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MILITARY AND THE FOREIGN POLICY OF PAKISTAN

NASEEM AHMED

Foreign policies are designed to help protect a country's national interest—its national security, ideological goals and economic prosperity. Owing to the anarchic nature of the international political system, states feel a high degree of insecurity: lacking systemic guarantees of state security, war remains a legitimate instrument of foreign policy. Self-protection is the sole protection in an essentially anarchical system. While the primary objective of this article is to examine Pakistan's foreign policy, it also evaluates two approaches to international relations, idealism and realism. Lastly, the article analyses the security perception of Pakistan and the role of the military in foreign policy making. The theoretical foundation of this study is realism, because Pakistan foreign policy is a classic example of political realism.

Keywords: Pakistan, military, foreign policy, security, realism, idealism, security perceptions, power, India

I THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

FOR UNDERSTANDING THE external behaviour or foreign policy of states, foreign policy models and theories of international relations provide intellectual guidelines to researchers and provide the best explanations thereof. To study foreign policy of states, two competing approaches have emerged in Western political thought since the French Revolution, namely, idealist and realist. The two approaches are discussed here in brief.

According to the idealist approach, the policies of states *vis-à-vis* the rest of the world are merely expressions of their prevailing political, social and religious beliefs. Idealists argue that, instead of being based on power, foreign policy should be formulated according to cooperative and ethical standards. Idealists are prone to believe that humans and their countries are capable of achieving more cooperative, less conflictive relations. In this sense, idealists might trace their intellectual lineage to political

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philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78), who argued in *The Social Contract* (1762) that human beings had joined together in civil societies because they ‘reached the point at which the obstacles in the way of their preservation in the state of nature show their power of resistance to be greater than the resources at the disposal of each individual for his maintenance in that state.’ Like Rousseau, contemporary idealists not only believe that in the past, people joined together in civil societies to better their existence but also they are confident that now, and in future, people can join together to build a cooperative and peaceful global society (Rourke and Boyer 2000: 14). By way of simplification, it can be said that while the realist is primarily interested in the quest for power—and its culmination in the resort to violence—as the essence of all politics among nations, the idealist is concerned, above all, about the elimination of power politics and violence (Wolfers 1951). Due to the failure of idealism to prevent the outbreak of the Second World War, since 1939, leading theorists and policy makers have continued to view the world through the realist lenses.

The second approach to foreign policy is analytical and is known as the realist approach. At the heart of this viewpoint is the proposition that policy rests on multiple determinants, including the state’s historic tradition, geographical location, national interest or purposes and security needs (Macridis 1963: 1). Realism is the dominant theory of international relations because it provides the most powerful explanation of war as a regular condition of life in the international system (Dunne 1999: 110). Realism is widely regarded as the most influential theoretical tradition in international relations, even by its harshest critics. Realism’s ancient philosophical heritage, its powerful critique of liberal internationalism and its influence on the practice of international diplomacy have secured it an important, if not dominant, position in the discipline (Burchill et al. 2001: 70). As its name implies, realism seeks to describe and explain the world of international politics as it is, rather than how we might like it to be. Most importantly, the state, which is identified as the key actor in international politics, must pursue power. For realists of all stripes, in the international system, the survival of the state can never be guaranteed, because the threat or use of force culminating in war is a legitimate instrument of statecraft and foreign policy behaviour. In an anarchic international political system, no state has the guarantee of survival. For realists, power is the only guarantee of the existence of a state in international system.

The sad end of Wilsonian idealism put realism on the centre stage. In the years after the Second World War, realism taught American leaders to focus on interests rather than ideology, to seek peace through positions of power and to recognise that great powers can coexist even if they have antithetical values and beliefs. The fact that realism offers something of a ‘manual’ for maximising the interests of the state in a hostile environment explains, in part, why it remains ‘the central tradition in the study of world politics’ (Keohane and Nye 1989: 36). To most realists, in the absence of international authority, there are few rules or norms that restrain states, although Hans Morgenthau, generally regarded as father of modern realism, did include chapters on international morality, international law and international government in his

famous book, *Politics among Nations* (Morgenthau 1991[1948]), which comes closer to being a realist textbook. Written in the aftermath of the Second World War, as the United States (US) was emerging as the major world economic and strategic power, *Politics among Nations* became not only an attempt to consolidate the principles of realism, which had seemingly been vindicated by the War, but was also designed to provide intellectual support for the role the US was to play in the post-War world. Morgenthau's important work therefore straddled two worlds: it was an intellectual statement destined to influence generations of students in the academy and a series of guidelines for the US foreign policy makers confronted by the uncertainties of the Cold War (Burchill et al. 2001: 77).

Morgenthau suggested that there had been a weakening of the moral limitations from earlier times when there was a cohesive international society bound together through elite ties and common morality. Thus, international law and government, in his view, are largely weak and ineffective. For him, international organisations are a tool of states to be used when desired; they can increase or decrease the power of the states but they do not affect the basic characteristic of the international system; and because they reflect the basic distribution of power among states, they are no more than the sum of their member states (Karns and Mingst 2005: 45–46).

Accordingly, the world is revealed to realists as a dangerous and insecure place, where violence is regrettable but endemic. In their account of the conflictive nature of international politics, realists give high priority to the centrality of the nation-state in their considerations, acknowledging it as the supreme political authority in the world (Burchill et al. 2001: 70). Realists regard states as billiard balls on a table. Just like these balls, states collide with each other. They act and react according to what is going on in the international environment. Therefore, realists view foreign policy as simply a reaction to events outside the state—actions of other states as well as the state's power in the international system. In addition, the state is presumed to be a rational actor, pursuing objectives which will ensure its security, power and development.

In some respects, foreign policy analysis (FPA) is firmly within the realist paradigm. It assumes a state-centric international political system, and although it acknowledges that there are other actors within that system, it primarily focuses on the transactions which take place between states or governments acting on behalf of the states—realists, for example, assume that the relations between states are motivated by the pursuit of power. Foreign policy analysts accept that power relations are important and that force (threat, used or implicit) is a major instrument of foreign policy (Groom and Light 1994: 93).

FPA enquires into the motives and other sources of behaviour of international actors, particularly states. It gives a good deal of attention to decision making, initially so as to probe behind the formal self-descriptions (and fictions) of the process of government and public administration. In doing so, it tests the plausible hypotheses that the outputs of foreign policy are, to some degree, determined by the nature of the decision-making process (Hudson and Vore 1995). The key to understanding

international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power. The idea of interest defined in terms of power reveals the true behaviour of politicians and guards us against two popular misconceptions about the determination of a state's foreign policy—the motives of statesmen and ideological preference. Whilst political leaders will cast their policies in ideological terms (defence of democracy and so on), they are inevitably confronted by the distinction between what is desirable and what is actually possible. There is no room for moral or ethical concerns, prejudice, political philosophy or individual preference in the determination of foreign policy because actions are constrained by the relative power of the state. The national interest, which ought to be the sole pursuit of statesmen, is always defined in terms of strategic and economic capability (Burchill et al. 2001: 79).

It is the concept of interest defined as power that 'imposes discipline upon the observer' and 'infuses rational order into the subject matter of Politics' (Morgenthau 1991[1948]: 5). For Morgenthau, national interests are permanent conditions, which provide policy makers with a rational guide to action: they are fixed, politically bipartisan and always transcend changes in government. They are 'a fact to be discovered rather than a matter of contingent and constructed preference' (Donnelly 2000: 45). A product of a long philosophical and historical tradition, realism in its various forms is based on the assumption that individuals are generally power seeking and act in a rational way to protect their own interests. Within the international system, realists see states as the primary actors, entities that act in a unitary way in pursuit of their national interest, generally defined in terms of maximising power and security. States coexist in an anarchic international system characterised by the absence of an authoritative hierarchy. As a result, states must rely primarily on themselves to manage their own insecurity through balance of power and deterrence (Karns and Mingst 2005: 45).

The term national interest has long been used by statesmen and scholars to describe the foreign policy goals of nation-states. Although the concept is not new, there is ambiguity about its meaning, and most scholars have chosen to use their own descriptions rather than follow formulations offered by others. Today, the student of international relations finds numerous definitions of national interest, most of which are not conducive to precision in the making of foreign policy (Nuechterlein 1985: 1). Morgenthau argued that power, primarily industrial and military power, was the means by which nations survived in an essentially competitive world, and that nations neglecting self-interest and national power succumbed to the influence and intimidation of other states which emphasised them. Morgenthau deplored what he termed the 'utopian' view of the world held by the 'idealists' and favoured instead a 'realistic' outlook based on national self-interest (Nuechterlein 1985: 2). Kennan (1951) shared Morgenthau's view of the world and the need for realistic thinking as the basis of foreign policy formulation.

Another scholar who wrote extensively on national interest was Arnold Wolfers, one of the group of scholars who sought to bridge the gap between idealists and realists. Wolfers (1952: 483) noted that the term national interest had become, in the

post-Second World War period, practically synonymous with a formula for national security and that, unless they explicitly deny it, those who emphasise national interest as the basis of foreign policy may be assumed to mean that 'priority shall be given to measures of security'. Wolfers believed that among scholars and statesmen, there was a preoccupation with national security and military power, which he said was not surprising during the 1950s when there was a major concern in the US about building up strategic military power; but, he argued, one did not have to be obsessed with national security in order to be realistic about the goals and interests of the US in the world (Wolfers 1952).

However, from Thucydides to Morgenthau, realists have stressed that material interests, the dominance of the strong over the weak and an anarchic international relations environment have guided states to formulate their external policies. Referring to the 'essence' of and the fundamental determinant of a country's foreign policy, Morgenthau writes that there is 'but one, standard for thought, one rule for action' in a nation's dealing with other nations, the national interest (Morgenthau 1951: 242). National interest means 'what is best for a national society' or 'what is best for a nation in foreign affairs' (Rosenau 1968: 34). Therefore, realists believe that struggles between states to secure their frequently conflicting national interests are the main action on the world stage. Since realists also believe that power determines which country prevails, they hold that politics is aimed at increasing power, keeping power or demonstrating power (Rourke and Boyer 2000: 15). Given the view that the essence of politics is the struggle for power, realists maintain that countries and their leaders, if prudent, are virtually compelled to base their foreign policy on the existence, as the realists see it, of a supposedly Darwinian, country-eat-country world in which the power is the key to the national survival of the fittest. From this point of view, the national interest can be defined, for the most part, as whatever enhances or preserves the state's security, its influence and its military and economic power (Rourke and Boyer 2000: 15). According to Henry Kissinger, 'realist' orthodoxy insists that nothing has changed in international relations since Thucydides and Machiavelli: a state's military and economic power determines its fate; interdependence and international institutions are secondary and fragile phenomena; and states' objectives are imposed by the threats to their survival or security (quoted in Hoffmann 2002: 105).

In short, realism makes several key assumptions. It assumes that the international system is anarchic, in the sense that there is no authority above states capable of regulating their interactions; states must arrive at relations with other states on their own, rather than it being dictated to them by some higher controlling entity (that is, no true authoritative world government exists). It also assumes that sovereign states, rather than international institutions, non-governmental organisations or multinational corporations, are the primary actors in international affairs. According to realism, each state is a rational actor that always acts to advance its own self-interest, and the primary goal of each state is to ensure its own security. Realism holds that in pursuit of that security, states will attempt to amass resources, and that relations between states are

determined by their relative level of power. That level of power is, in turn, determined by the state's capabilities, both military and economic. In presenting this theoretical framework, our central concern is to understand the foreign policy of Pakistan and the role of the military in making Pakistan's foreign policy.

II PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

Pakistan's foreign policy is an important and challenging subject, which has engaged the interest of scholars, analysts and researchers. The course of Pakistan's foreign policy has been complex and has passed through several stages during Pakistan's post-independence political development. In its early years, Pakistan generally adhered to a neutralist course. Then, it departed from this course, and became part of the US containment policy against the Soviet Union (USSR). Consequently, Pakistan got involved in Cold War global politics by entering into the US-sponsored military alliances, namely, South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) (Moskalenko 1974: 267). The quest for security and economic development has been at the heart of Pakistan's foreign policy making since independence in 1947. Thus, Pakistan's security environment derives its origins from the circumstances in which it was created. The issues of Pakhtunistan and Durand Line with Afghanistan and the Kashmir dispute with India stood out as the major planks of the national security agenda that yet has been too 'sacred' for the political governments to touch. Under President Ayub Khan, matters of state security were taken out of the hands of the always 'untrustworthy' political class—Pakistan was to undergo a transition from a homeland for Indian Muslims to a *fortress*, where its citizens could live more or less 'Islamic' lives secure from the predatory India (Cohen 2004: 61).

Since independence, Pakistan's foreign policy has pursued two major objectives: security through military capability and economic development. In this respect, the elements of Pakistan's security policy bear the imprint of the British colonial legacy. It also has had a profound influence on the Pakistan's policy with regard to its neighbouring states in the post-independence era (Khan 1967: 114). The Pakistani elites' approach to security, especially in the context of Afghanistan and India, revolved around military threats, as also the fear of subversion caused by these states to foster secessionist movements. These threats not only posed a danger to the territorial integrity of the country but also challenged the existence of the regimes in power and undermined the legitimising ideology of the state (Hussain 2005: 5).

Pakistan's security dilemma is traceable to the historical experience of people's fear of Indian dominance. Afghanistan's claims on some parts of Pakistani territory have also been a source of constant tension between the two states. In this context, India and Afghanistan have been the central concern of Pakistan's foreign policy. Therefore, since independence, the main objective of Pakistan's foreign policy has been to protect its territorial integrity against a possible attack from India—to ensure national security from external threats. An important aspect of Pakistan's foreign policy is that

its relations with India, in the main, determine its attitude towards other countries. Pakistan has conjured up the threat from India, and by constantly harping on its fear of India, Pakistan has tried to win the sympathy of the superpowers (Naqvi 1966). However, the basic force behind Pakistan foreign policy is its security and survival, both economic and military. Consequently, the evolution of Pakistan's foreign policy has been substantially affected by its historical adversarial relationship with India. The fact that Pakistan was a nascent state, carved out of India on the basis of Muslim nationalism, has contributed to its feelings of insecurity. Since independence, Pakistan has perceived that its primary security threat is from India, because Pakistan inherited some major territorial disputes with India. There were also other issues like the share of economic and military assets, which strained the relationship and created mistrust between the two countries.

However, the very nature of the state system breeds feelings of insecurity, distrust, suspicion and fear, producing a constant competition for power in which each state, to reduce its insecurity, seeks to enhance its power relative to that of a possible foe. If a state perceives its neighbour as a potential enemy, it tries to deter an attack or political coercion by becoming a little stronger than, or at least as strong as, its neighbour. The neighbour, in turn, also fears attack or political intimidation. It understands that its best interests lie in increasing its strength to forestall either contingency or if necessary, in winning a war, should matters go that far (Spanier and Hook 1995: 6).

Historically, three major developments changed the perspective of Pakistani leaders towards India and caused serious security problems for them: first, the communal riots that took place during the partition of the subcontinent and the massive influx of refugees put the Pakistan government in a difficult situation; second, disputes over the distribution of civil and military assets of the Government of British India; and third, the dispute on the accession of the princely states of Junagadh and especially Jammu and Kashmir caused much bitterness. These three factors shaped Pakistan's perception of India as an adversary. Embedded in historical rivalry and distrust, India and Pakistan fought three wars over Kashmir (1947–48, 1965 and 1971), and more recently (1999) in Kargil.

Most Indians, especially the policy makers, viewed the establishment of Pakistan as a negation of the principles of united India for which they had stood during the struggle for independence. Their disposition towards Pakistan ranged from a reluctant acceptance to a hope that the new state would collapse, and that separated territories would rejoin India. There was very strong perception among the Congress leaders that Pakistan is not an economically viable state and that it would not survive. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad observed that, among others, Sardar Patel was convinced that the new state of Pakistan was not viable and could not last: Patel thought that the acceptance of Pakistan would teach the Muslim League a bitter lesson (Azad 1959: 207). Even Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi said at the time of the Partition: 'We Muslims and Hindus are interdependent on one another: we cannot get along without each

other. The Muslim League will ask to come back to Hindustan. They will ask Nehru to come back, and he will take them back' (*The Concept* 1983: 47).

Pakistan military felt powerless to defend the nation against a potential enemy that was thrice their size. Pakistan inherited a ragtag army at independence that was woefully deficient in every department (Faruqui 2003: 41). It lacked in every respect such as size, skill and equipment to counter the Indian threat. Pakistan's strategic environment has been largely conditioned by its perception of security threat from India, and India is still perceived as a major threat to Pakistan's continuation as an independent state. On the other hand, India remains sensitive to any sign of improvement in Pakistan's military position (Ziring 1982: 29). As noted earlier, since its inception, Pakistan's decision makers gave primacy to security concern in their external relations in view of the perceived threat from India (Hussain 2005: 4).

However, the tragic events at the time of the Partition created certain problems for Pakistan, which played a significant role in the development of its security and foreign policy. Therefore, Pakistani leaders looked for economic and military aid from the US for their country's survival against its big hostile neighbour, India. As Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan told the National Press Club in Washington, DC, during his official visit to the US in May 1950, 'our strongest interests, therefore, are firstly the integrity of Pakistan' (Khan 1950: 11). President Ayub Khan commented that the principal objectives of Pakistan's foreign policy were 'security and development', because the consideration of security embraced the defence of Pakistan and the preservation of its ideology, as realists believe that power (military and economic) is important to the state and is the only guarantee of the security and survival of the state. Further, as Ayub Khan wrote in *Friends, Not Masters*, 'the cause of our major problems is India's inability to reconcile herself to our existence as a sovereign, independent state' (Khan 1967: 114). Ayub Khan also argued that 'we have an enemy, an implacable enemy [*sic*] India and it has ambitions to absorb Pakistan and turn her into a satellite state' (Khan 1967: 115). Pakistan's policy makers, especially the military elite, desirous of defending their country against India, allied Pakistan with the US during the early years of the Cold War.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto said on a number of occasions that the Prime Minister of India, his cabinet colleagues, the ministers of provincial governments in India and the leaders of political parties in that country have made statements naming Pakistan as India's enemy number one. This declaration of enmity was repeated even by other responsible officials and spokesmen of the Government of India (Bhutto 1964: 70). Therefore, since its inception, Pakistan's dilemma was how to strengthen its security and modernise its armed forces and yet, to be able to continue with its development programmes (Hilali 2005: 35).

Ultimately, Pakistan's threat perception of India came true: in 1971, Pakistan was dismembered by an Indian military invasion under the total Soviet military and political umbrella. After the loss of its eastern part, Pakistani policy makers were to learn the bitter lesson that they could not rely on foreign assistance for the security

of the state, as realists believe. The trauma of dismemberment produced an inadvertent improvement to Pakistan's security situation in the sense that Pakistan now had a geographically more compact location to defend. The lurking suspicions about India's *mala fide* intentions *vis-à-vis* Pakistan were further strengthened in the minds of many Pakistanis when India conducted its nuclear tests in 1974 under the slogan of 'Smiling Buddha'. At that critical moment of history, Pakistan was understandably cynical. India, once again, tested its nuclear devices in the year 1998. But this time, Pakistan was not willing to depend on foreign guarantees to its security peril. There is no guarantee of survival of a state in international political system other than power. Only the industrial and military power of a state can save it from external threats. In an anarchic world, states with more power stand a better chance of surviving. Hence, following this hard-core principle of political realism, Pakistan also went ahead and tested its nuclear weapons in May 1998, not as a choice but as a sheer necessity for its survival against its powerful rival, India. Drawing on the bitter lessons of 1971, Pakistani policy makers were convinced that Pakistan was externally vulnerable: the search for security was the main consideration behind Pakistan's nuclear tests.

While the Indian threat remains the main concern of Pakistani policy makers, Pakistan also feels a potential security threat from its Muslim neighbour, Afghanistan. At independence, Pakistan inherited another dispute that added to the security concerns of its decision makers: Afghanistan's irredentist claims on Pakistan's territory. As Ali (1989) has pointed out, the issues of Pakhtunistan and Frontier are the main sources of dispute between the two countries. The Pakistan–Afghanistan dispute had its origins in the international boundaries imposed on the region during the heyday of the British Raj in 1893 (Hussain 2005: 4). When the Afghan government learnt in 1947 that the British had finally decided to withdraw from India and that the new state of Pakistan would come into existence, it laid claims on the North Western Frontier and parts of Baluchistan. Afghanistan was a weaker military power, but what perturbed Pakistan most was Indo-Soviet support of Afghanistan's claims on Pakistani territory. In 1955, the Soviet Union endorsed Afghanistan's demands on Pakistan's border region (Barnds 1972: 124). The Soviet and Indian support for Afghanistan's dispute with Pakistan increased the sense of insecurity among the Pakistani policy makers. Therefore, the relations between the two Muslim states turned hostile. The basis of this hostility was the conflicting position of the two states on the issues of Pakhtunistan and the Durand Line. At one point of time, in the early 1960s, Afghanistan became the major security threat to Pakistan. Consequently, security concern became a central theme in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan adversely transformed Pakistan's geostrategic environment and the threat to Pakistan's security became imminent. As a result, Pakistan emerged as a frontline state against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Even after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistan's security interest in Afghanistan remained the priority of policy makers in Islamabad. In support of this view, Pandey (2002: 450) writes that after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan,

Pakistan continued to maintain its interest in the country mainly to acquire 'strategic depth' from which it could use Afghan Mujahideen in Kashmir. After India, the Afghan factor has been the most important element to influence Pakistan's foreign policy-making process. Therefore, Pakistan's foreign policy has been predominantly a search for security against the perceived threat from its eastern and western neighbours, India and Afghanistan.

However, the imagined or real threats to Pakistan's integrity gave rise to the primacy of security concerns in the state's internal and external policies. It facilitated the growth of a large military establishment which, over a period of time, became the most powerful and dominant political institution in the country. Pakistan's external policies have ultimately been greatly influenced by the particular nature of its decision-making apparatus. The military has been a formidable actor in the political process in Pakistan since the late 1950s. Subsequently, policy making in the realm of external and internal security has been the domain of Pakistan military, with the civil bureaucracy playing the role of a junior partner. Even during democratic rule, the military continued to be the pre-eminent player in the formulation of Pakistan's overall security and foreign policy, particularly *vis-à-vis* the US, China, Afghanistan and India. Thus, the threat perceptions of Pakistan paved the way for the military elite to formulate security and foreign policy of the country.

III PAKISTAN MILITARY'S FOREIGN POLICY ROLE

This section of the article will analyse the role of the military in the making of Pakistan's foreign policy. The military is one of the vital organs of the state. However, in some countries, the military becomes deeply involved in the politics of the state and dominates all other institutions (Siddiq-Agha 2007: 3). This also applies to Pakistan. The military's pre-eminent position in Pakistan's politics and society is the crystallisation of the importance it has enjoyed from the beginning. Pakistan came into existence in extremely difficult conditions and faced serious domestic problems and external security pressures. State survival became the primary concern of the rulers of Pakistan and the military was viewed as a guarantee of external security and a bulwark against internal turmoil and collapse. This gave a basis to the military for expanding its role (Rizvi 2000: 1). Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's *Quaid-i-Azam* (Father of the Nation), recognised the apolitical role of the army when he said:

Don't forget that you in armed forces are the servants of the people. You do not make national policy. It's we, the civilians, who decide these issues and it is your duty to carry out those tasks [with] which you are entrusted. (quoted in Kukreja 1985: 63)

Jinnah's vision for the military—an apolitical role of the army—did not materialise in Pakistan's history; from the early years of independence, the military started to interfere in the politics of the country.

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Soon after independence, one of the most important functions of the newborn state of Pakistan was to define the role of the military forces, especially the army. For this purpose, in September 1947, the Pakistan Defence Council, headed by the Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan who was also the Defence Minister of Pakistan, defined the functions of the army, both internal and external. The internal functions included: supporting the civil government and police in maintaining law and order; and supporting the political authorities in the tribal region while ensuring that there were no tribal incursions into the hinterland (Raza 1989: 150). The external function of the army included the defence of Pakistan against foreign aggression. This was a big task for the army. Pakistan's geography made its borders difficult to defend. It shared 5,230 km of borders with India (2,010 km in West Pakistan and the rest in East Pakistan, the latter surrounded on three sides by India) and some 2,172 km with Afghanistan. The Iranian border apparently did not figure in the calculus of defence at that time. There was also 724 km of contested boundary in Kashmir (Nawaz 2008: 34).

The military attained its central role in the postcolonial state of Pakistan by being its 'protector'. As pointed out by Cohen (2004: 61) in *The Idea of Pakistan*, Pakistan's Army, at first assisted by the civilian bureaucracy and a group of experienced political elites, assumed the role of benevolent babysitter, watching over Pakistani politics and society. Later, it was to assume the dominant role in 'correcting' Pakistan, emulating the benevolent, all-encompassing role of *maa-baap* (mother-father, the colloquial name for the British Raj). Like the Raj, it justified its rule in strategic and moral terms. Historically speaking, the dominant group in Pakistan's emerging foreign policy-making apparatus were the bureaucratic elites consisting of top civil servants and higher echelons of Pakistani military establishment. Cohen (1998: 105) has categorised the world's armies into three different types: armies that guard their nation's borders; armies that are concerned with protecting their own position in society; and armies that defend a cause or an idea. The Pakistan Army does all three. Furthermore, the military in Pakistan is chiefly responsible for all strategic and structural decisions; attempts to reduce the military role in the decision-making process have never been successful.

Since the early 1950s, it is evident that the Pakistan military has treated the twin affairs of defence and foreign policy as 'reserved' subjects (Kukreja 2003: 27). By citing the security threat from India and Afghanistan to the survival of Pakistan, the military acquired control over the country's security and foreign policy. To make itself more relevant to the state, the military strengthened itself institutionally by enhancing its control over defence and foreign policy making. The political leadership was far too fragmented to establish control over the military and issues of national security. The senior generals, especially Ayub Khan, who was the first Army Chief, insisted that defence matters were the military's forte (Siddiqua-Agha 2007: 71).

The military entered both defence and foreign policy making in a big way during 1953–54 when the Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C), General Ayub Khan, became the Defence Minister in a civilian cabinet. According to Jalal (1991: 194), since the creation of Pakistan, the political leadership was under subtle but sure pressure from the

men in uniform on both the domestic and the foreign policy fronts. The decision to enter into the military alliance with the US was also taken when the C-in-C, General Ayub Khan, was the Defence Minister. The foreign policy of the country thereafter has been under pressure (directly and indirectly) from the military leadership (Arif 1984: 78). It was necessary for the military to establish domination over defence and foreign policy issues because the defence budget, being a major portion of the national expenditure, swallowed about 68 per cent of the central government's revenues (Jalal 1991: 194).

In postcolonial states such as Pakistan, representative institutions and public organisations have been disrupted for long periods of time whenever the army took over. Most crucial turning points in the foreign policy of Pakistan have taken place during military rule. This practice reduced the level of input into policy making from informed public opinion. Under Ayub's martial law government (1958–62), which dissolved the national and provincial assemblies and banned political parties, foreign policy (like other fields of public policy) became an exclusive preserve of the state apparatus (Feldman 1987: 30). It was in the Ayub regime that the army's role was institutionalised; since then, the military controls the country's security and foreign policy and has also acquired political and financial autonomy. By the end of Ayub's rule, the security of Pakistan was seen as being in the capable hands of the military (Cohen 2004: 61). Finally, in 1969, President Ayub handed over power to the Army Chief General Yahya Khan, who declared martial law and ruled the country until 1971. During the martial law of General Yahya (1969–71), decision making was confined to a handful of the top military officials. The president was also the C-in-C and relied excessively on his chief of staff, leaving many decisions to him.

Throughout Pakistan's political history, the boundaries between the civil and military realms have been extremely hazy and ill defined. Perhaps 1973–77 was the only time when some systemic examination of civil–military relations took place. It was only during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's government that the civilian government controlled foreign policy. However, the number of actors who made decisions on defence issues remained limited and the military hierarchy continued to call the shots in defence planning. Prime Minister Bhutto, who was the Defence Minister and also retained the Foreign Affairs portfolio, tried to provide overall civilian coordination and control in matters of national defence.

However, Z.A. Bhutto's security and foreign policies remained geared to the classical realist paradigm. This paradigm naturally strengthens the significance of the military. Bhutto shared the military's hawkishness on India and national security. He made every effort to fulfil the armed forces' weapons modernisation plans, despite the fact that the country was socially and financially recuperating from its war efforts against India (Siddiq-Agha 2007: 80). There were two reasons for Bhutto's military–strategic realism. First, Bhutto was well versed in the discourse of state power: he valued power, and as a man with a larger vision, he could appreciate military prowess. Second, the

strengthening of the military was aimed at giving confidence to the generals regarding Bhutto's political leanings. He did not want the generals to have an impression of him as a populist leader determined on bringing socialism, or changes that would jeopardise the interests of the ruling class (Siddiqi-Agha 2007: 80).

Despite these measures, Bhutto eventually failed in discouraging the military from taking over power. This was because of the particular nature of his politics. Bhutto made the classic mistake of letting the military look into his political affairs and note his weaknesses in dealings with his political opponents. In his instinct for survival, Bhutto tried to partner with the military by giving them a role in administration, imposing martial law in major cities such as Karachi, Lahore and Hyderabad to curb the political unrest and mass demonstrations (Siddiqi-Agha 2007: 80–81). The opposition Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) was also backed by the armed forces for tactical reasons. General Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq, taking advantage of the turmoil in Pakistan, was successful in preventing the opposition from concluding a deal with Bhutto. Consequently, Bhutto increasingly began depending on the army. Zia used the opportunity to intervene and remove Bhutto through a bloodless coup on 5 July 1977 (Kukreja 2003: 167).

However, Z.A. Bhutto alone cannot be held responsible for strengthening the armed forces. The structural lacunae in the country's political system, which led to the military's significance compared with civilian institutions, date back to the early days after the country's birth in 1947. The significance of the national security paradigm determined the organisation's importance for the state. Successive governments failed to promote a social development agenda, and instead gave greater importance to the national security paradigm for the sake of personal political legitimacy (Siddiqi-Agha 2007: 82). When the decision-making elite formulates foreign policy, public input in issues of high politics is usually not the norm, but discussion of foreign policy is an important aspect of a democratic and open society in which the decision makers are accountable for their policy to the public. During the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) era, only one aspect of foreign policy was different from the preceding and succeeding years: foreign policy was openly debated in the national assembly.

When the army overthrew the PPP government in July 1977, the imposition of martial law was accompanied with the restoration of military dominance in the country's domestic and foreign affairs. In the sphere of foreign policy, decision making was once again transferred to a closed group comprising foreign office bureaucrats and a select group of military top brass. The military did not dominate foreign policy making in the initial years of martial law (1977–79): the foreign office had certain stalwarts, like Agha Shahi and Sardar Shah Nawaz, who managed to retain the policy-making functions and give their advice to the military council, thereby retaining some semblance of civilian input if not control over foreign policy making. General Zia did not allow the foreign office to have a free hand in policy making. This was evident in 1978, when Afghan President Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan visited Pakistan for talks with

his counterpart. When Daud complained to General Zia that the Pakistani Foreign Office had given his delegation a tough time and wanted Kabul to agree to a draft treaty, General Zia reined in his 'zealous bureaucrats' by telling Foreign Secretary Agha Shahi that there was no need for a joint communiqué (Ghaus 1988: 146). When all power was centralised in one person, there was no reason why foreign relations should have been an exception (Shahi 1988: xxi). The military once again emerged as the key actor in the decision-making process, especially in foreign policy making, by displacing the civilian political institutions and the leadership. The basic direction of foreign policy making came from General Zia: he was personally very interested in overseeing the input, conversion and implementation of Pakistan's foreign policy. The military regime's internal weakness and political isolation was a reason for its support of the anti-Soviet Islamist opposition in Afghanistan. In doing so, the military regime led by General Zia-ul-Haq, aimed at revitalising the US interest in Pakistan, thereby gaining international legitimacy. Besides, by backing the Islamists in Afghanistan, the military could gain support of the domestic Islamic groups that could balance its unpopular image at home. In short, the regime's security became associated with national security in Pakistan's Afghan policy during the late 1970s (Hussain 2005: 7).

Threats to security are those that affect the existence of the state's institutional and territorial structures, or the elites who rule them. Scholars such as Ayoob (1995) have rightly argued that Third World governing elites are preoccupied, if not obsessed, by concern for security of the regime and state. In Pakistan, the military had first emerged as the actor in the decision-making process and then assumed power by displacing the civilian political institutions and leaders. This was followed by the era of the military's direct and indirect domination of the political process, either under the cover of the martial law or through a carefully tailored political system which protected the military's entrenched position (Rizvi 1991).

Democracy was restored in Pakistan after Zia's death in August 1988. The PPP, under the leadership of Benazir Bhutto, returned to power (1988–90) with the political triad of prime minister, chief of the army staff (COAS) and president sharing power. From the outset, the influence of the military in policy making remained intact. The key actors were the COAS and President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. As Ispahani (1989) has pointed out, the Benazir Bhutto government was seriously restricted in its foreign policy operational environment by the army and the president, who inherited General Zia's substantial constitutional powers and commanded the sympathy of the bureaucracy, the army and the civilian opposition. There were serious differences between the president and the prime minister on numerous matters of foreign relations. The role of the army during 1989–90 was significant. Benazir Bhutto could not even assume her office without the approval of the COAS. The acceptance of Ghulam Ishaq Khan as President and the retention of Sahibzada Yaqub Ali Khan as the Foreign Minister exemplified the influence of the army. Bhutto's government was not able to assert civilian supremacy and generals remained wary of the PPP.

Generally, it is known that the defence policy, particularly *vis-à-vis* India and Afghanistan, has been under the complete influence or control of the army. The controversy surrounding Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's knowledge of the planning of the ill-fated Kargil war of early summer 1999 reopened questions concerning the influence of the Pakistan Army in the foreign policy making. Earlier, in February 1990, during Benazir Bhutto's first administration (November 1988–August 1990), a Pentagon official had hinted to Iqbal Akhund, the Prime Minister's Advisor on National Security and Foreign Affairs, that the intelligence agencies or the army were conducting a covert operation in Kashmir behind the prime minister's back (Akhund 2000: 222).

Nawaz Sharif won the elections on 3 February 1997 to become the Prime Minister of Pakistan for the second time. Nawaz Sharif's ambition was to become a powerful prime minister. On 1 April 1997, the Parliament unanimously decided to take the sting out of presidential powers, including the discretionary authority that allowed the president to dismiss the government and dissolve the national assembly. Nawaz Sharif became the most powerful man in the country, but still he was not satisfied. At the same time, Nawaz Sharif increased his reliance on the army to manage everything within the country. A quarter of a million troops were mobilised to conduct a long-delayed population census. Thousands were deployed to read electricity meters and run an almost bankrupt Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), which is responsible for electricity supply, and to manage country's huge irrigation network. At one point, army soldiers were brought in to kill stray dogs in Nawaz Sharif's hometown, Lahore (Hussain 1998). Such a large-scale induction of army personnel into civilian affairs was unprecedented even in Pakistan. The growing dependence on the army created its own predicament. Increasingly tasked with the administration of civilian affairs, the army top brass wanted more political power in the state. This led to tensions between the army and Nawaz Sharif, who was determined not to cede power to anyone (Hussain 2007: 32). Finally, Nawaz Sharif decided to check the powers of military, the most powerful institution in Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif's conflict with the Army Chief, General Pervez Musharraf, resulted in the imposition of martial law in Pakistan for the fourth time.

Nawaz Sharif had asserted civil supremacy over the military by vetoing Army Chief General Jehangir Karamat's recommendation for the creation of the National Security Council. Thus, a major factor behind the coup of 1999 was the apprehension amongst senior army officers that the civilian government was challenging the army's corporate interests and undermining its dominant role as an alternative system of power and influence. Nawaz Sharif's misplaced sense of power and assertion of his legal constitutional authority in attempting to remove the army chief brought to the surface the stark reminder that the army remained the paramount institution of the state and that it would not tolerate any lack of deference to its overwhelming control of the Pakistani state (Hussain 2005: 220). This was not surprising.

General Musharraf's regime, whose roots of power were in the military establishment, was unlikely to bring about a major change in Pakistan's foreign and security

policy. As in General Zia's era, the political decision making once again became the sole prerogative of a relatively small army clique, comprising the COAS, the chiefs of the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) and Military Intelligence (MI), the nine corps commanders and few other important staff officers in General Headquarters (GHQ). The army's hierarchical command structure and appointment of military 'monitors' in all civil ministries effectively reduced whatever influence the foreign office had on important external policy issues. Pakistan's foreign policy had, indeed, become 'the foreign policy of an army' (Cohen 1998: 172).

IV CONCLUSION

Pakistan's military leaders believe that the demands of national security necessitate their involvement in foreign policy making: the security of Pakistan is the *raison d'être* of the armed forces. The military, therefore, resists civilian guidance over foreign policy, particularly in areas of special concern like Afghanistan and Kashmir, even when Pakistan has an elected government. The Pakistani military also dictates policy towards all the major powers. The Indian and Afghan policies have been considered as reserved subjects, while foreign policy objectives in general are meant to underwrite Pakistan's security. However, the manner in which they are pursued also serves the military's corporate interests. According to Siddiqua-Agha:

...the discussion of national security as determining the army's utility for the state also serves as a reminder of the primacy of the military's corporate interests, which play a significant role in the formulation of state policies...since the military has acquired the role of the guardian of the country's sovereignty and overall security, the organisation tends to view domestic political crises from the perspective of the external threat. (Siddiqua-Agha 2007: 64)

In conclusion, the military has control over foreign policy making because state and democratic institutions in Pakistan are comparatively weak. This has resulted into the military's control on foreign and security policy making, particularly the Kashmir and Afghan policy. Afghanistan and Kashmir have therefore become sacred cows that the civilian leaders cannot touch. The top military brass in Pakistan believes that the issue of the security of Pakistan is too sensitive and cannot be left in the hands of incapable and corrupt political leadership.

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