatened that the US would 'bomb Pakistan back to the Stone Age',[15] although this claim was vehemently rejected by Armitage, who claimed that he did not have the authority, even if he had wished to do so.[16] Nevertheless, Pakistan could not afford to resist the ultimatum of the US, given its deep political dependence on US economic aid and military hardware. Musharraf was also reliant on the US to maintain his power and dreaded a strong US–Indian alliance against Pakistan. If Pakistan did not assist the US supporting the invasion, then the US would turn to India instead, and thus effectively isolate Pakistan, both militarily and diplomatically. Therefore, when the US and its allies invaded Afghanistan, Musharraf's government fully supported the invasion publicly, although privately he and the military were fearful of the consequences of this open declaration, particularly in anticipation of the inevitable backlash in Pakistan. Washington, moreover, ignored Musharraf's plea to allow time to persuade the Taliban, who were demanding evidence that bin Laden had been involved in the events of 9/11, to hand over bin Laden. The Bush administration seemingly regarded the Taliban – which was a specific Afghan organization – as synonymous with al Qaeda, the international terrorist group.[17] The two organizations were, in fact, radically different. The Taliban were a religious organization intent on imposing their own strict form of Islam in Afghanistan, but, unlike al Qaeda, posed no threat whatsoever to other countries.

Musharraf's worst fears were confirmed when the invasion of Afghanistan outraged the Muslim world, including the vast majority of Pakistanis, both secular and religious alike, who viewed it as an aggressive invasion of

a fellow Muslim state. In Pakistan, public hostility towards the US and its allies increased dramatically after the invasion. According to research, most Pakistanis, including many educated elite, believe the conspiracy theory that 9/11 was a plot by the US administration and/or Israel so as to provide a pretext for the attacks on the Muslim states of Afghanistan and, later, Iraq.[18]

The overwhelming military power of the US and its allies, in alliance with the non-Pashtun Afghan United Front (Northern Alliance), soon ensured that the desired military goals were quickly achieved. Within weeks, the Taliban were defeated, with many of the Taliban and al Qaeda, particularly their leaders, fleeing and seeking shelter in Pakistan in the tribal frontier area between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Like the Soviets before them, however, the US and its allies found the military victory easy, but have since struggled to find a political solution to the problems facing the divided, war-torn Afghanistan. Finding a way to exit Afghanistan has proven to be extraordinarily difficult.

One of the legacies of the invasion was the installation in Kabul of the Northern Alliance, which was dominated by Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras – the Pashtuns' main rivals. This action not only greatly concerned the Pakistan government, but infuriated the Pashtuns, both in Afghanistan and also in Pakistan's tribal territories.[19]

Pakistan's political siding with the West dramatically changed the face of terrorism in Pakistan. Up until that point, the main terrorist activities in the country had been largely either sectarian-based, directed primarily against the Shia, or against Indian security forces in Kashmir. Now, for the first time, the Pakistan state itself became the major target for terrorists. General Musharraf was regarded as a legitimate enemy and traitor to Pakistan and Islam by many *jihadi* groups, and he narrowly survived a number of assassination attempts. In December 2003, for example, two suicide bombers ploughed into his motorcade in Rawalpindi, near the headquarters of Pakistan's army, donating two car bombs which killed around 14 and wounded at least 46.[20] Members of al Qaeda who had contacts with two Pakistani militant groups, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Jaish-e-Muhammad, were accused of the violent attack. Questions were also raised about Musharraf's security and the possibility of rogue elements within the military or police being involved. Some junior officers were among those tortured and executed because of their involvement in the plot.[21]

Musharraf was now faced with the highly delicate balancing act of attempting to appear to fully support the US in the war against terror and, yet, at the same time, to appease public opinion in Pakistan, which strongly supported the Taliban's war against the US, considering it a legitimate struggle against foreign invaders similar in nature to the *jihad* against the Soviets many years before. To many Pakistanis, Musharraf was regarded as being far too close to the US, and this earned him the nickname of 'Busharraf'.[22] At the same time, the Pakistan military needed to

protect Pakistan's regional interests by maintaining links with the Taliban, particularly through the Inter-Services Intelligence Service (ISI). Pakistan's greatest fear was that when the US and its allies eventually left Afghanistan, India would quickly step in and form an anti-Pakistan alliance with an Afghan government which would be dominated by non-Pashtuns. The tensions and conflicts generated by Pakistan's need to protect its own strategic interests in Afghanistan, while, at the same time, appearing to fully support the political efforts of the US helps explain the often confusing, contradictory and frustrating relationship between the two states. This dilemma contributed to the ongoing distrust that has continued to plague the relationship between the US and its reluctant ally.

One of the most serious consequences of the invasion of Afghanistan was to greatly increase the power and influence of the Afghanistan Taliban and their Pakistani allies in the Pashtun tribal belt, particularly in the FATA. After the invasion of Afghanistan, thousands of *jihadis*, comprising Pashtun Afghan Taliban, along with Arabs, Uzbeks, Chechens, Tajiks and other foreign followers of al Qaeda, poured across the harsh, porous, 1,500 mile border between India and Pakistan into the FATA in order to escape attacks from the US and their allies. They were initially welcomed and given refuge by the local Pashtuns, who were bound by the chivalrous code of Pasthunwali which laid down that strangers seeking refuge from their enemies should be protected at all costs. As fellow Pashtuns, the Afghan Taliban were, initially, particularly welcomed in the FATA. Moreover, there was great support for the Taliban who were regarded as noble mujahideen fighting the US aggressor – a sentiment which was widely felt throughout Pakistan, even by individuals who were appalled by the Taliban's harsh interpretation and implementation of Islamic law.[23]

The Pakistan state had little control over the tribal region, and the small military presence, comprising the ill-equipped Frontier Corps and a few regular soldiers, were helpless to stop the flow of *jihadis* crossing the border.[24] The southern tribal agencies of the FATA, North Waziristan and South Waziristan in particular, became crucial centres of Taliban activity and, later, led to fierce clashes with the Pakistani military.

Yet another seemingly irresolvable conflict for Pakistan was the conflict with India over Kashmir which continued to remain the cancer in the relationship between Pakistan and India. On 1 October 2001, *jihadis*, allegedly belonging to Jaish-e-Muhammad, attacked Kashmir's legislative assembly, killing 31 people, which severely heightened tensions between India and Pakistan. Even more serious was the attack on the Indian parliament on 13 December 2001 allegedly by Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad militants, which threatened to escalate into an all-out war between India and Pakistan with the appalling prospect of the possible use of nuclear weapons. On 12 January 2002, under intense pressure from both the US and India, Musharraf banned five organizations which had committed acts of terrorism in the name of religion, including the militant groups,

Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammed.[25] Later in the year, bans were also imposed on the violent Sunni and Shia sectarian organizations, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Sipah-e-Muhammad and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen.[26]

The banning of terrorist organizations and the arrests, killing and imprisoning of their leaders were initially effective in reducing the incidence of sectarian violence. The security forces resorted to heavy-handed and sometimes unconstitutional arrests, extrajudicial killings and torture. After Musharraf's government committed to more effective moves in order to prevent militants from crossing the border from Pakistan, the violence in Indian–Kashmir was significantly reduced. However, the measures led to a proliferation of splinter groups amongst the terrorist groups which were even more violent than the parent organizations. Leaders of the banned organizations in the Punjab simply changed the names of the organizations and either went underground, focused on charity work or moved to the tribal areas in the FATA. In the FATA, they formed new alliances with al Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban groups, who had taken refuge there.

After 9/11, Pakistani security agents, accompanied by CIA agents, arrested hundreds of al Qaeda operatives in Pakistan, including Khalid Sheikh, who was one of the masterminds behind the 9/11 attacks.[27] Many suspected members of al Qaeda simply disappeared after being illegally handed over to the US. By targeting foreign members of al Qaeda, Musharraf was able to win favour with the US, but, at the same time, he was able to avoid suffering the political consequences at home, with most Pakistanis being indifferent to the fate of the foreigners. By late 2003, the US placed enormous pressure on Pakistan to prevent the cross-border movement of al Qaeda and Taliban militants from Pakistan to Afghanistan by destroying their sanctuaries in the FATA. By this stage, the Afghan Taliban, from the relative safety of their hideouts in Pakistan, had begun a successful counteroffensive against the US and its allies in Afghanistan.

The US decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan to join the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 was yet another disastrous foreign policy blunder that greatly weakened the ability of the US and its allies to wage war against the Taliban in Afghanistan. Moreover, the invasion stirred up even more rage and frustration in Pakistan at what was widely regarded as a highly illegal act of aggression, which demonstrated, for many, that the US was waging war against Islam. To Pakistan's military, it was a clear warning that the US was not seriously committed to resolving the quagmire that it had created in Afghanistan. The former champion Pakistani test cricketer turned politician Imran Khan summed up Pakistani public opinion when he expressed that throughout the Muslim world both the religious and irreligious alike were appalled by the hypocrisy and dishonesty of the US and its allies in attempting to justify the attack on Iraq by referencing non-existent weapons of mass destruction and spurious links between Saddam Hussein's government and al Qaeda.[28]

The nuclear physicist and noted social activist Pervez Hoodbhoy, who has consistently bravely railed against religious bigotry in Pakistan, stated that the US invasion of Iraq confirmed for Muslims around the world: 'The imperialist caricature: an America that invades and occupies an oil-rich Arab nation, violates human rights at will, thumbs its nose at the world, and condones the dispossession of the Palestinians by Israel.'[29] George W. Bush's infamous speech to Congress in which he claimed that the Islamic world hated the US because they 'hate our freedoms' completely ignores the fact that the vast majority of Muslims – and, indeed, many non-Muslims – hated US governmental policies, not, as erroneously argued, its freedoms. A major reason for Muslim opposition to US policies involves the uncritical support for Israel's illegal occupation of the West Bank and the violent repression of Palestinians' basic human rights.[30]

Jihad in the FATA

By spring 2002, it was clear to both US and Pakistani intelligence that Al Qaeda and the Taliban had regrouped in North and South Waziristan. In 2002 and early 2003, Pakistani troops, along with a small number of US Special Operations troops, made a number of raids into the tribal areas.[31] Reluctantly, but under intense US pressure, the Pakistan military for the first time moved into the FATA in large numbers in 2004, with the deployment of 25,000 troops into South Waziristan in order to attack Afghan Taliban and Pakistani militants.[32] The strategy was a major blunder, both politically and militarily. Before 9/11, there had been little terrorist activity in the FATA, with the exception of some Sunni-Shia conflict, but since then the region has become a major centre of military resistance and terrorist activity, largely directed against the Pakistani state. The huge military contingent, equipped with the latest military hardware such as helicopter gunships and artillery, was unable to defeat the guerrilla tactics of the battle-hardened militants. Conventional military tactics were ineffective in the wild mountainous region with its natural hideouts in caves. Communications were extremely difficult, with travel often restricted to narrow paths along the mountain ridges leading from valley to valley.

Not only did the military suffer heavy casualties, but the use of force and rising civilian casualties, including women and children, bred resentment and opposition from the Pashtuns with their tradition of taking revenge.[33] One of the extremely worrying trends was that some units flatly refused to fight, and several mutinous officers, according to some reports, were sacked.[34] Many of the army's officers and enlisted men came from the FATA, and they bitterly resented having to fight their kinsfolk on behalf of the US. So hostile was public opinion towards the military that, in some instances, parents of dead soldiers refused to accept the bodies of their sons for burial.[35]

Eventually, temporary truces were made with the militants in North and South Waziristan in 2005 and 2006, but the withdrawal of the military enabled the militants to extend their power, killing the traditional tribal leaders and imposing their harsh version of Sharia.[36] At this stage, the military continued to help the Afghan Taliban fight the US in Afghanistan. In effect, the Pakistan government handed over control of the area to the militants. One of the other consequences of the growth in power of the anti-Shia Afghan Taliban and al Qaeda in the FATA was an increase in violence against the minority Shias.[37]

Musharraf under siege

As well as attempting to combat terrorism and sectarian violence, Musharraf was facing challenges to his rule. On 8 May 2002, he won a national referendum which gave him five more years in the position of president. However, only around 15 per cent of eligible voters turned out to vote, and, therefore, the referendum added little legitimacy to Musharraf's presidential regime.[38] His main support came from the newly formed Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam), largely created by the ISI to protect Musharraf and the military's interests, who were defectors from the Pakistan People's Party and the religious front, the Muttihada Maljis-e-Amal (MMA).[39] In the 2002 National Assembly elections, the MMA won 53 out of the possible 272 seats.

The MMA comprised a strange mixture of previously rival Islamic parties, who, despite their doctrinal differences, were united in their strong opposition to the alliance with the US in Afghanistan which they regarded as a war between Islam and the American infidel. Their other major goal was to impose Sharia throughout Pakistan. Because of their opposition to the US, the MMA were, initially, very popular with the Pashtuns. Forming a government in the NWFP with 52 out of 99 seats, it embarked on a process of aggressive Islamization, which included stopping co-education, enforcing the veiling of women and introducing a very harsh version of Sharia. The MMA was supported by militant, outlawed groups, and many of their leaders who had fought in Afghanistan and Kashmir were elected to national and NWFP assemblies where they proved to be just as corrupt and ineffective as other politicians.[40] In attempting to defeat the largely secular Pakistan People's Party of Benazir Bhutto and the Pakistan Muslim League led by Nawaz Sharif, Musharraf faced the dilemma when he had to rely on the support of conservative religious parties.[41] In order to maintain this support, Musharraf had to be seen to be not too aggressive in his intentions to crack down on Islamic organizations that were linked to terrorist groups.

The need to win the support of sectarian politicians meant that political deals had to be done with extremists, which, in the long term, were highly damaging for sectarian peace and security. One example was that

of Azam Tariq – the leader of the notorious anti-Shia Sipah-e-Sahaba – who, despite the fact that he was imprisoned for terrorist activities, was released from prison and permitted to run in the 2002 elections and take a seat in the National Assembly. This was due to the fact that the government desperately needed his vote so as to form a ruling coalition.[42]

In 2007, Musharraf began to lose control of power, when he made a colossal blunder in suspending the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudry, who, unlike his predecessors, insisted on maintaining an independent position and openly criticized government decisions. Chaudry had embarrassed the government on a number of occasions, openly criticizing and rejecting government legislation, such as overturning the dubious sale of a government steel mill. Consequently, Chaudry became the national symbol of resistance to the authoritarianism of Musharraf's regime when he announced that he would investigate human rights abuses committed during Musharraf's rule. By 2007, the Pakistani security forces had resorted to extra judicial means, such as arbitrary arrests, torture, illegal extraditions and unlawful killings. Of particular concern was the disappearance of growing numbers of civilians, including journalists, civil rights workers, political opponents of the regime and other individuals who had nothing to do with the war on terror.[43] The protests against Musharraf's rule involved massive demonstrations in several major cities, the boycotting of courts by lawyers and campaigns in the media led by journalists and civil rights activists. The increasing opposition to Musharraf demonstrated the rising power of the Pakistani middle class and the influence of an independent and highly critical media. One columnist commented that: 'Musharraf has lost the script and events are snowballing out of his control.'[44] Bowing to intense public pressure, Pakistan's Supreme Court restored Chaudry to his office of Chief Justice in July 2007, which was a severe blow to the authority and legitimacy of Musharraf's government and was to prove a major factor in his eventual fall from power.[45]

The siege of the Lal Masjid and the formation of the Pakistan Taliban (Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan)

In 2007, the other issue of significant concern to Musharraf and the war on terror was the bizarre siege of the Lal Masjid or Red Mosque (so named for its famous red walls and interiors) by the military in Islamabad in July. The siege and its aftermath demonstrated the limitations of the state's attempt to combat terrorism. Further to this, backlash from the siege was a major factor in the growth of anti-government terrorist activities, particularly in the FATA and, even more worryingly, in the Punjab.

The Lal Masjid and its affiliated *madrassa*, Jamai Hafsa, were situated in an elite area, close to the centre of Islamabad, including the presidential

palace and parliament. The complex had attracted deeply pious students, both male and female, particularly from the NWFP and the FATA, where the influence of al Qaeda and the Taliban was extremely strong. It was run by two brothers, Abdul Aziz and Abdul Rashid, whose father, Abdullah Ghazi, had been the head cleric of the mosque during the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan. Ghazi had been funded by the ISI to recruit volunteers for the *jihad* in Afghanistan. After the Taliban success in Afghanistan, he then travelled to Kandahar to meet the Taliban leader Mullah Omar, taking his younger son, Abdul Rashid, with him. He also managed to establish close links with al Qaeda.[46]

The mosque, one of the oldest in Islamabad, was located close to the headquarters of the ISI, and many of Islamabad's elite had regularly worshipped there, particularly before 9/11. After 9/11, the mosque leaders were strongly critical of the war on terror and condemned Musharraf for his close alliance with the US. One of the goals was the overthrow of Musharraf's government, which was seen to be nothing more than a puppet government controlled by the US, and to replace it with a Sharia-based state.[47] Numerous provocative speeches made in the mosque called for the assassination of Musharraf. Among the speakers was the leader of Jaish-e-Muhammad, whose members were involved in several assassination attempts on the life of Musharraf. In July 2005, security forces attempted to enter the complex in order to investigate links between individuals from the complex and the 7 July suicide bombings in London, but were highly embarrassed after being driven back by baton-waving female students.[48] The government and military feared that an armed confrontation might result in the death of students, particularly females, while the ill-equipped and underpaid police were unable or unwilling to confront the lawbreakers.

In January 2007, the confrontation between the government and the radicals escalated when the female students of the *madrassa* illegally occupied the adjacent public library and stepped up their demands insisting that Sharia be imposed immediately throughout Pakistan. The female students acted as vigilantes – roaming the streets of Islamabad and imposing their own brand of Sharia by taking action against individuals who were seen to be breaking the laws of Islam. The students kidnapped Chinese sex workers – drawing protests from the Chinese government – raided massage parlours and terrorized shopkeepers into burning CDs and DVDs that they considered offended Islamic law.[49] The aggressive activities of the young female students, dressed in black from head-to-toe, in the heart of Islamabad was highly embarrassing to the government, which initially refused to take any action against them, fearing that it would experience a substantial backlash in public opinion, particularly from religious groups. Musharraf's reluctance to take strong action against this group was criticized, both at home and abroad, and was viewed as a further indication of his weakness.[50]

The government was in a no-win situation. If it did nothing, it was criticized for its irresponsibility, yet, if it took decisive action, which resulted in the deaths of students, particularly female, it risked a huge public backlash. Eventually, Musharraf was reluctantly forced to make a decision to take action against the heavily fortified mosque. After some of the female students had refused to vacate the adjacent library or to cease carrying on their unlawful vigilante activities, the military raided the complex on 10 July 2007, and the resulting fierce battle led to approximately 154 deaths, including 19 soldiers and some young female students.[51] The negative publicity from this raid proved to be a major factor in contributing to Musharraf's eventual downfall.[52]

The state's attack on the Lal Masjid complex outraged militant groups throughout Pakistan who viewed the attack as a declaration of war on Islam by the state. The reaction was particularly vehement in the Pashtun tribal regions from where many of the *madrassa* students had come. One of the immediate consequences of this attack was the breakdown of the peace deal between the government and militants in the tribal areas of North and South Waziristan.[53] The incident intensified the open hatred for the military in the tribal areas to such an extent that they were advised not to appear in public in their uniforms without adequate protection.[54] In September 2007, the al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in a public statement warned that al Qaeda would take revenge for the Lal Masjid assault. This threat was followed by suicide attacks on the military and other government personnel. In the year following the siege of the Lal Masjid, more than 88 suicide bombings killed over 1,000 people and wounded a further 3,000.[55]

Following on from the Lal Masjid incident, the further development was the impetus that it gave to moves to unite the disparate, and often rival, anti-government groups in the NWFP and the FATA. On 14 December 2007, a meeting of some 40 militant tribal leaders, who commanded 40,000 fighters, gathered in South Waziristan in order to form the Pakistan Taliban (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud. As the reclusive leader of the fierce Mehsud tribe, Mehsud had been among the toughest fighters against the Soviets during the 1980s. Initially, he had worked as a semi-literate truck driver, but he quickly rose to the position of commander in the Pakistan Taliban. He was a ruthless leader, but was also deeply religious which made him a very dangerous opponent.[56]

The Pakistan Taliban was a very loose alliance of over 30 Islamic Pashtun militant groups operating in the FATA or the NWFP. Each group was independent and loyal to an individual warlord or Maulana (Islamic preacher), but after the formation of the Pakistan Taliban, the leaders started networking amongst each other and, thus, cooperating more closely. The militants who were operating in the region came from highly diverse backgrounds, tribal loyalties and objectives, but, for the first time,

the diverse groups achieved a degree of unity in their desire to resist the common enemy – the Punjabi-dominated military and Musharraf and his government. Consequently, the Pakistan Taliban became a formidable military force opposing the US and its allies in Afghanistan, as well as the military in Pakistan.

As the state was unable to crush the militants in the tribal areas, they were able to negotiate deals with the Pakistan government and became *de facto* rulers in parts of the FATA and the NWFP, particularly in North and South Waziristan, where they were able to wrestle control of leadership from the traditional tribal elders.[57] In April 2009, the Pakistan Taliban took over the Swat Valley in the NWFP where they killed hundreds of security and government officials in the process. The presence of the militants only 60 miles from Islamabad came as a highly unpleasant surprise and prompted the Pakistan military to launch major offensives which were partly successful.[58]

The major goals of the Pakistan Taliban were to create an Islamic state in Pakistan through revolution, to impose their own interpretation of Sharia, to support the Afghan Taliban in the fight against the US and its allies and to defend themselves against attacks from the Pakistan state.[59] The Pakistan Taliban claimed that, as proud Pashtuns, they were only defending themselves against the Pakistan military which had become nothing other than the servant of the US.

The incidence of US drone attacks in the tribal regions which targeted prominent militants was another factor that helped to create unity among the tribesmen.[60] The drone killings had been highly successful in eliminating leading al Qaeda and other militant leaders and severely hampering the communications and mobility of the militants. The policy was strongly supported in Washington and was also endorsed privately by Pakistani military and politicians, but the subsequent fallout has been very serious. The attacks have further inflamed anger against the US because of the killing of innocent men, women and children. In one instance, four Hellfire missiles destroyed three houses and killed 22 people, mostly women and children, in the village of Danadola. The attack generated angry protests throughout Pakistan, including a huge anti-American and anti-government rally in Karachi on 15 January 2006.[61] The drone strikes have led to a significant rise in new recruits for the Pakistan Taliban, comprising not only the families of those killed in the two attacks, but also from other parts of Pakistan.[62] Baitulluh Mehsud claimed that each drone attack created three or four more suicide bombers in response.[63] In one instance, on 8 November 2006, a young man blew himself up in the middle of the parade ground of the Punjab Regiment Centre in the NWFP, which killed around 42 people, wounding many others.[64]

The war against the Pakistan Taliban in the FATA became a Pashtun war against the Pakistan state and its US ally. As has happened many times throughout Pashtun history, *jihad* religiously sanctioned and justified

resistance to the attacks of outsiders, but the main motivation of the resistance was still politically motivated: to maintain Pashtun independence and the status, authority and power of the individual leaders of the terrorist groups.

After the storming of the Lal Masjid, Mehsud ordered revenge suicide bombings across Pakistan. He was accused of having masterminded the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, although he vehemently denied any involvement saying that it was against tribal custom to harm a woman.[65] At the height of his influence, he is said to have controlled as many as 20,000 pro-Taliban militants. In 2007, he humiliated the military by kidnapping more than 200 soldiers, whom he later released, in return for the release of 25 militants. Three Shia soldiers, however, were beheaded. He is alleged to have been supported by some elements within the Pakistani intelligence.[66] Mehsud was later killed by two US Hellfire missiles fired from a Predator drone. In October 2009, 30,000 Pakistani troops attacked the territory of the Mehsud tribe, which retook much territory, but led to revenge attacks on urban centres throughout Pakistan, including the deadly new tactic of suicide bombing.

Dying for Allah: suicide bombing

The single most effective and terrifying aspect of terrorist activities to emerge in Pakistan in recent times has been the use of suicide bombers. Suicide bombing was a new and highly effective terrorist tactic in Pakistan and Afghanistan, being introduced by al Qaeda. Suicide was alien to the Pashtun Pushtunwali military code and Deobandi Islam, and it was largely considered a cowardly tactic and grave sin which had never been used before even in the fierce *jihad* against the Soviets. Initially, only Arabs and other foreign *jihadis* were suicide bombers, but from 2006 onwards, under the influence of al Qaeda, the majority were Afghan and Pakistan Pashtuns.[67] Suicide bombings were particularly terrifying because they were very difficult to anticipate and, thus, prevent. For example, on 13 September 2007, an 18-year-old suicide bomber killed 22 highly trained commandos in their mess about 60 miles south of Islamabad. His motive appears to have been a revenge killing for the death of his sister in the attack on the Lal Masjid.[68] In 2006, there had been just six such attacks, but by 2009, this had escalated to 87, with over 3,000 victims in total, many of whom were innocent bystanders.[69] Previously, suicide terrorists had targeted public places, which were mainly frequented by foreigners.

The first suicide attack in Pakistan took place in Islamabad in 1995, when an Egyptian terrorist drove his truck loaded with explosives into the Egyptian Embassy killing 14 people.[70] In 2003, 70 people were killed and 40 were injured in suicide attacks on President Musharraf and the Prime Minister, Shaukat Ali.[71] Until 2007, suicide attacks were largely confined to restaurants and other places that were frequented by foreigners (as men-

tioned above), but after the Lal Masjid seize, suicide bombers began to frequently target security forces, mainly in the NWFP and the FATA, particularly in North and South Waziristan.[72] The tactic of suicide bombing was a terrorist strategy that was designed to demoralize the security forces and generate fear and insecurity among the mass of the population and, thus, destabilize the state.

Many of the suicide bombers were young men and boys from North and South Waziristan, who were recruited from the extreme Deobandi- or Wahhabi-influenced *madrassas* located in Pakistan's tribal areas.[73] Others were from the poverty-stricken southern Punjab, where the Sunni sectarian groups had become extremely powerful. Almost 90 per cent of the bombers were aged between 12 and 18.[74] In 2008, the Pakistani journalist Zahid Hussain interviewed a number of young men who had been trained to become suicide bombers but who had been captured by the military. Most were recruited from the radical *madrassas* from the southern Punjab. In many cases, their parents had sent the boys to the *madrassas* for an education, food and shelter and were horrified when they learned that they were being trained to become suicide bombers. The boys and young men were separated from the other *madrassa* students and their families and were taken to training camps where they underwent rigorous physical training for long hours.[75] On the day of the attacks, the would-be bombers were taken to the local mosque, congratulated on their decision to become martyrs and were promised that they would go immediately to heaven. Their families were also financially compensated, treated with great respect and guaranteed a place in paradise as a consequence of their actions. For some young men and women dying for Allah meant deep respect in this world and eternal bliss in the next.[76]

The suicide bombers targeted two main groups. Militant Sunni sectarian groups, such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, attacked Shia, Christian and Ahmadiyya gatherings, religious processions and buildings. The second group had a more political agenda, attempting to destabilize Pakistan by attacking the military, government and innocent civilians.[77]

The year 2010 was the bloodiest to date, with over 52 suicide attacks, which killed a total of 1,224 people and injured 2,157. About half of this number was innocent bystanders. Around 14 per cent of the victims were members of the security and law enforcement agencies. Another 12 per cent were Shia Muslims, and 8 per cent of the victims belonged to the tiny Ahmadiyya sect.[78] The remaining victims were made up of members of political and religious organizations. Most of the attacks took place in the three centres of terrorist activity: 34 per cent of the attacks were perpetuated in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa (formerly known as the North West Frontier Province), 31 per cent in the FATA and 25 per cent in the Punjab.[79] An alarming new development was the use of female suicide bombers for the first time in Pakistan. In August 2011, a 17-year-old female bomber hurled a grenade at a police post in the city of Peshawar and then

detonated an explosive device attached to her body. The use of female bombers poses a huge problem for security forces because the bomb can be easily concealed in their bulky clothing, and male security forces are often reluctant to search females.[80] According to one analyst: 'Terrorist experts say Pakistan has been turned into the suicide bombing capital of the world.'[81]

Terrorism in the Pakistani heartland: the rise of the Punjab Taliban

One of the most recent and dangerous developments in Pakistani terrorism has been the surge in terrorist activities in the key province of the Punjab. Previously, Punjabi groups had focused either on terrorist action in Indian-administered Kashmir or against Shias, particularly in the central and southern parts of the Punjab since the 1980s. Until 9/11, these groups had been tolerated and, in some instances, financed and supported by the Pakistani military, particularly the ISI. However, after 9/11, when Pakistan withdrew support from the Kashmiri militants, some individuals and groups felt betrayed and angered by this act and turned against the state in the Punjab. Since 2008, terrorist attacks in the Punjab have included the 20 September 2008 bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, the 3 March 2009 ambush of the visiting Sri Lankan cricket team and the killing of eight police cadets at the police training centre near Lahore on 30 March 2009. On 10 October 2009, a brazen attack on the military's general headquarters in the garrison city of Rawalpindi was highly embarrassing to the army.[82] For the first time, these attacks threatened the geographical heartland of Pakistan and its civil and military elite who had previously ignored the possibility of terrorism in its own backyard. The fear was that such attacks might destabilize the Punjab and, thus, threaten the very survival of the Pakistan state.

A major concern for both the security forces and the government was the emergence from around 2006 of what is known as the Punjab Taliban. The Punjab Taliban is a loose alliance of terrorist groups that are based in the Punjab. The Punjab Taliban has allied itself with militant groups from the Pashtun-dominated Pakistan Taliban and al Qaeda.[83] However, members of the Punjab Taliban are different from the Pashtun-dominated Pakistan Taliban. They are better educated, technologically more literate and better equipped. Mosques and *madrassas* that are linked to extremist organizations, such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Sahaba, act as networking and recruiting centres. The policy of previous governments in using such groups in Kashmir has now rebounded with a vengeance on the military and the state.

The terrifying threat that Punjabi-based terrorists would attack India and thus lead to nuclear war nearly became a reality when one of the most brazen and successful terrorist attacks on Indian soil began on Wednesday

26 November 2008. A group of heavily armed militants, who arrived by boats from Pakistan, terrorized the heart of Mumbai – India's most populous city and the commercial and entertainment heart of India – attacking two five-star hotels, the major train terminus, a Jewish centre, a movie theatre and a hospital. Both US and Indian officials claimed that this attack was led by Lashkar-e-Taiba, which, although officially banned in Pakistan, still operated openly in the Punjab. The Mumbai attacks were highly embarrassing to Pakistan's new government of Asif Ali Zardai, particularly the claims by Western intelligence sources that the ISI was actively involved in training the terrorists, which the Pakistan government vehemently denied. It does seem likely, however, that former officers of the Pakistani military may have been involved in training the terrorists prior to the attack.[84] The Mumbai bombings raised serious questions about whether Pakistan was serious about reining in terrorist groups that targeted India or, indeed, was even able to control terrorist groups that the ISI had previously sponsored. It was clear that the Mumbai gunmen had attended training camps in Muzaffarabad – the capital of Pakistani-administered Kashmir.[85]

Becoming a *jihadi*

We can gain some insight into the ways by which individuals have become involved in terrorist activities through the biography of the sole surviving terrorist from the Mumbai attacks, Mohammad Amir Ajmal Qasab. One of the most graphic and chilling images from the Mumbai attack is that of Qasab – casually, but neatly, dressed, cradling an AK-47 and striding confidently into Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus) railway station. Without warning, he and his armed partner opened fire on commuters, killing 58 and injuring 104 from all walks of life.[86]

According to his confession that he made to Indian interrogators after his capture, Qasab was born and educated in a village in the Punjab, where his father sold snacks at the local bus station.[87] Although poor, the family owned their own house. While he was somewhat of a trouble-maker as a child, he showed little interest in religion and was not violent. He was educated at the local primary school, but left at the age of 13 to seek work, initially in Lahore as a labourer and then in Rawalpindi. In Rawalpindi, he decided to rob houses and went to the local Raja Baazar to try to buy a weapon from one of the many gun shops. Quite by chance, he came across a stall set up by Lashkar-e-Taiba. After a brief interview, he was given his bus fare and was directed to the Ahl-e-Hadith education and training complex, Markaz Dawa-ul-Irshad – a heavily guarded complex, which does not tolerate music, television and smoking. Its Wahhabi-influenced teaching philosophy includes both modern and Islamic education.[88]

Qasab was one of the few highly motivated students who were chosen to undergo further rigorous military training in a camp in Pakistan-controlled

Kashmir, which included the use of various firearms, navigation and survival techniques. The recruits were also lectured on the atrocities committed against Muslims by the Israelis and in other places like Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan.[89] Qasab appears to have adapted very well to the military training and was selected to join a suicide squad in the attack on Mumbai. It is not clear whether the terrorist group belonged to the mainstream Lashkar-e-Taiba organization or whether it was a breakaway extremist splinter group.

Membership of the *jihadi* outfit appears to have given Qasab a sense of purpose, pride and confidence, which was apparent when he returned to his village, shortly before the Mumbai attacks. Villagers noticed that he was a changed man. The school failure and petty thief had returned home as a proud, highly trained *jihadi*.[90]

A second case study of a terrorist is that of Umar Kundi, who, like Qasab, also came from a lower-middle class background, but who had a better education and start in life.[91] His parents were Pashtuns who lived in a small town in south-west Punjab. The family was religious and spent their precious savings in making the pilgrimage to Mecca. His father was a telephone operator who managed to save enough money to send his son to medical school. During the late 1990s, Kundi studied medicine at the Punjab Medical College in Faizabad – Pakistan's third biggest city. Like many other young men from a small town background, initially he had problems adjusting to the busy life of the big city, with its bustling traffic, expensive modern restaurants and shops and unveiled women walking in the streets. While at university, he was recruited by an Islamic student group that was attached to Lashkar-e-Taiba, which had an office on campus and actively recruited students, helping them to adjust to life in the city and keep out of trouble. While he was working at the Allied Hospital in Faizabad, one of Osama bin Laden's closest associates, Abu Zubaydah, came to the hospital for treatment and preached *jihad* against the Pakistan government for supporting the US. His lecture was well received by the medical staff, presumably, including Kundi.[92]

Kundi appears to have become very disillusioned with his life and career prospects, as his father was unable to pay for further specialist medical training, leaving Kundi the choice of either being unemployed or taking on the position of a poorly paid doctor in the public hospital system. Like other bitter, angry and frustrated young men, he joined one of the small *jihadi* groups and allegedly organized the May 2009 attack on the provincial headquarters of the ISI in Lahore. He became one of Pakistan's most wanted terrorists and was eventually killed in a shoot-out with commandos at the young age of 29.[93] On March 2011, the Taliban exploded a car bomb, which targeted the ISI offices in Faisalabad, killing 20 and wounding over 100. A Taliban spokesman claimed that the bombing was an act of revenge for the killing of their commander, Kundi, the previous year.[94]

The biographies of Kundi and Qasab support the research findings of Pakistani psychologist Sohail Abbas who interviewed 517 men who had been jailed for allegedly attempting to go to Afghanistan to fight the US troops.[95] His analysis revealed that the perception, particularly from abroad, that terrorists in Pakistan were all religious fanatics and illiterate graduates of extremist *madrassas* was incorrect.[96] Instead, most terrorists were relatively well-educated, attending government schools, and were not particularly religious.[97] They also tended to be younger members of larger families, coming from the lower-middle class who found a purpose and status in belonging to a *jihadi* group.[98] Their motivation in becoming terrorists had more to do with the anger and frustration that they felt as life's failures. Many also seem to have been attracted to the *jihadi* groups out of a sense of adventure. Their hostility was directed against the enemies of Muslims, primarily their own government, India and the US, rather than religious fanaticism. According to historian Ayesah Jalal, *jihad* has been popular in Pakistan with the frustrated and disillusioned young men who have no career prospects, whose 'lives would otherwise promise nothing but oppression and humiliation'.[99]

Not all terrorists, however, come from underprivileged backgrounds. Among those who planned the attack on the Marriott Hotel in September 2008 was Syed Abraruddin – a 27-year-old chemical engineer from a well-off, middle-class family from Marden in Khybur Pakhtunkhwa province. He received an excellent education from the elite Edwards College in Peshawar and returned as a faculty member. While at the university, he came into contact with members of the student wing that belonged to the Jamaat-e-Islami and, from there, made contact with Al Qaeda.[100]

The fall of Musharraf, the rise of Zardari and the future of terrorism in Pakistan

In October 2007, Musharraf persuaded the outgoing parliament to re-elect him once again as president, but the Supreme Court overthrew the decision. When it became obvious that the Supreme Court was prepared to rule his re-election as invalid, as the constitution did not permit unelected public officials from contesting elections, Musharraf declared emergency rule across Pakistan on 3 November 2007.[101] The 1973 Constitution was suspended. All non-government television stations were taken off the air, the mobile networks were jammed and the military surrounded the Supreme Court. Thousands of Musharraf's opponents, including cricketing legend Imran Khan, were arrested. The Chief Justice and a majority of the Supreme Court were forced to resign, replaced with judges who were loyal to Musharraf. Under intense pressure from the US, which threatened to cut off military aid to Pakistan as a consequence, Musharraf reluctantly resigned from the military on 28 November, appointing Ashfaq Parvez Kayani his successor as Chief of Staff. Kiyani, who is generally

regarded both within Pakistan and internationally as an honest and highly competent professional soldier, was determined to keep the military out of politics.[102] The Supreme Court then ratified Musharraf's re-election as president. Through losing the support of the military, however, Musharraf's grip on power was now much more tenuous.

On 27 December 2007, Pakistan and the outside world were stunned with the news of the assassination of Benazir Bhutto following a political rally in Rawalpindi. The assassination of Bhutto turned public opinion against Musharraf to an even greater degree. Bhutto had accused the ISI of working against her. In a letter sent to Musharraf in October, before she returned to Pakistan, Bhutto demanded that three government officials, including the director general of the ISI, should be investigated in the event that she was assassinated.[103] Angry supporters of Bhutto went on a rampage, attacking police, burning buses and businesses and accusing Musharraf of involvement in the assassination. A stricken, angry mob chanted 'Musharraf is a murderer' outside the hospital where her body lay.[104] While the government blamed the local Taliban and al Qaeda, an independent United Nations inquiry was highly critical of the federal, state and local security arrangements which failed to provide adequate security for Bhutto.[105] On 5 November 2011, five Punjabi Taliban and two police officers, including the former police chief of Rawapindi, were charged with being part of a conspiracy intended to assassinate Bhutto. The report stated that the police chief ordered the hosing down of the crime scene after receiving a call from army headquarters, possibly involving the former director general of military intelligence.[106]

In the February 2008 elections, Musharraf's party was routed by a coalition of parties led by Benazir Bhutto's widower, Asif Ali Zardari, and Nawaz Sharif. The military, under General Kayani, remained neutral during the 2008 elections, unlike in the 2002 elections, when the ISI, in particular, had helped to rig the elections in favour of Musharraf. The poor showing of the religious political parties demonstrated, yet again, their very limited appeal for the mass of the Pakistani population. In addition, Kiyani ordered that army officers who had been given prominent positions in bureaucracy must resign.[107] On 7 August, Sharif and Zardari demanded Musharraf's impeachment for breaches of the Constitution. On 18 August 2008, Musharraf resigned ostensibly for the good of the nation and went into exile, living both in the United Kingdom and Dubai.[108]

In September 2008, the highly unpopular and corrupt Asif Ali Zardari became President of Pakistan. On Benazir Bhutto's death, Zardari had inherited the co-leadership of the Pakistan People's Party with his young son – an act which was apparently based on Bhutto's will, which many of her friends believe was fabricated.[109] Zardari's main claim to office, then, was as the widower of Benazir Bhutto.[110] The US regarded him as a reliable ally, despite his infamous reputation of being deeply corrupt, including

being charged with several money laundering charges in Switzerland.[111] He proved to be a strong supporter of the US, including the drone operations, and, as such, is regarded as a American stooge by most Pakistanis.[112] The British Chief of Defense Staff, Sir Jock Stirrup, described Zardari as 'clearly a numbskull'.[113] He is highly unpopular, both within his own Pakistan People's Party and more widely in Pakistan itself. The military regard his government with contempt because of its incompetence and open corruption. The unlikely coalition of Zardari with his wife's former arch enemy, Nawaz Sharif, in order to oust Musharraf – their common enemy – did not last long and was soon to dissolve. In addition to the threat of terrorism and sectarian violence, the new ruling coalition faced inflation, ethnic and regional divisions, food and energy shortages.

On 2 May 2011, Zardari's government and the Pakistani military were highly embarrassed when Osama bin Laden was killed by members of a US special forces unit in his home in Abbottabad – a military garrison town, which is a mere two hour drive north of Pakistan's capital, Islamabad.[114] Bin Laden's home was close to the prestigious Pakistan Military Academy. The raid was highly embarrassing for the government and the military, who, for years, had been vehemently denying that bin Laden had taken refuge in Pakistan.[115] His death led to an acrimonious war of words between senior officials of Pakistan and the US. Pakistan was furious with the invasion of its territory and the claim by US officials that alerting the Pakistani authorities would jeopardize the mission.[116] It raised questions as to what extent the military, particularly the ISI, had been playing a double game. Many refuse to believe that many in the ISI were unaware that bin Laden was living under their noses. The question that Pakistanis wanted answered was whether the military, particularly the ISI, was hopelessly inefficient or whether they were culpable in aiding and hiding bin Laden. The raid led to heightened anti-American feeling within the military, with General Kayani threatening to cut all military cooperation with the US.[117] The military's reputation suffered a further serious blow when a journalist, Syed Saleem Shahzad, who had previously reported on links between the navy and Al Qaeda, was found dead – allegedly murdered by the ISI, which had been openly threatening journalists and their families.[118]

Terrorist organizations in Pakistan: an overview

One of the major difficulties in attempting to analyse the recent history of terrorism in Pakistan is that so much of it is speculation, innuendo and conspiracy theory. Much research needs to be done on terrorist organizations, their leadership, their motivations for resorting to terrorism and their support in these acts. Access to confidential government documents, particularly relating to the links between terrorists, politicians and the ISI, is also urgently needed. The highly complex relationship between the many *jihadi* groups is made even more difficult by the proliferation of

breakaway groups into small cells and the frequent changing of names of organizations and of members.

Jihadi groups each have their own specific history, social roots and strategic objectives. All uniformly and unanimously oppose the US and NATO presence in Afghanistan, which they regard as Western aggression. Another common factor between them is the anger and frustration directed against the corrupt governments that have governed Pakistan. In the FATA, there is strong resentment against the Pakistan state, which is regarded by many Pashtuns as a corrupt, foreign power which has done nothing towards alleviating the FATA's poverty, under-development and lack of basic health and education facilities.[119]

There are also important differences between the individual organizations. Some are sectarian-based, but others want all sects to work together against a common enemy – the *kafir* state – and its US ally. Many target the Pakistan military and innocent civilians, but others only attack the US and its allies in Afghanistan. Some are based in the tribal culture of the FATA, while others have their origins in sectarian violence in the Punjab. Yet others are basically criminal organizations, which use the cover of being a *jihadi* group. Some organizations also exist in order to serve the political interests of their leaders.[120]

One can, however, make some generalizations. The first is that since 9/11, the Pakistani state has been under attack because of its support of the US and its allies in Afghanistan and attempts to crack down on terrorist organizations and their campaigns against India in Kashmir. The second is that the sectarian violence that was the main feature of terrorism in Pakistan, particularly in the Punjab during the 1980s and 1990s, has also been largely subsumed into the *jihad* against the state. The third generalization is that terrorism that is directed at the state is no longer largely confined to the tribal regions, but has moved into the heart of Pakistan – the Punjab. As such, the growing cooperation between Pashtuns in the tribal areas, Punjabis and members of al Qaeda poses a severe challenge to state security and, perhaps, the very existence of the Pakistani state.

Most of the organizations have specific political goals which range from ending state corruption and exploitation, to driving the US and its allies out of Afghanistan, to replacing the corrupt Pakistani state with a state based on Sharia. Some largely pay lip service to the naïvely idealistic goal of establishing an Islamic state throughout South Asia and more widely. Religion often serves as an ideology to further the political goals of the organizations or to mask the personal ambitions and self-interest of their leaders, but there is little evidence to support the view that individuals are motivated to commit acts of terrorism purely through reading the Koran or any other Islamic texts. One of the great ironies of the current situation is that the state, particularly the military, is now facing the threat of the Frankenstein monster that it created when it nurtured terrorist organizations in Kashmir and Afghanistan, as well as encouraging anti-Shia

sectarian groups in Pakistan itself. Even the ISI, which has had close links to some *jihadi* organizations, have become the target of militant groups.[121]

It will need a much stronger and far more determined government than currently exists to begin resolving the political problems that have been primarily responsible for the terrorism: the resolution of the Kashmir problem, a precondition for lasting peace with India; a strong crackdown on sectarian violence; and moves to resolve the economic and political grievances of the Pashtuns. The other factor, which is an international problem, is the establishment of some sort of peace and political stability in Afghanistan at the point when the US and its allies depart. Unfortunately, the fallout from the US invasion of Afghanistan will undoubtedly continue to have a negative impact for security in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. These goals will all be extremely difficult to achieve, but an even greater challenge will be to establish a strong, well-governed Pakistan, which will begin to address wider governance and political problems that have been primarily responsible for the growth of terrorism.

Conclusion

Critical Terrorism Studies, Islam and the making of terrorism in Pakistan

In the conclusion, I revisit and attempt to answer the two key questions raised in the introduction: why has Pakistan come to be regarded as the world's most dangerous state in respect to terrorism? And, second, what role did Islam play in the making of terrorism? In so doing, I will empirically test some of the theoretical concerns and inferences raised by Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) theorists.

CTS scholars argue that there is no simple explanation for terrorism. Rather, we need to consider the many complex reasons for the phenomenon. This case study of Pakistan strongly supports this argument. In the 1950s, if one were to attempt to predict which of the new Muslim states that emerged during the twentieth century would have the greatest terrorist problems, Pakistan would be very much at the bottom of the list. Pakistan was then widely regarded as a beacon of moderation: a highly tolerant secular state, with a strong commitment to democracy. The veteran journalist and critic Tariq Ali writes that when he was growing up, a large proportion of the educated elite only paid lip service to being Muslim. Few Pakistanis, either in the city or countryside, fasted for the month of Ramadan and café life still went on, as it had done before Ramandan. The clergy were often ridiculed because they were regarded as being dishonest, hypocritical and lazy, whose only interest in religion was to earn a living and who were lampooned for, allegedly, having an unhealthy sexual interest in young boys.[1]

A series of events – accidents of history – along with the actions of key individuals are of supreme importance in explaining why this moderation was lost. By taking an historical approach and drawing upon interdisciplinary research, as recommended by CTS scholars, this analysis has been able to identify a range of different reasons, some more important than others, but all contributing in total to an understanding of the growth of terrorism and sectarian violence, which are closely intertwined.

The making of terrorism in Pakistan

The first major factor to consider is the structural weakness of the Pakistani state – a consequence of the legacy of colonialism and the politics of

separatism that emerged after the Indian subcontinent had been divided into the Muslim numerically dominated state of Pakistan and the Hindu-dominated state of India. The founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, had been forced to accept a weak, divided state. The new state of Pakistan had to face numerous problems, particularly the failure of a strong political party or parties to evolve and, second, the absence of any ideology to unite the different regional components that made up Pakistan. As we have seen, Islam was totally inadequate in its function as ideological glue, given that Islam within Pakistan was so deeply fragmented into competing ideologies and sects. The successful separatist movement in East Pakistan, which led to the formation of the independent state of Bangladesh in 1971, was the most striking example of the power of regionalism, as well as of the inability of religion to create national unity. The Pakistani military's attempt to use state terrorism failed to suppress the movement for Bangladesh.

The structural weakness of the Pakistan state has meant that politics have been based almost exclusively around power, patronage and family. Politicians, no matter how well-meaning or idealistic, have been unable to address Pakistan's fundamental problems, including poverty, inadequate education and widespread corruption. Since its inception, Pakistani politics have been dominated by a small elite of landlords, urban political bosses, senior bureaucrats and the military. Most of the state's very limited resources have been either allocated to the military or siphoned off by politicians so as to provide solely for themselves and their families or to reward their supporters. Consequently, weak governments – both civilian and military – have had an extremely poor record in combating sectarian violence and terrorism. For one thing, because most of the elite do not pay taxes, there are very few funds available to pay for even the most basic government services. A corrupt judiciary, ill-trained and underpaid police force and protection from politicians have all enabled terrorists to flaunt the law.

Of key importance for understanding why terrorism emerged in Pakistan is that from its foundation Pakistan has been threatened by its much more powerful neighbour, India. The fear, resentment and hatred of the Indian government and its policies have been felt throughout all sections of Pakistani society, particularly within the military, and this has been a major factor determining foreign policy. Its genesis lay in Pakistan's conflict with India over the possession of Kashmir, which began soon after Pakistan's birth. It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Kashmir conflict and its debilitating effects on all aspects of Pakistani life. Bitter resentment towards India has led to an ongoing arms race between the two countries, which has been extremely financially draining, particularly for the economically weaker state of Pakistan. Military spending has consumed a very large proportion of Pakistan's limited government funds. Due of the fear of its much more powerful neighbour, Pakistani politicians

– both civilian and military – have used *jihadi* groups to fight a proxy war in Kashmir. This policy rebounded on the state when many *jihadi* groups turned on the government and the military when they became allies with the US after 9/11.

The rise to power of the military dictator General Zia ul-Haq, who ruled from 1979–1988, was to be crucially important in changing Pakistan from a religiously tolerant state to one in which sectarian violence has become widespread. The first serious outbreak of terrorism was a consequence of attempts by Zia to impose a narrow Sunni form of Islam on Pakistan, in part to legitimize his rule and strengthen his power, and was to eventually lead to sectarian violence between the numerically dominant Sunnis and the minority Shias. This terrorism, which, in large part, was motivated by the political and social conflicts between Shia landlords and Sunni urban politicians was initially confined to central and south Punjab where Shia and Sunni rivalry was strongest. Since then, the curse of sectarian violence has gradually spread to other parts of Pakistan, particularly to the North West Frontier Province (the NWFP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (the FATA), where the roots of sectarianism also lie in the political and economic conflict between Sunni and Shia elites. The rule of Zia, however, probably would have been a minor chapter in the history of Pakistan, except, by a strange and fatal coincidence for peace and security in Pakistan, it coincided with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

If one were forced to identify one key factor in the emergence of terrorism in Pakistan, Afghanistan and more widely it would be the Afghan *jihad*. The spontaneous uprising of the Afghans assumed the form of a holy war which was particularly powerful among the Pashtun tribes of Afghanistan and Pakistan, who have had a long history of resisting the invasion of foreigners. This *jihad* was eagerly supported by Pakistan, fearful of the impending Russian threat and anxious to increase its influence in Afghanistan in order to counter Indian influence there. Pakistan, therefore, supported the more extremist groups among the mujahideen who fought the Soviet military and their Afghan allies. As part of the *jihad*, the mujahideen resorted to terrorist actions directed against the Russian military and their Afghan allies and, later, were to use the same tactics against the US and its allies.

The military, particularly the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), supported the more extreme among the *jihadi* groups. In turn, Pakistan was supported by the US in order to weaken its arch-rival – the Soviet Union. The US-channelled funds and weapons, distributed through the ISI, greatly strengthened the power and influence of the organization. Since then, the ISI has played a major role in financing, training and encouraging *jihadi* groups to be used against the Indian state, particularly in Kashmir, as well as interfering in Pakistani politics by supporting non-democratic forces. The Pakistani military has continued to play a double game, secretly encouraging certain *jihadi* groups while ostensibly supporting the US and its allies.

The Afghan *jihad* also provided a golden opportunity for Saudi Arabia to promote its extremist Wahhabi Islam throughout Afghanistan and Pakistan, particularly among the tribal areas along the Pakistan–Afghanistan border. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, charities and individuals have financed Wahhabi-influenced *madrassas* in the Pashtun tribal belt and in other parts of Pakistan, particularly in the Punjab. Saudi Arabia's actions were motivated, in part, by its desire to curb the influence of its arch rival – the Shia state of Iran. Consequently, Pakistan and Afghanistan became a battleground for the proxy war between Shia Iran and Wahhabi Saudi Arabia. A minority of Wahhabi-influenced *madrassas* have continued to preach *jihad* against the US and its allies, other Muslims and the Pakistani state. The baneful influence of Saudi Arabian Wahhabism in promoting sectarian hatred has, surprisingly, been largely understated in the literature on terrorism in Pakistan.

After the Soviets decided to leave Afghanistan, the US promptly turned its back on the region because it was no longer important for US geopolitical goals. This short-sighted policy – just one of a number of blunders that the US has made over Pakistan – has strengthened the anger towards the US in Pakistan and left Afghanistan to be fought over by rival, well-armed mujahideen groups. Pakistan saw the opportunity, through the ISI, to channel these well-trained, battle-hardened groups, armed with the numerous weapons that were left over from the Afghan *jihad*, into supporting the spontaneous revolt which broke out in Kashmir in 1989 against the abuses of Indian power in the Valley. When Pakistan, under pressure from the US after 9/11, attempted to curb the activities of these groups they turned on the state itself. In recent times, most of the *jihadis* have become much more independent of the military and are threatening the very state which once nurtured them. The other major consequence of the rule of Zia and the Afghanistan *jihad* has been the emergence of the Taliban in Afghanistan, which became a sanctuary for Osama bin Laden and other followers of al-Qaeda, particularly after 9/11.

By the 1990s, therefore, the seeds of terrorism and sectarian violence, which had first been sown in the politics of partition, were ready for harvest. Since then, the military government of General Musharraf, the civilian governments of Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif and that of Bhutto's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, have been largely powerless to control the numerous terrorist groups that have emerged. The events of 9/11 and the subsequent ill-advised invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq by the US and its allies have all greatly strengthened the support for terrorists in Pakistan. It is easy to understand how, for the majority of Pakistanis, the attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq were regarded as attacks on Islam itself. The foreign policies of the US and its allies are hated by the majority of Pakistanis, of all political and religious persuasions, particularly among the military, many of whom, ironically, have been trained in the West and have sent their children to be educated there. It has made it extremely difficult for the Pakistani state and its security

services to take strong action against the terrorists, because, in so doing, they are seen to be traitors and mere puppets of the US. It also raises a threat that junior officers and the men that they command may well revolt against the state and their superiors. The Afghanistan *jihad*, in conjunction with the rule of Zia, have, therefore, been the two key factors that help explain terrorism in Pakistan, although these, in turn, have been greatly influenced by the events that have gone beforehand.

Islam and the making of terrorism in Pakistan

The final and, so far as this volume is concerned, the most important question remains: what has been the role of Islam in the making of terrorism? One fact is patently clear: the emergence of terrorism did not emerge spontaneously out of the teachings of Muhammad and his followers. It is easy, of course, to find justification for violence in Islam's religious texts, but it can also be easily found in the texts of other religions, such as Judaism and Christianity. The vast majority of Hindus, Jews and Muslims, of course, ignore this aspect of their religion. Certainly, in recent years, some Muslim clergy and organizations have advocated violence and sectarian conflict, in part to gain prestige, power and political advantage, but such teachings, which draw upon the more extreme interpretations of the Deobandi and Wahhabi schools of Islam, are alien to the spirit of Pakistani Islam.

As we have seen in Chapter 1, the Islam that developed over a long period of time in Pakistan was fragmented and largely politically quiescent, tolerating a wide range of different doctrinal issues and ritual practices. The dominant core of Pakistan Islam has been the teachings of Sufism, drawing much of its support from the dominant Barelvi school of Islam, which is generally tolerant of other sects and religions, although, unfortunately, this tolerance is fading. It is true that some branches of Pakistani Islam did preach a narrower and more literal approach. The most important of these less inclusive branches of Pakistani Islam was the Deobandi, but the doctrinal differences between Barelvi and Deobandi would, by themselves, never have been the cause of sectarianism and terrorism. For the vast majority of Pakistanis, the differences between the followers of the Barelvi and the Deobandi traditions have been largely irrelevant. Few Pakistanis care about or even are aware what sect or school of Islam they belong to, particularly in the countryside, where Sufism and respect for the *pirs*, the descendants of saints, is so very strong.

More dangerous has been the Wahhabi school of Islam, which has been actively promoted by Saudi Arabia. Wahhabism has been particularly influential among the Pashtun tribes in Pakistan's wild frontier region who have had a long tradition of *jihad* against foreign invaders. However, the influence of Wahhabism would have been contained within the outskirts of the Pakistan state among the minority Pashtuns, if it had not been for Zia's rule and the creation of the Afghan *jihad*. A minority of

Wahhabi-influenced *madrassas* preach *jihad* and have selected potential suicide bombers from amongst their students. Most Pakistanis, however, have, at least until recently, ignored the Wahhabis or viewed the sect as a misguided minor offshoot of Islam or even considered the Wahhabis to be infidels. As one old Sufi commented in relation to the Wahhabi clerics: 'They read their books but they never understand the true message of love that the prophet preached. Men so blind as them cannot even see the shining sun.'[2] The roots of terrorism, therefore, are much more firmly planted in mundane, grubby politics and individual ambition.

Throughout the volume, the discussion clearly demonstrates that Islam has been used and abused for political and economic reasons. What is typically striking about terrorism in Pakistan is that it has emerged out of conflict among the followers of Islam and not between Muslim and non-Muslim. Most of the victims of terrorism have been Pakistanis themselves, either because of Sunni–Shia violence or because of terrorist actions against the state and its resulting attempts to crack down on terrorism.

The first serious outbreak of sectarian violence in 1953, against the tiny Ahmadiyya community, was encouraged by some politicians in the Punjab, in order to win support among the masses. Since then, governments – both civilian and military – have increasingly resorted to appealing to Islam in their attempts to justify their rule, power and authority. Among the more politicians to appeal to sectarian differences was the, allegedly, socialist and secular Zulifkar Ali Bhutto, who, along with his arch-rival, Zia, attempted to use the oppression of the Ahmadiyya to woo the Muslim vote. The campaign against the Ahmadiyya was to provide the future tactics and training for extremist Sunni groups, which turned against the Shias during the 1980s. The ambivalent relationship between the state and Islam has enabled religious groups, who politically have had little influence or support, to take the moral high ground and so wield much more power and influence than they deserve.

An analysis of a survey, conducted by A. C. Nielsen Pakistan in September 2007 of 907 urban Pakistanis in 19 cities, found that the religious beliefs of those surveyed was not a factor in whether they supported terrorist organizations or not.[3] For example, those individuals who stated that they supported Sharia and Islamic political parties were no more likely to support groups that used violence in the name of religion than those who were less religious.[4] Furthermore, those Pakistanis who supported democracy were no less likely to support terrorist organizations. The analysis also challenged the assumption that poverty and poor education are a primary cause of terrorism in Pakistan. Specifically, it rejects the claim made in the US government's 9/11 Commission Report into the terrorist attacks on the US that *madrassas* – 'incubators for violent extremism'[5] – are the primary recruiting grounds for terrorists.[6] Instead, those individuals drawn to *jihadi* organizations tend to be better educated, have been educated in public schools and are financially better off than the

majority of Pakistanis.[7] The analysis concluded that support for organizations that use violence 'is not religion per se. Rather, underlying political considerations appear to be what is driving support.'[8] Currently, the most pressing consideration in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly the NWFP), where terrorist activities are most pronounced is the political goal to expel the military and other representatives of the Pakistani state who are currently regarded as oppressors. In addition to this, there is an urgent demand for much-needed political and economic reforms in an area which has long been neglected by the government.

Attempting to find the roots of terrorism in Islam is, therefore, pointless. The use of the term 'religious terrorism', which implies these roots, at least so far as Pakistan is concerned, is highly misleading, dangerous and analytically useless, as the CTS analysts have argued. As the title of this volume suggests, terrorism was created through the actions of human beings and was the consequence of the actions of individuals who were primarily motivated by political and economic interests, in conjunction with historical developments, which had little to do with religion.

In summary, then, we can identify the three key political decisions, all of which were to play a critical role in shaping the development of terrorism in Pakistan. Each was an essential condition. The first decision was taken in 1846 when the English East India Company sold the Muslim-dominated Kashmir Valley to the Hindu ruler of Jammu, whose successor acceded to India. While we will never know for sure, if it had not been for an accident of history that saw most of Muslim Kashmir come under Indian rule, the relationship between India and Pakistan would most likely have been much more positive and would probably have greatly limited the growth of terrorism. The second decision was the fatal blunder of Zulifkar Ali Bhutto in appointing Zia ul-Haq as Chief of Army Staff over the heads of more competent secular-minded rivals. Without Zia, there would probably have been no policy of state-imposed Sunni Islamization and, consequently, little Sunni–Shia sectarian violence. The third decision was that taken by the Soviet Politburo to invade Afghanistan which led to the rise of many of the numerous *jihadi* groups that are involved in terrorist activities in Pakistan, Afghanistan and globally, today. To this list, we can add the politically disastrous decision of the US to invade Afghanistan, which resulted in the formation of many *jihadi* groups, particularly in the tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan, which turned against the Pakistan state, as well as against the US and its allies. What is significant is that none of the above decisions had anything to do with religion.

Terrorism and the future of Pakistan?

The tragedy of terrorism and sectarian violence in Pakistan is that it has diverted attention away from far more pressing needs, not least of which is the need to develop sound state governance. It has also largely ignored

probably the most urgent problem facing Pakistan, which, in the future, could well make terrorism very much a side issue – that of global warming and the drying up of Pakistan's water supplies, particularly the Indus River and its tributaries, on which grows the heavily dependent crops which are needed to feed Pakistan's large and rapidly growing population which is expected to grow from the current 185,000,000 to 275,000,000 by 2050.[9] Failure by the Pakistani government to address this problem because, in part, it has been diverted by the side issue of terrorism may well have devastating consequences for Pakistan and its people; consequences which far outweigh the immediate concern about terrorism.[10]

Despite the pessimism, many analysts see hope and opportunity for the future of Pakistan. Despite its history of poor government, Pakistani society has proven to be surprisingly strong and resilient.[11] While terrorism and sectarian violence are a major problem, they are, by no means, the most serious challenge that is facing Pakistani society today. Nor is it inevitable that the Pakistani state will collapse, as has been predicted by many analysts, particularly in the West. A recently published edited volume *Pakistan: Beyond the 'Crisis' State*, containing chapters from Pakistan's most eminent historians, diplomats, scholars, lawyers, economists, senior administrators, religious scholars and journalists, has provided a number of policy recommendations to address Pakistan's problems.[12] The contributors are cautiously optimistic that, provided the quality of government is dramatically improved, Pakistan is capable of putting in place a reform agenda that will lead to the development of a stronger, more stable state, which would benefit all Pakistanis and not just its elite. The growth in the political voice and power of the Pakistani middle class, encouraged by an independent, vibrant media, may well be able to pressurize the government into making much-needed political reforms.[13]

CTS scholars insist that there is a moral dimension to terrorism research. In the concluding paragraph to his excellent study *Pakistan: A Hard Country*, Anatol Lieven passionately states that: 'The West needs to develop a much deeper knowledge of Pakistan, a much deeper stake in Pakistan, and a much more generous attitude to helping Pakistan.'[14] This is very sound advice. This recommendation, however, would be even more compelling if Islam were to be included in the quotation. Therefore, more in-depth studies of Pakistan and other Islamic states by open-minded scholars, including CTS-grounded scholars, are necessary. Only then can we begin to fully understand the underlying causes of terrorism in Pakistan and other countries and, thus, be in a position to make sensible, informed decisions, including dialogue if necessary, with those whom we may regard as terrorists, and so work towards resolving the underlying social, economic and political problems that have created and nurtured violence that has been committed in the name, if not in the essential spirit, of Islam.

Notes

Introduction: overview and theory

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3 Birth pains: the decline of democracy, sectarian violence and the intractable problem of Kashmir, 1947–1958

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5 The turning point: Zia ul-Haq and the Islamization of Pakistan, 1977–1988

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