

Claremont Colleges

Scholarship @ Claremont

Scripps Senior Theses

Scripps Student Scholarship

2022

Military Supremacy in Pakistan: A Case of Military Dictators and Eluded Democracy

Anushe Engineer
Scripps College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarship.claremont.edu/scripps_theses

Recommended Citation

Engineer, Anushe, "Military Supremacy in Pakistan: A Case of Military Dictators and Eluded Democracy" (2022). *Scripps Senior Theses*. 1905.

https://scholarship.claremont.edu/scripps_theses/1905

This Open Access Senior Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Scripps Student Scholarship at Scholarship @ Claremont. It has been accepted for inclusion in Scripps Senior Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarship @ Claremont. For more information, please contact scholarship@cuc.claremont.edu.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is a product of many, many people who have shaped my understanding and love for Pakistan over the years. I would like to thank my thesis and major adviser, Professor Pahwa, for helping me get this thesis fleshed out, and for getting me through all my college crises over the semesters. I would also like to thank Professor Sinha for helping me brainstorm my thesis topic and getting things moving along.

A huge thank you to all my friends back home who have contributed nothing to this thesis but everything to my sanity and well-being and happiness. Thank you for making Pakistan home for me, and for all the memories that remind me how beautiful Pakistan truly is despite the chaos that exists within. No amount of literature read and theses written will change the inherent love I have for a place that shaped who I am today.

An even bigger thank you to the Gharo Gang, whose spontaneous adventures and road trips showed me the true beauty of Pakistan like I had never seen before. From mountains to beaches to deserts and everything in between, I am truly blessed to have experienced the true essence of my country and its people and cultures and foods. May we have many more chaotic, unnecessarily long and fulfilling trips together.

To my family, who have the biggest hand to play in my education. Thank you, Shahan and Dad, for all your random facts on Pakistan's history, and for introducing me to all the foods that make Pakistan home for me.

To all the incredible women in my family, whose blessings and yellings in equal parts have gotten me through life — I truly aspire to be as strong and determined and eccentric and stubborn as you all are. To my nani, who instilled the value of a strong education in me since I was in pre-school; your prayers are the only reason I've made it all the way to the end of college. To my dadi, from whom I get my love for reading from, and who introduced me to the world one fabulous book at a time. To my mother, to whom I owe so many of my successes in life, and without whom this education would not be possible. I am forever indebted to you for giving me all the opportunities in the world, and I can't thank you enough for that.

And to Huti Masi, for giving me everything money cannot buy. Thank you for all your love and wisdom over the years, for the endless hours of conversation about a Pakistan I will never know but still love, for telling me to "keep my brain in the box", and for showing me how to live a life full of love and laughter and a little bit of madness.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Why has the military always wanted to stay in power?	6
Democracy in a South Asian context and why it has eluded Pakistan	9
How the military came to power — and stayed	11
Zia, Islamization and the irreparable damage to Pakistan	17
Blame game: was it all the military's fault?	22
Transnational powerplay: CPEC and Pakistan's military establishment	31
Conclusion	33

Introduction

For more than half of Pakistan's 75 years of existence, the country has been ruled by military dictators. Although Pakistan is more or less considered a democracy, I will be arguing in my thesis that it is, in fact, a garrison-cum-hybrid democratic state (Paul, 2014). I will explain through various domestic and international events how Pakistan's military leaders have taken advantage of several foreign and domestic events to stay in power, even when democratically elected civilian governments were ruling. The actions and decisions of military rulers have become institutionalized in Pakistan and shaped its future trajectory in terms of institutional, political, social and religious norms that non-military leaders have also adopted or been affected by, thereby hindering their ability to rule democratically. I will use the terms 'military' and 'army' interchangeably throughout this thesis because army personnel have been the main actors throughout Pakistan's extensive periods of military rule.

The time frame of events analyzed in this thesis are from Pakistan's independence in 1947 till 1999, when General Pervez Musharraf overthrew prime minister Nawaz Sharif in a bloodless coup. Additionally, in a more contemporary setting, I will assess what domestic power structures in Pakistan can look like in the future by analyzing the role of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. I will explain why the military has been as powerful as it was by briefly analyzing how Ayub Khan propelled the role of the military to that of the most important actor in the state, particularly focusing on his relation with the United States of America during the Cold War. To further make my argument for how and why the military has been the most powerful actor in society, I will focus in-depth on the actions and legislative amendments Zia ul Haq

implemented to cement his power. Here, I will closely analyze how he capitalized on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to extract resources from the U.S. in order to strengthen the Pakistani military as a sign of regional hegemony. I will also explain how Zia privileged Islam as Pakistan's most salient identity and used Islam as his justification for his unconstitutional actions. Lastly, I will take a look at the role elected civilian leaders — namely Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif — played in perpetuating military supremacy while also pushing back and carving out a more democratic framework within the country.

T. V. Paul argues that Pakistan is a garrison state because it is constantly preoccupied with the protection of its natural borders, is always ready to engage in war and the military is the most dominant actor in society. I will build on this argument by offering a historical analysis of the military's foreign endeavors in Afghanistan, Kashmir and against India to show the military's obsession with national security, its desire for strategic depth in Afghanistan and strategic parity with India to gain regional hegemony. Further, I will explain the consequences of these endeavors on democratic functioning in Pakistan.

Maya Chadda makes the argument that democracy in South Asia must be assessed from an alternative lens to accommodate for the impacts of colonialism on nation-state consolidation and economic development at the same time (Chadda, 2000). Chadda also argues that the failure of democracy in one part of the country or at one moment in time doesn't equate to failure of the democratic transition as a whole; I will use this to build on my own argument that despite its turbulent and politically unstable past, Pakistan has the potential to democratize now because of some benchmarks it has reached; consistent elections since 2008; widespread political participation of civilians in the electoral process; decreased military intervention during the rule of elected civilian leaders; and the power of public opinion in swaying political outcomes.

I will use Stepan and Linz's definition of democracy as a yardstick to assess where Pakistan lies on the democratic spectrum and whether this corresponds with or argues against Paul's argument of Pakistan being a garrison-cum-hybrid democratic state.

Pakistan as a garrison-cum-hybrid democratic state

A garrison state is characterized by a constant readiness for war and a need to protect its borders and assets (Paul, 2014). They emerge in response to perceived internal or external threats, the latter which Pakistan sees in India and Afghanistan, which I will expand upon in detail further on. In a garrison state, the military is the most dominant actor in society, which is befitting for Pakistan where the military has always been the most important decision-maker for domestic and foreign affairs and national security policy. Garrison states are also characterized by weak civil-military relations, which was characteristic of Pakistan especially under Zia's rule since he clamped down on freedom of the press and banned all political parties, two markers of strong democracy in a state.

Since its inception in 1947, it has been difficult for Pakistan to sustain viable democratic institutions. This is because authority has always been with top brass military men ruling the country who have prevented the full utilization of resources for non-military purposes. Pakistan's constant hostility with India and heavy involvement in the Cold War as a frontier state allied with the United States of America has reinforced the military's belief that a strong army was absolutely necessary given the hostile external environment Pakistan found itself in. This is why national security became a core focus for the military and billions of dollars in foreign assistance have been diverted primarily to the military to supposedly strengthen its capabilities. For context, between 1960 and 2012, the amount of foreign aid Pakistan received totalled at least US\$73.1

billion, of which 75 percent went to the military and barely 10 percent to economic development and socioeconomic uplift (Boon & Ong, 2021).

The consequences of being a garrison-cum-hybrid democratic state, especially in the case of Pakistan, is that the military has entrenched itself in political, social, economic and religious affairs when its place in the country should only have been with the country's defense. Because of this entrenchment, it has become difficult to erase the excessive militarization of society. In regards to the country's defense, and typical of a garrison state, the military focuses on other state's capabilities rather than their intentions when assessing threats. It lays emphasis on seizing windows of opportunity to attack first, which often jeopardizes Pakistan's standing in international circles since it is seen as an aggressor incapable of maintaining diplomatic relations with its neighbors. The biggest and perhaps most long-lasting consequence of the military turning Pakistan into a garrison state is that the ambitious foreign policies it pursued harmed its own social fabric and people; Pakistan gradually became a source of transnational Islamist terrorism, with members of the Mujahideen and other regional terrorist groups perpetuating ethnic conflict and targeting minority religions in Pakistan.

Why has the military always wanted to stay in power?

A brief history on the formation of the Pakistan military will explain why it has always been as powerful and salient as it has. Much of the Pakistani military elite (officers, bureaucrats, landlords) came from Punjab, a demographic also shared by the British Indian armed forces. Thus, when personnel from the British Indian military left and formed the Pakistani military in 1947, they inherited a culture that glorified military virtues and supported military solutions to conflict, as the British had done throughout their rule over the Indian subcontinent. Therefore,

the civil-military regime, which was the most powerful actor in Pakistan at the time of partition, was comprised of the landed aristocracy who collaborated with the army and bureaucracy to dominate the political and economic decision-making process in the early years. The failure of early civilian and military leaders to create a democratic framework rooted in political parties signaled their desire to concentrate power in their hands and exclude civilians from political participation, a trend that repeated itself during the rule of military leaders several decades after independence. Because of this, there were only brief interludes of democracy in Pakistan for the first two decades; the first ever general elections were held December 1970, more than 20 years after Pakistan was created; Pakistan didn't have a constitution until 1956, and between 1947 and 1958 Pakistan has had four governor-generals and seven prime ministers. From this it is evident that democracy had little chance to flourish because there was no stable framework within which leaders could build the country, and because the country's rulers were military men ruling in authoritarian fashion, they had no interest in working within a democratic framework either.

Since independence, one of the main goals every military leader has envisioned for Pakistan has been strategic parity with India (Paul, 2014), which translates to regional hegemony and greater military and political power. They have always wanted to secure Kashmir for themselves, or at least deter India from claiming complete control over Kashmir, which is why military leaders have resorted to seizing "windows of opportunity" (Ganguly, 1989) by attacking India first to gain an advantage in the battlefield. From obtaining nuclear weapons to three direct wars with India over Kashmir to several indirect attacks on Indian soil backed by the Pakistani government, military leaders have done all that they can to put Pakistan on equal footing with India. This military adventurism jeopardized Pakistan's standing in international circles since it was seen as an aggressor incapable of maintaining diplomatic relations with its neighbors, but

this behavior was not a complete shock to Pakistani civilians or international actors since Pakistan had established itself as a garrison state.

It was for want of strategic parity with India that military leaders, most notably General Muhammad Zia ul Haq, wanted strategic depth in Afghanistan. After the Soviets retreated from Afghanistan in 1989, the Pakistani military knew that Afghanistan could not be allowed to become a fully independent actor and wanted to keep it under Pakistan's control to prevent India from allying with the Mujahideen in Afghanistan and using them as proxies in attacks on Pakistan. The Pakistani military didn't want Pakistan to be surrounded by unfriendly states and aligned first with the Mujahideen and later with the Taliban to extend its control into Afghanistan. While this may have been portrayed as a "win" for the military, chasing strategic depth had severe destabilizing effects on Pakistan, most notably extremism and sectarianism. Initially, Pakistan trained around 30,000 Taliban militants in camps across Afghanistan who later attacked Shia and minority groups in Pakistan. What the Pakistani military may not have realized is that a weak Afghanistan would actually end up producing multiple long-term problems for Pakistan. Tens of thousands of Mujahideen crossed the border into Pakistan after the Soviet conflict was over and became the basis of religious extremist groups in the region. Because the Pakistani military funded, trained and has relied on Islamist militant groups to pursue their foreign policy endeavours in Afghanistan, these groups have become increasingly powerful in Pakistan and interfere with democratic governance. They want things to be aligned with their interpretation of Islam and expect the military to convey their sentiments to elected civilian leaders. Because it was the military and ISI who enabled these militant groups to become powerful during the Soviet conflict and still used them as proxy fighters years later, they were the ones who negotiated with these militant groups to curb their attacks on Pakistani soil instead

of allowing civilian governments to do this. This was their way of staying relevant during periods of civilian rule by controlling matters of national security and relations with Afghanistan. Clinging to Afghanistan was more a show of power dynamics than a need for security and stability from Afghanistan. The Pakistani public has often encouraged this military adventurism with its neighbors because the military has perpetuated the narrative that strategic parity with India is the most important goal for Pakistan above all else. The public did not have the capacity to demand the creation of democratic institutions or becoming a welfare state because they were never aware of these possibilities since the military had only perpetuated the narrative of military might. One such military leader was Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan, who ruled from 1958 till 1969, rallied the public around an anti-India narrative and the need for strategic parity with India which allowed him to hit two birds with one stone; justifying the use of military force against India as well as inflating the importance of military rule in Pakistan as opposed to the rule by political parties, which he and other military leaders downplayed at every opportunity they got. They wanted to stay in power and forestall democratic rule as long as they could and repeatedly convinced the public through speeches and propaganda that political parties were too incompetent to rule the country and make important decisions regarding the country's national security and foreign policy.

Democracy in a South Asian context and why it has eluded Pakistan

Before assessing the status of democracy in Pakistan, I want to define what democracy is by building on the definition Alfred Stepan and Juan Linz put forth. They propose that full democracy is achieved when: a general agreement is reached on procedures for elections; a government comes to power through popular elections that are free and fair; the government has

de facto authority to make policies; and the three branches of government (legislative, executive, judiciary) do not have to share power with other institutions such as the military. In the case of Pakistan, every elected civilian government has had to share power with the military, which I will illustrate in detail further on. Stepan and Linz also warn of the “electoralist fallacy” when gauging the degree of democracy in a country, which is when free and fair elections are considered a sufficient condition for democracy.

Stepan & Linz’s definition, however, is more Western-centric and not inclusive of countries who became independent of colonial rule in the 20th century. The South Asian experience of democracy, as Maya Chadda argues and which I will build upon, is democratization combined with economic development and state consolidation simultaneously, as opposed to European states who experienced state consolidation first and economic development many centuries later. Democracy in South Asia, Chadda argues, is about being inclusive through bargains to which both the central state and its parts (ethnic or caste-related identities) have to consent. According to Chadda, poverty, instability, corruption and violence are problematic but can coexist with gradual democratization, which ties in best with the case of Pakistan. Further, the failure of democracy in one part of the country or at one moment in time does not mean failure of the democratic transition as a whole. I will use Chadda’s definition of democracy as a yardstick when analyzing the status of democracy in Pakistan in my conclusion.

According to elite bargaining theories of democracy, democratization begins when different segments of the elite agree among themselves that they will follow a process of bargaining to share power and not concentrate it all for themselves (Chadda, 2000). By this definition, I argue, Pakistan will be a democracy when the military and elite share power with the rest of the civilian population through political participation in the electoral process and when

military leaders stop interfering in the governance of civilian governments in power. Democracy is achieved when the majority believes democracy is the only way to govern collective life, which has not been the case in Pakistan since civilians have oscillated their preference for rule between military dictatorships and civilian governments. I will elaborate on this point further on to explain why at particular points in Pakistan's history its civilians have welcomed military takeovers with open arms and why at other times have pushed for civilian governments and political parties to take charge of the country's rule.

How the military came to power — and stayed

The military in Pakistan became as powerful as it did because it was politicized in the early years of Pakistan's existence and then capitalized on this to institutionalize its power in order to cement its dominance. Once the military became a major stake-holder of power, it elevated national security to the highest salience to maximize resource extraction from the national economy for the military's benefits.

What makes the military so powerful in Pakistan is its existence as a part of the larger military establishment. The ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) functions as the second military bureaucratic organization in Pakistan. It was established in 1948 but became more relevant and powerful in the 1980s as part of the U.S.-led Mujahideen struggle against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The ISI has been more than just an intelligence agency gathering highly classified information — it has had a prominent role in the country's foreign policy, especially with regards to Kashmir and Afghanistan. The ISI has repeatedly subverted the political system by suppressing political groups the military does not approve of, routinely kidnapping and even assassinating politicians and journalists at the behest of the military and interfering in the

electoral process. Former ISI director-general admitted at a Supreme Court hearing in 2012 that the ISI distributed millions of dollars to politicians and political parties to defeat Benazir Bhutto in the 1990 election, which ousted Benazir from power and gave Nawaz Sharif his first stint as prime minister. The ISI has also been a major player in the radicalization of Pakistan by actively promoting extreme right-wing groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, as well as collaborating with the Haqqani network. All this was done to maintain the military's status as the most powerful political and economic actor in the country, a position that remains unchallenged since civilian governments have never been strong enough to curb the power of the military or ISI.

Moreover, the Pakistan military has proved itself as a savior of the citizens by providing them with social and economic welfare when civilian institutions failed to do so. The military has contributed to the development and expansion in the sectors of education, healthcare, disaster relief and infrastructure, and it also heads several institutions — the Fauji Foundation, a conglomerate covering food, financial services, natural resources; the Shaheen Foundation, a welfare foundation of the Pakistan air force; and Defense Housing Authorities. By undertaking social welfare projects like these, the military has always seen and presented itself to the public as the stronger alternative to dysfunctional civilian governments, framing political parties as agents of disunity. By downplaying the idea of a civilian government, the military set the status quo for civilians to become distrusting of the electoral process and political parties, and, therefore, the need for democracy in Pakistan. Further, by perpetrating civilian weakness the military and ISI cemented their power as the most dominant actors of the state since civilian politicians were not strong enough to curb their power. A man who is critically regarded as being responsible for the weakening of democracy in Pakistan in its early years is Iskander Mirza, who

dismissed four prime ministers in his two years in office from 1956 till 1958. In October 1958, he abrogated the constitution, claiming it was unworkable and would lead to the disintegration of Pakistan, and imposed the country's first martial law to pivot away from the democratic functionings he thought would be the peril of Pakistan, appointing army chief General Muhammad Ayub Khan as chief martial law administrator. Mirza was able to do this because there were no strong political parties to push back against his declaration of martial law. Mirza's unconstitutional interferences in civil administration undermined what little democratic framework Pakistan had and simultaneously ushered in the beginning of many military takeovers, which ironically, is how he was ousted from power when Ayub Khan declared himself president just three weeks after Mirza made him chief martial law administrator.

One military leader in Pakistan followed another when Ayub Khan handed over the presidency to General Yahya Khan in March 1969, yet another example of military supremacy trumping democratic norms in the country. The first general elections in 1970 may have given the impression that Pakistan was pivoting towards democracy, but, as Stepan and Linz warned of the electoral fallacy, competitive elections are not a definitive marker of democracy or democratization in a nation-state. Yahya wanted to stay in power and wanted a fragmented result of the 1970 elections so that the opposition was not united enough to oust him, which the military ensured for him by working behind the scenes to ensure that the Constituent Assembly was so fragmented that it would be impossible to draft a constitution. The military obviously wanted a military leader in power to have command over key decision-making aspects in the country. Further, the military regime had tried to safeguard Pakistan's identity as an Islamic ideological state before allowing the people to vote in the 1970 elections, which was the beginning of Islam standing as a pillar of utmost importance in Pakistan above other factors such

as democracy or being a welfare state. Propaganda through state-controlled media and changes in academic curriculum would forestall elected politicians' attempts to alter Pakistan's orientation fundamentally, which is what Yahya Khan's successor Zulfikar Ali Bhutto attempted to do with his "socialist Islam" and paid the price for it with his life. The 1970 election is an early example of military interference in democratic functioning in the country, and I argue that instances like these set the tone for military supremacy in Pakistan that overshadowed any attempts at democratization.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto succeeded Yahya Khan as President of Pakistan from 1971-1973 and then Prime Minister from 1973-1977. He was the first civilian to hold the post of Civilian Martial Law Administrator, a position that afforded military leaders greater authority to impose martial law and disrupt civilian rule in a country. Although Bhutto's time in office was arguably the longest glimpse of democracy the country got till he was ousted in 1977, he actually strengthened the military's role more than curb it. An example is his reliance on and excessive use of force by the military against Balochi rebels who were not in favor of the Pakistani government. There were mass uprisings in Balochistan after he dismissed the provincial government in 1973 on the pretext that arms had been discovered at the Iraqi Embassy in Balochistan which would facilitate the Baloch rebels. Bhutto contained these uprisings by sending the military into Balochistan to crush the rebels, a move that pleased the military since they were able to gain some face after losing the war with India in 1971. Instead of unleashing the army on the Baloch people, Bhutto could have co-opted them and reached a compromise with them regarding their grievances with the government. As per Chadda's definition, this would have been an opportunity for the bargaining process where power was shared among other actors and not concentrated solely in the hands of the elites. This was a shot at democratization

for Bhutto which he squandered, and instead he did what past leaders have done and relied on military might to secure his position in power.

It was also under Bhutto's regime that Pakistan saw the rise of fundamentalist Islamic groups opposed to his populist and socialist reforms that they claimed could not go hand in hand with Islam. Although many consider Zia responsible for Pakistan's "Islamization", it was actually under Bhutto's rule that Islamic radicalism took off; he declared Ahmadis non-Muslims, which was ratified in the constitution through the Second Amendment September 17, 1974. He also enshrined Islamization within the 1973 constitution which declared Pakistan an Islamic Republic and Islam as the state religion. This was the beginning of Islam being used to justify decisions of leaders to keep them in power on the pretext that Pakistan was meant to be an Islamic state, which ultimately forces democratic institutions and norms to take a backseat.

Bhutto was ousted from power because he was unlike the military leaders whom he preceded and succeeded, which is why the military knew they could not work with him in power and acted swiftly to remove him. While Bhutto missed the opportunity to transform Pakistan into a welfare state and focus on economic and social development, I argue that many of his actions with regards to foreign actors actually pivoted Pakistan away from its bravado as a garrison state. Throughout his time in power he didn't pursue strategic parity with India through military adventures or "seizing windows of opportunities" as is typical of garrison states and as was the agenda of several military leaders before and after him. This is not to say that he did not work to strengthen Pakistan militarily after a traumatic loss to India in the 1971 war; he did, when he managed to secure considerable military assistance from China in the 1970s and purchased weapons from Europe when military assistance from the US plunged dramatically in that time period. Can we take Bhutto's distancing from strategic parity with India as a sign of civilian

leaders' independence from military goals? Was this his attempt at ushering in democratization in Pakistan? Perhaps not, given his reliance on the military to hold on to power, as well as his reliance on foreign aid and assistance to prop up Pakistan economically rather than generating wealth internally through development and taxation. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a classic example of civilian rulers largely following in the footsteps of military leaders despite having an open shot at democratizing the country. The mindset of using the military to hold on to power and relying on foreign assistance to strengthen the economy had become deeply entrenched by the time Bhutto came to power, and it has largely stayed that way since. Looking at the bigger picture, the blame can't be placed squarely on civilian leaders for squandering their shot at democratization when the entire political system in Pakistan has been crafted to concentrate all legitimate power in the hands of the military. The larger military establishment has controlled matters of national security, foreign policies, domestic affairs and keeping military leaders in power, so it is no surprise that democratically elected leaders often co-opt the military for personal gain, not only to appease the military but also because that is the only way they can access power.

I argue, however, that Bhutto's removal from power by Zia says more about the failure of democracy in Pakistan at that time than his own shortcomings do. Zia's ban on political parties meant there weren't any people or institutions holding him accountable for his authoritarian actions. For context, the Pakistan National Alliance was formed in 1977 as a cohort of political parties campaigning against the Pakistan People's Party. They wanted to use Zia to get rid of Bhutto and his PPP and make room for a more pro-business regime, contrary to Bhutto's socialist policies and nationalization of several industries. Zia played his cards well and pitted the PNA against the PPP, allowing the military more room for political maneuvering. Through Operation

Fairplay executed 5th July 1977, Zia deposed Bhutto through a bloodless coup to cement his power. The Supreme Court eventually ruled in favor and legitimized Zia's military intervention, which was both a blow to any semblance of democracy in Pakistan at that time as well as the beginning of institutional legitimacy of authoritarian tactics by military leaders. It was no surprise that they ruled in favor of Zia because just weeks after Zia overthrew Bhutto, he forcibly removed Chief Justice Yaqub Ali from office because he knew Ali was democratic and would rule against Zia's illegal actions. Bhutto's hanging in 1979 ultimately proved that there was always a price to pay when you went against the military in Pakistan.

Zia, Islamization and the irreparable damage to Pakistan

It was under Zia's regime that militarism and Islam became twin pillars shaping Pakistan's identity. The military, and more specifically, the top brass in the military, became the most privileged caste in Pakistan, while Islamization was folded into every political and socioeconomic aspect in the country. Because many top level bureaucrats and military personnel believed Islam should be a centralizing factor in Pakistan, they welcomed Islamization overtaking the functioning of democratic institutions. One such example is the power of the Federal Shariat Court to have executive jurisdiction for certain matters that circumvent the ruling of civil courts. Zia's Islamization went so far as to give Pakistan's nuclear program an Islamic tint, defining it as a shared asset for all Muslims. He fused religion and military power and presented it to the public as a sort of symbiosis, with the military helping to uphold Islam and Islam being infused into military practices and norms. It is interesting to note that the Pakistan army was always born an ideological army that justified Islam as its corporate identity; Zia just capitalized on the undertones of Islam within the military to justify his imposition of martial law

and cement his authority in power. When he declared himself president of Pakistan, he announced that his real source of power came from his status as army commander, not as president. As previous military leaders in Pakistan had done before, this was his way of giving the military an inflated sense of importance when he came to power, signaling to the public that a military man is the best fit for the country.

From the get go, Zia cemented his power by banning all political parties in 1978 to avoid opposition parties clubbing together against him like the PNA did against Bhutto. This was one of his more explicit, straight cut ways of killing democracy in the country, but his imposition of the Eighth Amendment into the Constitution of Pakistan in 1985 changed the country's governance for the worse till it was repealed in 1997. The Eighth Amendment changed the governance system in Pakistan from a parliamentary democracy to a semi-presidential system that allowed the president to dissolve the national assembly and elected governments and eventually dismiss the prime minister and their cabinet on the grounds of instability, intolerant levels of corruption, mismanagement and unchecked levels of domestic violence. Further, the Eighth Amendment allowed domestic and national security affairs — the Afghan policy, nuclear weapons, relations with India, the national defense budget, institutional privileges of officers and full control of the military — to be concentrated in the hands of the president. At this point Pakistan could hardly be called a democracy since it tethered on the lines of being a dictatorship, which many international actors and allies saw it as and were becoming weary of Pakistan's internal cohesion because democracy was gradually failing. The Eighth Amendment essentially gave rise to constant conflict between the president and prime minister, which culminated in Zia's dismissal of Prime Minister Muhammad Khan Junejo 29th May 1988 on the grounds of corruption. In Pakistan, dismissals have often been a guise for removing people who might

become too powerful or better liked by the public, which was the case with some of the dismissals in Pakistan in the 1990s. This is a classic move military dictators use to keep themselves in power by removing any form of opposition or threat to their regime.

Even though Zia agreed to hold elections in 1985, they were partyless elections and not a true sharing of power with civilians. But what is interesting to note about the 1985 elections is that it was actually Junejo who pushed for them to begin with. Junejo was also the one who ended Zia's eight-and-a-half years of martial law in December 1985 and restored freedom of the press. Junejo's short stint as prime minister from 1985 to 1988 should not be overlooked since it comes under Zia's military dictatorship. If anything, it was an oasis of democracy during Zia's dictatorship and should be considered as the beginning of the gradual transition to democracy that Benazir Bhutto ushered in when she took over as prime minister in the 1988 elections. That Junejo was not a military man suggested at that point in time that non-military figures in power had and possibly could have the potential to steer Pakistan towards greater democratization as Junejo attempted to. As is evident, being prime minister was not symbolic of democracy because at the end of the day it was under Zia's military dictatorship; however, it did symbolize that there were domestic actors who were willing to push back against military dominance and restore democracy bit by bit.

Within Pakistan, Zia tightened his grip on power through dismissals, the Eighth Amendment and banning political parties, among other measures. On the outside, Zia played his cards well and took advantage of foreign actors and interventions to strengthen his position as supreme military leader by bringing in massive amounts of foreign aid and armaments into the country. He often fused his military finesse with capital gains by providing military advisers and trainers to several countries in exchange for cash or arrangements to pay for military equipment;

for example, Libya gave Pakistan \$200 million to purchase arms in exchange for Pakistani pilots for the Libyan Air Force, while Abu Dhabi also contracted Pakistani pilots for its own air force in exchange for funding Pakistan's purchase of 32 Mirage V fighter aircraft from France (Haqqani, 2013). While there was no economic development within the country to generate this kind of revenue, the fact that Zia managed to secure this kind of funding was enough to prove his military competence and ability to keep Pakistan afloat economically.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (1979-1989) saw significant overlap with Zia's rule in Pakistan from 1977-1988. The U.S. was fighting a proxy war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and allied with Pakistan owing to its geostrategic location as Afghanistan's neighbor. For more than a decade, the U.S. funneled billions of dollars worth of aid, weapons and training into Pakistan so that Zia could train the Mujahideen in Afghanistan who were fighting against the Soviets. The issue here is that the Mujahideen were more than just freedom fighters trying to wrest back their country from the Soviets; they gradually became Islamist extremists who used religion as their justification for violence and a means to obtain arms and funding, which went hand-in-hand with Zia's desire to "Islamize" Pakistan and the military in particular. These Mujahideen later became the core of the Taliban, al-Qaeda and other Islamist militant groups who were responsible for much of the instability, violence, conflict and ethnic disparity in the region that not only left Afghanistan in ruins but also impacted Pakistan's political and economic stability and national security. Because it was Zia who trained, funded and sheltered the Mujahideen via money received from the U.S., international actors began seeing Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism because of its reliance on Islamist militant groups as instruments of foreign policy regarding India and Afghanistan. As the Afghan conflict was drawing to an end, Zia took advantage of the well-trained, well-armed Mujahideen and recruited

them for fighting alongside insurgencies in Kashmir, inspiring them by branding it an “Islamic cause” which convinced them to fight beyond the Afghan cause.

While many saw America’s victory in Afghanistan as a “win” for Pakistan and Zia in particular, it did considerable, irreparable damage to Pakistan that continues to destabilize Pakistan even today. To begin with, it reinforced the belief that Islam sanctioned asymmetric warfare and therefore should be a part of national military strategy, which was a huge win for Zia. Further, military leaders like Zia were focused on making a garrison state out of Pakistan and saw the influx of foreign aid and weapons as economic success since it empowered the military. But this had no tangible effect on Pakistan’s economy or civilians in actuality because the money was either pocketed by military personnel or used by the military to increase their armaments and continue funding religious militant groups. None of this aid trickled down to ordinary civilians, nor was Zia (or other military leaders before him) interested in developing a welfare state. There was no actual economic growth in the country, no development in terms of hospitals, schools and other institutions that modernize society and bolster democracy through institutional practices. Zia was interested in perpetuating the struggle with India and obtaining strategic depth in Afghanistan, which is why he made pacts with radical Islamist and ethnic-based groups rather than expanding trade networks and focusing on generating revenue from within the country.

It is important to remember that it was under Zia’s rule that the ISI and the larger military-intelligence establishment became one of the most powerful and deadly entities in Pakistan and remain so even today. This military-intelligence establishment is the “deep state” which is selective of who to fight and who to support, a decision that should typically be in the hands of the government but isn’t, underscoring the immense power the deep state has and the lack of actual decision-making power for the government. The deep state may not operate in

plain sight but its presence is definitely known; anyone who dares to challenge the military establishment risks assassination, like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto or face exile, as Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto did. The ISI gained prominence and immense power under Zia's rule, and, like the rest of the country, adopted his ideology of privileging Islamist militants. Based off growing evidence there developed a fear that elements of the military and ISI may sympathize with Islamist militants, or that a rogue Islamist faction may split off from the army and be beyond the control of the army, ISI or military establishment and potentially undermine the state or support Islamist militancy. More concerning than this, however, is that Islamist elements within the army may provide terrorists with nuclear weapons, which isn't too much of a stretch considering leaders like Benazir Bhutto have facilitated nuclear proliferation. This is a direct consequence of the unchecked power of military leaders who in turn enabled actors like the ISI and religious extremists to grow as powerful as they did, which, in turn, overshadowed the power of democratically elected governments.

Blame game: was it all the military's fault?

At the time of Zia's death in 1988 and more than 40 years after its creation, Pakistan stood at the intersection of being a garrison state with the risk of being overrun by Islamist militants who were remnants from the Soviet conflict and used Islam and jihad as their context for violent territorial warfare. Successive military dictators who focused on making Pakistan a garrison state failed to develop Pakistan economically, socially or politically, leaving it in bad shape for those who preceded Zia. This begets the question of how Pakistan reached this point of military supremacy, and who enabled the military and military leaders to become the most powerful actors in society; the answer is the U.S. Right from Pakistan's first leader Muhammad

Ali Jinnah, Pakistani leaders have always expected the U.S. to help out financially and militarily since the U.S. was more than capable of sparing a few million dollars and Pakistan was a new nation-state barely standing on its own two feet. Pakistani leaders also took advantage of the international political climate to lure the U.S. into a sweet deal with Pakistan, mostly during the Cold War. For example, Ayub Khan disguised his anti-India stance with anti-communism to butter up US diplomats even more, telling them that India wanted to get the U.S. out of Asia (Haqqani, 2013). He cautioned that if they didn't help Pakistan in their conquests against India, Pakistan would turn away from the U.S. and then the U.S. would lose both India and Pakistan as allies. From 1954-1959 alone, Pakistan's military received \$425 million in aid from the U.S., a generous amount that kept the military satisfied yet eager for more. In the backdrop, U.S. diplomats were observing the increasing dysfunctionality in Pakistan which the U.S. was exacerbating when it propped up militarization in the country through massive amounts of aid and weapons. The military became Pakistan's "safe anchor" (Haqqani, 2013) because of all the foreign equipment, training and aid it was receiving, but relying primarily on the army as the framework for the young state made Ayub and early military leaders questionable to work with. Nonetheless, the U.S. continued to rely on Pakistan as a strategic ally in the region, which Zia exploited to a high degree. Because the U.S. was slightly shocked when the Soviet military actually invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Zia knew the U.S. government wouldn't mind paying a higher price for securing Pakistan as an ally against the Soviets. The U.S. believed that once Pakistan got its military aid, it would give the U.S. the bases it wanted in Pakistan, fulfill the U.S.'s goals and the problems with India and Afghanistan would wither away. As they later realized, this was a grave mistake since Pakistan's alliance with the U.S. was driven by its quest for strategic parity with India, while the U.S. initially wanted to capitalize on Pakistan's

geostrategic location to make it a major fighting force in Asia to defend against communism. The consequence of the U.S. enabling Pakistan through aid and weapons is that it could not stop Pakistan from using Jihadi militants (Islamist extremists) as proxies in regional conflicts, such as in Kashmir and Afghanistan in the 1990s, nor could it stop Pakistan from pursuing its nuclear weapons program despite asking Pakistan for the promise that they wouldn't. Decade after decade, the U.S. enabled Pakistani leaders to seize the opportunity of external alliances to address domestic issues, which, in the short run benefitted the leaders but in the long run gave no advantage to the U.S. and only increased the power of the Mujahideen and the other Islamist extremist groups they morphed into.

Moreso, Pakistan's alliance with the U.S. got it more aid from other countries, such as the U.K., Japan and Germany and international institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. These allies and financial supporters didn't make democracy a condition for receiving economic aid, which is why Pakistani leaders didn't focus on economic development, institutional reform or resource extraction as other developing countries were incentivized to in order to receive economic aid from these very institutions. Further, these allies would never let the Pakistani economy collapse because they needed Pakistan for their own geostrategic interests, which is also why international organizations turned a blind eye to Pakistan's nuclear proliferation since Pakistan had the capability to carry out or thwart the U.S.'s policy objectives. There were several consequences of international actors letting Pakistan off the hook; military leaders were not held accountable or forced to create a welfare state in an economically failing nation. The rule of military leaders who came to power undemocratically was legitimized by foreign actors, which perpetuated the cycle of military leaders handing over power to one another. Further, these military leaders perpetuated the cycle of turmoil and violence both within

the country and in Kashmir and Afghanistan so that the military could stay relevant and continue receiving aid; if Pakistan's security problem is solved then its allies will stop sending foreign aid, weapons and assistance to Pakistan. The continuation of the security problem has been in the material and corporate interest of the army and military-intelligence establishment, which is why even during civilian periods of rule military leaders have tried to control the nation's security and financial matters to extract resources from foreign actors. In short, foreign actors have enabled Pakistan to believe it will always receive the aid and weapons it needs to carry out its adventurous foreign policy endeavors and the military has fully taken advantage of this to constantly pursue its own agenda.

The actions of military leaders produced dire consequences during the rule of civilian regimes. Military leaders, most notably Zia, set future civilian leaders up for failure because they created a Pakistan that was only prosperous when it was a useful geopolitical ally during times of international political turmoil, such as the Soviet conflict in Afghanistan during the Cold War. As the Cold War drew to an end, military and economic assistance from foreign allies grew smaller or came with harsher terms. For example, in 1990 U.S. aid to Pakistan was suspended by then president George H. W. Bush in accordance with the Pressler Amendment, which allowed aid to flow to Pakistan as long as the U.S. president could annually certify that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear explosion device. Pakistan's nuclear development program was no secret by then, neither were the sanctions a surprise. With Pakistan no longer being used to fight America's proxy war in Afghanistan, the billions of dollars worth of aid and armaments were barely coming in at a trickle, leaving Pakistan's first civilian leader since Zia — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto — floundering without the backing of foreign allies or a unifying anti-India, pro-Islamization rhetoric buttressing her popularity. If anything, she and her successor Nawaz Sharif spent both

their respective terms as prime minister in the 1990s doing everything they could to secure their power and avoid being ousted by the military, which ended up happening anyway. The military establishment had created a political system that continuously privileged the military as the most dominant actor in society since it had curated institutional and civilian support over the years by downplaying the very factors of democratic rule that could oust it from power. Had there been regular elections and freedom of the press and political parties since independence, citizens might have reacted negatively to such frequent military takeovers.

Despite being democratically elected with the potential to gradually democratize Pakistan, Benazir chose to continue on the path of using and misusing religion as past leaders had done to fulfill their foreign policy agenda, most likely to prove to the military top brass that she shared in their agenda. As soon as she came to power she threw her support behind the Taliban in Afghanistan, extremist groups in Kashmir and the nuclear weapons programme in Pakistan. She wanted to create a Western-oriented trade and pipeline route from Turkmenistan to Pakistan through Southern Afghanistan with the plan in mind that the Taliban would provide security along this route. Alongside supporting insurgents in Indian Occupied Kashmir, she helped create terrorist organizations like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed (Paul, 2013); their initial goals were to fight India in Kashmir but later expanded to a more transnational narrative with al-Qaeda and other global terrorist organizations. Benazir also augmented Pakistan's nuclear weapons program through nuclear transfers to North Korea, Iran and Libya. She also oversaw a missile swap between Pakistan and North Korea with the help of Abdul Qadeer Khan, a Pakistani nuclear physicist who is considered the founder of Pakistan's atomic weapons program. All of this is indicative of how civilian leaders undermined Pakistan's potential to emerge as a strong, tolerant and democratic state.

However, Benazir was also confronted on all sides by powerful actors who wanted to see her downfall; the president at that time, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, enhanced the president's power under the amended constitution (Eighth Amendment) which limited Benazir's scope of authority as prime minister. The military insisted on retaining authority over Afghan policy, foreign and national security affairs and butted heads with Benazir who wanted to control these issues as part of her position's jurisdiction. Nawaz Sharif, her main opposition at the time, was focused on strengthening Punjab and other provinces at the expense of the central government in the hopes that he could remove her from power in the next elections. In Sindh, Punjab and what was then known as the North West Frontier Province, electoral contests were between Bhutto's PPP and Nawaz Sharif's anti-Bhutto opposition, which he gained support from by releasing documents about her corruption through personal expenses. Understandably, Benazir's PPP government couldn't have made much progress with these barriers. It is also understandable that Benazir was always watching Ghulam Ishaq Khan's every move because he had the power to remove her and dissolve her government as per the Eighth Amendment. Benazir's fears were well founded because on 6th August 1990, Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed the Bhutto government and dissolved the National Assembly. His justification for this was that Bhutto's actions endangered democracy because of bribery in the National Assembly, the failure of her government to maintain law and order, misuse of state power to accumulate personal wealth and incompetency in the administration of the economy. Additionally, the army had frequently complained to Khan about Bhutto "interfering" in their matters as a way to indirectly remove her from power. Although Khan himself was not a military man, he was a close ally of Zia and his successive sacking of two democratically elected prime ministers did much damage to what little democracy was budding in Pakistan.

Ghulam Ishaq Khan's dismissal of Nawaz Sharif in 1993, I argue, was a pivotal point for democracy in Pakistan. There was a decrease in foreign remittances from overseas Pakistanis working in the Gulf due to the Gulf crisis in the early 1990s coupled with the drying up of foreign aid from the U.S. owing to the end of the Afghan war. There an urgency to restructure government policies so that Pakistan could lay down a legal and physical framework for a market-oriented, rule-based economy, which is exactly what Sharif did when he implemented a market-based solution Pakistan's economy performed better from 1991-1992 than it had in previous years, and Sharif was seen as a business-friendly and action-oriented prime minister. It was Sharif's relative success that drove president Ghulam Ishaq Khan to dismiss Sharif in April 1993. Sharif's market-oriented economic policies were popular with international donors who were crucial to Pakistan's aid-dependent economy. By this time, international actors had begun correspondence with civilian leaders after decades of dealing with military dictators who only wanted aid and weapons to strengthen the military for regional hegemony. Sharif also consolidated a popular base both inside and outside parliament, tilting the informal balance of power in favor of elected elements. This shift in power away from civil-military bureaucracy was the main threat to Ghulam Ishaq Khan, whose insecurities stemmed from the viceregal system of authority in Pakistan he belonged to. After seeing previous presidents enjoy their power unchallenged, Sharif's success and popularity was a huge blow to the otherwise privileged bureaucratic caste in politics. As president, he believed power lay in his hands and his priority was keeping Sharif in check and ensuring his own success in the next elections.

Sharif has been one of the few civilian leaders in Pakistan to push back against the supremacy of the military and top-level bureaucrats in the country who have always wanted power concentrated in their hands. Sharif wanted to reverse the Eighth Amendment to restore

power to the prime minister, causing Khan to eventually dismiss Sharif and dissolve the assembly, but Sharif appealed to the Supreme Court who restored Sharif to power. Sharif and Khan found themselves in a political gridlock that paralyzed the central government and saw the economy becoming vulnerable as foreign reserves plummeted. Chief of Army Staff General Abdul Waheed Kakar temporarily took the reins and demanded the resignations of both Sharif and Khan.

The third dismissal of an elected government meant two things for democracy in Pakistan. On the one hand, it showed repeated patterns of arbitrary interventions from military personnel, signaling the military's stronghold on Pakistani politics and the functioning of elected governments. On the other hand, the Supreme Court's decision to restore Sharif's government showed a strengthening of elected elements since the judiciary was acting independent of coercion from the military or any other actors. The military had taken a step back from ruling the country directly and since power lay with civilian leaders, appointees to the judicial system weren't necessarily those with whom the military carried favor. Under Zia's rule, several judges and politicians were jailed, removed from power as Chief Justice Yaqub ALi was, or chose not to be a part of Zia's dictatorship; they returned to or were reappointed to their various offices under Bhutto and Sharid's regime. Many of them were tied to serving democratically and did not privilege any one group over the other, which is why Sharif was reinstated to power.

Further, public opinion had become one of the most crucial factors affecting political outcomes in Pakistan, something that the military became highly weary of. Military leaders wanted to tread carefully since they feared a negative reaction from the public that would make them seem authoritarian and ready to clamp down on civil liberties. They knew that even though Pakistan's history and political legacy gave them preeminence over elected governments, their

authority now needed popular justification. Zia's death and takeover of the country by Ghulam Ishaq Khan, a non-military ruler, meant that military rule was not the norm any more and not the only option the people of Pakistan had to contend with. Political parties may have been corrupt, but they opened up doors to wider participation in the government and this, I argue, greatly strengthened democracy in Pakistan.

This is also why Pakistan is a garrison-cum-hybrid democratic state and not a democracy altogether; the military and civilian governments are constantly competing for power with each other and the remnants of decades of military rule are difficult to do away with overnight. Elected leaders like Benazir feared being overthrown and oftentimes pandered to the military to stay in power rather than trying to democratize Pakistan. Public opinion also swayed between wanting rule by elected political parties and a return to a military dictatorship, which many welcomed when General Pervez Musharraf overthrew Sharif in a bloodless military coup October 12, 1999. The public was not rejecting democracy so much as it was rejecting the chaotic and corrupt rule that civilian leaders and their political parties brought with them.

The brief interlude of rule by elected civilian governments in the 1990s was foundational for the development of democracy in Pakistan. The judiciary was functioning independently and helped civilian leaders push back against interference from bureaucratic actors. Pakistan lessened its reliance on aid and military equipment from the U.S. and began generating revenue through economic growth and alternative trade deals in the Middle East. That the public's opinion was powerful enough to deter the military from behaving rashly was indicative of the strengthening of democracy in Pakistan and a huge departure from a clamp down on free speech and freedom of the press under martial law. Military leaders had always perpetuated the narrative that political parties are incompetent and incapable of running the country. Now, Pakistanis do not embrace

military authoritarianism over long periods of time because now the military itself fails to manage the state better than the civilian governments they dismissed. The public eventually demands a return to democracy, as they did after almost a decade of Musharraf in power.

Transnational powerplay: CPEC and Pakistan's military establishment

Despite the 1990s seeing the foundation of democracy laid in Pakistan, democracy has not developed much since then because the military found ways to control domestic and national security policies, just less overtly than before. One of these ways was the military capitalizing on Pakistan's strengthening alliance with China. As the U.S. withered away as Pakistan's strongest ally and biggest donor of aid and armaments, China replaced this role and is responsible for perpetuating and benefiting from the military establishment's dominance in Pakistan. China and Pakistan's relationship is lopsidedly symbiotic. China is important to Pakistan because it acts as its primary external balancer against India, has helped Pakistan develop as a nuclear state and is now Pakistan's main arms supplier. China, following in the footsteps of Pakistan's previous allies, is using Pakistan's geostrategic location to signal to India that it has greater regional dominance. China perceives India as a threat and strategic concern, particularly after the 1962 war. By allying with Pakistan, China wants to keep India on its toes to forestall India from challenging China on a wider regional basis. I argue that China wants to continue the rivalry between India and Pakistan to keep India preoccupied, while Pakistan wants to continue its rivalry with India to avenge lost territories and gain regional hegemony in keeping with the garrison state narrative set by military leaders.

China has been exerting greater regional hegemony through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Pakistan. On a surface level, CPEC is a geoeconomic project in Pakistan that is supposed to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries, pull up

Pakistan's failing economy and enhance China's energy security. But at a deeper level, CPEC has given immense importance to the military establishment in Pakistan since China trusts that the military will provide the security and cooperation needed for CPEC to succeed over the years. It has given the military the importance and financial backing it needs to maintain control over domestic affairs in Pakistan. When U.S. President Donald Trump suspended aid to Pakistan in 2018, China duly provided \$4.5 billion worth of financial assistance to Pakistan for the fiscal year 2018-2019. Once again, in the short-run this may seem like a "win" for the elite actors in Pakistan to have billions of dollars at their disposal, but in the long-run it has disincentivized elite actors from bolstering further economic development in Pakistan.

Additionally, the military establishment is the most trusted and preferred interlocutor for Beijing, so much so that in 2018, Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa was invited to Beijing to discuss CPEC rather than newly inaugurated Imran Khan. CPEC holds too much geostrategic importance for China to see it sabotaged by weak internal security in Pakistan and incompetent civilian leaders. Chinese officials also have decades worth of experience dealing with Pakistani military leaders, so this is not the first time the military has been engaged in geopolitical affairs.

The military establishment wants to use CPEC as leverage to extract more weapons, technology and cooperation from Beijing to continue their objective of strategic parity with India, which is why the military has devoted increasing amounts of resources to safeguard Chinese assets, mostly in response to pressure from Beijing. That foreign actors are controlling domestic affairs in Pakistan, such as terrorism and the lack of security, is indicative of the immense power China has in Pakistan to achieve its goals. To that end, China's communication with the military is more effective than communication with the Pakistani premier not only

because the military possesses the necessary manpower and expertise, but also because its intelligence wing, the ISI, maintains important links to several militant groups that target Indian interests on behalf of Pakistan.

The grandiose of CPEC begets the question of what results CPEC has produced for Pakistan thus far. CPEC is also raising Pakistan's debt levels, which Imran Khan is addressing by asking China and international financial institutions for loans to pay off those debts. In June 2019, Chinese Foreign Direct Investments to Pakistan dramatically fell by 77%, making it safe to say that CPEC hasn't given Pakistan any "game-changing" economic progress yet. China, like Pakistan's other allies have done, is simply exploiting Pakistan for its geostrategic location for its own geopolitical goals and regional hegemony; democratizing Pakistan is not a priority.

Conclusion

Pakistan is currently recognized as a democratic state because it holds regular elections under a competitive multiparty political system. In actuality, real power in Pakistan lies with the military and greater military establishment who have historically been the most important actors in society. Some civilian leaders, like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, had the opportunity to democratize Pakistan but focused on securing power for themselves, while others, like Benazir had a similar goal but were ruling at a time where the military had the power to hang, exile, or dismiss civilian governments as they pleased, which is exactly what happened to Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif over their various terms. The military has always been in the backdrop of Pakistan's domestic and international political affairs, simply finding new events and actors to take advantage of to fulfill their desire for strategic parity with India. Ayub Khan capitalized on the Cold War to squeeze money out of the U.S., while Zia exploited the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to cement his power, prop up Islam and the military as twin pillars shaping

Pakistan's identity and have the U.S. pour billions of dollars worth of aid and armaments to help him achieve these goals in the guise that he'll help them win their proxy war against the Soviets. Now, the greater military establishment has taken advantage of CPEC and strengthened allyship with China to reclaim power and authority over domestic affairs in Pakistan.

Analyzing 75 years of tumultuous history in Pakistan allows us to envision what its future holds. Democracy *does* exist in Pakistan, despite several decades of successive military dictatorships. Civilian leaders, democratic institutions such as the judiciary and public opinion have collectively pushed back against the military's supremacy, which is also how democracy has grown. Political parties may be corrupt and civilian leaders may have squandered the nation's money for personal use, but, as Chadda explained, poverty, instability, corruption and violence can coexist with gradual democratization and should not be seen as a failure of democracy. For now, Pakistan's status will remain that of a garrison-cum-hybrid democracy.

Could a member of the military top brass stage another coup or overthrow the civilian government to come back in power? If their professional and corporate interests can be protected adequately from a distance — which is what it is working towards by making puppets out of civilian governments — they will not be tempted to step in directly and establish military rule once again. Given how much importance Zia and Benazir gave to Islamist militant groups, there is a strong possibility that deteriorating stability in Afghanistan and the rule of the Taliban can produce dire consequences for Pakistan in the future. Even so, it will be the military establishment, not the civilian government, who deals with that crisis when it comes.

Works cited

Abbas, Hassan. *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror*. M.E. Sharpe, 2004.

Boon, Hoo Tiang, and Glenn H. K. Ong. "Military Dominance in Pakistan and China–Pakistan Relations." *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 75, no. 1, 2021, pp. 80–102.

Chadda, Maya. *Building Democracy in South Asia: India, Nepal, Pakistan*. Lynne Rienner, 2000.

Fair, C. Christine. *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

Haqqani, Husain. *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States, and an Epic History of Misunderstanding*. PublicAffairs, 2015.

JALAL, AYESHA. *Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics*. BELKNAP HARVARD, 2017.

Linz, Juan J., and Alfred Stepan. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Johns Hopkins, 1996.

Paul, T. V. *The Warrior State: Pakistan in the Contemporary World*. Oxford University Press, 2015.

Rizvi, Hasan Askari. "Pakistan: Civil-Military Relations in a Praetorian State." *The Military and Democracy in Asia and the Pacific*, 2004, <https://doi.org/10.22459/mdap.03.2004.06>.

Shah, Aqil. "Constraining Consolidation: Military Politics and Democracy in Pakistan (2007–2013)." *Democratization*, vol. 21, no. 6, 2013, pp. 1007–1033., <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2013.781586>.

Shah, Aqil. "The Transition to 'Guided' Democracy in Pakistan." *The Asia-Pacific: A Region in Transition*, 2004, pp. 207–218.