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New Perspectives on
Pakistan's Political Economy
State, Class and Social Change

Edited by
Matthew McCartney
S. Akbar Zaidi

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Preface

The genesis of this book lies in teaching a course on the economic development of South Asia, at both Oxford University and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, and in trying to assess and explore ideas about the political economy of regions and states other than those of India. Unlike the rich academic literature on studying India and other countries of the Global South across a variety of schools of thought in economics, politics and political economy, the limited focus on Pakistan has largely been dominated by a single framework, one proposed by Hamza Alavi, which focused on the notion of an overdeveloped state, with regard to Pakistan and, later, Bangladesh, in a paper published in the *New Left Review* in 1972. One option for teaching such a course was to use the comparative nature of scholarship, primarily one based on the Indian academic and social science tradition and historical context, and consider its relevance for Pakistan. However, as academics, researchers and scholars of India, or the other countries which constitute South Asia realise, that while this is how much of the academic teaching and research in and on South Asia usually functions, it is a very suboptimal choice of teaching and scholarship, given the specificities of the different countries. Pakistan, like the other South Asian countries, differs substantially from India, given its political economy and history, and requires an examination based on its own terms and in its own context. While exceptional scholarship of social scientists from India and those who work on India is now increasingly providing theoretical and empirical evidence redefining numerous theoretical paradigms – as we find in this volume as well – what has been lacking for at least four decades now is rigorous assessment of Pakistan's political economy, which, until recently, has continued to be dominated by the work and influence of Hamza Alavi.

In February 2016, Professor Matthew McCartney and his student Muhammad Ali Jan organised a workshop in Oxford sponsored by Wolfson College and the Contemporary South Asian Studies Programme (CSASP) to address this problem and to assess the state of scholarship in the social sciences and of the political economy of Pakistan, almost four-and-a-half decades after Alavi's thesis. Their suggestion was to engage with the call to academic arms made by S. Akbar Zaidi in an essay published in *Economic and Political Weekly* in 2014, in which he argued

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that one needs to go well beyond the Alavi thesis and considerably re-think Pakistan's political economy in a much changed world and in a very different Pakistan. Soon after publication, Zaidi's *Economic and Political Weekly* essay was critiqued and responded to in the journal by five, mostly younger, scholars from Pakistan in a symposium organised by Majed Akhter, then Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography, Indiana University, Bloomington. Akhter invited Aasim Sajjad Akhtar, Fahd Ali, Umair Javed and Adeem Suhail to engage with Zaidi's intervention. Zaidi responded to the critiques by suggesting they were not 'ruthless enough' and that many of his arguments went 'uncontested'. The five participants in the symposium in the *Economic and Political Weekly* were invited to contribute to this volume, three of whom eventually did, and they have considerably expanded on their original insight as is evident in this collection.

The workshop held in Oxford in February 2016 had ten papers presented for discussion, five of which have been included in this volume. S. Akbar Zaidi delivered the keynote address to the participants in a public lecture around the workshop. Those who presented papers included Adeel Malik and Masooda Bano, both teaching at Oxford University; Faisal Siddiqi, an advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, based in Karachi; Umair Javed, who was just finishing his PhD at the London School of Economics; Afiya Shehrbano Zia, a feminist scholar from Karachi; Farooq Sulehria and Matthew Nelson (whose paper was presented in absentia), both from SOAS; Adnan Rafiq and Ali Jan, both of whom were completing their PhDs at Oxford; and Matthew McCartney, who teaches at Oxford University and is responsible for organising the Oxford workshop. Subsequently, Aqil Shah, Danish Khan, Hassan Javid, Aasim Sajjad Akhtar, Rosita Armytage and Adeem Suhail were invited to contribute to this collection in response to the Alavi and Zaidi papers.

Both of us, as editors to this volume, have since negotiated the shoals of getting feedback from the reviewers and going through various iterations of editing. We would like to thank all who participated in the Oxford University Workshop, as well as all the final contributors to this volume. We are delighted to see the stimulating contradictions, debates and rigorous arguments emerging in these chapters. We asked the question whether Pakistan needed a new political economy to go beyond the one originally provided by Alavi. Our contributors have answered this question in a wonderful variety of ways and we see this as the start of a new debate about Pakistan and its political economy.

16 February 2019

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Introduction

Matthew McCartney and S. Akbar Zaidi

This is not a book about Hamza Alavi (1921–2003), the Pakistani Marxist sociologist/anthropologist, but about social science in Pakistan, with a particular focus on its political economy, broadly interpreted. Specifically, this book is trying to understand why, how and with what consequences did one particular theoretical perspective come to exercise such a dominating influence on the analysis of state and society in post-independence Pakistan. There was much brilliant and insightful work done in the 1970s and 1980s on agrarian transition (S. Ahmad 1977; Khan 1975; Khan 1981; Hussain 1980), on industrial concentration (Amjad 1983), ethnicity (Ahmed 1998), and democratisation (A. Ahmad 1985, 2000). Yet it was Alavi's overdeveloped state thesis that dominated discussions and continued to determine how the Pakistani state was envisaged.

One possible explanation why Hamza Alavi's thesis has persisted and dominated, especially in the context of Pakistani scholarship, is the sheer breadth of Alavi's intellectual and practical engagement. Many of the studies and academics mentioned above are essential references confined to relatively narrower terms of engagement and disciplines, but wherever one approaches Pakistan through the broad political economy perspective, one finds that Alavi's pioneering work to be of noted relevance.

Before casting the spotlight on this one intervention, a quick digression on the extraordinary range of Alavi's career and scholarship would be worth our while. After all, he 'was one of the most important intellectuals from the Asian subcontinent to participate in (and in many cases formulate the terms of) debates from the 1960s onwards about Third World development' (TB 2004:341). This digression may help us understand some aspects of his overdeveloped state thesis.

Alavi started his career in the Bank of India as a Research Officer in 1945 and by 1952 he was one of its five principal officers. Unlike most (if not

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quite all) Marxist intellectuals, Alavi left a comfortable career and moved to Tanzania to take up farming. He later enrolled for a PhD at the London School of Economics and then pursued a more conventional academic career at the Universities of Sussex, Leeds and Manchester. He was editor of *Pakistan Today* and was on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Contemporary Asia* and the *Journal of Peasant Studies*. Alavi was involved with various activist groups, such as the Pakistan Youth League, the Pakistan Socialist Society and the Committee for the Restoration of Democracy (formed after the 1958 coup), but not in formal electoral-based party politics.

Alavi's extended oeuvre over five decades included seminal pieces on US imperialism, aid to Pakistan, peasants, agrarian transition, kinship, women, ethnicity, the colonial mode of production, the sociology of developing societies, Islam and even on the Khilafat Movement. He was renowned for his original and controversial insights which went against the conceived wisdoms of, for example, Marxism and nationalism. He was a philosopher of Marxism but argued it was the middle peasantry (not the impoverished rural class) which was the most likely militant rural class and hence, a natural ally of the urban proletariat. Alavi's scholarship was very much in tune with and influenced the radical thinking of the 1960s and 1970s, in particular, his focus on imperialism and the colonial legacy. He argued that indigenous propertied classes were accomodated to imperialism and that capitalist development occurred on the basis of landowners utilising pre-capitalist production relations. This implied that the dominant structure was imperialism and global relations, and that domestic economic change was not contingent on eliminating feudal structures (TB 2004:342). Alavi departed from conventional nationalist Pakistani narratives, and downplayed the importance of religion behind the partition of British India; he argued instead that Muslim civil servants had led the movement to protect their jobs after independence – hence his arguments around the 'salariat' (Alavi 2002).

This diverse body of writing spanning a long academic career continued to find relevance for Pakistani scholars and a global academic audience. What is surprising though is that given (or perhaps because of) these very diverse scholarly interests, Alavi failed to formulate his 'grand theory of everything' related to the state and classes in Pakistan. He was unable (or unwilling), despite his understanding of Marxist and structuralist theories, to tie in his varied analysis into a single strand. While one could argue that Alavi may have been something of a 'polymath', what does seem surprising is that having written on so many varied themes, he never went back to try and build a more

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encapsulating theory of the Pakistani state and society to unite his wide oeuvre. Very few of his scholarly interventions engage with his other pieces; they often stand alone, making important points in different, unrelated disciplines. This absence of a broader formulation linking through his numerous essays on diverse themes is most evident in his essays on the Pakistani state.

Despite his own intellectual eclecticism, it is for one particular idea that Alavi is best remembered and regarded as widely influential. It would be no exaggeration to argue that much of the conceptualisation and theorisation around Pakistan's political economy, broadly defined, over the past forty years, has been around Pakistan's state, its military, and consequently, about imperialism. Our focus in this book is Alavi's 1972 paper published in the *New Left Review*, 'The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh'. Alavi's (1972) thesis on the overdeveloped state has been revised and revisited in many forms by Alavi himself (see Alavi 1983, 1990, for example). The 1972 paper set the stage and provided the context for much subsequent analysis on political economy concerns in Pakistan. One obituary noted, 'rarely would one find a scholarly paper or a reading list in a relevant Sociology course at the best universities in the world where his article is not cited' (Sayeed 2004). Suhail (this volume) notes that the paper has been cited more than 1,100 times by scholars since publication.

For some scholars this enduring influence is proof of pioneering academic excellence. In 1972 the paper represented 'path-breaking work on the nature of the state in post-colonial societies' and was 'widely recognised as a major advance over the earlier theorisation about the nature of the state in Asia, Africa and Latin America by modernisation/political development and underdevelopment/dependency/world systems theorists' (Kumar 2004:3654). Alavi (1972) was a timely academic response to a crisis in theory and real politics. It was written in the context of the 1970s when a profound crisis in state theory prevailed during the advent of the debate framed around neo-neoliberalism and late capitalism. In the specific context of Pakistan, the creation of Bangladesh had 'shattered the idea of Islam as the ideological mask on which impossible territorial unity of Pakistan predicated its subjection to political dominance of the political classes' and Bhutto had risen to power and was still, in 1972, widely perceieved to be a radical change to 'patrician and praetorian classes' as Suhail argues in this volume.

Despite his emphasis on the colonial and on imperialism, Alavi (1972) was not just a product of the dependency school which was so influential in the 1970s. Instead, he had provided a renewed opportunity to examine the

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relationship between class and state in developing countries and the 'subsequent emergence of state centric political theory was epitomised in the writings of Alavi' (Kumar 2004:3654). Alavi challenged the traditional Marxist view by arguing in his overdeveloped state scheme that the superstructure could become dominant and the bureaucratic-military state could become autonomous of domestic and international class forces. According to Kumar (2004:3654), this reformulation of the state had a profound influence on the ideas and opinions of the then influential neo-Marxism of John Saul, Colin Leys, Mahmood Mamdani, Issa Shivji, Claude Millassoux and Michael Stepan regarding their views of the postcolonial state in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Mali and Peru. And into the 1970s and 1980s, its influence manifested itself in the works of Pranab Bardhan, Gail Omvedt, Ashok Rudra, Supdipta Kaviraj, Achin Vanaik, among others, on theorising about the postcolonial state in India. Certainly Alavi does seem to have inspired the long-standing academic parlour game among scholars of Pakistan of trying to characterise the Pakistani state. Along with the overdeveloped state, in recent years we have also heard of the Garrison State, the Failed State, the World's Most Frightening State, the Drowning State and the Warrior State, among others.

This book starts with a less sanguine argument. The fact that a critic and interlocutor of Alavi's thesis writes that 'Alavi's conceptualisation appears to be remarkably resilient almost 40 years since it was formulated, and, at the very least, no other theory of the Pakistani state has emerged to compete meaningfully with the "overdeveloped" formulation' (Akhtar 2008:7), says more about the (dismal) state of social science and social scientists in Pakistan than about Alavi's original thesis (Zaidi 2002). Despite this starting point, the thinking of our contributors ranged freely and can be divided (by very rough characterisations) into those that focus on the enduring value of the 1972 paper and argue that it is still relevant (Shah, Javid and Armytage) and those who argue that it needs to be replaced by new thinking (Jan, Suhail, Javed, Akhtar and Khan).

THEORISING THE ALAVIAN PAKISTANI STATE[1]

Here we very briefly summarise Hamza Alavi's key arguments about the nature of the state in Pakistan in 1972 through the most recent and thorough interpreter of Alavi's overdeveloped state thesis. Akhtar (2008) critiques Alavi's

[1] Much of this and the next Section draw from Akhtar (2008) and Zaidi (2014a).

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formulation and builds on it, highlighting significant weaknesses and adapts it to the present socio-economic and political formation of Pakistan. Akhtar is particularly important because he builds on Alavi and gives us a unique critical continuity from 1972 to 2008, and to 2014, finally concluding with this book in 2019. Without Akhtar (2008), there would not have been a Zaidi (2014a) (this paper is discussed later in this introduction).

Hamza Alavi's 1972 argument was based on the notion that a nexus of power existed in Pakistan between the landlords, the military, the bureaucracy and what he called 'metropolitan capital' which, based on Pakistan's colonial legacy and evolution, resulted in an 'overdeveloped' postcolonial state dominating an un- or under-developed society. It was the military-bureaucratic 'oligarchy' with the three propertied classes which kept what can be called Pakistan's political settlement in place. One of Akhtar's (2008) many critiques is to dismiss Alavi's 'static conception of structure that underlies his understanding of the overdeveloped state'. More than three decades later, using a Gramscian framework, Akhtar (2018) also brings in the political and cultural spheres of analysis which were missing in much of the neo-Marxist analysis of the 1970s.

Inspired by Alavi's emphasis on class and building on (improving) his relatively weak empirical base, this volume is predictably quite concerned with the measurement of and exposition of class. Jan does utilise the standard definition of 'large farmer', as does Alavi, of 100+ acres, and acknowledges the difficulties of incorporating the distinction between land ownership and self-cultivation. Jan acknowledges that the share of area farmed by large landlords has declined, but his chapter goes beyond Alavi and argues that large farmers in Pakistan have reproduced their class power beyond the village by investing in trade, urban property and industry, and in children's education in order to help them take up professional occupations. This was one example of several in which Jan shows how class in contemporary Pakistan has become more complicated. Class, he argues, varies by area and over time, and is not an abstract category to be read off from a given mode of production. In Punjab and Sindh, families control important Sufi shrines where substantial landlords combine material power with religious authority. Social origins, especially the caste background of rural elites, are important, so class is not simply a material concept.

Javed writes about the rise of bazaar traders and the trend of their increasing participation in provincial and national politics, as evidenced by the share of seats they hold in the national assembly. These traders are able to influence policy through a variety of lobbying strategies such as rent-seeking ties

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with local state functionaries to evade taxes. Despite being an insulated and authoritarian regime, the efforts of the General Pervez Musharraf government (1999–2008) to assess the actual turnover of the retail sector through a documentation drive failed in the face of bazaar strikes including one that lasted eleven days in Punjab. In this volume, Armytage engages with Durr-e-Nayab's (2011) detailed taxonomy of class. In this schematic, 65 to 80 per cent of Pakistanis earn a living through manual labour, while the middle class (18 to 34 per cent of the population) are those with at least one family member with a tertiary education and one family member employed in non-manual work in sales, clerical, or professional positions. The upper middle class (6 per cent) are those with college education from one of the country's top schools, have probably been educated abroad, and are most likely to be employed as professionals, legislators, senior officials, managers, or in military roles. The upper elite (1 per cent) are in similar employment categories but in much more prominent roles and tend to derive income from profits on real estate and share ownership. Whether more neatly categorised such as by Armytage or loosely defined as by Jan, the definition and measurement of class is interrogated with rigour in many chapters of this book.

The rather vague assertions about measuring and evaluating state capacity in Alavi are fully reassessed and updated in this volume. This effort forms one of our key contributions to the discussion on the political economy of the state in Pakistan. The original inspiration for this book, Zaidi (2014a), wrote of a contemporary state in Pakistan that is unable to exercise its monopoly of violence uniformly across territories, while newly emerging groups such as the Taliban and urban mafias can both commit violence and challenge the brute force of the state. The state is unable to collect much tax revenue and many of its core functions in security and social services have been de facto privatised. But Shah (this volume) argues that the state's despotic power is still strong with its well-equipped military, para-military, intelligence and police, as demonstrated by its ability to wage external and internal wars. After 2014, for example, the state intervened successfully to displace the Pakistani Taliban from North Waziristan. In terms of state provision he notes that the story is not all about state failure, there are islands of state effectiveness such as the motorway police, construction of schools and employment of teachers. Shah notes that bureaucrats in the state have shown that they do have independent policy-making capabilities and that their agenda-setting power comes from different sources such as asymmetries in information, resources and expertise which together allow bureaucrats to shape the incentives of other social and

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political groups. Javid and Suhail both argue that state power is contested at the local level by an array of historically constituted actors. But private patronage of this sort is ultimately dependent on connections to the state – it is access to public office or to those individuals who hold it that determines the capacity of traditional politicians and local level elites to provide patronage on a relatively large scale and to engage in rent seeking. Javid argues that the local state plays a crucial role in the delivery of patronage. The decentralisation on account of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan in 2010 resulted in the devolution of more powers of patronage to lower levels of government departments such as health and education and provided provincial governments with greater mechanisms through which to exert control over the civil administration. Akhtar argues that the bureaucracy has changed and become more embedded in local networks so is more likely to use its position of authority to benefit linked patronage networks. The increasingly diverse composition of the bureaucracy, he also argues, does not really mean that the Westernised elite has been replaced by another social group but that the entire civilian side of the bureaucracy has fragmented. Khan (this volume) focuses on an argument missing in Alavi – in his overdeveloped state, a power asymmetry exists between state institutions and social classes but this cannot explain why this power asymmetry between state and social classes varies significantly from one place to another within Pakistan.

As Akhtar reminds us, not only was an analysis and evaluation of society completely missing in most of Alavi's work, but it also lacked any analysis or evaluation of resistance, in particular, and the working classes, in general. As Akhtar argues:

> [W]hile Alavi's model of this state has offered much insight into the legacy of colonialism and the state forms it left behind, arguably the most gaping hole in his theoretical treatise is the lack of attention paid to the politics of the subordinate classes, or in other words, the working people upon whose exploitation the entire system of power rests. (Akhtar 2008:193)

There seems to be a complete absence of the dynamics of change and transition in Alavi's work, and one wonders how a theory of superstructure could have been so easily formulated ignoring social and class dynamics.

Although Akhtar (2008) makes the claim that 'Alavi's conceptualisation appears to be remarkably resilient' almost half a century later, Zaidi (2014a) rejects all claims to any relevance or resilience today. However, both Akhtar (2008) and Zaidi (2014a) recognise that much has changed in Pakistan, 'not

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only with regard to how theorisation takes place, but also in terms of social structures and classes in Pakistan' (Zaidi 2014a:48). Akhtar brings in both notions of the 'intermediate class' – loosely called the middle class by others – and also religio-political movements and as players in the political arena in Pakistan. One of Akhtar's best known contributions has been that of the politics of 'common sense' or the ways in which people accept how power is actually articulated in Pakistan, hindering the possibility of popular politics and resistance and leading to 'the existing configuration of power' being 'reproduced as a function of both dominance and consent' (Akhtar 2008:32). Akhtar adds much value to an analysis 'from below' (Akhtar 2017, 2018).

This volume provides a major intervention in the debates around the nature of the political economy of Pakistan, focusing on the social dynamics of contemporary Pakistan, a theme which forms the core of all the contributions. Jan writes about the declining power of the old aristocracy and rising prominence of the rural middle class. Shah writes about the importance of social processes such as urbanisation, the middle class and the informal sector. Javed deals with capitalism and urbanisation, the decline of the old landed class and the rise of bazaar traders linked to rise of informal economy. Javid explores the rise of brokers who connect the state, politicians and those seeking patronage. Akhtar talks of an intermediate stratum which has historically emerged through the development of secondary and tertiary sectors of the agrarian economy which is now the face of capitalist modernity in Pakistan and also of the rise of the service sector and urbanisation. He looks beyond Pakistan to note that imperialism has changed in ways not accounted for by Alavi, which includes new internet and communications technology, financialisation and the rise of China and its role in infrastructure investment in Pakistan. He asks whether the rise of China represents a countervailing tendency to the historic influence of Western imperialism or will this just strengthen the traditional coercive arm of the state without enhancing the policy autonomy of the state.

Afiya S. Zia notes the importance of changes in the economy, mobility and social attitudes which follow a rapid increase in women's participation in the workforce, in the pursuit of education and in paid activism and the development sector, with religion playing a critical role as well. Khan discusses how changes in socio-economic processes led to new patterns of spatiality in villages and towns. Districts in central and northern Punjab, he notes, have relatively better provisioning of public goods such as roads, electricity and schools. McCartney records the dramatic shift in agricultural policy that provided farmers little direct support in the 1950s and massive support through

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subsidies, support prices, rural infrastructure especially irrigation, and loans from state banks in the 1960s. The rising middle classes feature prominently in this volume, where Jan writes that governments from Ayub Khan onwards tried to break the power of the landed aristocracy by patronising the rural middle classes. More recently, this has complicated the definition of class as the investment in children's education by large landlords has allowed them to become professionals such as doctors, lawyers and engineers. Javid argues that the reforms of the civil service under Bhutto opened up the civil service to the middle class, while Akhtar writes that current estimates of the middle class have reached 60 million, though the aspiration to be middle class is even more important and the social goal has become a 'major cog in the hegemonic order'.

It is clear that many have criticised Alavi's view of the state, arguing that his influence has led scholars into a static treatment of the state and its relations with society and that they have been constrained by the overdeveloped presence of Alavi, limiting original thinking (Zaidi 2014a). This is not just about the weakness or inertia of Pakistani academia but is in part intrinsic to Alavi's original model. The overdeveloped state, argues Saul (1974), has its three core functions – to create territorial unity, promote economic development and subordinate social classes. This type of functionalism, according to Sang-Mpam (1986:611), 'explains the static and rigid notion of the inherited state; which is found in most writings on the postcolonial state' which is 'reified and tailored once and for all'. Many of the contributors to this volume move beyond this view and argue that the state in Pakistan never did do what Alavi claimed an overdeveloped state would and should be doing. Suhail (this volume) notes that Alavi frames his analysis in terms of a materialist interpretation of the state whereby the bureaucratic-military state appropriates the lion's share of the surplus from all sectors of production, while holding the productive forces in underdeveloped stasis relative to metropolitan capital. McCartney (this volume) finds that the empirical evidence for Pakistan shows that the state has instead failed to mobilise tax revenue and save and, except for agriculture in the 1960s, it has generally been unable to consistently implement policies, plans and long-term goals. This book engages with how the state has changed over time. Zia (this volume) argues that the state and societal institutions are increasingly loaded with an Islamic bias and justice is dispensed within this framework. Even judges have been compromised by Islamists, and militant groups have taken over the practice of justice. Khan introduces the logic of state spatiality and argues that the postcolonial state of Pakistan can be best characterised by uneven development of state space.

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Akhtar (2008) had argued that 'the structure of power' has changed and is continuously evolving. The dialectic and the articulation between state, society, social classes, resistance and the like was missing in Alavi's analysis. Another important correction by Akhtar (2008) is the critique of Alavi's notion that from among the three 'propertied classes' he considered the metropolitan bourgeoisie to be the most powerful. Following David Harvey (2003), Akhtar made the distinction between the capitalist logic of imperialism and its territorial logic, arguing that the nature of relationships between imperialism and Pakistan need not be of the capitalist extractive kind, but one which fits in to a broader world view of the territorial logic of imperialism, a fact which seems well articulated after 1979. Akhtar is correct in stating that 'Alavi tends to analytically conflate the role of metropolitan *capital*, with the political impulse of metropolitan *states*, implying that the operational dynamics of these two qualitatively different manifestations of metropolitan power in the Pakistani social formation are indistinguishable' (Akhtar 2008:115).[2]

While there is much to build on in Akhtar's (2008) departure from Alavi, there is also some difference in emphasis and understanding. We (in this introduction) do not agree with Akhtar when he states, 'Alavi's basic contention that the postcolonial state is little more than a coercive apparatus and that this apparatus is directly inherited from the colonial state is compelling because the 'military-bureaucratic oligarchy' that was essentially a British creation *is still the country's dominant political force*' (Akhtar 2008: 8, emphasis added) and even when he further states, 'Few scholars of Pakistan would disagree that the coercive role of the state and its ability to maintain a consensus with the dominant classes would appear to be the two defining features of Pakistan's political economy well into the 21st century' (Akhtar 2008:8). We argue that it is perhaps not possible to see the state as such, given its fracturisation and inability to function even at a 'normal' level (Zaidi 2014a). However, Zaidi (2014a) and Akhtar (2008) are in agreement about the rise of new social classes, of the informal sector, of the increasing dominance of the urban economy with its manifestations, and about the fracturisation of power and hegemony of the state. Some critical differences in emphasis do, however, exist (see Zaidi 2014a for further discussion).

Numerous other contentions and departures in this collection from Alavi's interpretation of Pakistan's social formation and of its supposedly

[2] Akhtar adds in a footnote that '[i]n his empirical analysis however, Alavi's focus is on the manner in which the geo-strategic interests of imperialist *states*, and particularly the US, have been a major cause of the militarisation of the Pakistani state'.

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'overdeveloped' state are also worth highlighting. With regard to the influence and role of the military, for example, Javid argues that there has been a consolidation of civilian power since the ousting of the Musharraf military government in 2008, while Shah goes further and makes the point that there is nothing particularly new and the military has always had its power challenged, for instance, through Bengali nationalism before 1971 and by the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in the 1980s. The rise of the Lawyers' Movement in 2007, argues Shah, convinced the military to ditch their military president although the military did not subsequently lose any of their core institutional privileges during the democratic transition, be it control over organisational structure, missions, budgetary allocations, or intelligence gathering. Khan writes that since the 2014 attack on the Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir, the space in the media to challenge the national security narrative of the military establishment has been substantially weakened. Moreover, the sophisticated propaganda campaign in print, electronic and online media by the Inter Service Public Relations (ISPR) shows how the military establishment is able to dominate mental space and create different perspectives suited to its own sense of being, an argument also raised by Sulheria. Importantly, McCartney makes the argument, *contra* Alavi, that the autonomy of the military and civil service were actually postcolonial creations not a colonial endowment and both increased their power and autonomy over the 1950s

This volume also makes clear the importance of political parties in Pakistan and thus emphasises their absence from Alavi's work. McCartney compares the passive view of parties and their domination by the bureaucracy and military in Alavi with their crucial role in the years before independence emphasised in the works of scholars such as Maya Tudor (2013). Akhtar argues that political parties since the end of the Musharraf era have struggled to assert themselves as the real makers of policy especially vis-à-vis traditional security concerns. In contrast, Jan argues that political parties have blunted the power of large landlords, are no longer just vehicles for the interests of different factions of the landed elite, and now represent a wider set of interests. A democratisation of patronage politics has occurred, according to him, and service delivery is now a prerequisite for political success in rural areas. Shah argues that political parties adopt the role of strategic actors in playing the electoral game to stay in power and they can aggregate and represent societal interests because of their roots in society which are rarely reducible to class preferences. Javid argues that politicians are significant for various reasons: development funds are allotted to Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) and Members of the Provincial

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Assemblies (MPAs) to spend in their constituencies; they have the ability to initiate the transfer of a civil servant who fails to acquiesce to their demands; and they also play a role in regulating the system of patronage politics. The scramble for tickets before an election demonstrates that politicians recognise the fact that alignment with a dominant party is the only credible means through which they can ensure steady access to state patronage and it only shows that parties are more than a collection of rural notables.

Perhaps, thinking of these factors as criticisms of Alavi is unfair as their relevance at the time he was writing was not evident, and we must remember that Alavi was an academic of his time, writing during the dictatorships of Ayub and Zia and then during democracy with an authoritarian streak under Bhutto. His work, unsurprisingly, does not reflect current academic and mainstream thinking about the importance of democracy, while this volume does reflect contemporary concerns with the importance of democracy and democratisation in Pakistan. Shah discusses the importance of 2013 as being the first democratic transfer after a full term in office since independence and suggests that the mere operation of electoral democracy could help in slowly institutionalising processes such as judicial independence and freedom of speech and so may help achieve a civilian dominated democracy. Javed argues that four decades of democratisation, albeit often constrained and compromised, has changed state-society engagement through the rise of a powerful class of bazaar traders and that this rise was facilitated through local democracy. Javid bemoans the lack of recent scholarship on the changes and opportunities generated by Pakistan's recent transition to democracy and a decade of uninterrupted, if flawed, democracy and argues that democracy has begun to transform contemporary patronage politics in Pakistan and that elections are generating competitive pressures which induce parties to move away from patronage to programmatic politics. Akhtar is less optimistic and argues that terrorism since 2001 has allowed the coercive apparatus of the state more power under the cover of democratic rule, a point also made by Shah in this volume. Armytage argues that the importance of dynasties in politics has served to cement traditional elites in their long-standing political power.

If indeed Alavi (1972) is no longer relevant to our times since Pakistan's social formation has changed so drastically, then certain questions arise, for instance, why it would interest us at all at this juncture and why scholars contributing to this volume have been asked to revisit his earlier thesis. The answer to this anomaly lies in the lingering influence of Alavi. In order to move forward, as Akhtar (2008) and Zaidi (2014a) do, one has to revisit and

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put to rest the older formulation to conceptualise and reimagine new ways at looking at Pakistan's state, society, institutions and classes. Alavi (1972) and subsequent reformulations may have been relevant in the time they were stated (as perhaps one expects that they should), but for us they have become a point of departure, allowing more nuanced understandings of Pakistan's political economy to be explored. Alavi's formulation, as well as theoretical foundations on which they were based, are untenable due to the significant transformation that has taken place across the political, economic and social domain in Pakistan, as well as how theorisation has taken on many new turns since the 1970s. If Alavi's highly statist analysis does not help in explaining Pakistan today, new work needs to emerge free of the shackles of those earlier rigidities.

THE STATE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE (AND POLITICAL ECONOMY) IN PAKISTAN: FROM DISMAL TO PROMISING?[3]

Although Alavi did undertake fieldwork, including, for example, a fifteen-month stay in a Punjab village to study patron–client relationships, his scholarship was the product of European and North American universities. One obituary noted, 'One cannot conceive of being able to produce such quality and socially relevant research if he had lived in Pakistan or for that matter in any other developing country, barring India. Poor societies do not have the intellectual or physical resources necessary for such intellectual endeavours' (Sayeed 2004). This is an irony, considering that some of the arguments in this book observe that Alavi's model of the 'overdeveloped' state has acted as a straightjacket for Pakistani academia and has itself hindered the development of non-Alavian models and thinking. Second, for any economist at least, the claim seems clearly wrong. The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) was formed in 1957 and started publishing its journal (*Economic Digest*) in 1958 which was replaced by the *Pakistan Development Review* from 1961. As Alavi was entering the London School of Economics to study for his PhD in the 1960s, the *Pakistan Development Review* (PDR) published by PIDE was fast becoming one of the best academic development journals in the world. The journal was a wonderful melting pot of established foreign and emerging domestic scholarship, graced by luminaries such as Gustav Papanek, Ronald J. Herring, Keith Griffin, A.R. Khan, S.R. Lewis, G.M.

[3] This section draws partly on Zaidi (2017).

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Radhu, L.J. White, A.R. Kemal and H.J. Bruton amongst many others. The journal was also an intellectual workhorse in which some of the pioneering contributions of development economics received their first academic airing and were exposed to their first rigorous debate. Examples here include the terms of trade, the construction of national accounts, estimates of national savings, the impact of subsidies on resource allocation, factor intensity of production, income distribution and real wages. Perhaps the most notable debate and most influential contribution was in the late-1960s and early-1970s on the efficiency impact of import substituting industrialisation and development of a rigorous methodology (domestic resource costs and effective rates of protection) to measure that impact. This debate first used Pakistan as a case study within the pages of the PDR and it later encompassed many more case studies and formed a crucial plank in the neo-classical counter-revolution against the role of the state and contributor to global neoliberalism from the 1980s onwards.

After the 1970s, commentators increasingly saw the state of social science research in Pakistan as being 'dismal'. This period is the one in which we can claim that Alavi's (1972) formulation has persisted for as long as it has in the absence of critical scholarship by Pakistanis. The renowned Department of Economics at the Quaid-i-Azam University created in the late 1960s lost some able economists by the end of the 1970s. After being moved from Karachi to Dhaka in 1969 and dominated by Bengali economists, PIDE was left moribund with the split of Pakistan in 1971. The State Bank of Pakistan had ceased virtually all in-house research and associated publications after the mid-1970s. The Pakistan Economic Association (PEA) held its sixteenth and last Annual Meeting in Islamabad in early 1973. The reasons for this decline are many and there have been various reviews of the reasons.[4] Shah (this volume) does not entirely agree, arguing that Pakistani scholarship did move on in the 1970s. He cites Jalal (1990), for instance, who made a strong case for alternative explanation of the military domination, not only in the colonial inheritance but also security imperatives and peculiar political coalitions. Otherwise it is generally true to say that there is wide agreement that not much research of any quality took place in Pakistan, and the little that was undertaken by Pakistani social scientists, was by the few who lived and worked in the West (Zaidi 2002). Zia (this volume) is more typical when she argues that Pakistani academia since the 1980s by most measures is a 'travesty' in its limited frameworks of

[4] For research on the state of the social sciences, see amongst others, Naseem (1998), Naseem et al. (1998), Ul Haque and Khan (1998) and Zaidi (2002, 2003).

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analysis and reliance on select mentors. She makes the interesting point that this is not solely a domestically driven failure, and she argues that international financing for understanding Muslims and for promoting a soft Sufi Islam has subsumed research and analyses of secular working-class movements well into the twenty-first century.

In our specific, political economy context, Hamza Alavi is an important individual, but not the only one who did his best research outside of Pakistan. Moreover, those who produced good quality research within Pakistan had done so as productive individuals and this did not reflect any strong support from their institutional homes. Many of the scholars working on various, broad aspects of the political economy of Pakistan in the 1980s and 1990s were based abroad. A short list would include Aijaz Ahmad, Rashid Amjad, Eqbal Ahmad, Saghir Ahmad, Feroz Ahmed, Shahid Javed Burki, Hasan Gardezi, Mahmood Hasan Khan, Jamil Rashid and Shahnaz Rouse. There was, hence, no community of academics or scholars left behind to interact with, to share ideas with. There were few journals and almost no professional associations. The PDR went into noticeable decline, from being globally engaged to becoming parochial and derivative. Moreover, many Pakistani social scientists felt that those Western social scientists who worked on Pakistan were 'second rate scholars' at 'third rate universities', a fact which did not help the Pakistani social science cause either (Zaidi 2002). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, much of the research undertaken in Pakistan – mostly by economists – focused on issues which the World Bank and the IMF found important. Poverty, structural adjustment reforms, 'governance', 'best practices', global 'standards', and the like, became the focus of academics who took up roles as consultants working for donors of various kinds. Such was the understanding of the research which had been done on the state of the social sciences almost two decades ago. Much has changed since then (Zaidi 2002, 2017).

Unfortunately, there has not been substantive recent research on the state of the social sciences in Pakistan since the late 1990s. There is clearly an urgent need for such a study to examine what has happened since. In the absence of such research, it is not possible to be systematic or precise and provide hard empirical data, and one is forced to depend on anecdotes and observations. Nevertheless, there is some basis to make the claim that the state of research in the social sciences is not as dismal as it was in 2000, and despite the claim made by some uninformed journalists who do not conduct research themselves (for example, Yusuf 2012), things have improved a great deal. Just as there were numerous reasons why things looked bad in 2000, there have been reasons why things may have improved.

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In the period after 2000, the then military government of General Pervez Musharraf set up a Higher Education Commission (HEC) and assigned to it the task of assisting Pakistan's higher education in all disciplines. In the last two decades, the HEC has provided scholarships and funding to thousands of Pakistani students studying in Pakistan and abroad. Many of these fellowships and scholarships have been in the social sciences. The HEC has also sent a few thousand university teachers abroad to complete their PhDs. Moreover, USAID which closed its operations in Pakistan in 1993 subsequently returned in pursuit of its war on terror, and supported many hundreds of Pakistani students, academics and teachers going to the US for higher studies. Other countries, such as Germany, Australia and the UK have also funded Pakistani scholars going abroad for higher studies. While not all have returned to become part of the Pakistani academia, many have.

Added to this was the government's overly generous, and perhaps lax, strategy of granting university status in the private sector to those who applied for licences, which resulted in a boom in private sector university education catering to Pakistan's emergent middle classes. Some private sector universities started much earlier – and the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) is probably the best example. After some years of being in the higher education private sector business focusing mainly on business studies and computer sciences, it started producing high quality students in the social sciences, many of whom proceeded for further education abroad in diverse disciplines. Such interventions and outcomes have resulted in the social sciences acquiring some social acceptability and respectability amongst aspiring students. Moreover, a major difference from the past has been that while economics dominated the social sciences in Pakistan in the 1970s and 1980s, it no longer does so. With fresh PhDs in anthropology, sociology, history and related subjects, the pool of academic disciplines and of academics in Pakistan has expanded markedly. Most striking is the more recent emergence of Pakistani women scholars working in different disciplines making their mark globally, as well as of young radical scholars, who have shown a preference to work in academia rather than in international organisations as a generation did before them (Zaidi 2002, 2017, 2018). The expansion of universities catering to demand for students in the social sciences has helped these new scholars, many returning with higher degrees from the US and the UK, to find productive employment. There had also been a noticeable growth in research organisations and think tanks in Pakistan since the end of the 1990s. Some examples include the Social Policy and Development Centre

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(Karachi late 1990s/early 2000s), Sustainable Development Policy Institute (Islamabad, 1995), Centre for Research in Economics and Business (Lahore, 2007); Institute for Policy Reform (Lahore, 2014), Institute of Public Policy, (Lahore, early 2000s), Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS) (Lahore, 2012), Center for Economic Research Pakistan (Lahore, 2008), Consortium for Development Policy Research (Lahore, 2013), Pakistan office of the International Growth Centre (IGC) (Lahore, 2009) – to name but a few. As can be seen, most of these are in Lahore, but there are others in Islamabad as well.

The shift away from an economics-dominated social science scholarship of Pakistan is clearly evident in this volume. Contributors have strongly emphasised the importance of non-economic ideas such as ideology, for example. In this collection, Akhtar writes that Alavi's formulations do not help us understand how domination is legitimated from below. We need to understand legitimation to develop a satisfactory explanation for the resilience of political order in Pakistan. Akhtar argues that when faced with the perennial threat of coercion, a wide cross-section of society has imbibed a Gramscian common sense approach to politics – which means the seeking out of patrons as a means of navigating the rigours of state, market, formal and informal sectors. Zia argues that faith has replaced class as a means of identity, while Sulheria stresses the importance of the ideological state apparatus and records the long history of state control/influence over the media going back to the wave of press bans and arrest of Faiz Ahmed Faiz in 1948 in his capacity as a representative of Progressive Papers Ltd. Khan argues that prior to the emergence of private media in Pakistan, mental space was mainly monopolised by the military via state television. But the rise of private media provided a new and effective platform for civilian institutions, civil society and political actors to raise their voices and concerns. Consequently, mental space became a highly contested space between different sociopolitical and state actors. The role of the private media was instrumental in the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in the early 1980s and the Lawyers' Movement in 2007.

Other factors which give some credence to the argument that there has been a boom in the scale and quality of research in the social sciences include the return to Pakistan of scholars and academics who left for, mainly, international organisations, such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UN organisations, and who have now returned. Many of them have set up institutions of higher learning, bringing in many years of global experience. Second-generation Pakistani scholars – part of Pakistan's new

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academic diaspora – brought up in the West have also shown an academic interest in Pakistan, interacting with Pakistani institutions and scholars. Moreover, perhaps for the first time, Pakistani scholars, particularly in the US, have been exposed to scholarship from India in the fields of economics, anthropology, sociology, political theory and history, bringing in theoretical tools more suited to Pakistan. Many academics have returned to Pakistan to bring new ideas to scholars and students in Pakistan, while growing internet access has made the work of those who choose to stay in the West far more readily available within Pakistan (Zaidi 2017). Other social scientists (such as Armytage and McCartney in this volume) have had their understanding of Pakistan greatly facilitated by interaction with these new institutions and the new generation of scholars.

By all accounts, there is now a greater presence of Pakistani and foreign-trained social scientists than there has ever been and many of them have begun to look at issues from the perspective of the wider political economy. Many of the contributors to this volume belong to this new generation of Pakistani social scientist, as do some non-Pakistanis who have brought in a new, and different, perspective on Pakistan, far more scholarly than the more lucrative terror-studies and foreign policy type of studies which have been the focus for foreign journalists and some researchers, as well as for many Pakistanis.

ABOUT THE BOOK: NEW AVENUES FOR CONCEPTUALISING PAKISTAN'S POLITICAL ECONOMY

This collection of papers emerges from a workshop held at Oxford University organised by Matthew McCartney in collaboration with Muhammad Ali Jan (both contributors to this volume) and the Contemporary South Asian Studies Programme (CSASP) in February 2016, where many of these papers were first presented. The workshop entitled *Pakistan: Political Economy of a Transforming Society* drew its immediate inspiration from Zaidi (2014a) and sought to examine many of the claims made in that article. Zaidi's main argument was that the Pakistani state is no longer the monolith we too often imagine it to be and that power and its articulation have fractured into many different and diverse avenues and forms. Following Pierre Bourdieu, we should see the state 'not as a monolithic and coordinated ensemble, but as a splintered space of forces' (Wacquant, 2016:114). The old military–bureaucratic oligarchy, or even metropolitan capital à la Alavi, no longer constituted what we called 'the state'; in the era of neoliberalism and the expansion of capitalism and the market, the omnipresent state had lost much power, efficacy and even hegemony, to

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be replaced by competing institutions, with perhaps none dominating how the state articulated power. One of the key arguments made by Zaidi was that the state had lost its ability to articulate power in ways it did just a few decades ago. New institutions such as the media, the judiciary, traders and politicians had emerged to contest and wrest power away from the military that had been the dominant institution and had even become coterminous with 'the state'. Also new social classes and groupings had emerged and helped transform Pakistan's social formation away from the bourgeoisie, workers, or peasants, to be broadened to include, for example, new 'middle' classes, particularly but not only, in areas called 'urban'. These new groupings have a very different relationship with capital and the state. In fact, many of these newly emergent classes which have consolidated their economic power through more participatory forms of collective action and through politics have begun to emerge as claimants to some share in the power of the state.

Five months after the publication of Zaidi's original article in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Majed Akhter, Assistant Professor, then at the Department of Geography, Indiana University, Bloomington, invited four other scholars to comment on the Zaidi (2014a) article. Majed Akhter (2014) introduced the discussion, Aasim Sajjad Akhtar (2014) elaborated on the hegemonic 'politics of common sense' building on Akhtar 2008, Fahd Ali (2014) used postcolonial theory to engage with Zaidi's use of 'political settlements', Umair Javed (2014) focused on associational politics in the Punjab, while Adeem Suhail (2014) theorised 'the negotiated state' based on his fieldwork in Lyari in Karachi. Zaidi (2014b) responded to the critiques by suggesting they were not 'ruthless enough' and that many of his arguments went 'uncontested'. Zaidi, while replying to this group of scholars, mentioned that all these interventions lacked 'a foregrounding of class analysis at the heart of Pakistan's political economy', and that 'no matter how much we develop ideas expressed in these pages and elsewhere, unless we locate class at the centre of Pakistan's political economy, incorporating many of the ideas raised here, our understanding and our project will remain incomplete. Sadly, so will our praxis' (Zaidi 2014b:57). The participants in the symposium in the *Economic and Political Weekly* were invited to contribute to this volume, three of whom did, and have considerably expanded on their original insight as is evident in this collection. The workshop held at Oxford in February 2016 had ten papers presented for discussion, five of which have been included in this volume.

What is important and original about this collection is that it is the first comprehensive academic analysis on Pakistan's political economy since the

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publication of Gardezi and Rashid (1983). Written at the height of General Zia ul Haq's dictatorship, this collection explored themes important thirty-five years ago. Engaging with issues of feudalism, the Asiatic mode of production, Islam and ideology, democracy and dictatorship, debt and dependency, as well as a focus on productive forces, and of course, on the state (by Alavi no less). Its publication was a brave and major intervention and political statement against a repressive military dictator. The scholars were writing in an era in which new theoretical and scholarly trends and new methods in conceptualising political economy were only just emerging.

Our collection is less about debt, imperialism, or feudalism, and more about gender, the middle classes, media, the bazaar economy, urban spaces and the new elites. It is about Pakistan today. The book goes beyond a contemporary obsession with terrorism and extremism or with political Islam, or with simple 'civilian–military relations', and looks at modern-day Pakistan through the lens of varied academic disciplines. The book would be relevant to new political economists (those coming from anthropology, economic geography, sociology, etc., rather than just the traditional disciplines such as political science). It also formulates a new political economy for Pakistan. It is explicitly inter-disciplinary in its focus, looking at themes from economics, politics, sociology, media studies, economic anthropology, women's studies and political science. This reflects the contemporary reality of Pakistan noted earlier – the diversification in the social sciences in Pakistan, away from the complete dominance of economics.

A clear feature of this book is that all the scholars engage with Alavi's (1972) older formulation, with Akhtar (2008) and with Zaidi (2014a), particularly focusing and engaging with the latter, but are not constrained by previous formulations and often contest those earlier perspectives. Khan (this volume) for example argues that conceptualising either 'institutions' (Zaidi) or 'class' (Alavi) in isolation is not warranted because both are dialectically interrelated in the context of postcolonial Pakistan. This book brings together not just new work by emerging scholars of Pakistan, but also formulates new and fresh ways of seeing Pakistan's political economy, not simply focusing on 'the state'. Surprisingly, in some of the essays the state is absent in its overt manifestation and hides in the shadows, replaced by an interpretative analysis of institutions such as the military, the media, the market, embedded in particular power relations. The state emerges more as a hegemonic 'relational conception', as Gupta (1995) has argued, of governmentality, rather than an almighty structure, perhaps emphasising the fracturisation of *the* state into its many parts. Also, while the book does discuss class, it is complemented by various

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other categories of analysis. It is not just Pakistan which has moved away from class, but this is more a trend of our times. As Zamora argues, following the beginnings of the post-Marxist trend in the late 1970s, with the Foucauldian turn affecting social sciences globally, 'a broad conception of identity thus came to replace the notion of exploitation. As the concept of "social class" disappeared from philosophical analysis, the struggle against capitalism was gradually being replaced by a struggle against normalisation of behaviors and identities imposed on subjects, as well as against Marxism and "social Statism"' (2016:64). The multidisciplinary nature of each paper and of the collection allows the scholars to move beyond strict disciplinary limitations. Moreover, compared to many publications on Pakistan, particularly on its political economy, this collection is far more rigorous in its theoretical foundations, while also being empirically founded, as it is based mostly on recent fieldwork and relevant data.

Moving away from older structural conceptualisations and imperatives of the state and some institutions, this book moves closer to explaining how society and state interact and intersect dialectically, a key lacuna in Alavi (1972). Such points of interaction include the military, the elites, women and Islam, the bazaar, or urban spaces. Each contributor looks at his or her particular area of specialisation and interest, integrating it with broader notions of state and society. Moreover, in the era of neoliberalist developmentalism and globalisation, while none of the papers directly examine an economistic understanding of neoliberalism, one can see how the expansion of the market, the retreat of the state, and the emergence of non-state actors and institutions inform much of the analysis. Missing from our collection here is a more informed engagement with 'resistance' (on which see Akhtar 2008) or with the subaltern, although some papers do examine possible openings for solidarity and political action, albeit, related more to the new 'rising classes' of traders, the middle classes and other bourgeois aspiring social groups. As a result, the political subjectivity of different groups and institutions emerges in a more dynamic and fluid form. Concepts which have gained much currency in political economy scholarship particularly in India – such as primitive accumulation and the politics of dispossession (Sanyal 2006; Chatterjee 2008; Sinha 2015) – are also, as yet, not theorised in the scholarship on Pakistan. The chapters here tend to be heavily focused on the Punjab and, relatively speaking, they neglect the other provinces of Pakistan. In this volume, Javid, for example, writes about the pool of 400 dynastic families in the Punjab who dominate the upper and lower houses of parliament. Armytage focuses on business and political elites who are mostly from the Punjab and Khyber Paktunkhwa but she does note that a few hail from Sindh such as some of the Muhajir business

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elites. Sulheria records that of the top 100 columnists and anchors in Pakistan, 50 are from the Punjab and based in Lahore or Islamabad-Rawalpindi, 12 to 15 are retired civil and military bureaucrats mainly from the Punjab but 25 to 30 are Urdu-speaking, from Karachi-Islamabad-Lahore. Jan uses original fieldwork from the Punjab while Suhail bases his chapter on fieldwork from Lyari Town in Karachi. Javid argues that the 18th Amendment passed in 2010 was in part motivated by the anxieties on part of smaller provinces regarding the dominant role of the Punjab, and Zia uses the case study of the rise to power of militant groups in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa between 2002 and 2008 to illustrate a more extreme moment when religion exerted a profound influence over law implementation and legislation-making.

Akhtar writes that the General Zia regime after 1977 demolished the traditional revolutionary left and autonomous class and student organisations, and that today in Pakistan barely 3 per cent of the workforce is unionised. Otherwise there is little discussion in this volume about labour, revolutionary politics or student organisations. Javid mentions briefly the rise of independent technocratic institutions such as the Provincial Finance Commissions (PFCs) and Local Government Commissions (LGCs) and also the greater independence of the State Bank of Pakistan, but they are not discussed in any detail in this book. Despite the Global Financial Crisis being a decade old and, as suggested by some, being at least partly responsible for the slowing down of economic growth in Pakistan, it receives almost no mention in this book beyond a few general hints in Akhtar that the crisis tendencies with the capitalist system have given rise to a growing financialisation insofar as the real productive sectors of the economy are increasingly less a site of profit in comparison to sectors such as real estate and derivatives trading. Neither does inequality, a big pre-occupation in much contemporary international political economy, get much discussion, save for Armytage's discussion of Pakistan's political, economic, and class structure.

The chapters in this volume dynamically and dialectically try to capture emergent processes and trends. They are an invitation to other scholars to engage with and move beyond the way this collection frames Pakistan's changing political economy, a key idea raised by Zaidi (2014a). The chapters also throw light on the changing nature of the social sciences and of political economy academic work with regard to Pakistan. Just as the overdeveloped state in Pakistan has undergone change, we stake the claim, that so too has the underdeveloped nature of social science in Pakistan, both claims to which this book bears considerable testimony.

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1 In a Desperate State

The Social Sciences and the Overdeveloped State in Pakistan, 1950 to 1983

Matthew McCartney

INTRODUCTION

Hamza Alavi published 'The State in Post-Colonial Societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh' in 1972 with the aim of drawing general lessons for the classical Marxist theory of the state from a single case study – postcolonial Pakistan. He argued that Pakistan's colonial experience endowed it with a state that was 'overdeveloped' after independence relative to the developing economy and society of Pakistan. What Alavi called the 'three propertied classes' (the indigenous bourgeoisie, metropolitan bourgeoisie and large farmers) at independence had convergent, not competing, economic interests which allowed a bureaucratic-military-dominated state to mediate between them and so gave the state a relatively autonomous role. Two subsequent essays 'Class and State' and 'Elite Farmer Strategy and Regional Disparities in Agricultural Development' were published by Alavi in 1983 in an edited collection (Gardezi and Rashid 1983). These essays sought to explore in greater detail 'the social character of the civil bureaucracy and military, class origins, class affiliations and class commitments of the dominant classes and the struggle of subordinate classes'.

While other chapters in this book look forward to thinking about the validity of Alavi and his overdeveloped state argument in the decades since publication, this chapter looks backwards. This chapter considers the validity of Alavi's model in the post-independence decades up to the early 1980s in light of the evidence which would have been available to Alavi himself. In doing so this chapter goes back to Alavi and looks in careful detail at the strengths and weaknesses of his model of the overdeveloped state and asks how valid

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the model was as a representation of the Pakistani state and society between the 1950s and early 1980s.

The next section looks in detail at the three propertied classes, followed by a section on state autonomy and the overdeveloped state, after which we turn to factors that were missing from Alavi's analysis, such as politicians and labour, and then concludes with an overall evaluation of Alavi's model of the overdeveloped state.

THREE PROPERTIED CLASSES

The colonial state was what Guha called 'an autocracy set up and sustained by a democracy' the consequences of which was the 'historic failure of capital to realise its universalising tendency under colonial conditions' (1997:12). The state in postcolonial society, argued Alavi, was not then the instrument of any single class (such as the capitalists), but instead was relatively autonomous and so able to mediate between the competing interests of the three propertied classes, the large farmers, the indigenous bourgeoisie and the metropolitan bourgeoisie (Alavi 1972). This section finds that Alavi makes a reasonable case for the importance of large farmers and the indigenous bourgeoisie and makes a weaker case that metropolitan capital was of lesser importance. The evidence presented is, therefore, consistent with Alavi's model of the overdeveloped state.

Large Farmers

Alavi is consistently clear about the importance of large farmers as a dominant class and the evidence supports his claim. The 1960 Pakistan Census of Agriculture showed that large farms of 25-plus acres constituted 8 per cent of the total farms but 42 per cent of the farm area (Alavi 1983b:305). Adding in the area under tenant farmers to these figures for self-cultivation implies that large landlords owned nearly 70 per cent of the total farm area (Alavi 1983b:305). Large farmers spread their economic influence from farming after 1947 as they took the place of migrating Hindu traders in local urban markets for produce (*mandi*s) and expanded into agro-based industries such as cotton ginning, flour milling and rice husking (Alavi 1983). In 1950, agriculture comprised 53 per cent of Pakistan's GDP and 80 per cent of its exports (Khan 1999:99). The economic dominance of large farmers was translated into political influence as under parliamentary democracy landowners dominated

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party politics (Alavi 1972). The evidence is consistent with the key thesis of Alavi's theory of the autonomous overdeveloped state as agricultural policy from the 1950s to the 1980s could not be read off as a clear function of this class dominance of large farmers.

The state did not have full autonomy; large farmers retained a veto power on some policy interventions. Attempts at land reform failed. The Sindh Tenancy Act of 1950 and, at the national level, land reform efforts of 1959, 1972 and 1977 were thwarted in implementation by powerful landlords (Herring and Chaudhry 1974; Khan 1986; Khan 2002; Raj 2002). There is a similar story regarding direct taxation where it is difficult to reconcile the 'overdeveloped state' in Pakistan with its continual and thwarted efforts to tax agriculture through a universal income tax (Khan 1999:138) or a wealth tax (Khan 1999). The ratio of tax on land to crop income fell continuously, from nearly 3 per cent in the 1950s to 0.45 per cent in 1995. Using a conservative estimate of per hectare net crop income gives a figure of average direct tax of around 1.67 per cent of a farmer's net crop income (Khan 1999:131–2).

While being able to veto some state policies, large farmers were not able to utilise their class dominance to leverage direct benefits from the state. Over the 1950s there were only small *taccavi* (distress) loans given by the provincial governments in case of crop failure and limited funds for investment in farms available through the Federal Agricultural Bank (FAB) and Agricultural Development Finance Corporation (ADFC) (Khan 1999). Macroeconomic policy – exchange rate over-valuation, high import duties on manufactured goods, export duties on raw materials and price controls on food grains – together turned the terms of trade sharply against agriculture in the 1950s, so transferring resources from farmers to manufacturers through rigged market prices (McCartney 2011:84).

It was only during the 1960s that government policy started to systematically favour large farmers. The exact meaning of 'large' has been debated, Alavi (1976) considered them to be a 'traditional landed aristocracy' and Burki (1976) 'middle class agricultural entrepreneurs', but both agreed on the gains from government policy to the large farmers. Again, this can be reconciled to the thesis of the autonomous overdeveloped state as this policy shift occurred when there was clear evidence of the declining economic influence of large farmers. The share of agriculture fell from 53 to 29 per cent of GDP between 1950 and 1980 and by 20 per cent in terms of its share in national exports (Khan, 1999:99). Policy cannot be deterministically read off changing levels of class influence.

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In 1960 the Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan (ADBP) was set up to channel credit to farmers. The state also introduced high support prices for wheat and large subsidies on modern technology such as tractors, tube-wells, fertilisers, pesticides and new varieties of seed (Alavi 1983:61). This favour continued into the Bhutto years as the five main national commercial banks were nationalised and compelled to boost their lending to agriculture after 1972. Three quarters of loans extended by the ADBP were channelled to farmers with 5-plus hectares (Khan 1999:114).

Alavi argues that these material state-distributed benefits were linked to the rising economic and political influence within agriculture of, specifically, large farmers. Alavi argued that the Green Revolution unleashed a dynamic that further strengthened the influence of large farmers. He maintained that the introduction of mechanical harvesting and threshing would eliminate the need for large farmers to retain sharecroppers as a tied source of seasonal labour and so support the rise of even larger mechanised farms (Alavi 1983b). Other scholars have supported this argument. Niazi showed census data from the decades after 1960 that revealed a continuing decline in tenant-operated holdings and an equivalent rise in owner-occupied farms (2004:251). This argument links to a well-known narrative – that tube-wells and tractors require lump-sum investment so can only be afforded by large farmers. The use of chemical fertilisers and adoption of high-yield variety (HYV) seeds depends on the availability of irrigation water and so follows the pattern of tube-well use onto large farms. The heavier use of fertiliser and a greater marketed surplus on large farms implies that the benefits of input subsidies and price supports go to large farmers (M.G. Chaudhry 1982). Alavi (1983b) clearly buys into this narrative and links the relative gain of the large farmers to those pro-agricultural policies noted earlier. He suggested that the big farmers made the most progress in farm mechanisation and drew on a Survey of Farm Mechanisation in 1968 which showed that 86.5 per cent of the cultivated area of mechanised farms was in the hands of owners with holdings of above 100 acres (Alavi 1983b:294). He argues that the consequence of the Green Revolution was, therefore, to widen disparities in income and wealth among the different strata of the rural population and also among regions (Alavi 1976; Burki 1976).

The evidence shows otherwise, that Alavi was wrong in tying the unequal benefits of the Green Revolution to the rising class strength of large farmers. The evidence is instead consistent with Alavi's contention that an overdeveloped state was making policy in agriculture independently of dominant class interests. Evidence shows that measures of inequality in land ownership in

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Pakistan as a whole and also in Punjab, Sindh and NWFP show a continuous decline between 1950 and 1980 (Khan 2002:182). Measures of operational holdings in the same regions show a decline in the 1960s then stagnation or a slight rise after the early 1970s (Khan 2002:182). The lowest 30 per cent of farmers by size doubled their share of land holdings from 3 to 6 per cent of total land area between 1960 and 1972 (M.G. Chaudhry 1982:180), and the number of marginal farmers continued increasing into the 1970s (Khan 1986:122). These figures have been disputed as Chaudhry focused on the distribution of operational holdings rather than ownership and the 1960 and 1972 censuses are based on different methodologies. Adjustments to make the results comparable show higher concentration among large farmers, at least in the Punjab, but not enough to change the result of the declining class strength of large farmers (Khan 1983:51). Another interpretation can be gleaned from Khan (1983) who uses a more complicated schematic to define and measure class, based on land ownership, land use and labour hire. According to his analysis, agriculture in Pakistan after the 1950s was characterised by a decline in feudalism (large landowners renting out land to sharecroppers), a rise in capitalist farming (owned or rented land worked by hired labour) and a rise in marginal farming (where land is often rented out to capitalist farmers) and landlessness, both providing labour to capitalist agriculture. Here we could suggest a more nuanced interpretation of Alavi: that agricultural policy was driven not by *dominant* class interests in agriculture but contributed to and was influenced by *changing* class interests, in particular the rise of capitalist agriculture that benefited from Green Revolution technology.

Alavi argues that tube-well development was the most important factor stimulating the Green Revolution and those tube-wells were concentrated in large farms (1983b:303). This was paralleled by a concentration of tractor ownership, and he suggests that 94 per cent of the tractors in West Pakistan by 1968 were on large (25-plus acres) farms (Alavi, 1983b:304). The evidence does not support the monopolisation of such inputs by large farms. Large firms had an early lead in the adoption of HYVs, but this differential had disappeared by 1971–72. The use of traditional forms of irrigation (such as the Persian Wheel) and purchase of the rental services of tractors and tube-wells implied that by 1971–72 more than 79 per cent of the cropped area owned by small farmers benefited from irrigation facilities as against 60 per cent owned by large farmers (M.G. Chaudhry 1982:177). Despite credit market constraints, small farmers increased their ownership of tube-wells at a faster rate than large farmers during the 1970s. Small farmers (122.6 per cent) had a

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higher cropping intensity than large farmers (94.6 per cent) (M.G. Chaudhry 1982:177) and cultivated a much larger share of their total farm area 87.6 per cent (farms 0–12.5 acres) compared to only 34 per cent on large (150-plus acres) farms (Herring and Chaudhry 1974:260). This combination of factors led to either declining income inequality between small and large landowners during the 1960s (M.G. Chaudhry 1982:1973) or a more critical examination of data and method, suggesting very little change in measures of income inequality (Khan 1983).

The Indigenous Bourgeoisie

Alavi (1983) noted that there were only a handful of industrial undertakings of size in Pakistan at independence and they were mostly Hindu-owned. After independence, the migrant Gujarati-speaking businessmen who filled their economic role had minimal links with the Urdu-speaking political leadership, bureaucracy and military. This, he argues, meant that in comparison with large farmers the indigenous bourgeoisie was economically and politically weak (Alavi 1983).

The wider evidence clearly supports this contention. Pakistan was predominantly an agrarian economy in c. 1950; agriculture comprised 53 per cent of its GDP and manufacturing only 6.4 per cent (McCartney 2011:42). India received 95 per cent of the industrial establishments of pre-independence South Asia. Most industry in Pakistan was based around flour and rice mills and sugar and cotton ginning factories and most of this was small-scale and owned by farmers to process agricultural products. East Pakistan was the world's biggest supplier of jute but had no jute mills; output was exported to mills in Calcutta. West Pakistan was a major supplier of raw cotton but had inherited only 14 of the nearly 400 cotton textile mills of British India (Rothermund 1993; Roy 2002; Habib 2006; Tripathi and Jumani 2007). East Bengal produced raw materials that were exported to the paper mills of West Bengal and woollen mills of India (Talha 2000:153). Muslims owned only one bank, the Muslim Commercial Bank, founded in July 1947, and three insurance companies (Talha 2000).

Alavi argues that despite the weakness of the bourgeoisie, state policy was targeted to pushing a tiny merchant class into industry through boosting the profitability of manufacturing production (Alavi 1972, 1983; Ahmed and Amjad 1984). This is compatible with the thesis of the overdeveloped state, where state policy was not a function of existing relative class strength.

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In September 1949 sterling was devalued against the dollar and a large number of countries including India followed, but not Pakistan; this lowered the cost of imported machinery and equipment (Alavi 1983). Sharp increases in import tariffs prevented the overvalued currency from reducing the price of imported manufactured goods and threatening local production. Local producers were instead able to charge higher prices (Islam 1970:59). By 1954–55 effective rates of protection (ERP) in Pakistan were 76 per cent for consumer goods and 71 per cent for intermediate goods (Lewis 1969:134). Costs of production in industry were kept down through very low or zero import duties on capital goods and raw materials. This trade policy combined with other tax incentives meant that by the early 1960s the market cost of capital was only 25–33 per cent of its world price (Guisinger and Kazi 1978:394). Export duties on raw wool and cotton, cement, rice, fish, bamboo, hides and skin, jute and tea were used throughout the 1950s which served to lower prices when used for inputs for domestic industry (Radhu, 1964). During the 1960s the Export Bonus System was introduced which permitted incumbent exporters buying capital equipment from abroad to purchase foreign exchange at a preferential exchange rate (P. Hasan 1998:160). Together these interventions to favour manufactures generated annual profits of 50–100 per cent in the early 1950s, which only slowly declined to around 20 per cent in the 1960s (Papanek 1967:33, 39; Amjad 1982:67). These profits faced many exemptions such as tax holidays which meant that in practice less than 30 per cent of corporate profits were taxed (Lewis 1970:135). In 1964–65 legally sanctioned tax arrears were twice as large as direct tax payments and only 75 per cent of the direct taxes assessed that year were actually paid (Papanek 1967:193; White 1974:164; Amjad 1982:35). The government set up the Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan (IDBP) and Pakistan Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation (PICIC) to channel lending to industry. Between 1960 and 1965, government authorisation for an investment project came with the ability to obtain the necessary foreign exchange from the IDBP or PICIC. Combined, these provided almost 70 per cent of the foreign exchange required and accounted for about 65 per cent of total investment sanctioned between 1960 and 1965, and 60 per cent over the remainder of the 1960s (Amjad 1982:56).

These benefits were targeted at a very small group of merchant-industrialists. Muslim minority communities (mostly migrants from India) represented under 1 per cent of the population but by 1959 controlled over half of industrial assets (Lewis 1970:47) and two-thirds of private industrial investment (Papanek 1967:41). By 1970, 41 industrial houses controlled almost 80 per cent of the

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private domestic assets of non-financial and manufacturing companies quoted on the Karachi Stock Exchange (KSE) (Amjad 1983:241). Banks controlled by seven industrial families accounted for 60.3 per cent of all bank deposits in Pakistan. A Credit Inquiry Commission in 1959 found that 60 per cent of all bank credit went into 222 accounts (White 1974:42). There was a realistic perception that the top ranks of the industrialists were closed off to newcomers. The top three houses in 1961, Adamjee, Saigol and Dawood, were unchanged a decade later. Statistical analysis shows that the licenses for capital goods licenses received by a family over the 1960s were positively related to the assets it controlled in 1961 (White 1974). The leading business families dominated the positions of directors of government-controlled financial and industrial corporations (N. Hasan 1997:77).

In contrast to the 1950s and 1960s, the Pakistani bourgeoisie suffered an apparent setback in the 1970s. This interlude illustrates an important corollary of the thesis of the overdeveloped state, that it was able to display policy flexibility as objective conditions changed. In 1972 the Bhutto government nationalised ten capital and intermediate goods sectors with cotton mills, banking, rice and flour following in subsequent years (Ahmed and Amjad 1984:92; P. Hasan 1998:208–209).

The policy shift was real in substance and strongly opposed by the industrial bourgeoisie, but it is easy to exaggerate its practical implications. Net assets of the majority of the top 26 industrial families were actually unaffected by the nationalisation programme, and the remainder saw only small reductions (Amjad 1976:254). By 1974, the left wing of Bhutto's party had been 'purged' and, as a result, genuine efforts to redistribute the wealth of the biggest business houses ceased (Noman 1988:74, 79). The Bhutto government quickly backtracked from its early efforts to profit politically from working class militancy through populist rhetoric and began a brutal suppression of the working class movement. By the time of the 1974–75 and 1975–76 budgets, private business was receiving incentives and reassurances there would be no more nationalisations (Alavi 1983).

Metropolitan Capital

In an earlier paper Alavi (1964) noted that US aid to Pakistan systematically tended to benefit US corporations, but otherwise Alavi did not have that much to say on foreign (metropolitan) capital beyond noting that it was powerful but not among the three dominant propertied classes (Alavi 1983). He supports

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this contention by arguing, for example, that some important policies such as the launch of the Export Bonus Scheme in 1959 had no relationship with foreign aid or donor influence (Alavi 1983:525). Alavi does note that after Mossadeq's nationalisation of Iranian oil in 1951 the US switched to a closer military alliance with Pakistan, but he argues that the resulting loans and credits mainly from the US continued independently of that alliance (Alavi 1983). There is a widespread view that this is a major omission in Alavi's analysis and that in reality foreign capital exerted a dominant influence. Griffin (1965:621), for example, argued that the 'entire social and economic system, and the planning exercise which is its manifestation, is supported and sustained by foreign assistance', while Ali (2008:251) stated that 'US priorities determined Pakistan's domestic and foreign policies from 1951 onward'. The 1950s offers more support for this alternative perspective – that metropolitan capital was influential, did have a significant influence on policy making and that the state was not autonomous of its influence.

The impact of metropolitan capital did not operate through foreign direct investment (FDI). In 1947 foreign investment in Pakistan was relatively small and much of it confined to plantations and trade in East Pakistan. In utilities, where a sizeable stock of FDI existed, there was no new FDI after 1960 (S.A. Chaudhry 1970).

There was a striking domestic policy failure throughout the post-independence era, the inability of the Pakistani state to mobilise resources for development (discussed later). The narrowing of Pakistan's foreign policy engagement and continuing dependence on foreign aid to fill its domestic savings gap reduced the autonomy of the Pakistani state. There is evidence against the Alavi view, that domestic policy *was* heavily influenced by the US. The Ford Foundation supported the establishment of the Development Advisory Service at Harvard in 1952 – foreign advisors from which played a lead role in preparing the First Five-Year Plan. The Ford Foundation was also instrumental behind the launch of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) which became Pakistan's premier think tank (Burki 1999; Naseem 2002). Increases in foreign resources were sometimes the result of very specific changes in economic policy. The clearest example was the advent of the Free Trade List in 1964, which was financed by a 100 million dollar loan from the US (Papanek 1967). While under pressure from donors Pakistan signed the Indus Basin Treaty with India in 1960 which unlocked donor financing for large irrigation investments (P. Hasan 1998).

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While the 1960s are typically seen as the high-point of the influence of metropolitan capital there is some evidence to demonstrate that the Pakistani state was acquiring more autonomy. While the coup by the pro-Western Ayub Khan in 1958 was seen favourably by Western donors, those same donors objected to the 1965 war between India and Pakistan, and the US reduced aid to Pakistan after the mid-1960s (Amjad 1982). However, in response Pakistan quickly re-orientated its foreign policy and sources of aid, demonstrating more autonomy from metropolitan capital than hitherto. Pakistan improved its relations, in particular, with China, the USSR and other socialist countries. In the five years after 1965 China was the largest donor, with some 260 million dollars, but Czechoslovakia (40.1 million dollars), Poland (9.8 million dollars), USSR (93.0 million dollars) and Yugoslavia (33.7 million dollars) also contributed (Noman 1975:327). Between 1965 and 1966, China became a significant source of arms supplies. In 1968 an agreement was signed to import Soviet arms (Noman 1975). The three-year annual average value of trade with the socialist countries grew at the rate of 20 per cent per annum between 1959–60 and 1969–70. The share of such trade in Pakistan's total trade rose from 4.5 per cent in 1960 to nearly 14 per cent by the end of the decade (Noman 1975:322).

STATE AUTONOMY AND THE OVERDEVELOPED STATE

State Autonomy: Relative and Overdeveloped

Relative autonomy means that the state can be an autonomous organisational actor and so act on behalf of, not at the behest of, dominant groups. Alavi (1972) argued that the influence and power of each of the three propertied classes is offset by the other two and so the state is able to mediate and arbitrate between their competing demands.

Other scholars have never agreed to the view of the Pakistani state as dominant and overdeveloped, and instead have characterised it as 'fearful', as a state which saw pluralism as a sign of weakness, preferred coercion to co-option, was conscious of its own lack of legitimacy and fearful of subversion by ethnic and subaltern forces (Talbot 1998). The state had become extremely centralised for various reasons including a cult of unity generated by a feeling of insecurity vis-à-vis India, the feeling of vulnerability among a predominantly migrant leadership to any form of decentralisation, especially a regional leadership that had long mobilised politically outside the ruling and migrant Muslim League, and the all-Pakistan structure of the civil bureaucracy (Waseem and Hayat

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1997). According to this view it was the perception of its own vulnerability as an over-centralised, remote and brittle state rather than its overdeveloped status that prompted a harsh response to any perceived challenge. The state consistently regarded all dissent as a law and order problem rather than as a political issue (Talbot 1998). This perspective sees the 1958 coup as more an indication of the fear of newly emerging and uncontrolled political forces than it did the political strength of a ruling oligarchy. Ayub was concerned that the first general election scheduled for April 1959 might have produced a coalition that would take Pakistan out of the security pacts and into a non-aligned foreign policy (T. Ali 2008), or that power would end up being transferred away from the West Pakistani bureaucratic-military elite to groups from East Pakistan (Noman 1988) or that elections would have been won by the Awami League in East Pakistan and Qayyum Muslim League in West Pakistan, which represented the landed rural classes and would undermine the government's pro-industrial strategy (Amjad 1983:263). It is notable that dismissals of elected state governments by the centre often led to ethnic conflict rather than a strengthening of central authority. This occurred in the NWFP in 1947 and 1973, Balochistan in 1973 and East Pakistan and Sindh in the 1950s (Waseem and Hayat 1997:732). The labelling of the Pakistani state has become a burgeoning academic endeavour which reminds us not to unhesitatingly opt for Alavi's version. The existing labels include the Warrior State (Paul 2013), the Garrison State (Ahmed 2013), the Frontline State (Akhtar, 2010) and the Crisis State (Lodhi, 2011) among various others.

The next section looks at the implications of having three propertied classes and it finds various weaknesses with the Alavi model. There is little evidence for the claim that the overdeveloped state was autonomous in setting policy – the civil service and the military were constructions of the post-independence years and not a legacy of an overdeveloped colonial state. Alavi ignores the mass of the Pakistani state below the 'overdeveloped' apex, and we are left wondering why farmers, industrialists and metropolitan capital are labelled 'classes' and the bureaucracy and military as 'the state'.

Was the State Autonomous (Policy)?

State policy that promoted industry at the expense of agriculture throughout the 1950s when industrialists were weak, and landowners were clearly a dominant social group, can be explained if we accept that the bureaucracy and later the military were relatively autonomous of other social groupings (Amjad

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1983:261). But there is no consistent evidence that this relative autonomy allowed the Pakistani state to implement policies over the 1950s in accordance with its long-term goals.

The first comprehensive efforts at planning in Pakistan began in 1953 with the appointment of a Planning Board that drew up the First Five-Year Plan scheduled to run from 1955 to 1960. The plan was largely ignored and abandoned after the military coup in 1958 (Lewis 1969:11). The structure of investment bore no relation to the plan, with actual investment in agriculture falling short by 36 per cent, irrigation by 15 per cent, power by 13 per cent, while investment in industry exceeded the planned levels by 10 per cent, housing by 42 per cent and education by 26 per cent (Huq 1966:156). Rural development interventions in the 1950s and 1960s endeavoured to promote cottage industries, increase rural credit, village co-operatives and agricultural productivity. These interventions tended to be top-down and state-led but aspired to promote local-level community action. These programmes repeatedly failed in achieving their objectives and invariably ended up being hijacked by locally dominant prosperous farmers and subsidising their private consumption and investment (Waseem 1982).

Alavi's argument that the overdeveloped state mobilises a large portion of the economic surplus to promote development is belied by the data. During the 1950s and 1960s taxes on income and wealth typically raised less than 1 per cent of GDP and total tax revenue increased from 3.1 per cent of GDP in 1949–50 to only 6.4 per cent of GDP in 1969–70 (Pasha and Fatima 1999:204). There is likewise no evidence that government spending was utilised to promote economic development. By 1969–70, for example, developmentally oriented expenditure on social, economic and community services and subsidies comprised only 0.5 per cent of GDP (Pasha and Fatima 1999:209). It was only by the 1970s that tax revenue surged, reaching 10.5 per cent of GDP in 1975–76 (Pasha and Fatima 1999:204). Much of this increase was taken up by funding more military spending and servicing a growing debt (Pasha and Fatima 1999:209). The failure of domestic resource mobilisation meant that Pakistan continued to depend on foreign capital inflows (see later).

In Pakistan there were some improvements in the planning mechanisms in the late 1950s, 'the administrative structure was toned up, the institutional arrangements involved improved and the system of planning built into the whole fabric of society' (Huq 1966:196). The Second Five-Year Plan (1960–65) aimed to increase national income by 20 per cent via a doubling of gross investment. 'In practise the increase in income, investment and savings by the mid-1960s

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meant that the implementation of the plan has been fairly satisfactory' (Huq 1966:196). The increase in agricultural growth after 1959, and especially after 1965, was due to the Green Revolution technology package of HYVs, chemical fertilisers and pesticides. Government intervention in agriculture was sustained, consistent and successful. The Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan (ADBP) provided numerous loans to farmers to set up private tube-wells. The number of tube-wells increased from a few hundred in 1960 to 75,000 in 1968. The increase in water availability from irrigation/tube-wells was estimated to be responsible for much of the output gain (Zaidi 2015:33). In the 1960s two semi-autonomous Water and Power Development agencies (WAPDAs) were established in each province and the West Pakistan branch completed the substantial Indus Basin Replacement Workers ahead of schedule by the mid-1960s (Papanek 1967:156). Water availability, fertiliser off-take and the number of tractors in use expanded rapidly, driven by government infrastructure spending or credit from the ADBP (Zaidi 2015:33). Adaptive research experiments by state-funded research institutes and dissemination of results by state extension agencies together facilitated the rapid spread of HYVs in wheat and rice. By 1969–70 more than half of Pakistan's irrigated area was cultivated with the improved seeds (S. Ali 2005).

These improvements in planning were short-lived. By autumn 1968 there were widespread disturbances throughout the country, including massive labour unrest. The ability of the Pakistani state to link its allocation of credit to industry to be conditional on the acquisition of planning goals, such as the adoption of high technology, declined. In response to the political conflict, the government responded by increasing allocation of credit to those with political influence rather than economic potential (Khan 2000).

The Civil Service

The strength of the civil service bureaucracy is a crucial part of Alavi's argument that the state was overdeveloped and autonomous at independence in Pakistan. The evidence shows, contrary to his thesis, that this autonomy was not a legacy of the colonial experience but was constructed *after independence*.

In India, at least, the Indian Civil Service (ICS) in 1951 was still the elitist, meritocratic, professional institution of bureaucratic power formerly known as 'the steel frame of the Raj'. The British in India provided this steel frame despite constituting 'less than one tenth of one percent of the population in India'. (Goodnow 1964:6). The ICS was considered to be 'legal-rational, hierarchically

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organised, and technically competent and expected to remain politically neutral' (Banik 2001). Article 311 of the Indian Constitution protected the civil service from arbitrary dismissal or reduction in rank (Chakrabarty 2006). The bureaucracy at independence had a 'well-articulated, smoothly functioning administrative machine, headed by an elite corps which could stand comparison with any analogous body of senior administrators anywhere in the world' (Hanson, 1966:268) and the 'police and military services were subordinate to civil authorities' (Goodnow 1964:33).

It was different in Pakistan. Sikhs and Hindus had risen through the senior ranks in increasing numbers, especially after exams were first held in India in 1921. Muslims, by contrast, experienced a long decline in influence from their positions of power in the Mughal aristocracy as judges and administrators. By the 1930s, even in Muslim majority provinces they comprised a significant minority of those in government service, as shown in Table 1.1. They had minimal representation in key departments such as customs, railways and accounts (Talha 2000:164–165). In 1946–47 there was no Muslim at the level of Secretary in the Secretariat of the Governor General, Finance Department, Central Board of Revenue, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Department of War Transport, Railways Department, Department of Works, Mines and Power (Talha 2000:51).

Table 1.1 Share of Muslims in Government Service (Muslim Majority Provinces)

Province	*Percentage of Muslims in Total population (1931)*	*Percentage Share of Muslims*
Punjab	52.2	19.35
NWFP	94.1	24.2
Baluchistan	87.4	10.5

Source: Talha (2000:9).

The absence of senior Muslim civil servants and the migration of their Hindu and Sikh counterparts meant that while India largely inherited the British civil service intact, Pakistan had to construct a new central government, and 'the division of the British Indian administrative structure is a key factor in assessing the differential inheritances of India and Pakistan' (Jalal 1995:18). The strength of the civil service bureaucracy in Pakistan was a product of the postcolonial era and not a legacy of the colonial experience. Efforts in Pakistan to rebuild the civil service after 1947 were successful. Alavi (1983) noted that the ICS had been resurrected in the form of the Civil Service of Pakistan

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(CSP) with 500 members who had resumed the status of being a tight-knit, exclusive group that jealously guarded their privileged identity. Training and initial recruitment was controlled by the Public Services Commission whose autonomy was itself manned by CSP officers. The Prime Minister retained constitutional responsibility to approve all appointments to senior positions but in practice he rubber-stamped decisions already taken by the civil service and retained little discretion (Goodnow 1964:149, 184). The crucial figure in local administration was the district officer (usually a CSP officer) who 'was *the* government' (Goodnow 1964:48) as revenue collector, judge and police chief. This closed group was 'almost a caste on its own' and had 'an extraordinary esprit de corps' whose members provided mutual support and solidarity and supported a legitimating myth of guardianship (Alavi 1983). This unity was facilitated by the disproportionate influence of Muhajirs (migrants to Pakistan at the time of independence) in the federal bureaucracy. By 1973, Muhajirs who constituted 3 per cent of Pakistan's population filled 33.5 per cent of senior jobs in the federal bureaucracy (Waseem 1996:621). This early dominance was facilitated by their dominance in the Muslim League, facility in speaking Urdu, the language of the bureaucracy, and their pre-migration background as urban-dwellers (Verkaaik 2016:846). At the top of 1950s politics a stream of Governors-general, Prime Ministers and Chief Secretary to the Cabinet were serving or ex-CSP officers (Goodnow 1964:69).

The military coup in 1958 briefly disrupted bureaucratic power. The military undertook a review of the civil service within the first twelve months and more than 1,500 officers were removed on the grounds of inefficiency and corruption, even the CSP was affected and 13 of their members were sacked (A. Chaudhry 2012:48). This process was short-lived and the CSP was actually strengthened by the 1960s. After the purge 'he [Ayub] changed his mind when he realized that despite his purge of the CSP, the bureaucracy continued to maintain an esprit de corps and had the experience and ability to wield state power effectively' (A. Chaudhry 2012:144). By November 1958 Ayub had ordered the army out of the civil service and back to the barracks. Throughout the 1960s all positions of consequence in the federal and two provincial governments, the state-run corporations, as well as the position of the Chief Election Commissioner, were held by CSP officers (A. Chaudhry 2012:51). The threat of action against CSP officers which had occurred in 1958 was later rescinded when the previous constitutional protection from the Government of India Act of 1935 was restored in the 1962 Constitution (A. Chaudhry 2012:95).

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It was not until the time of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government in the 1970s that the hold of the military-bureaucratic oligarchy was seriously challenged. The CSP was abolished in August 1973 and members of all cadres were merged into the All Pakistan Unified Grades with all officers being allocated an appropriate grade within the overall grade structure. There was to be free movement of personnel within the unified bureaucracy, eliminating the exclusiveness of the CSP and its privileged access to higher posts in government. The reforms also introduced lateral entry and the 'caste like structure of the CSP dominated bureaucracy of Pakistan was broken' (Alavi 1983:76).

The Military

Alavi (1972, 1983) argues that the dominant position of the bureaucratic-military oligarchy in the state meant that they could manipulate politicians and political parties and they had effective command of the state from the moment of independence (1972:65). Earlier we discussed how the bureaucracy had to be recreated after independence. There is also evidence that the military were not the masters of an overdeveloped state at the moment of independence but had to likewise gradually increase their influence.

While there were Sikh- and Hindu-only regiments that could join India as intact organisations, Muslims did not have their own regiments[1] (Talha 2000:53). One estimate is that there were only one hundred Muslim officers of the rank of captain and above in the British Indian army that opted for Pakistan and none of these were above the rank of colonel. Almost five hundred British officers were still present as late as 1951 when the first Pakistani (Ayub Khan) became Commander-in-Chief. The early years of Pakistan were dominated by efforts of recreating a functioning military; for instance, 70 per cent of the 1950–51 national budget went to the military (Huq 1966). The Pakistan Military Academy and later Air Force Academy (modelled on Britain's Sandhurst) were created after independence (Hashmi 1983). As the 1950s wore on, the military did very quickly increase its influence. After the dismissal of the Nazimuddin government in 1953 General Ayub Khan was appointed as a minister in the new government instead of being retired as rules demanded and was granted a further extension in 1958. The closer connections with the US from signing the CENTO treaty in 1955 further enhanced the role of the military (Siddiqa 2007; Shah 2014). Ayub Khan as army Commander-in-Chief

[1] A legacy of the 1857 Mutiny which was perceived to have been led by Muslims.

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negotiated directly with Washington to secure the military aid programme of 1953–54 (T. Ali 2008). The 1954 agreement with the US gave the military a source of funding independent from the budgetary decisions of domestic politicians (Pardesi and Ganguly 2010:57). The contrast with India becomes striking as the 1950s wore on. In 1946 Nehru replaced the Commander-in-Chief with a civilian Defence Minister in the central Cabinet. The President was made the supreme commander of the armed forces. In 1955 the position of Commander-in-Chief was abolished and each wing of the military (navy, army and air-force) was led by a respective Chief of Staff. The Indian army was fragmented into six regional commands each with a separate headquarters and communication with other commands was mediated by the civilian Defence Ministry (Pardesi and Ganguly 2010). The rise of the military also reflects the overwhelming dominance of the state of the Punjab within Pakistan which was the traditional recruiting ground for the British Indian army. During World War I, for example, Punjabis constituted 87 per cent of the artillery in the British Indian army, 66 per cent of the cavalry and 45 per cent of the infantry. At independence, one third of Punjabi men between 18 and 30 had served in the British Indian army (Pardesi and Ganguly, 2010:54). Even during the Emergency in India (unlike the uprising in Balochistan after 1973) the army remained confined to the barracks and the police were responsible for implementing repressive interventions (Ganguly 2016).

The military coup in 1958 considerably strengthened the role of the army (Afzal 2001). The military government suppressed criticism through press restrictions and took over a major newspaper (Progressive Papers Ltd). All political organisations, such as political parties, student bodies, trade unions and professional associations were banned, and elected institutions from the National Assembly down were abolished. A University Ordinance banned students and teachers from participating in political activity. The Elective Bodies Disqualification Ordinance (EBDO) in 1959 was meant to coerce the political class and led to the disqualification (until December 1966) of some 3,000-plus politicians (Alavi 1972). The 1962 Constitution specified that the defence minister had to be a senior military officer (Goodnow 1964:265). When an apparent alternative to military domination did win an election in 1970, the incoming PPP government failed to make a permanent break with the status quo. General Zia ul Haq was able to launch the coup in 1977, to execute Bhutto and over time to reassert a military-dominated state-centred patronage politics as Alavi (1972) had envisaged. After taking power, Zia sacked the Chief Justice, retired numerous judges and forced those remaining

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to take oath of office to declare loyalty to his regime. The national parliament was renamed the Majlis Shura (or Advisory Committee) which served only as a consultative body to the military government (Waseem 2011).

Below the Apex

The notion of an overdeveloped and autonomous state ignores the internal heterogeneity of the colonial and postcolonial states in Pakistan. While the ICS of Pakistan may have come to seem overdeveloped and relatively autonomous, the political reality below the apex of the 1,000 officers of the ICS was always very different. As colonial rule had spread in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the British had secured their influence by making a variety of arrangements with notable locals who then collected taxes and maintained order. Across British India this limited the downward reach of the colonial state (Kohli 2004). At the end of the colonial period, land tax was only 1 per cent of national income and the total tax burden 6 per cent (Maddison 1971). Public expenditures during the first half of the twentieth century averaged 10 per cent of GDP and more than half of this was spent on running the state (the military and civil service) and maintaining the legal framework and judiciary. This top-down division of the state continued after 1947 and was aptly termed by Pritchett (2009) for the case of India – the 'Flailing State'. Pritchett wrote of impressive state institutions at the apex – the Supreme Court, the Election Commission, the civil service and nuclear programmes. Below this he argued the capacity of the Indian (or Pakistani) states to implement programmes is weak and there is 'rampant absenteeism, indifference, incompetence and corruption' in the functioning of the 'police, tax collection, education, health, power supply, and water supply'. In Pakistan centrally sponsored rural development initiatives invariably failed to reach their targeted beneficiaries and were commandeered by locally powerful landed groups for their own benefit (Waseem 1982).

The Military and Bureaucracy as Classes?

During the early decades of independence, the military, argues Alavi, could be clearly distinguished from the three propertied classes. The army was mainly recruited from the unirrigated area of Rawalpindi Division of the Punjab and parts of NWFP, which was one of the most impoverished and congested agricultural regions of the country and later even failed to benefit from the

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Green Revolution. Over time this distinction became less easy to make. The policy of granting land to army officers (and also to members of the civil bureaucracy) meant that army officers not coming from a landed background acquired landed interests and a corresponding class alignment. Since the 1960s, some generals (and also senior bureaucrats) emerged as some of the biggest businessmen in the country. Many were given profitable places on boards of companies on or even before retirement (Alavi 1972). This is the 'military capital' or 'Milbus' that has been explored more recently by Siddiqa (2007). Siddiqa defines Milbus as 'military capital used for the personal benefit of the military fraternity especially the officer cadre which is not recorded as part of the defence budget or does not follow the normal accountability procedures of the state', making it an independent genre of capital. The military was given 10 per cent of approximately 9 million acres reclaimed from construction of the Kotri, Guddu and Ghulam Muhammad dams in Sindh. After the third martial law in 1977 four military foundations were registered under laws that categorised them as private sector entities and so remained beyond the reach of government auditors. Over time, the army acquired greater financial autonomy and became increasingly independent of the state (Siddiqa 2007; Shah 2014). Siddiqa is quite clear that the military has emerged as a class (though does not elaborate on the problematic of an institution becoming a class) and is not just a component of the state (2007:5). Akhtar (this volume), likewise, calls the military a 'class'.

Conflict or Co-operation

The mediating role of the bureaucratic-military oligarchy between the competing demands of the three propertied classes is possible, argues Alavi (1972), because those three classes have mutually compatible interests. An accommodation between the native bourgeoisie and the feudal landowning classes can occur because independence has been won, the institutional and legal framework for capitalist development has been established by the metropolitan bourgeoisie and the native bourgeoisie does not face the historical task (as did the European bourgeoisie) of subordinating feudal power in order to establish a nation state (Guha 1997). The feudal landowning class also plays a key role in maintaining links between the state at the national level and the local-level power structures in the rural areas it dominates (Alavi 1972:73). The metropolitan bourgeoisie values collaboration with the indigenous bourgeoisie because it allows them to invest without the political risks associated with

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making direct investments themselves. These convergences of interests make it possible/necessary for the bureaucratic-military oligarchies to play a mediatory role (Alavi 1972:75). A more realistic discussion, in a similar but Indo-centric political economy, is Bardhan (1984) who also emphasises antagonism, not cooperation, between his three dominant proprietary classes. The industrial bourgeoisie, he argued, often resented being 'supplicants' to the license-giving powers of the bureaucracy and their ingrained suspicions of private ownership and profits. While the Indian state benefited rich farmers by paying high procurement prices for agricultural produce, this was resented by industrialists who preferred a policy of cheap food. The farmers in turn complained about the high prices of domestically produced (rather than cheaply imported) industrial products (consumer goods and farm machinery). The possibility of conflict between the three propertied classes and its implications for the autonomy of the state is ignored by Alavi.

POLITICIANS

Alavi is of the opinion that political parties and politicians were subordinate to the overdeveloped state. For Alavi it evidently clear that for Pakistan the experience of partial transfer of power in the 1920s and 1930s had already institutionalised procedures by which the bureaucracy could bypass the political leaders who had been inducted into office (Alavi 1972). Under the Government of India Act 1919, Indian ministers were able to hold minor portfolios in the provincial government. British civil servants objected to working under Indian ministers, so it was made clear that the latter would be protégés of British senior civil servants, so reversing the normal relationship between minister and civil servants (Alavi 1983). The bureaucracy and army recruited senior officers from rich rural families and this link was reinforced by the grant of land to civilian and military officers who had become substantial landowners in their own right. These landowners in turn dominated party politics in Pakistan and were, subsequently, corralled by the overdeveloped state (Alavi, 1972). This entirely passive view of political parties fails to explain the enduring manner in which military rulers in Pakistan (especially Ayub and Musharraf) have tended to create a political party as a vehicle for their political aspirations, which suggests that political parties may have an independent functional role. While Pakistan has fallen prey to repeated military interventions, it is important to remember that all four military governments ultimately relented to public pressure to hold elections (Waseem and Hayat 1997:726).

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In his work, Alavi did not engage with the then influential work of Samuel Huntington on modernisation and the corresponding crucial role of political parties. In every society affected by social change, new groups arise to participate in politics, so argues Huntington. In an institutionalised political system there are means of political socialisation that change the attitudes and behaviour of the politically mobilised. This means that positions of leadership can only be achieved by those who have risen through the political ranks, and so institutions impose political socialisation as the price of political participation (Huntington 1968). The distinctive institution in the modern state is the political party (Huntington 1968:89). As political parties become stronger they can bind various social forces and create a basis for loyalty and identity, thereby overcoming more parochial groupings. By regularising the procedures for leadership succession and for the assimilation of new groups, the political party can provide the basis for stability and orderly change (Huntington 1968). Tudor (2013) argues that in both India and Pakistan before independence, issues of distributive conflict were mediated through political parties. An institutional dynamic was able to emerge and provide for regime stability in India where the Congress Party represented a stable compromise on key issues of distribution. After independence India was relatively quick to adopt a democratic constitution which was explained by a process that in the 'decades prior to independence, urban, educated, middle-class elites had created a centralised party organisation operating on the basis of meritocratic internal elections that effectively created political power by aggregating yet still subordinating individual preferences' (Tudor 2013:161). Members of the Assembly were mainly those who had risen up through the party ranks and who had been involved with the independence movement for decades. When elections to the Assembly occurred in July 1946 the leaders of the Congress took care to broaden minority representation in the Constituent Assembly beyond just Muslims and Sikhs to include Parsis, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians, Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Scheduled Castes (SCs) and women. These democratic principles were forged over the pre-independence decades by an urban and educated middle-class elite needing to co-opt opposition to sustain a prolonged, successful anti-colonial movement (Tudor 2013).

The Muslim League, by contrast, had little organisational machinery linking the central leadership with those exercising power at the provincial and local levels. The Provincial Assemblies were dominated by traditionally powerful landed families with little/no allegiance to the Muslim League. Those in power at the centre were either politicians with no identifiable

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bases of support or civil servants. Without a domestic political base, the migrant political leadership of the Muslim League relied on the military and bureaucracy rather than incorporating local notables within the Muslim League (Jalal 1995). The failure of party politics between the 1950s and 1970s is a key part of Pakistan's story in explaining the divergent political trajectories in India and Pakistan but is not something discussed by Alavi. The growing dominance of the bureaucracy in running the political system (Jalal 1995) and local development initiatives (Waseem 1982), the language riots in East Pakistan (Jalal 1990), the inclination to confront opponents rather than broker political deals (Talbot 1998), the failure to incorporate newly emerging socio-economic groups in the 1960s (leading to conflict rather than incorporation) (Maniruzzaman 1971) and the failure to peacefully engage with the movement for greater autonomy in East Pakistan (leading to civil war) (Jones 2003) – these have all been explained in terms of the failure of political parties in Pakistan (and the more successful experience of postcolonial India to the relative success of political parties, that is, the Congress).

LABOUR

The first phase of industrialisation in Pakistan was concentrated in Karachi where Urdu-speaking refugees from India constituted the bulk of the working class. Industrialisation later spread to other cities and the bulk of the new recruits, including those now coming to Karachi, were from impoverished agrarian regions of North-west Punjab and especially the NWFP (Alavi 1972). Alavi argues that labour disputes were mediated by an elaborate institutional structure that enabled the state bureaucracy to be directly involved at every stage in the management/manipulation of industrial relations. He concluded that these efforts to control, limit and manipulate working-class militancy were a legacy of the overdeveloped colonial state which were consolidated by the postcolonial state (Alavi 1972).

There is certainly evidence that the Pakistani state sought to control labour. Soon after independence the government of Pakistan formed the All Pakistan Confederation of Labour (APCOL) as a state-controlled labour organisation to isolate left-leaning unions. The leader of APCOL was appointed Labour Minister in the Central Government. The Indian nationalist movement had incorporated a powerful union movement, the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) back in the 1920s of which Nehru had served as President. Jinnah and the Muslim League gave little attention to labour other than its role

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in facilitating post-independence industrialisation (Candland 1995, 1999). Alongside incorporation, the government also resorted to repressive tactics and arrested leftist union leaders for fomenting strike activity. In 1954 the Communist Party and the rival PTUF union were banned (Shaheed 1983, 2007). At independence, unions in Pakistan were weak and, in most cases, had only been branches of all-India organisations. The union system fragmented; in the 1950s the number of registered unions doubled while total membership declined (Ahmed and Amjad 1984). The number of workers involved in disputes and days lost to those disputes remained low throughout the 1950s (Wizarat 2002:231).

The incoming military government of Ayub Khan in 1958 aspired to continue efforts to benefit corporate profits at the expense of labour. In October 1958 the new military government repealed the protective Industrial Disputes Act 1947 and replaced it with the Industrial Disputes Ordinance 1959. The latter was an attack on organised labour. Nearly all major industries were declared to be 'essential industries where strikes were forbidden', these included railways, post, telegraph, water, ports, defence and telephones. Cement, iron and steel, sugar, leather and leather goods, vegetable oils, electrical equipment were declared 'essential for the time being'. Under the new labour policy all disputes that could not be resolved collectively were automatically referred to an Industrial Court for a decision which was legally binding on both parties. A Presidential Ordinance in March 1963 banned the publication of any news items relating to strikes or industrial unrest. The number of strikes fell drastically in the early years of the martial law government (Shaheed 1983; Ahmed and Amjad 1984). Throughout the 1950s the labour share of national output declined (Wizarat 2002:165) and wage growth lagged productivity growth well into the early 1960s (Huq 1966:107).

Over the longer term there is evidence contrary to Alavi's views that shows the state had at best only mixed long-term success in controlling labour. The state was not as autonomous as he had imagined. In practice state policy was buffeted by ongoing and contradictory political demands. The government established the Minimum Wage Boards in 1961 which increased the wages of the least skilled in cotton textiles by 30 per cent (Guisinger and Irfan 1974:374). In the early 1960s wages for civil servants were increased and industrial unions began to push for comparable wage increases. There was a rapid increase in strike activity in the early 1960s (Ahmed and Amjad 1984). A 1963 strike in the textile sector met with initial success and an unprecedented promise of higher pay and only later did did the government intervene to arrest eight

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hundred workers in an attempt to break the strike. In 1964, in preparation for the general election, there was an abrupt shift to granting wage increases and to allowing more favourable decisions in the Industrial Courts (Guisinger and Irfan 1974; Shaheed 1983). Another upsurge of strike activity in the late-1960s (Wizarat 2002:231) saw a then weakened government respond more quickly with concessions and as a consequence the money wage of all production workers increased sharply after 1967 (Guisinger and Hicks 1978:1276).

This ambiguity towards organised labour continued into the 1970s. Under General Yahya Khan, the Industrial Relations Ordinance (IRO) in 1969 gave workers fundamental right including the right to form unions, engage in collective bargaining and the right to strike. But the same legislation prohibited industry-wide unions to try and retain fragmented factory-based unions (Candland 1995, 1999). The Bhutto government in April 1972 granted workers greater participation in management, a right to a share in profits, easier rights to strike and a cost-of-living allowance to ensure that wage increases matched inflation (Ahmed and Amjad 1984). This tilt towards labour was short-lived and the Bhutto government soon began to brutally suppress strike activity. The Zia regime after 1977 continued the more repressive stance and, barring a small rise in strike activity connected with the movement to restore democracy in 1982 and 1983, work-days lost to strikes remained low until the early 1990s. A rapid growth in unionisation went into reverse in 1977 and both the number of unions and trade union membership fell steadily (Candland 2007). An interesting contrast can be seen in the Indian labour movement which was able to prevent any privatisation in India over the 1990s and a Pakistani movement which secured compensation but otherwise acquiesced in the rapid privatisation of the public sector over a few years in the 1990s (Candland 1995, 1999).

CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps it is useful to conclude with a checklist to catalogue the hits and misses of Alavi's model of the overdeveloped state. The chapter opened with a review of the three propertied classes of the Alavi model. For the large farmers and indigenous bourgeoisie, the discussion here found their evolution to be consistent with the thesis of the overdeveloped state. The dominant farmers did not manage to convert their influence into beneficial state policy, while the weak industrial bourgeoisie in the 1950s was greatly favoured by state largesse. This is consistent with the relative autonomy of the state posited by Alavi's

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model. Alavi did include metropolitan capital as a propertied class but gave it a billing below that of the other two. This was hard to justify in the 1950s when metropolitan capital did have a significant influence on Pakistan but perhaps more justifiable in the late-1960s when Pakistan showed some clear signs of loosening the hold of metropolitan capital.

Taking a step forward, we then seek to engage with the implications of Alavi's class analysis. Here, the Alavi model is more conspicuously unsuccessful. There is little evidence that the overdeveloped state was autonomous in setting policy. The civil service and the military were constructions of the post-independence years and not a legacy of an overdeveloped colonial state (at most we could say both were recreated on a colonial imagining). Alavi focuses almost entirely on the apex of the state and fails to consider the local state bubbling beneath, which could be better described as 'flailing' than overdeveloped. Alavi fails to clearly define and explain what he means by 'class' in the sense that there is no clear reason why the military and bureaucracy are labelled as 'the state', while farmers, industrialists and metropolitan capital are labelled 'classes'. Alavi does not consider the importance of conflict among his propertied classes.

The final two sections of the essay examine what is missing from Alavi's analysis. Despite the rich and fertile study in the social sciences of the role of political parties both generally (the seminal work of Huntintdon [1968] was discussed here as just one possible example) and specifically for the case of then contemporary India (see, for example, Kothari [1964] and Weiner [1967]), Alavi does not discuss their functional role in Pakistan. Does Alavi here contribute to a tradition of social science scholarship in Pakistan (see Zaidi [2002] on this point) to not venture outside Pakistan-focused writing for new models, theories and methods? The last section of this essay deals with organised labour. Alavi is quite dismissive and argues that organised labour remained under the control of the overdeveloped state. This chapter suggests otherwise, that state policy remained contradictory and organised labour in Pakistan retained the power to influence the state to its own ends. This failure to engage with social formations outside the overdeveloped state and its three propertied classes is another unfortunate legacy of Alavi's model and one that Zaidi (2014) focused on – the path dependence of the top-down Alavi model and its failure to consider actually lived realities.

So, for all its theoretical richness, there were problems with the analysis of the Alavi model in the 1970s and 1980s. There were also weaknesses with the model that have been perpetuated throughout subsequent generations of

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social science scholarship in and about Pakistan (discussed in more detail in the Introduction to this book). Even if the state and society of Pakistan had not undergone any change since Alavi was writing, there would be justification to 'rethink Pakistan's political economy'. Given the problems with Alavi's model and profound changes in Pakistan, this call has even greater urgency and it is to those changes that the chapters in this book address themselves.

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2 The Overdeveloped Alavian legacy

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

Class, a neo-colonial state, ethnic–national oppression, patriarchy and imperialism continue to shape Pakistan's political economy as they have always done, albeit in ever-changing ways. Some notable efforts aside, attempts to understand how these various elements come together to produce a contradictory social totality are increasingly rare. In short, 'grand' theorising in the mould of Hamza Alavi's structural Marxism is no longer in vogue. Academic fashion now demands an emphasis on the everyday and discursive realms (Go 2016; Chibber 2014).

This chapter presents a somewhat traditional historical materialist analysis of the Pakistani state and its society, employing a Gramscian framework to elucidate my understanding of state and capitalism and the modes of politics that have become predominant since the 1980s. Gramsci is a traditionalist; it is another matter altogether that a particular reading of Gramsci has come to animate so many 'post-Marxist' theoretical formulations over the past couple of decades following from the seminal contribution of Laclau and Mouffe (1985). Subaltern Studies, of course, traced at least some of its genesis to Gramsci, but its focus shifted steadily away from the history of subaltern politics in colonial India towards more textual concerns (Sarkar 2002).

To a significant extent, this chapter shares with the Subaltern Studies project a suspicion of mainstream scholarship in which actors, events and processes 'from below' are conspicuous by their absence. Indeed, the need to move beyond the bird's-eye formulations that have long dominated radical discussions is even more urgent in Pakistan than in postcolonial contexts such as India where scholarship in the social sciences and humanities has been much more dynamic. In this spirit, this chapter presents a critical engagement with Alavi and his seminal theory of the overdeveloped postcolonial state (Alavi 1972), following Zaidi (2014). While recognising the substantial contributions that Alavi made to our understanding of Pakistan, and the post-colony at large, it is

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high time that we look beyond such icons, because critical scholarship cannot remain beholden to even seminal formulations indefinitely. It is an indication of how barren the Pakistani intellectual landscape has been since the 1980s that many scholars still automatically defer to Alavi's work, a point emphasised by McCartney and Zaidi in the Introduction to this volume.

Of course Alavi's formulations have remained influential for as long as they have because much of what he wrote is, on the surface at least, still relevant. For instance, who would deny the power of the 'military-bureaucratic oligarchy' that Alavi (1972) claimed was the most influential of all interest groups in Pakistan by virtue of its mediating role? Or that what he called the 'metropolitan bourgeoisie' – shorthand for economic imperialism – remains willing and able to hold state and society hostage to its dictates?

Yet Alavi's particular brand of structural Marxism is not able to account for much that has changed beneath the surface. His theoretical formulations were relatively static, even though the more empirical accounts that he penned reflected the changing dynamics of power within the ruling bloc (1983, 1989). The 'overdeveloped' theory was also too functional, implying that society was 'under-developed' relative to the state. Certainly, Alavi's analysis of society was under-developed – most glaringly, he offered no insights about the politics of the mass of people upon whose exploitation the entire structure of power rests. While the military, bureaucracy, propertied classes, imperialist powers and multinational corporations do dominate Pakistan, Alavi's formulations do not help us understand how this domination is legitimated 'from below'. Only by adequately exploring the question of legitimation can we develop a satisfactory explanation for the resilience of the political order in Pakistan.

To take this point further: Pakistan's class structure is far more complex than is assumed in classical expositions of historical materialist canon such as Alavi's. For instance, there is an intermediate class stratum which historically emerged through the development of secondary and tertiary sectors of the agrarian economy that is now the face of capitalist modernity in Pakistan. As this chapter will argue later, it is this class that is the bedrock of the political and cultural movements of the religious right.

In summary, anyone with more than a cursory interest in Pakistan's contemporary political economy must grapple with a series of interrelated questions: Who constitutes the country's ruling bloc? What political and cultural worlds do the variegated intermediate classes inhabit? And, perhaps most importantly of all, how and why do the subordinate classes consent to the rules of a game that they can never hope to win?

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Addressing Gramscian concerns such as subalternity and (counter) hegemony means further disaggregating the subordinate classes and interrogating the political imaginaries and alignments of working people, oppressed nationalities, women, deprived castes and the many different confessional groups outside the pale of 'official' Islam. While some work has been done on the increasingly informal (and thereby challenging) conditions within which the most exploited and oppressed segments of Pakistani society live and work, linking the 'informalisation of everything' with questions of political consciousness, imagination and hegemony can further improve our understanding of Pakistan's polity and the role of ordinary people in its everyday functioning (Zaidi 2014).

It is with this in mind that this chapter makes a contribution to understanding subordinate class politics in contemporary Pakistan. As noted earlier, in comparison to a bygone era there is today very little emphasis on understanding the interconnections between class, state, nation and other aspects that shape social life; this chapter will attempt to elucidate this complex structural universe by making a series of interrelated statements.[1]

STATE

The Pakistani state, conceived as a 'steel frame'[2] by its British makers, formally still resembles the entity that existed through the colonial period and in the first few decades after decolonisation. Even a cursory investigation of actually existing institutional forms reveals, however, that many things have changed. The insularity of the civil service structure was irrevocably altered by the reforms initiated by the Bhutto regime in 1973, which had a direct impact on the class and ethnic composition of civilian state institutions (Kennedy 1988). By abolishing the insular Civil Services of Pakistan (CSP) and instituting 'lateral entry', the PPP government radically undermined the institutional bases of the high bureaucracy's power, while greatly enhancing the ability of the occupants of elected office to influence bureaucratic practices.

[1] This chapter agrees with Akhter (2014) and Zaidi (2014) that a gendered analysis of Pakistan's structure of power is sorely needed – the juxtaposition of patriarchy on other forms of domination/exploitation was conspicuous by its absence in Alavi's work, and remains an imperative till this day, one that is, regrettably, yet to be addressed.

[2] British Prime Minister David Lloyd George referred to the British Civil Service as the steel frame of the Empire in his speech in the House of Commons on 2 August 1922.

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Some forty years later, it is evident that the Westernised, secular successors of the British no longer dominate the bureaucracy. This social segment is now much more inclined towards private sector occupations which are both more lucrative and allow for a more 'globalised' lifestyle. The officer corps of the bureaucracy is now largely comprised of individuals of relatively humble origins educated in public and/or low-end private schools who retain substantial links to social networks in the villages and towns of their birth. This embeddedness in local networks, and the fact that the bureaucracy has been steadily politicised since the 1973 reforms, means that state personnel are increasingly more likely to use their positions of authority to benefit their network. In short, the paternalism of the colonial state has given way to a no-holds-barred use of public office for the benefit of parochial groups.

The increasingly diverse composition of the bureaucracy means that the Westernised 'old guard' has not so much been replaced by another social group as the entire civilian side of the steel frame has fragmented; it is thus that the 'everyday' or 'shadow' state looks and functions quite differently from its formal counterpart.[3] Popular discourse recognises the empirics of the actually existing state, but almost completely through the reductionist lens of 'corruption'.[4] A substantial body of scholarship on 'corruption' in the postcolonial world has developed in recent times and confirms that the surface phenomenon must be understood in its proper historical context, and with reference to established political and economic structures (Witsoe 2013; Blundo and de Sardan 2006).[5]

While what was above termed the shift towards a no-holds-barred use of public office for private gain has intensified in recent decades, the practice of giving and receiving favours was institutionalised by the late colonial period even in that most celebrated of British administrative orders – Punjab (Javid

[3] This chapter uses both these terms in the tradition of scholars working in the Indian context: for 'everyday' state, see Fuller and Harriss (2003); for 'shadow' state, see Harriss-White (2003).

[4] Right-wing populists make 'corruption' the very basis of their mobilisations against incumbents, despite the fact that the political programmes of what appear to be antagonistic political actors are virtually indistinguishable. Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is the most notable example of such a self-anointed 'alternative'.

[5] The seminal contribution in neighbouring India was that of Gupta (1995) whose emphasis was on the popular ideas circulating in rural Uttar Pradesh about the practice of 'corruption'. This chapter concurs that there is a tendency in such 'discursive' studies to abstract from the materiality of 'corruption', and particularly structures of power (Jeffrey and Lerche 2001).

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2011). For all of its pretensions, the British 'steel frame' was hardly Weber's impersonal ideal-type, and the colonial masters were not the dispassionate liberal statesmen they claimed to be. Nevertheless, changes in the composition, practice and self-perception of civilian state institutions that have taken place over the past three to four decades need to be understood in their own right. In other words, the Pakistani state is not the same animal that it was when it came into being, even if many of its fundamental – and particularly authoritarian – impulses continue to harken back to the British Raj.

In part because of the fragmentation of the civil services but more significantly due to the 'garrison' inheritance of the Pakistani state, the military arm of the 'steel frame' has become the face of Pakistan's structure of power. The military has retained the institutional insularity that the civil services have long since lost, and has also asserted itself as the exclusive guardian of state ideology.[6] Much has been written about the military's dominance and the extent to which it has been undermined over the past few years. Of particular interest for this chapter is the contention that other institutional interests have emerged to compete with the military, including the judiciary, media and even that nebulous entity called 'civil society' (Zaidi 2014).

There is certainly something to be said for the fact that the military's status as 'sacred cow' was challenged in the final few months of the regime headed by General Pervez Musharraf. The private TV media and the superior judiciary became the face of the struggle for the 'rule of law' and for the restoration of democracy. Yet quite aside from the question whether these new contenders for power were espousing genuinely counter-hegemonic positions or not, there was nothing new about the military institution suffering a loss of prestige towards the toe end of a military dictatorship. Take, for example, the humiliation suffered by the Yahya Khan regime that presided over the dismemberment of the country in 1971. The military has always rebounded from such ignominy and later restored its image as the 'guardian of the state'. To a large extent this has also happened in the post-Musharraf years as well (see Shah, in this volume).

General Raheel Sharif, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) from 2013 to 2016, in fact, generated a cult following amongst a significant section of the educated middle class in urban areas towards the end of his tenure. The same TV media that had depicted itself as the vanguard of democratic freedom at the peak of

[6] It is beyond the remit of this chapter to discuss here the fallouts of the 'ideology of Pakistan' including state-sponsored jihadists turned renegades.

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the anti-Musharraf movement, openly celebrated COAS Sharif as the most popular man in Pakistan, in contrast to the purportedly venial and corrupt politicians that littered the country's embattled democratic landscape (Jamal 2016). Meanwhile, after the dramatic events of the Lawyers Movement in 2007 that challenged the Musharraf regime the superior judiciary then settled back into a more familiar position of secondary importance, retaining some populist pretensions but generally avoiding confrontation. This was no more evident in the series of developments before and after the setting up of military courts in early 2016.[7] Indeed, the Supreme Court's disqualification of two elected prime ministers in a span of five years confirmed that it remained very much aligned with other unelected institutions of the state.[8]

In short, mainstream political parties elected to office since the end of the Musharraf dictatorship have continued to struggle to assert themselves as the real makers of policy, especially vis-à-vis traditional 'security' concerns, both within the country and in terms of relations with neighbouring and global powers. The dramatic fallout between Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) and the military establishment between 2014 and 2018 is the latest example in this regard. This was preceded by the so-called 'Memogate scandal' that erupted during the tenure of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government (2008–2013). Throughout this period, the imperative of combating the increasingly broad and nebulous threat of 'terrorism' allowed the state's coercive apparatus more and more power under the cover of democratic rule (see the section on imperialism later).

In thinking about the military's power and relative coherence compared to other institutions of the state, or for that matter dominant class fractions within Alavi's original nexus of power, it is hard to look beyond the institution's rapidly growing corporate empire, which first became a subject of bonafide scholarly discussion with the publication of Ayesha Siddiqa's (2007) seminal book towards the end of the Musharraf dictatorship.

The dialectic between the military's political/ideological power and its economic interests can be traced back to the unique colonial social contract established in Punjab after 1857. A loyal 'citizenry' which acceded to a heavy-handed paternalism was concocted comprising the rank-and-file of the British Indian army, a class of landed proprietors in the south and west of the province

[7] See http://www.dawn.com/news/1198533 (accessed 15 February 2018).

[8] See https://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/letter-of-the-law-not-its-spirit-seems-pakistan-judiciary-s-concern/story-elQNVZMeY1SLqBAFeuGJEN.html (accessed 15 February 2018).

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and settler 'colonists' on newly irrigated lands in the central plains (Tan 2005). This state–society consensus was reinforced in the years after 1947 as the lingering effects of partition violence made ordinary Punjabis firm supporters of the 'national security' state. By the 1980s a military corporate empire – what Siddiqa calls 'milbus' – had been definitively established. The institution's attempts to maintain political and ideological dominance are now informed to a significant extent by the imperative of sustaining its economic empire, which, on the surface, confirms another one of Alavi's original insights about the military-bureaucratic oligarchy channelling a significant part of society's surplus to itself under the guise of 'economic development'.

While the military's 'guardian of the state' role is a defining feature of Pakistan's political economy, the dynamism of this structure of power is explained by the consent generated 'from below' on a daily basis. In this regard, the military's increasingly invasive economic interventions in society stand out precisely because they expose the institution's coercive tendencies (Khan and Akhtar 2014).

The military nevertheless continues to enjoy limited legitimacy by virtue of its being the 'guardian of the state'. In contrast the fragmented civilian and policing institutions of the state are often depicted as 'corrupt' and even 'failing' – in a manner that is not dissimilar to the one applied to politicians. This chapter will demonstrate in the following sections that it is the civilian side of the 'steel frame' which, at the local and everyday levels, actually ensures political and social order. The everyday functioning of state functionaries – and their nexus with political entrepreneurs at the local level – forces us to think about the traditional state–society divide in a way that the Alavian meta-narrative simply cannot capture (see Javid, in this volume). State institutions are peopled by the same classes and ethnic groups that exist in society; the everyday negotiations that are the stuff of contemporary politics blur the distinction between state and society. As will be argued in the last section, it is this blurring that accords the structure of power its surprising resilience.

CAPITAL

In the story of modernity, including the peculiarly Pakistani version, the history of the state is inextricably tied to the history of capital. Over the past three to four decades, the deepening of capitalist production and exchange relations across the length and breadth of Pakistani society – with significant variations, of course – has dramatically altered the social and political landscape (Qadeer 2006; Zaidi 2015).

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Colonial historiography is animated by accounts of white-collar professionals who took up occupations in government service or private fields such as law, medicine and education and then became active in the anti-colonial struggle. In contrast the demonised *bania* – the almost mythological moneylending caste – is never really described as a major political presence, even though urban commercial castes and classes did participate in many a political agitation. The relative marginalisation of such urban commercial segments can be explained by the structure of power fashioned by the British which revolved around the agrarian economy and the propertied segments that were the state's principal allies in rural areas.

Pakistan remained a primarily rural society for the first two decades after the end of the Raj. This changed in the wake of the Green Revolution and state-instigated industrialisation of the 1950s and 1960s.[9] Traders, merchants, transporters and other segments associated with the secondary and tertiary sectors of the agrarian economy, including agro-processing industries, have, over the past few decades, become pivotal economic and political actors. The attendant growth of the service sector has further increased the influence of what have been called the intermediate classes.[10] This influence was initially limited to local contexts, but during and after the Zia era it can be reasonably argued that the intermediate classes have pushed their way into countrywide corridors of power (see Javed, in this volume).

This highly variegated social segment has been both a presence on the streets – most notoriously during the PNA agitations that brought down the Bhutto regime in 1977, and subsequently all 'Islam in danger' campaigns – and at the polls, with the Pakistan Muslim League of Nawaz Sharif arguably the closest to a party that speaks for the intermediate classes (alongside other propertied classes). It was the intermediate classes in a rapidly urbanising Punjab that Zia ul Haq patronised heavily, and which gave to his regime a veneer of stability. The modus operandi was to give them political access to the state through local body elections to complement their growing economic

[9] It would be remiss to ignore the disproportionate influence exercised by partition migrants in Pakistani politics from the very early years; the 'urban' values that many migrants embodied were therefore important long before the 1960s (cf. Hasan 2002). Still, for most Pakistanis who did not migrate in and around the partition years, the socio-economic changes precipitated by the Green Revolution and later developments were transformative.

[10] The classic account is that of Kalecki (1969). See also Jha (1980) and, most recently, Harriss-White (2003).

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clout. They eventually graduated into provincial and national electoral contests and have not looked back since.

The secular processes of change which have led to the emergence of the intermediate classes have generally been underspecified in Pakistan, namely urbaniszation and informalisation. Much time is spent decrying 'feudalism', despite clear evidence that urbanisation has transformed the social landscape. While methodological differences preclude consensus, a handful of scholars have been crying out for an expanded definition of 'urban' for the best part of two decades; one of them argued years ago that approximately half of Pakistan's population could already then be considered urban (R. Ali 2002).

Recent estimates suggest at least 57 per cent of Pakistan's population is now urban, and that even rural areas increasingly resemble urban settings resulting in what has been called the 'urbanisation of everybody' (Zaidi 2015:796). Urbanisation has generally been coeval with the deepening of capitalism, and has transformed culture, politics and economics accordingly. It is no longer accurate to depict Pakistan as a 'backward' society, dominated by the omnipotent British 'steel frame' in alliance with landed 'feudals' who expropriate surplus from a predominantly peasant mass.

The processes of change triggered by the Green Revolution were given further impetus by the Gulf migrations that started in the mid-1970s. The fact that remittances are Pakistan's single biggest source of foreign exchange revenue is testament to this fact. The most recent data suggests that remittances, which by the 1980s were already substantial, increased ten-fold between 2002 and 2012 (Amjad et al. 2012). While it will take some time to ascertain the longer-term impacts of this recent surge of remittances, enhanced incomes that migrant families acquired before the turn of the century were often invested in housing, as well as small businesses (Addleton 1992).

This in turn explains the fact that many of Pakistan's emergent entrepreneurs operate in what is now widely called the 'informal economy' which, according to figures from 2007–08, was at least half the size of the formal economy (Zaidi 2015:814). These entrepreneurs often transcend the classical capital–labour relation through self-employment. In truth, 'informalisation' is not a recent phenomenon; the emergence of scholarship on the subject since the 1970s simply reflects a belated recognition of the insufficiency of conceptual categories employed to understand non-Western societies.[11]

[11] Saskia Sassen's (2014) work demonstrates that metropolitan areas in much of the Global North have also being rapidly 'informalised'.

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In my understanding this intermediate stratum dialectically transcends all of the binaries that we often adopt in our conceptualisation of capitalist modernity – state and market; the dominant and subordinate classes; informal and formal. So, for instance, it is from within the subordinate classes that the intermediate classes emerge, affirming the possibilities of upward mobility offered by urbanisation and informalisation, as well as the ruthlessness of a system that can just as quickly punish those who do not negotiate state and market in accordance with the rules of the game (discussed later).[12]

Indeed, the static picture of Pakistani society that continues to be propagated in many scholarly and journalistic accounts is complicated not only by the emergence of a commercial intermediate strata in urban areas but also by the growth of an educated white-collar class that is increasingly incorporated into the global economy vis-à-vis employment in multinationals and non-governmental organisations, and under various other entrepreneurial/recreational guises, including participation in the virtual world.[13]

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to delve into the details of this rapidly expanding middle class – the most recent countrywide estimate (Nayyab 2011) has this class at almost 60 million, or close to one third of the population – but I note in the discussion of political imaginaries below the increasing hegemony of 'middle-class aspiration', which, alongside the established politics of patronage, is a major cog of the established political order.

IMPERIALISM

In thinking about the emergence of an increasingly globalised middle class one is reminded of another one of Alavi's favourite themes: imperialism. His treatises on the US aid relationship with Pakistan, as well as the dynamics of late twentieth-century imperialism more generally were legendary (Alavi 1963, 1964). His overdeveloped state formulation introduces the 'metropolitan bourgeoisie' as one of three dominant classes within Pakistan, but upon close reading it becomes obvious that Alavi makes no substantial contribution to a theory of imperialist power in its own right. Other than asserting that the 'metropolitan bourgeoisie' continues to pursue its interests in Pakistan after the end of formal colonial rule, Alavi notes only that foreign aid and developmental

[12] Some informalisation is a consequence of downward mobility – for example, formerly unionised factory workers who are pushed into precarious work.

[13] This is not the classic white-collar 'salariat' that was another of Alavi's (2002) favourite conceptual/empirical contributions.

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interventions by the metropolitan bourgeoisie reinforce the power of the military-bureaucratic oligarchy and that the 'indigenous bourgeoisie' exercises very little autonomy from Western capital that flows into Pakistan.[14]

In any case, Alavi's works are now dated; as the structure of global capitalism and the system of interaction between nation-states that sustains capitalist exchange and productive relations have changed considerably since the early 1970s. There is now a virtual consensus amongst radical theorists the world over that the crisis tendencies within the capitalist system have precipitated to growing 'financialisation' insofar as the real productive sectors of the economy are increasingly less of a site of profit in comparison to sectors such as real estate and derivatives trading. There is also a growing recognition of the revolutionary effects of information and communications technologies (ICT) (Sassen 2014). All of these structural shifts would have to be considered in a relevant theory of contemporary imperialism and its effects on Pakistani state and society. In short, Alavi's 'metropolitan bourgeoisie' is both conceptually and empirically under-specified and offers very little help in developing a contemporary understanding of metropolitan power and how it is shaping Pakistan's political economy.

To take an example of novel theoretical approaches, David Harvey (2003) has argued persuasively that 'imperialism of the capitalist sort' has two competing logics: one that is based on the enhancement of capitalistic tendencies and another that emphasises territorial control. As such, what Alavi called the 'metropolitan bourgeoisie' is a misnomer insofar as Western powers have historically emphasised strategic interests in their relations with Pakistan over strictly capitalistic investments. The net result of foreign powers' interventions has therefore been the steady strengthening of the unelected apparatuses of the state, particularly the military, whose 'national security' pretensions generally align well with foreign powers seeking to secure strategic objectives deriving from Pakistan's geographical position. Indeed, longer-term trends confirm that accumulation of power via proximity to the state apparatus has always been crucial for the accumulation of capital – this tendency has been reinforced by imperialist powers.

It is popularly believed that the Chinese influx into Pakistan – particularly the infrastructural investments associated with the so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) – represents a countervailing tendency to the historical influence of Western imperialism. This position needs to be subjected

[14] White (1974) and Amjad (1982) offer much more detailed analyses than Alavi of the nature and extent of foreign capital inflow into the Pakistani economy.

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to scrutiny in light of the mandate that the Chinese have provided to the Pakistani military to provide 'security' to Chinese investments.[15] This very broad mandate has strengthened the military's already considerable power inasmuch as space has shrunk to even articulate concerns about the effects of CPEC on the environment, under-represented nations such as the Baloch and the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, and working people more generally. Chinese power may challenge Western hegemonic influences in Pakistan, but there is little reason to believe that the structural challenges of indebtedness and policy autonomy will be redressed. The manner in which the Chinese are providing a mandate to the Pakistani state to criminalise any kind of dissent confirms not only that the Chinese posture is barely different from that of Western states, but also that it has little concern with ethnic, class and other fault lines in Pakistani society.[16] Neither can it be argued conclusively that Chinese influence will force the Pakistani security establishment to bring to an end its duplicitous policy vis-à-vis the militant right-wing which is ostensibly the major target of so-called counter-terrorist initiatives.

All of this is to say that there are many dimensions that would need to be considered in an updated theory of imperialist power in Pakistan, and it is perhaps unsurprising that Alavi's work cannot capture all such dynamics given the scale of change in the structure of global capitalism over the past three decades.

POLITICS

We now come to the crux of the argument. The colonial-era structure of power in what was primarily a rural society was centred upon an insular and all-powerful civil bureaucracy which controlled productive resources such as land and water, distributing patronage through dominant classes. Alavi's classic formulation may have been based on this political order, but, as noted earlier, completely underspecified the structure of power 'from below', as well as the change dynamics of the social formation. Alavi and colleagues (1982) did write separately on the 'colonial mode of production', but his corpus did not include any discussion of change in social structures beyond the 1960s.

As argued in this chapter, the social order in Pakistan has undergone

[15] See http://www.dawn.com/news/1277182 (accessed 18 February 2018).

[16] The forced disappearances of a number of progressive-minded activists openly critical of the military establishment on such matters are the latest indicator of shrinking space.

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significant transformation over the past half century due both to domestic and global developments. Yet this chapter contends that – counter-intuitive though it may seem – the structure of power in today's Pakistan features a patronage-based politics culminating in the state. Who distributes the patronage, towards what end, on what basis – all of these facts can no longer just be assumed to be as they were, but patronage is still the name of the game (see Javid, in this volume).

I want to try and explain this dialectic of change and continuity in historical terms – via the Gramscian dialectic of coercion and consent – by taking us back to the heady days of the late 1960s and the radical political wave that swept both through Pakistan and much of the world. But let me first provide some details about the colonial-era political order that this wave of radicalism sought to demolish.

The British fashioned a property rights regime in which those who owned land – and other natural resources such as forests – were empowered to act as patrons mediating between the propertyless and the colonial state. The latter itself controlled substantial productive forces, most notably through its building of massive perennial irrigation networks in Punjab as well as upper Sindh (A. Ali 1988; Haines 2013).

This political economy of patronage was all-encompassing insofar as the state and landed class exercised decisive influence over most aspects of social life, including basic livelihoods, dispute resolution and service delivery. It was thus that the hallowed institutions of *thana* (police station) and *katcheri* (local courts) came to acquire their everyday significance, while 'traditional' patrons who already exercised significant social power prior to the British conquest were further entrenched by the institutionalisation of a private property rights regime.

In a nutshell, the landed class was able to secure the long-term consent of the propertyless mass on account of a peculiarly colonial mix of economic and extra-economic coercion. The parochial identities that the colonial state happily institutionalised – particularly religion, caste and *biraderi* – became cast as perennial markers of native culture and patrons invoked any number of these identities to retain control over their economic dependents.

There was of course great variation in many aspects of this social order across British India, particularly the areas of the subcontinent that were later to constitute Pakistan. In the canal colonies of Punjab, for instance, the beneficiary of colonial paternalism was not the prototypical big landlord but a more modest individual peasant proprietor. The exploited classes were distinguished by their

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hailing from what the state designated the 'non-agricultural castes' (Ahmad 1977). Outside of the agrarian heartland of the Indus Valley, property and authority forms were distinct, bringing into existence invented traditions such as property-owning tribal chieftains and *malik*s (Nichols 2001; Swidler 2014).

For most of their two centuries ruling the subcontinent, the British managed to insulate their patronage-based political order from emergent contradictions; the most obvious example was the legal intervention known as the Punjab Alienation of Land Act of 1900 which protected the state's landed allies from being dispossessed by money lending *bania*s. The British, however, never faced the magnitude of changes that their Pakistani successors have had to contend with. By the middle of the 1960s, the patronage-based order that had prevailed through the colonial period was under attack as class, ethnicity, caste and many other societal fault lines became politicised. In short, the world view of the subordinate class was transformed – in large part due to the efforts of the left – and the politics of negotiating Guha's (1999) triumvirate of *sarkar*, *zamindar* and *sahurkar* was now giving way to a politics where the state could be captured directly, to establish *Mazdoor Kissan Raj*. Alavi never really considered the potentialities of this emergent politics of the left to challenge the 'overdeveloped state' and the structure of power at large.

In the event, this counter-hegemonic political wave did not progress beyond an embryonic stage and Zia ul Haq and his coterie of generals presided over the most counter-revolutionary period in the country's history (1977–88). Pakistan was somewhat representative of the global trend inasmuch as the Zia regime initiated a process that Harvey (2005) has called in the context of Western countries 'the restoration of class power'. Both the 'military-bureaucratic oligarchy' as well as old and new propertied classes pushed back against increasingly boisterous claims 'from below' to reconfigure the entire social order. But there was no prospect of simply turning back the clock and reviving the 'traditional' patronage regime. The Green Revolution, Gulf migrations and the process of urbanisation more generally had transformed the social order and mandated new political configurations.

Demobilizing the subordinate classes was the crucial imperative, and the Zia junta resolved to make 'Islamisation' the major plank of its political project. Important members of the *ancien régime* were easily convinced to be part of the new dispensation, given their alienation from Bhutto's left populism. Landlords adept at changing loyalties in accordance with political realignments, industrialists stripped of their assets under the nationalisation programme, a demoralised civil bureaucracy – all were happy to become junior partners to

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the generals. The 'Islamisation' brigade also benefited enormously from the backing of Western imperialist powers; it was thus that the *ahl-e-kitab* were united in the *jihad* against 'godless' communism.

Domestically, the regime's most crucial initiative was to integrate the intermediate classes into the structure of power. In doing so it reinforced the symbiotic link between the intermediate classes and the religious right. Contrary to mainstream academic and journalistic perception, the religious right is far from just a cultural enforcer; it is a product of immense social and economic change, much of which is regional in scope. Islam has become a source of mobility for historically weak social groups in a variety of settings (Zaman 1998; Akhtar 2010). At least part of this trend is explained by the substantial resources and political power of religious schools and organisations backed by states such as Saudi Arabia and Iran (Nasr 2002). Initially the political fortunes of the Islamist right were tied to the political economy of drugs and guns and the rest of the paraphernalia of imperialist war in and around Afghanistan (Akhtar 2011). Over time, however, the scale and scope of the Islamist influence has expanded to many different realms of society.

The intermediate classes and the religious right are the emergent face of the patronage-based order that was given new life by the Zia regime. They are the new mediators between the subordinate classes and *thana/katcheri* (Akhtar 2018). These social forces have not so much displaced the 'traditional' landed oligarchy as adapted the particular mode of politics that the latter championed throughout the colonial period and the first few decades after the country's creation.

How has the world view of the subordinate classes evolved as this revived political economy of patronage has taken shape? As has been discussed already, Alavi's formulation did not include mention of how the structure of power was legitimated, which, according to this chapter, is the single biggest lacunae in his work. Alavi's work implies that the mass of working people are but passive participants in the political order. In fact, the rehabilitation of a waning structure of power during the Zia years was a direct response to the consciousness and political mobilisation of the subordinate classes.

The Zia regime was the most brutal in Pakistan's history. It demolished the revolutionary left and autonomous class and student organisations. In today's Pakistan, for example, barely 3 per cent of the workforce is unionised.[17] Political and cultural repression went together; women and religious communities cast

[17] See https://www.dawn.com/news/1255333 (accessed 18 February 2018).

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outside the pale of 'official Islam' were almost completely banished from the public realm.

Having unleashed the coercive arm of the state upon a wide cross section of society, the junta then proceeded to institutionalise a political order that was based on the generation of consent from the subordinate class via state functionaries, intermediate classes, and the Zia regime's political subject of choice, the religious right. Faced with the perennial threat of coercion, a wide cross section of society imbibed a Gramscian 'common sense' approach to politics, seeking out patrons as a means of navigating the rigours of state and market, formal and informal.

This 'common sense' has in part become so because of the virtual eviction of radical transformative imaginaries from the intellectual and political mainstream. In effect, there is no pretence about politics as being anything more than the imperative of getting things done. The notion that politics can be about transforming everyday reality rather than simply trying to navigate it finds little traction in everyday discourse. This is not to suggest that ideological battles do not take place in what is a vast political field. One could argue that ethnic nationalists of various stripes do indeed put forward a transformative political imaginary, but this should not be taken to mean that ordinary Baloch, Pashtuns, Sindhis, and so on, who otherwise support their respective ethnic-national movements, do not engage with the everyday state and market under the constraints of 'common sense'.

As for the argument that the militant right-wing offers a radical political imaginary, even if very different from that which the left proffered in the past, in this case too, rhetoric and the exceptional case notwithstanding, the religious right as a whole has very much acceded to the politics of common sense as it has been defined here.

Meanwhile at the other end of the spectrum, the politics of the left as once conceived has been replaced by the rise of identity politics reflecting a much more diverse set of concerns that many believe cannot be encapsulated within an overarching anti-systemic ideology like Marxism.

To be sure, global trends confirm that class is less of a political signifier than at any time in the past century. It has been argued here that class remains an essential analytical tool that helps to explain Pakistan's dynamic structure of power. But it has also been argued that the politics of class has been largely displaced by a politics of patronage that is rooted in the mobility of the emergent intermediate classes. Meanwhile, the rise of another kind of middle class – that which is connected to the globe via the new ICTs – is likely to further transform

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the political field and, indeed, the very meaning of political subjectivity as the imperatives of the 'network society' become more pronounced (Castells 2011). In other words, more and more Pakistanis have an aspiration to be 'middle-class' insofar as this means connectivity into the 'global village', irrespective of their class backgrounds as defined by objective criteria.[18]

Evidence confirms that absolute poverty is increasingly less of a concern than inequality (Zaidi 2017) but this rising inequality is not necessarily generating unified responses on the left. Indeed, material deprivations now seem to be more successfully invoked by the populist right – both in Pakistan and around the world – than progressives.

It is hardly an indictment of Hamza Alavi that he, like his peers, did not account for the many changes that have taken place both within Pakistani society and at the global level over the past few decades. The silences of the Alavian framework need to be flagged so that efforts to understand the structure of power in the contemporary period do not suffer from the same inadequacies of Alavi's original formulation. Indeed, it is time to cut down the overdeveloped Alavian legacy to size, so that we can get on with the task of improving upon the many insights that it helped generate.

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[18] A case has been made that this globally connected middle-class is behind the rise of Imran Khan and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) – and its victory in the 2018 general election more specifically – but it is beyond the scope of this chapter to critically interrogate this argument.

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3 Institutions Matter

The State, the Military and Social Class

Aqil Shah

INTRODUCTION

In his thoughtful and expansive essay, S. Akbar Zaidi (2014) invites us to rethink and destabilise the 'statist bias' in the political economy scholarship on Pakistan, considering the significant transformation in both state and society dynamics in recent decades. He does not claim to offer an alternative theory; his intentions are more modest: to get the intellectual ball rolling by highlighting an important weakness in the literature. Specifically, Zaidi (2014) seeks to emancipate social science theorising about the Pakistani state from what he thinks is the wilted straitjacket of Alavi's (1972) 'overdeveloped state' thesis.[1]

Zaidi (2014) rightly considers Alavi's analysis to be dated and static. Drawing on Akhtar's (2008) critical recent re-examination of Alavi, he believes the biggest flaw in the overdeveloped state formulation is its 'inability to examine – or even understand and recognise – social forces' (Zaidi 2014:48). Zaidi (2014) does concede that Alavi's thesis may have been relevant in the past, but is losing relevance given the increasing 'fracturization' of state authority in Pakistan, with changes in the social structure, and the concomitant rise of violent non-state actors.

Along the way, Zaidi (2014) advances several bold and important claims. First, he urges scholars to formulate a theory of the state that integrates the complex social processes that are feeding into and modifying the nature of state–society relations in Pakistan. Some of these processes are '[t]he growth of urbanisation, of a middle class, and of a hugely buoyant informal sector, and the breakdown of state authority and of state institutions' (Zaidi 2014:53). Second, he believes that the military is no longer the domineering Godzilla that

[1] Alavi (1966) is his earliest treatment of the problem.

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it once was. Instead, newer centres of power, such as the higher judiciary and private electronic media, as well as mainstream political parties, have begun to contest its domination (understood here as the recurrent use of violence, threats and other means to make others do what they otherwise would not do). While by no means a decisive shift, Zaidi (2014) believes this friction and resistance is important to recognise in our thinking about civil–military relations. Third, Zaidi complains that scholars and intellectuals have abandoned the study of class in favour of institutions, which in his neo-Marxian view, are primarily 'multi-class' entities dedicated to preserving capitalism. Since institutions (and other political actors) exist to reproduce the capitalist system, he casts doubt on the utility of institutions as independent or explanatory variables.

This chapter responds to Zaidi's (2014) main claims in the spirit of constructive engagement and for identifying directions for future research. The chapter is divided into two parts. Part one argues, first, that Alavi's framework is deterministic but still relevant, and discarding its focus on state autonomy would be tantamount to throwing the baby out with the bathwater. After all, if the state is no longer a theoretically viable or empirically formidable entity but an enfeebled one, presumably bending to the will of violent non-state actors, why even consider a new theory of the state in the first place? Second, this chapter contends that those who exorcise statist scholarship for ignoring society and social forces should strive to avoid the same reductionist sin: that is, collapsing the state into social structure and denying it any independent causal power. Furthermore, social class interests or conflict are not the *primum mobile* of history and society, a view of history that informs critical readings of Pakistan, including Zaidi's. Third, and related, institutions matter. They are not mere 'multi-class' coalitions driven by the inexorable march of capitalist development. Instead, they may be actors in their own right with distinct agendas, ideas and interests, which they often protect or advance by acting against the preferences of the so-called ruling or dominant social classes.

The second part of this chapter assesses Zaidi's specific claims about military politics in Pakistan. While civil–military relations in Pakistan appear to be in relative flux as he contends, this chapter argues that any understanding of military politics in the post-2007–2008 transitional context requires moving beyond crude indicators of power to empirically explaining institutional choice, or explaining why the military has sought to protect its prerogatives through concessions to and co-optation of newly empowered political actors rather than brute coercion. While the military retains the right to use its coercive capacity to parry any direct civilian threat to its core institutional prerogatives,

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its interactions with the higher judiciary and private broadcast media reveal that it has adjusted to the changing civil–military dynamics by aspiring to 'cultural' hegemony through a mix of concessions, co-optation and, when need be, selective coercion.[2]

REVISITING THE ORIGINAL SIN: FROM THE 'OVERDEVELOPED STATE' TO THE FEEBLE STATE

To briefly recap Alavi (1972), Pakistan inherited a state (or more precisely, a bureaucratic-military oligarchy) from the British that was 'overdeveloped' in relation to social classes. This domineering state could subdue and prevail over indigenous social classes because it enjoyed what he called 'relative' autonomy. Leaving aside Alavi's original sin, which this chapter gets to shortly, Zaidi (2014) also lambasts scholars of Pakistan for their seeming inability to move beyond the former's outmoded line of analysis, let alone 'recognise or correct' the fatal flaws in his work. He writes, 'Alavi's 1972 article and its subsequent reorderings by him have defined, unfortunately for far too long, the limited debate on the state in Pakistan.... That all scholarship on the state in Pakistan owes its allegiance to Alavi speaks less about his intellectual insight and prowess than the inability of Pakistani intellectuals, academics and scholars to think for themselves' (Zaidi 2014:47–48). This is a contestable claim. For one, it lumps much scholarship on the Pakistani state as a sordidly unimaginative enterprise still trapped in the 1970s. Moreover, it overlooks the contributions of scholars such as Jalal (1990, 1995) and Sayeed (1968) who have either advanced compelling alternative explanations or challenged the 'overdeveloped state' thesis.[3] This is not the place to recall each of their contributions, but one example should suffice. Jalal's (1990) seminal *The State of Martial Rule* offers a historically rigorous explanation for the origins of Pakistan's militarised political economy that focuses on the country's strategic colonial inheritance, security imperatives and peculiar political coalitions that

[2] I discuss the military's strategy and tactics for manufacturing public consent for its institutional position and policies through the non-state electronic media in Shah (2014b). See also Siddiqa (2017: 319–334) for a recent examination of the structure and process by which the military manages and manipulates the media.

[3] See, for example, Sayeed (1968), in which he explains the choice of an authoritarian 'Vicerergalism' over a more democratic/parliamentary alternative as administratively efficacious at the time but one that undermined the development of political institutions and leaders.

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warped the state–society balance of power in the first decade to put Pakistan in an authoritarian cast.

In my own contribution to the literature on civil–military relations and democracy, I argue that Alavi's 'overdeveloped state' is over-determined (Shah 2014b). While military dominance first reared its head in the immediate years following independence, there is no compelling reason to assume that this outcome was preordained by a colonial genetic code as Alavi argues. In order to understand why Pakistan failed to turn its 'burden' of newness into sustainable democratic political institutions and processes as did India, it is necessary to discard 'the myth of exaggerated continuity between the late years of colonial rule and the early years of independent power' (Kaviraj 1997:56). In other words, rather than fixating on immutable 'colonial continuities', scholars need to account for the disjuncture and contingency surrounding the key historical conditions, events and decisions that set in motion path-dependent processes of political change in the decade after independence, which has left a lasting imprint on the political trajectory of Pakistan (Pierson 2000; Mahoney 2000). One could say Alavi and some others in the colonial legacy camp have typically underplayed the significance of the critical first decade in shaping Pakistan's political development (Talbot 2010; Yong 2005).

Banal Statism

Zaidi's (2014) main problem with Alavi's (1972) 'overdeveloped state' is not so much its structural determinism, as its monocausal statism that denies social forces meaningful agency. At the time Alavi wrote his seminal article, it represented a broader radical departure from the instrumentalist Marxian conception of the modern state as a 'committee' of bourgeois rule dedicated to maintaining capitalist relations of production and exchange (Marx and Engels [1848] 1972:475). Alavi and other neo-Marxist political sociologists rejected the idea that the state was merely a 'superstructure' which existed solely as an organised political instrument of a social class. Instead, they argued, the state was autonomous because of a functional requirement, that is, it had to have some degree of 'relative autonomy' from class interests if it was to protect capitalism as a socio-economic order (Manza and McCarthy, 2011). It was this relative autonomy of the inherited state apparatus, contended Alavi (1972), that made it possible for the neo-colonial bourgeoisie to pursue its class interests in postcolonial contexts. While this external dimension is empirically questionable, as both Akhtar (2008) and Zaidi (2014) contend,

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the overdeveloped state was far from being independent of class influence. Instead, as Alavi (1972) recognises, it continued to 'mediate' social conflict, and often acted on behalf of the propertied classes.

Zaidi (2014) also questions, and rightly so, the empirical relevance of the 'overdeveloped state' for understanding the present Pakistani state, which he sees as increasingly fractured, fragile and even failing in some respects, including the ability to exercise a monopoly of violence uniformly across the territory delimited by its juridical borders. As he argues, 'The state's writ has been reduced geographically, and private militias, goon squads, militants ... not only manifest their ability to do violence, but also actually challenge the brute force of the state' (Zaidi 2014:52). Moreover, the authority vacuum left by the state has spurred the privatisation of essential state functions, such as security and social service provision (Zaidi 2014:52).

There is a kernel of truth here. But it is pertinent to ask if the state is really enfeebled in toto? Given real-world geographical and resource constraints, no state has achieved the Weberian ideal of successfully wielding and broadcasting its authority over its entire territory.[4] Stateness, in other words, is a continuum and it is important to assess where a state falls on this continuum. Unlike terminally weak or failed states, which have a hard time controlling even their capital cities, the Pakistani state's coercive authority extends beyond the capital into, at least, the major urban centres. However, like many other developing countries, its ability to enforce laws and policies uniformly across its territorial expanse is far from robust and even intermittent in parts of Karachi, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and south Punjab. For instance, in Karachi, state provision of security and social services such as water are confined to territorial enclaves inhabited by elite sections of the population, whereas in the rest of the city, violent non-state actors such as the Pakistani Taliban, criminal syndicates and armed gangs affiliated with political parties openly challenge the state's monopoly of violence (see Suhail in this volume) which has created a political equilibrium described by Gayer (2014) as 'ordered disorder'.

How does one make sense of this variegated strength-capacity of the state? It would be reasonable to argue that, unlike 'governments [that] simply do not govern' (Huntington 1968:2), the Pakistani state is stronger in some realms

[4] Weber has defined the modern state as a 'compulsory association which organizes domination'. His most well-known conception of the state is a 'human community that claims the (successful) monopoly of the legitimate use of violence within a territory' (Gerth and Mills 1946:78).

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than others, an acknowledgment that opens the possibility of differentiating between the forms of power states possess in relation to civil society. The sociologist Michael Mann (1984, 2012) divides these into two types: *despotic* and *infrastructural*. Despotic or hard power refers to the classic Weberian conception of the state based on its control over the means of legitimate violence. In contrast, infrastructural power is the 'institutional capacity of the state ... to penetrate its territory and logistically implement its decisions' (1984:113). In other words, this demonstrates the state's ability to enforce its policies and decisions in the territory under its control, such as its capacity to 'regulate institutions, extract resources, and provide public goods' (Soifer 2008:220).

Understood in this dual sense, the despotic power of the Pakistani state still seems formidable given its sizable and well-equipped military, paramilitary, intelligence and even police forces. The clearest demonstration of this despotic power is in the state's ability to wage external and internal wars. For instance, many commentators doubted the Pakistani military's capacity to impose its monopoly on violence in Pakistan's north-western tribal belt, until recently known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), which had become a sanctuary for Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants since the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.[5] But this narrative, backed by the military, ignored the difference between capacity and will. For years the Pakistani army hesitated to take on the Taliban in North Waziristan Agency by arguing that it lacked the capacity to do so. But as any sensible observer of Pakistan will testify, this prevarication had much to the do with the military's unwillingness to target Waziristan because it also served as the base of operations for one of its main jihadi proxies, the Haqqani network. In any case, the army's successful displacement of the Pakistani Taliban from North Waziristan through its Operation Zarb-e-Azb (June 2014 to date) should vitiate previous accounts of state weakness.

By contrast, the Pakistani state's infrastructural power remains feeble, as is evidenced, for instance, by its low collection of taxable revenue,[6] and the limited success of social policy such as poverty alleviation, and the provision of health, education and other public services. However, this power is not homogenously weak across all arenas of state activity. The Pakistani state has shown itself capable of performing tasks that are usually characteristic of strong

[5] In May 2018, FATA formally became a part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.
[6] Only 20 per cent of taxable revenue is actually collected (Zaidi 2015:256).

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states, such as effectively conducting a national census. And even within the same arena, there are divergences. For example, the state is better at building schools and employing teachers than at enhancing the quality of education (Hasnain 2008), or even maintaining those buildings and holding teachers accountable for neglecting their jobs – a phenomenon that is widespread. In still other cases, Pakistan can boast 'islands of effectiveness' amidst an abundance of frailness and malfeasance, such as the Motorway Police compared to the generally corrupt and inefficient regular police (Crook 2010). Ultimately, I think unpacking the power of the state to distinguish between its constituent dimensions can help us better understand state–society dynamics in Pakistan, and Mann's approach can be particularly useful in that regard.

From the Statist Fire into the Societal Frying Pan

While Zaidi (2014) criticises Alavi's (1972) exclusive attention to the state, his own focus is squarely on society. In fact, he is discomfited by scholars who privilege other variables, such as ethnicity, religion and especially institutions, at the expense of class as an object of analysis. To quote Zaidi, '[m]uch of the analysis on Pakistan now deals with the role of institutions, their clashes with each other for hegemony, and so on. Class seems lost in the analysis' (Zaidi 2014:51). Is Zaidi right in claiming that class analysis has virtually disappeared from the literature? This argument does not stand to scrutiny. In fact, several recent works deploy social class as a key explanatory variable, while others wed class and institutional analysis to explain political economy (Rahman 2012; Javid 2015). Besides, there is no a priori reason to assume that social classes are the most crucial groups in any society. By assuming that classes systematically exhibit certain political tendencies or pursue predefined collective interests, this Marxian-inspired view takes class interests as historical 'givens' rather than 'takens' and eliminates the real possibility of intra-class fissures.

To be more specific, Zaidi (2014) sees the subordinate classes as the true vanguard of counter-hegemony against the ruling elite. For instance, after a sceptical analysis of the causal role of institutions, Zaidi asks,

> What of the *social groups and classes who oppose the system of exploitation and expropriation*? ... Opposition to the state is led *more* by sections of what we can call the middle classes – such as those demanding water and electricity, not connections, but an uninterrupted supply – *rather than* the working classes, labourers, and peasants demanding better working conditions or higher pay. (Zaidi 2014:52, italics mine)

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This attachment to a politics of social emancipation is laudable but problematic, because the agency of the working (or any other social) class is historically doubtful. For example, even in Western Europe where modernity and liberal democracy first arose, the working class was rarely a decisive actor. Several influential scholars (Himmelfarb 1966; Collier 1999) have shown that the process of democratisation often followed industrialisation and the creation of class-conscious working classes. In many cases, the incumbent political elites extended franchise to the working classes when they needed a broader support base in the context of partisan political competition. Moreover, making collective claims against the state seldom succeeded in the absence of political organisation, such as a strong working class party. Labour unions did play an important role, but mainly in conjunction with other social forces, and where labour was already represented in parliament through socialist parties (Collier 1999). Political organisation, in other words, is not the froth floating over the choppy waters of class conflict. Instead, it is central to the success of the politics of subordinate classes.

INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY AND MILITARY DOMINANCE BY OTHER MEANS

There is a consensus in recent social science scholarship on state building, regime origins and economic growth that 'institutions matter'. Although there is much less agreement on what constitutes an institution,[7] it is widely accepted that institutions affect action by structuring human interactions and expectations through formal and informal rules. Here I use institution in the sense of a formal organisation which can deploy its expertise, resources and legal powers to shape the incentives and inclinations of other social and political groups. More to the point, the military institution wields the ultimate political power because it controls the means of force and coercion which endows it with the unique capacity to advance its interests. Like other professional militaries, the Pakistani army has a corporate identity, and interests that separate and distinguish it from the politicians, civil bureaucracy and even society at large.

As Pakistan's history shows, the generals have been equal opportunity offenders when it comes to social class. The military has repressed a variety of parties and political leaders not because they have threatened the capitalist

[7] See Hall and Taylor (1996) for the different social science conceptons of institutions, which include rules of the game, formal organisatons and norms.

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relations of production but because they have violated its institutional norms or prerogatives. For example, it ousted prominent Punjabi landlords such as Prime Minister Feroze Khan Noon in 1958, Sindhi landed elites such as Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1977 and Mohammad Khan Junejo in 1988, and even members of the Punjabi industrial bourgeoisie such as Nawaz Sharif in 1999, when they challenged the military's corporate integrity or threatened its tutelary role in the political order, as was seen again more recently, in 2018. More indirectly, the military's expansive economic interests in housing, logistics, cement production and infrastructure development, to name a few, hurts the presumed class interests of the bourgeoisie.

Scholarship of the political economy of Pakistan would be richer if researchers were to integrate the important and well-established role of institutions, which can be relatively independent of the class interests that they presumably represent or seek to protect. For instance, political scientists have long shown that political parties typically act as strategic actors primarily interested in the electoral game of winning and staying in power (Sniderman and Levundusky 2007; see also Javed, and McCartney, in this volume). They can aggregate and represent societal interests because of their roots in society, which are rarely reducible to class preferences here, Akhtar's (2008) characterisation of Pakistani parties as the expression of bourgeois interests, which Zaidi (2014) seems to endorse, is problematic.

Moving to the present political context, Zaidi (2014) asks an important empirical question to understand the nature, scope and prospects of civil–military relations since the transition to elected rule in 2007–2008: 'Who holds power in Pakistan?' Zaidi believes that new power contenders, such as the higher judiciary and the private electronic media, have 'successfully challenged the undisputed dominance' of the military, which has left the once mighty generals 'vulnerable' and in 'retreat' (Zaidi 2014:50–51). In fact, he goes farther to argue that the military is no longer a hegemon, but now instead just 'a veto player'. This interpretation of civil–military politics raises a couple of issues. First of all, it is debatable whether military dominance was ever undisputed. The military was successfully challenged by the Bengali nationalist mobilisation against the Pakistani military during the 1971 civil war, and less successfully by the contentious PPP-led Movement for the Restoration of Democracy [MRD] against General Zia's military regime in the early 1980s. It is also debateable whether military dominance has been successfully challenged in the post-authoritarian context, although there is undoubtedly vigorous, if sporadic and disorganised, civilian contestation of its privileged

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position. Second, the military has not been a hegemon in the Gramscian sense, because its structure of dominance was sustained primarily by coercion rather than consent. East Pakistan and Balochistan are two paradigmatic examples of the military's 'hit everything with a hammer' approach to resolving demands for ethnic recognition and autonomy. In other words, the military has exercised what Guha (1998) has called 'dominance without hegemony'. Finally, the military is not just a veto player like the Indonesian military in the post-Suharto period on which Zaidi basis his assessment. It is, in fact, *the* veto player, if by that term one means an institutional actor 'whose agreement is required to change the status quo' (Tsebelis 1995:289; Tsebelis 2002).

In fact, any reasonable analysis of the post-Musharraf military's relationship to the judiciary and the media would demonstrate that the military is no longer interested in the direct conquest of the state or society. Instead, as this chapter discusses below, the military appears to be pursuing a Gramscian-style hegemonic strategy based on both consent and co-optation.

The Judges: Concession and Co-optation

Historically, Pakistan's higher judiciary has distinguished itself by collaborating with the military in providing legal justifications for military interventions. Zaidi recognises that the judiciary has recently acquired a degree of independence which derives from the successful anti-regime protests led by the 'lawyers' movement' (2007) to reinstate the arbitrarily sacked Supreme Court Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry. While the anti-regime mobilisation played a crucial role in convincing the military institution to ditch the military president, it is equally crucial to acknowledge that the military did not lose any of its core institutional privileges during the democratic transition, such as its control over organisational structure, missions, budgetary allocations and intelligence gathering, among others. Beyond the deadweight of historical entrenchment facilitated by its permanent war fighting mission against India, it could retain these reserve domains for several reasons. The first was the high degree of structural separation between the institutional military and the military-led government (Stepan 1988; Shah 2014a). While the two were connected at the top by the president and army chief of staff, General Pervez Musharraf, the military institution did not take over direct command of the government. There were no military councils of ministers and no reserved seats for members of the military in the Parliament, as in Suharto's Indonesia or Pinochet's Chile. In fact, the large majority of the military was focused on

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combat readiness against India and, to a lesser degree, on counterinsurgency missions against Taliban militants in FATA. Musharraf never declared martial law (like Zia or Ayub) in good measure because of a post–Cold War norm against military rule, the violation of which typically carried diplomatic and financial costs. Second, the military did not directly participate in repressing the popular protests which could have dented its legitimacy and reputation. In fact, the high command astutely separated itself from a reviled military dictator at his weakest moment, thus emerging out of the transition process relatively unscathed as an institution.

Zaidi (2014) sees the 2007 lawyers' movement as a critical inflection point, and characterises it as the first protest movement against an army chief of staff, without providing any explanation for why he ignores the cross-regional, cross-class contentious mobilisation that helped remove Field Marshal-President Ayub Khan in 1969. Zaidi is right to recognise that the military is no longer the only game in town, but he seems to overestimate the extent to which the judges have challenged the generals. For instance, Zaidi believes that 'the supreme judiciary and the reinstated chief justice have since 2009 passed numerous judgments that have found the military as an institution, as well as serving and retired senior officers, guilty of treasonable offences' (2014:50). He seems to have based this conclusion on two cases. First, the Supreme Court's decision to hold two retired generals – former army chief Aslam Beg and the director general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (DG-ISI) Asad Durrani – responsible for violating the constitution in the infamous Asghar Khan case. However, rather than risk antagonising the generals, it vaguely instructed the government to take 'necessary legal action' against them, while issuing specific instructions that the politicians who took bribes should be interrogated by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). Besides, *post-facto* judicial sanction is not entirely new if one considers the *Asma Jilani vs the Government of Punjab* (PLD 1971) case, where the Supreme Court declared General Yahya Khan as a usurper, but which had little substantive effect on the civil–military power imbalance. The second case that Zaidi based his conclusion on was the indictment of former army chief Musharraf for treason. While unprecedented, Musharraf did not spend a single day behind bars (instead, his palatial house on the outskirts of the capital was declared a sub-jail), and he was allowed to leave the country under military pressure before he could be prosecuted (*Dawn* 2016).

The judges have no doubt questioned the military's human rights violations in Balochistan which is truly unprecedented. However, from a glass-half-empty perspective, these intermittent judicial inquiries have not yet yielded a

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single prosecution. In at least one case in which an ISI brigadier was charged with kidnapping a civilian, the Supreme Court itself restrained the police from executing its arrest orders because 'it was a matter of respect of an institution' (*Daily Times* 2013). In fact, these toothless hearings may have only reinforced the generals' presumptions of impunity while creating a veneer of accountability since the military's campaign of intimidation, abduction and torture of Baloch and Sindhi nationalists, journalists and civil society activists continues unabated. The January 2017 abduction of anti-establishment bloggers and rights activists reportedly by the 'agencies' (a euphemism for the military's Inter-Services Intelligence) (Human Rights Watch 2017; Geo TV 2017) is clear indication that the generals can bare their fangs to signal that the rule of law does not apply to the Pakistan military, and anyone who dares bring the institution into disrepute will pay a high personal cost. In fact, the military remained unfazed in the face of the extraordinary local and global media attention on the abductions and civil society protests across Pakistan and abroad demanding the recovery of the bloggers. The civilian government, on the other hand, appeared clueless and helpless, clearly unable to assert its authority over the military even though it must take responsibility since the people elected the politicians and demand accountability.

Reflecting its long-standing authoritarian leanings, the Supreme Court disqualified Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif from holding public office in June 2017 in a corruption inquiry linked to the Panama Papers. However, the disqualification was not on the basis of any proof of corruption but a technicality, with the judgement resting on an insidious constitutional requirement of 'honesty', inserted by the military dictator General Zia ul Haq and used to oust dissenting members of parliament. The probe that became the basis for the Court's decision was, moreover, led by military intelligence officials and marred by serious accusations of witness intimidation and bias. As if deposing the duly elected prime minister was not enough, the judges also ordered the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to revive dormant corruption cases against Sharif and his family members, and designated a judge from the same bench that disqualified Sharif to ensure the timely conclusion of the cases in an anti-corruption court. In July 2018, Sharif was expectedly convicted in absentia to ten years in prison for owning assets disproportionate to his income. Despite facing a long jail term, Sharif returned to the country on the eve of the July 25, 2018, parliamentary elections and was incarcerated upon arrival. Sharif applied for bail in the Islamabad High Court, but the ISI reportedly pressured the court's chief justice to remove a judge critical of the military from the bench hearing Sharif's application (*Dawn* 2018b).

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Sharif's disqualification formed part of the military's systematic rigging of the electoral process to prevent the PML-N from coming back to power and to prop up the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) led by Imran Khan. This included pre-poll coercion and/or blackmail of PML-N party members to join the PTI or to contest the elections as independent candidates, a virtual black out of the PML-N's electoral campaign on state and private TV news channels, heavy military deployment inside polling stations around the country, as well as suspected fudging of election results and an unprecedented delay in their announcement (*Dawn* 2018a, 2018c; *Guardian* 2018).

The Electronic Media: Coercion and Co-optation

Zaidi (2014:51) also describes the media as the tool for 'hounding the military for its past anti-democratic behaviour'. While the electronic media's strident opposition to Musharraf in the terminal year of his rule bears this statement out, it needs further elaboration. Major news channels and popular political talk show hosts tend to parrot the military's narrative on the expansively defined sphere of 'national security', either out of self-censorship or due to direct threats and intimidation. And the military has also shown itself fully capable of applying sophisticated strategies such as the use of its powerful media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), to effectively police both the electronic and the print media. The ISPR maintains a vigorous social media presence designed to manufacture consent and vigilantly controls journalists' access to 'sensitive' defence information, such as the military's counter-insurgency operations in FATA. It also uses Twitter to 'talk back' to the government. For instance, DG-ISPR Major General Asif Ghafoor deeply embarrassed the government when he tweeted the military's 'rejection' of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's decision to sack his top foreign policy advisor and a senior civil servant over their alleged role in leaking the contents of a high-level, classified civil–military meeting to the press.[8] The article in question suggested that the civilian leadership had sparred with the military over its support for militant groups (see Almeida 2017). He later had to retract his statement, which could be interpreted as a small victory for civilian supremacy. However, the tweet signalled that the military reserves the right to publicly contest the government. The ISI also runs its own Information Management

[8] https://twitter.com/officialdgispr/status/858257576210952192?lang=en (accessed 7 January 2018).

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Wing, which metes out both punishments and rewards. In recent years, the agency has been widely accused of intimidating and blackmailing journalists, while cajoling others through both monetary incentives and 'exclusive' stories to sway public opinion against designated internal and external foes.[9]

Zaidi believes that the killing of bin Laden in May 2011 may have been a turning point in stripping the military's presumptions of impunity from public scrutiny. He argues: 'Moreover, an extraordinary and unprecedented public debate has taken place on the so-called security agencies, and by extension on the covert role of the military, after the Abbottabad raid on Osama bin Laden in May 2011.... Public criticism of the military has never been so vocal in Pakistan' (2014:52).

The bin Laden episode did temporarily strain the patron–client relationship between the military and prominent pro-military journalists, who launched unexpected criticism of the military for its disastrous policies of nurturing militants and its transparent incompetence despite receiving a large share of the national budget. In turn, the military publicly warned its critics to stop 'trying to deliberately run down the Armed Forces and the Army' in particular and threatened 'to put an end' to 'any effort to create divisions between important institutions of the country'. At least in one case the generals seem to have lived up to their words. On 29 May 2011, the ISI allegedly abducted, tortured and brutally murdered the Pakistani journalist Saleem Shehzad, just a day after he exposed links between Al-Qaeda and navy personnel (*Guardian* 2011). Similarly, on 19 April 2014, unknown gunmen shot Hamid Mir, a well-known journalist and news anchor at the popular Geo TV, in Karachi. Before the attack, Mir had informed his family and close associates that the ISI was threatening him because of his coverage of the military's human rights violations in Balochistan and that the agency should be held responsible if he was harmed. After Geo TV hurriedly broadcast the allegations, splashing a picture of then DG-ISI Lieutenant General Zaheerul Islam Abbassi across TV screens in Pakistan for hours, the military unleashed a campaign of threats,

[9] For example, after the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operative Raymond Davis was arrested in Lahore for killing two Pakistanis in January 2011, the ISI leaked the names of fifty-five American 'spies' to show how the PPP government's lax visa policy had made it possible for the CIA to expand its network within Pakistan. It also deliberately leaked the name of the CIA station chief in Pakistan to settle scores with the Americans for the humiliation they had caused it with the raid that killed bin Laden.

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intimidation and blackmail that nearly bankrupted the country's largest news conglomerate (*Dawn* 2014).[10] While the electronic media is a genie that the military cannot put back in the bottle, the effects of these coercive military responses is to significantly increase the costs of dissent, which only amplifies journalists' fear and uncertainty. In the run-up to the July 2018 parliamentary elections, the military continued its assault on media freedoms, including publicly identifying several journalists and activists as threats to national security, illegally detaining journalists, pressuring editors to pull critical opinion articles, disrupting the distribution of the *Dawn* newspaper, and intimidating cable operators to block the transmission of dissenting news channels such as Geo and Dawn News (Haroon 2018).

The July 2018 election represented the second peaceful transfer of power from an elected government to another. Thus, according to the well-known 'two-turnover test',[11] Pakistan had achieved democratic consolidation. While most political parties, including the PML-N and the PPP, appear committed to the rules of the electoral game, meeting this minimum threshold does not make Pakistan a consolidated democracy. Instead, it can be described as a tutelary hybrid regime, where formal democratic institutions are severely curtailed by an authoritarian military that has insinuated its vast prerogatives into the functioning of a democracy. The generals have crafted a 'menu of manipulation' that includes silencing dissent through selective repression of civil society, coercing the media, co-opting the country's judiciary to legally target its political opponents and micromanaging elections to achieve desired results.

[10] For example, the ISI had the Ministry of Defence petition the Pakistan Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), the country's electronic media regulator, to revoke Geo TV's transmission license and initiate criminal charges against its management for defaming the state. In addition, ISI-backed militant organisations, such as the Jamaat-ud-Dawa, staged angry protests, which competitor pro-military media organisations then broadcast along with talk shows segments questioning the patriotism of Mir and Geo TV. Ultimately, Geo and its affiliated newspapers were banned from military bases and units, and the ISI reportedly pressured cable TV operators around the country to block the channel's transmission.

[11] The 'two-turnover' test is attributed to Huntington (1991:267), who described it as follows: 'The party or group that takes power in the initial election at the time of transition loses a subsequent election and turns over power to those election winners, and if those election winners then peacefully turn over power to the winners of a later election.'

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CONCLUSION

Zaidi (2014) not only invokes the need for us to rethink the traditional 'state-heavy' assumptions underlying social science scholarship on the Pakistani state, he also urges us to incorporate new social actors and processes in our analyses to construct a more temporally appropriate framework for understanding continuity and change in state–society relations. In this chapter's response to Zaidi, I have argued that the state still offers a valuable analytical category and, that in our desire to reclaim the role and place of society in political economy scholarship, scholars should avoid society-centric explanations that are often narrowly tied to class antagonisms as the grand motors of history typically at the expense of other important explanatory variables, such as institutions. This chapter has also suggested the importance of breaking down state autonomy into its different forms, for example, coercive/despotic versus infrastructural, to capture variation in intra-state power vis-à-vis civil society. Second, the chapter also suggests that while it is important to acknowledge the emergence of countervailing power in the judiciary and the media, which can potentially constrain unbridled military domination, the generals have adapted by practising a strategy focused on deriving consent through persuasion and co-optation ultimately backed by coercion. It would be naive to conclude that we are seeing any meaningful decline in military political power. If anything the post-transitional context indicates the solidification of a hybrid regime subject to military tutelage undergirded by its 'reserve domains' in foreign policy and domestic politics.

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4 Class Is Dead but Faith Never Dies

Women, Islam and Pakistan

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INTRODUCTION

In his 'Rethinking Pakistan's Political Economy', S. Akbar Zaidi (2014:50) argues that '"class" has become a category that has lost relevance for the social sciences' in Pakistan and that 'the country has been forced into an analytical Islamic framework as if no other sense of existence or identity existed'. This chapter confirms Zaidi's observation by referencing it against Alavi's (1988) thesis on women, class and Islam. The comparison reveals how Alavi's earlier class analysis has since been replaced by the privileging of Islam as a category of analysis in a body of post 9/11 scholarship. It also demonstrates how defensive apologia, offered by those who claim a left identity, has prevented the emergence of a new and gendered reading of Pakistan's political economy, since it has been busy saving Islam and the Muslim man from feminist critique and global imperialism.

The first three decades of the newly independent state of Pakistan were marked by successful pressure from women's groups and activists for the feminisation of its policies and institutions. The 1977 military coup by General Zia ul Haq was followed by a regime under which the earlier ambitious modernisation period was replaced by an aggressive conservatism enforced by a social and legal Islamisation campaign. This was met with resistance from a small but vocal Pakistani women's movement during the 1980s. According to Hamza Alavi,

> the decade [was] truly [the] decade of the women of Pakistan. A powerful women's movement made a dramatic impact on Pakistan's political scene, all the more so in the light of the total failure of political parties to inject any life in the movement for restoration of democracy in Pakistan to bring an end to its oppressive military regime. (1988:1328)

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This acknowledgement of the agency of women's resistance to a masculinist state and of the importance of their contributions towards Pakistan's democratisation is a departure from Alavi's (1972) original un-gendered thesis of the overdeveloped Pakistani state in which women are an invisible category. But the criticism regarding Alavi's gender blindness warrants deeper investigation. Women's rights movements in Pakistan have held contradictory relations with military regimes. These relations have been hostile and confrontational at times and at others, yielded advantageous or beneficial policies for women. So, while General Zia ul Haq (1977–1988) has been the quintessential anti-women dictator, under General Ayub Khan's (1958–1969) and General Pervez Musharraf's (1999–2008) regime, women achieved considerable legal and social progress, often in defiance of the opposition of the religious parties and in contrast to the indifference or impotency of democratic or left parties on women's rights. The point being that the history of women's relationship with the (praetorian) state has been a mixed one, and while women's collectives have negotiated the minefield of state co-optation with admirable deftness, it is not a simple matter to analyse the gendered relations of power dynamics vis-à-vis the Pakistani state. Critically, and despite much abstract sloganeering against imperialism and neoliberalism by those who associate with left politics in Pakistan, there has been no convincing gendered analysis of the political economy, especially under neoliberal globalisation and its connectivity with liberal rights for women in an Islamic Republic. Therefore, to expect Alavi to have attempted a gendered reading of power dynamics back in 1972 when women were infiltrating and 'feminising the state' may be an overstated expectation.

Zia ul Haq's regime was the richest period in terms of the production of feminist literature, and Alavi's brief thesis on women acknowledged that the threat to women's education that was posed by Islamic fundamentalism and General Zia's Islamisation policies were 'a threat to the family economy' and to the new values and attitudes (1988:1329). His conclusion is that these middle-class and lower-middle-class families are 'therefore the "modernists" who interpret Islam in a liberal way, who are sceptical of dogmatic interpretations of Islam by mullahs whom they consider to be obscurantists even though they avail of their services for ritual purposes' (1988:1329). Alavi argued that there was a considerable and 'growing social base of secularism in Pakistan's political life' (1988:1329) and cited evidence by way of the repeated rout of the Islamic political parties such as the Jamaat-i-Islami in three successive elections in the country.

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Alavi's predictions have not unfolded in any linear or conclusive manner; middle- and lower-class women have certainly not wholesale adhered to liberal social philosophies but instead, as post-9/11 scholarship has eagerly demonstrated, many women have embraced pietist and nationalist masculinist interpretations of Islam with little scepticism.[1] Religion has been deployed as a viable tool of political empowerment by/for women and for the promotion of patriarchal ends (Zia 2015). However, this phenomenon has not been as sweeping or sustained as this scholarship attempts to portray and certainly not impeded other women's economic, professional and even liberal aspirations. The Pakistan state and society today seem to be precariously poised on the crest of religious-secular waves of tensions that sometimes rise but also ebb into a state of concurrence. These vacillations and debates are discussed later with reference to women's relationship with Islam, and it is argued that scholarly preoccupation with Islamophobia and imperialism has contributed to the missed opportunity to develop any gendered analysis or reading of the political economy in recent times.

In his thesis, Alavi also corroborates the collusion between state masculinist Islamisation and domestic 'family patriarchs' insofar as the latter treats 'the women of his household [as] his virtual slaves and he jealously guards their subordination by a constant invocation of Islamic values, as interpreted by himself.... A fundamentalist ideology reinforces his command over the enslaved women in his domestic workshop' (1988:1329). In the post-9/11 period, the notion of Muslim women's pietist agency as a viable alternative to liberal empowerment has challenged the Alavian argument that women are enslaved believers.

Alavi sounds a common critique, popular amongst the left, regarding class difference as a limitation to expanding women's movements. Alavi suggests that 'very few working women … can afford the time to go to meetings and demonstrations' and that only those who are sufficiently well off and 'tend to have servants to take care of the domestic front' can play an active and continuing part in such activities (1988:1330). Alavi considers mobility as a major impediment but that 'this does not mean that the vast majority of working women who are not blessed with such help lack consciousness or that they are unaware of the issues that confront women in Pakistan' (1988:1330). This observation by Alavi has also been revisited by Zaidi (2014), who has

[1] One example is the emergence of Al-Huda, a women's pietist movement. For details, see Ahmed (2009).

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observed the seismic changes in the economy, mobility and social attitudes that follow a rapid increase in women's participation in the workforce, in the pursuit of education and in paid activism or the development sector. This gendered mobility is not necessarily limited by women's class status but neither is it boosted by some conscious class or solidarity politics. Women's consciousness and mobility has been facilitated largely by economic compulsions, state liberalisation and globalised means of communications (media). Unlike Alavi, Zaidi would not consider the General Zia years (1977–1988) but perhaps may consider the General Musharraf era (1999–2008) as the 'decade of women' particularly with relevance to the evolution of a political economy in which women have played a critical role and are poised to influence its turns in the future.

POST-9/11, POST-SECULARIST SCHOLARSHIP

In the post-9/11 era, a cohort of Pakistani post-secularist scholars[2] has produced a body of work heavily influenced by the works of Asad (2003), Mahmood (2005) and Abu-Lughod (2002, 2013). In these works, Muslim women's religious 'agency' rather than secular autonomy has become a substitutive and almost exclusive tool of analysis for 'understanding' Muslim women at the cost of their working-class identities (Zia 2018). The elasticity afforded by anthropology and a political environment around Islam in the post-9/11 decade has led to overwhelming scholarly interest in 'The Muslim'. Discursively, the Muslim subject has been framed and reframed, packed and unpacked, feminised, de-radicalised, and anthropologised. A case has been made for Muslims to be recognised as a 'cohesive' entity rather than expected to be part of Western multiculturalism. Islamists' subjectivities have been recovered, their madrassas depoliticised, patriarchal politics rationalised and violent ideologies suspended in the search for accommodating Islamist religiosities in both Muslim and non-Muslim contexts. Muslim identity has served as an academic cash cow, leading to a proliferation of all sorts of Islamic studies

[2] The Pakistani scholarship I refer to include, as examples, the works of Jamal (2013); Bano (2012); Kalmbach and Bano (2011); Deneulin and Bano (2009); Aziz (2005); Cheema and Mustafa (2008, 2009); Iqtidar (2011); Mushtaq (2010); Quraishi (2011). Others are Pakistani PhDs in progress, whose authors frame their theses around postcolonialism and Subaltern Studies to analyse the 'War on Terror' in Pakistan. For example, see A. Khan (2014), T. M. Khan (2015) and Ali (n.d.), among others.

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departments, seminars, projects, research, publications, PhDs and, of course, scholars around the world.

Simultaneously, a variety of theses have been offered in a body of post-secularist Pakistan-specific scholarship produced in the post-9/11 period. These include proposals such as Iqtidar's (2011) submission that it is the Islamists of Pakistan and not secularists who can serve as authentic agents of an appropriate (redefined) secularisation. There is Bano's (2012) work that makes a case for Islamist women as rational believers who can benignly instrumentalise Islam towards social justice and development in Pakistan. Aziz (2005) suggests that Islamic legal regimes are viable alternatives to the unworkable 'occidental secularisation' that we must reject. Cheema and Akbar (2010) argue that moral rewards can emerge from Islamic readings of all financial and political legal cases, especially for the 'poor and disenfranchised people of Pakistan' (Cheema and Shahzad 2010). The underlying premise of this body of scholarship has been that while Islamist politics has had a systemic affinity with the Pakistan military's jihadist ambitions and paranoia, still, it is primarily the Pakistani liberal intelligentsia and its preoccupation with an equality-espousing human rights agenda that is the obstacle towards an authentic, postcolonial Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Several other 'scholar-activists' who purport a left or radical positioning do not propose Islamist politics as an alternative to secular forces, but in a similar vein this collective of Pakistani students and scholars (particularly in north America) hold liberal intellectuals in Pakistan responsible for blocking out the importance of the 'people's movement'. These scholar-activists consider themselves new radicals compared to those they classify as 'liberals' and who, they insist, are oblivious to peasant and working-class movements in the country.[3] Apart from attempting to lump some targeted activists as liberal sell-outs, they also make outdated allegations and reprimand 'liberal pundits' for recalling the former Prime Minister 'Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto as a paragon of social democratic virtue rather than the anti-Left, anti-Bengali demagogue that he was' (Toor 2013).

According to this new scholarship, religion, particularly Islam, has become a relevant category of identity and social analysis. The first set of post-secularist scholars reference religious identity as a neutral and ethnographic driver of

[3] The naïve and contradictory, ahistorical positions of this collective may be found on social media where they are most active, and for a response to some of their blinkered positions, see Zia (2014b).

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social and political participatory behaviour. The second group of 'radical leftists' frame Muslim men as permanent victims of Pakistani 'liberal-secularists' who are characterised as drone-supporting, 'NGO-type' Islamophobes. This renders invisible earlier social-scientific analyses (including those by Alavi) that focused on religious politics as the impetus and source that propels faith-based violence and hate-crimes, and which assists in the deployment of institutionalised, legal ways of persecuting minorities and getting away with murders of women. This body of post-9/11scholarship selectively ignores how faith-based crimes and social behaviour elicit both societal and legal impunity, even when they directly violate the law or use its moral base to take people's lives. More critically, this literature obfuscates the changing nature of the state (also pointed out by Zaidi 2014b) by a dogged left opinion (usually diasporic) preoccupied with documenting and blogging against the evils of the War on Terror, neoliberalism and liberal-secular NGO Islamophobia. This limited interest in protesting the rescue of Muslim women through global liberal sympathy has deflected any serious engagement with or proposals for a new and gendered reading of the domestic political economy.[4]

THE LIBERAL-SECULAR BOGEYMAN DOMINATES THE ACADEMY

By now the process by which the replacement of categories of analysis takes place, as observed by Zaidi (2014a) becomes clear. Iqtidar in *Secularizing Islamists* compounds the inadequately defined category 'Liberal-Secular' as a hybrid and fixed category to refer to any collective that opposes Islamist politics in Pakistan. But, in fact, religio-nationalist issues ranging from drone warfare to polygamy and inheritance have supporters and detractors across all classes, genders, provinces and beliefs. So, first, liberal thought, however vaguely defined, is not the privilege nor political aspiration of the bourgeoisie only – something that Alavi (1988) notes in his essay. Second, liberals are not (unfortunately) necessarily secularists in Pakistan – they are just mostly opportunists who have repeatedly compromised on secular possibilities when it has mattered most. Meanwhile, many secularists (especially in Balochistan and Pakhtunkhwa) are certainly not always political liberals.

[4] See Zaidi's review (2012) of recent publications on Pakistan by Anatol Leivan, Humeira Iqtidar and Saadia Toor among others. Just the headings that Zaidi uses to categorise these works are educational. Some of these are 'Journalistic Account', 'Amateur Anthropology', 'Running Out of Ideas', 'Wishful Thinking' and 'Concocted History'.

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Both the above-mentioned, West-based scholarly endeavours to delegitimise fledgling and flawed liberal values in Pakistan emerge from a post-9/11 Empire anxiety. Interestingly, this scholarship paints a landscape that is Punjab-centric, both by way of the sites of its research interest and the membership of this collective. The Punjab-centricity of this body of scholarship is a notable point and deserves closer examination elsewhere.

Research produced within Pakistan's academia since the mid-1980s is by most measures a travesty, and the social sciences have only recently begun to produce original scholarship (Zaidi 2002). The small minority of academics who publish in the English language in Western academia or within Pakistan are broadly products of the same class, privilege and educational opportunities. The only obvious distinction amongst these critical progressives is that those located in Pakistan, while critical of the militarised state (long before it was fashionable), have not held any mitigating sympathy either for religious militancy or for the narrative of mainstream Islamists which has been supportive of militants. Subsumed under this debate, the political instrumentalisaton of religious agency is erased. What is missed in this side argument is the documentation over how, despite the backlash of the conflict and the militants' targeting of women during the 'War on Terror', progress in women's participation in virtually every field, symbolic and actual, soared during the Musharraf era (Zaidi 2015; Zia 2014a).

Diasporic academic-activists have access to Western audiences by way of representing these issues at conferences and getting published in Western journals. As an increasing number of texts and theses are developing into a body of scholarship, there is a certain in-group fear of engaging in a political debate with these texts. Some members who are familiar with this scholarship and the connected debate are careful not to intervene as they claim friendships across the divisions. Unfortunately, by borrowing from limited frameworks of analyses and relying on select mentors, these scholars are neglecting the changing desires of those working classes across the country who do, in fact, aspire to a liberal imaginary and freedoms. It may be disappointing to know that the subaltern often harbours the same dreams and aspirations as the urban, middle class democrat does (social mobility, access to media, legal rights, free markets and state patronage; most working class movements in Pakistan seek rights mandated in international agreements). Others who claim left leadership suggest that there is no need to criticise religion because capitalism is the real enemy. They are privately critical of the diasporic scholars yet admit that it is best to ignore such extraneous politics.

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REINVENTION PREVENTS NEW IDEAS

Throughout the many 'peace talks' between the Pakistan government and the militant Taliban (from 2004), select Islamists have been labelled as 'moderate' mediators and have been successfully merged into the mainstream narrative by the Pakistani state despite their dubious democratic value. Interestingly, the very same banned jihadist group, Lashkar e Tayabba (renamed and operating under its charitable front, Jamaat ud Dawa [JuD]), that has been proposed as an agent of democratic and charitable secularisation by Iqtidar has always been known as a proxy for Pakistan's jihadist aspirations vis-à-vis Kashmir and India. Recent reports on proposals for deradicalisation by Pakistan's intelligence agencies have suggested that the JuD be mainstreamed by induction into the state's armed forces (Noorani 2016). Such an imagined merging would result in a 'harmonious' coupling of the jihadi–military complex that progressive democrats in Pakistan have always rallied against.

Even prior to such a materialist realisation, Islamists' agendas have been successfully absorbed into international development agencies, human rights organisations and domestic policies and development agendas. Effective lobbying by Islamists at international levels has meant that Muslim women's rights or human rights have been severed from the 'oppression' of the universal. Instead, these may now be measured according to alternative, culturally specific benchmarks and standards. This has affected the narrative on women's rights, ranging from dress-code, inheritance and citizenship to religious political leadership roles, marital rights and the right to work. Some of the defining debates that were considered to have been resolved under the reformed Muslim Family Laws in Muslim majority contexts have now been revisited. Legal restraints on child marriage, rights to divorce and checks on polygamy in Pakistan are constantly challenged by religious groups under the rationale of Islamic authenticity. Sympathisers of the Islamists support the revisitation of these laws and rights by arguing that marriage is a pragmatic and beneficial socio-cultural refuge for Muslim women. For fear of being painted as Islamophobic, there is global caution and silence over cases of stoning of women, blasphemy cases and the persecution of minorities in Muslim contexts. Only when the case is very obviously offensive, such as shooting a girl, Malala Yousafzai, in the head for going to school, will the international community have the courage to speak out. For that too, there is outrage and a backlash at the 'liberal interventionism by imperialists'.

One such concept endorsed by the 'new radicals' is their observation of how the Rule of Law only benefits the elite upper classes. Most of the very same

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liberal intelligentsia disparaged by these critics would agree. However, how does one respond to those who reside at the bottom of local hierarchies as they seek out the refuge of lay state law in order to circumvent local customary codes, for example, when women escape communities to marry of their own will or wish to avoid forced marriages. Such appeals have not just been to the Rule of Law but have also gone directly to the Chief Justice of Pakistan to contract free-will or prevent underage marriage, assist in divorce cases, protect from dowry violence, forced conversions and marriages or provide security from persecution in the name of patriarchy and religion and even to ensure that they are awarded International Labour Organization (ILO)–sanctioned minimum wage.

It is one thing to challenge the different layers of elite capture in society but quite another to do so by spinning an apologist stance which depends on defending Islamic politics despite its anti-women, anti-minorities and discriminatory agendas. Pakistan has come close to haemorrhaging all its liberal secular possibilities with hundreds of thousands killed in routine bombings, mosque and madrassa leaders pledging allegiance to the Taliban and even ISIS, and secular resistance in any individual or collective manner being targeted quite directly. Such politics have manifested in the form of murdering the Governor of Punjab and the Minister of Minorities for attempting to defend a Christian woman accused of blasphemy; systematic killings of polio workers and their security personnel around the country; and the attempted assassination of Malala, the school-girl who defied the Taliban. State and societal institutions are loaded with an Islamic bias and justice is dispensed in that framework. Pious judges are kissing murderers and Islamic punishment is executed right outside its gates. Further, in Karachi, several studies and observations have shown how militant groups and Islamists dispense justice at their will in their land-grabbed communities (Shah et al. 2015). All this is resisted not by some overt liberal-secular elites or NGOs but, most often, by middle- and working-class movements and individuals/intellectuals, media personalities or just young academics and even bloggers and politically conscious community leaders.

Some new-age commentators who claim a left identity (mostly online) continue to insist that the Pakistani state is targeting 'working class and lower-middle class religious-minded Pakistanis who are harassed and sometimes forcibly disappeared simply for being poor, practising Muslims and therefore suspect' (Ahmed and Tahir 2016). One is not sure what the motivating impulse of the Pakistani state used to be before the 'War on Terror' when it

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persecuted Muslim men no less – practising or not. Nor is it certain how this analysis applies to targeted citizens of Karachi and Balochistan today – who are not really great practitioners of religion but nevertheless prime targets of state-sponsored disappearances. Such ahistorical compounding of class and 'practising Muslims' is a misleading and crude analysis but jihadist groups in south Punjab may appreciate such a sympathetic interpretation that reduces militant religious politics to be simply an expression of class struggle. It would be worthy to note that, there has been little or no class analysis of the Taliban's warfare against tribesmen, journalists, women health workers, policemen and those working-class people who have resisted the patriarchal violence and agendas of the militants.

More interestingly, the predictions of Aziz, Cheema and others regarding the impossibility of reforming laws for women or minorities via secular rationales has also been upended by recent fairly progressive laws on child marriage, adultery, domestic violence, honour crimes and family laws. These have been reformed by Parliament according to a universalist framing and with the support of progressive lobbying in defiance of the recommendations of the Council of Islamic Ideology or street resistance from religious parties.

Contradictorily, many Islamists selectively invoke liberal principles of legal and political freedoms for Muslim men (which include their right to expression, worship, politic, as well as to habeas corpus, legal representation and other liberal rights). Despite opposing the presence of women in public service on principle, Islamists still usurp the liberal policy and women who represent their Islamic politics avail of and occupy Parliamentary reserved seats for women. The only time liberal anxieties are invoked is on the issue of women's and minority equal rights or land reforms, but not regarding neoliberal economics nor opportunities for men in the field of technology.

ISLAM, WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

The surplus of studies and research emerging from Western academia that market Islam as a logical entry point for social development has translated into tangible, obscenely funded development policies and projects across the Pakistan – a process called 'donor driven Islam' (Zia 2011). With an exclusive focus on enabling religious interlopers and strengthening faith-based institutions, this has meant that the relationship between madrassas and land grabbing in Karachi, or the market of fraudulent fatwa issuing or the nexus between the otherwise peaceful, Tablighi Jamaat and anti-Shia jihadist groups are rendered insignificant and are sidelined in such analysis (Shah et al. 2015).

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Other than militant groups, mainstream Islamists have actively obstructed legislation on domestic violence, violently prevented women's participation in public activities including, marathons, Valentine's day celebrations, kite-flying, playing cricket or music on campuses. They are constantly challenging the removal of religious content from school curricula, the anti-child marriage laws, conditions for polygamy, elimination of *riba* (interest). When they were in power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2002–2008), the main legislative flurry was towards the passing of the *Hisba* or morality law which prescribed a vice and virtue police amongst other policies. In other words, the normative male Islamist preoccupation in Pakistan has to do almost exclusively with sex and money.

Some Pakistani modernist feminists supported the instrumentalisation of women's religious leadership in development work with the hope that this would challenge patriarchy from within the folds of Islamic teachings (Shaheed 1998). For post-secularists, however, this hope goes further with confident claims that 'Islamic knowledge can provide women living within conservative communities with argumentative tools that increase their assertiveness, their activities within the public sphere, and their awareness of the rights vis-à-vis the male members of the family granted to them by even relatively conservative interpretations of Islam' (Kalmbach and Bano 2011). If these women subscribe to a traditional and conservative religious ethos, then why would they engage for changing the status quo by negotiating or demanding autonomy or independence? By definition, surely, women who adhere to traditional or conservative interpretations of Islam and the prescribed forms of social roles and hierarchies of relationships would not aspire towards liberal goals. However, if the authors refer to autonomy as daily mobility here, then the practice of bargaining and negotiating within patriarchal limitations is a well-documented feature in Muslim contexts and its operation within familial relationships, too, have been studied extensively (Kandiyoti 1991a; 1991b). This is by no means a value addition to the theory on faith and development. Towards what ends are these women jostling and negotiating by using faith as the driver for autonomy if they are simultaneously adherents of traditional Islamic precepts? The question is that, if equality is an ambition or aspiration associated with Western feminism then what is the 'alternative' goal of Islamic women's leadership? Moreover, if such leadership is bound to traditional patriarchal precepts, why is this of gendered interest?

The overlapping consensus between the two streams (modernist and post-secularist feminists) that argue for religiously inspired development initiatives is consensual up until a point. Post-secularists argue for 'religion *in* development'

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rather than 'religion *and* development', citing this reframing as reminiscent of the shift for gender in development studies (Deneulin and Bano 2009). Those modernist feminists who support the instrumentalisation of religion in development, while consistent and clear about their demand for a secular or non-theocratic Pakistani state, and in their demand for the repeal of Islamic laws and separation of religion from state business, seek to disabuse religion from the polluting effects of patriarchal cultural practices. By this token, they can also continue to simultaneously work on feminising women's relationship with religion within the private or social sector. However, post-secularists challenge this demarcation by illustrating the 'lived realities' of women involved in piety and faith-based movements and insist that this should be seen as political and a valid instrument of empowerment, mobilisation and expression of women's attempts to cross the private/public divide.

As mentioned earlier, the specifics of what the women of the religious ruling alliance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa did as Parliamentary leaders and in public service between 2002 and 2008 is all subsumed and disguised by the gloss that the Iqtidar and Bano theses afford these issues. These post-secularists focus on the performativity rather than structural class issues that are intrinsically tied to religious politics. In the process, class becomes a non-starter or, at best, a homogenising footnote. More importantly, there is little to suggest that such exceptionalism has benefited Muslim women.

The destination or ends of many faith-based projects are seldom assessed or evaluated. The only two certainties about faith-based developmental projects are that, first, they have legitimised conservatism; and second, according to Masud, the enlisting of the *ulema* in Pakistan in this regard has merely 'strengthened the ulema's authority at the cost of development targets' and 'politicised both religion and development' (2012:192).

Such a revision has also meant that the Muslim Man has become the substitutive Working Class Man and the Muslim Woman has become the Subalternised Veiled Subject Who Does Not Need to Be Saved Anymore, as Lughod has convinced us all. Apparently, Muslim women have no material or secular desires; apparently, they all reject something called 'Western Liberal Freedoms' even as they embrace, and we celebrate, their neoliberal economic aspirations and consumer habits and mobility and portability afforded by the hijab. We are informed via anthropological inquiry that Muslim women are most content pursuing 'alternative leadership' in mosques and madrassas (leadership towards what it is unclear, certainly not autonomy) and finding refuge in religious agency and their hijab and veil.

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The question is, why would any state, particularly the Pakistani one, have a problem with such conformist citizens who demand nothing by way of property rights, reproductive rights, social welfare or equal citizenship? Instead, these duty-bearers can be placated by their unequal inheritance and marital rights, as long as they have the other rights, that is, to observe the veil and hold *dars* or Quranic studies and proselytise in home-based madrassas for posterity. More worryingly, due to such a shift in analytical frameworks, acts of violence perpetrated in the name of Islam can no longer be reviewed as a crime, nor can the impunity extended to such crimes through certain Islamic laws be challenged, since faith-inspired violence is analysed as simply motivated by and as reactionary to something called imperialism (Zia 2017). Religious actors have been rendered as empty or neutral vessels and religion voided of political resource.

A GENDERED READING OF A NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY

The deluge of international financing for 'understanding' Muslims, and investing hope in a Sufi, soft Islam has effectively subsumed research and analyses of secular working-class movements in the country. Such movements include that of the nationwide Lady Health Workers who have been systematically assassinated by the Taliban from 2006 onwards. The commander of the Pakistan Taliban, Fazlullah, accused them of being condom-carrying prostitutes persecuted them for administering polio vaccines (Ud din et al. 2012). Also, throughout the War on Terror decade, they launched a nationwide strike for minimum wage and regularisation of their contractual government work, successfully.

Since 2000, the Okara peasant women's movement and the women councillor's participation in local bodies' politics changed the landscape of women's movements, which Alavi had thought would remain the preserve of urban, upper class women. Unfortunately, these have received just a footnote, if that, in international academia or political attention – let alone long-term funding interest. These working-class women's movements in Pakistan have deployed agency not towards Saba Mahmood's gendered Islamic virtues but very much for emancipatory ends, political power, using a liberal vocabulary, lay legal aid and secular means towards social transformation. But these have been directly opposed by religious fundamentalism, Islamist politics and men of varying faith. Several non-governmental organisations working on women's issues have given rise to a community of social leaders across Pakistan.

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Whatever the critique of neoliberal agendas carried by these organisations, their struggle against local patriarchies and organised religious power-brokers at local levels has yielded a women's rights consciousness in the most unexpected sites across the country. The Women's Action Forum is a non-funded, pro-democracy women's rights lobby group that has been active for thirty-five years and is consistently faced with the challenges to women's progress and is witness to women's resilience against religious politics on a daily basis. To deny this local routine challenge in order to make a grand narrative against imperialism and liberalism is a luxury only the detached can afford.

In post-9/11 analyses, liberal Muslims are criticised as sell-outs for embracing Western modernity and its trappings, but when Islamists do so it is hailed as the most awesome, thrilling Nicholas Kristof–*New York Times* kind of euphoric moment. Of course, Islamists embrace Western modernity and deploy all its tools and products towards Islamic banking, cyber activism, YouTube *tabligh* (missionary work), Islamic portals for cell phone subscribers and hijab shampoos by Unilever. What this analysis is silent on is the fact that capitalism is an equal offender in the commodification of women, regardless of their pietist motivations or wardrobe. The focus on performativity, consumerism or inner empowerment is a serious shortcoming in analyses of both liberal and Islamist politics as currently rehearsed in Pakistani scholarship. Not only do these ignore or negate class analysis, but such analysis of liberal politics is also ahistorical and inaccurate, while such analysis of Islamist politics is limited because it glosses over their pragmatic policies.

There is the additional factor of how Anglo-US academia has been complicit with international development funding agencies in promoting such a concerted dilution of class analysis and replacing it with a religious framing. Western universities, too, have embraced – with no scrutiny and remarkable lack of rigorous inquiry – any persuasive thesis that offers to invert the image of Islamists via discursive theoretical explorations and which discounts their political ambitions and activism. The publishing industry has been equally suppliant in pushing anything that has 'Islam' or Islamists in their subtitles but certainly not class or secular critiques. This reinforces the point that Zaidi (2014a) makes, which finds that class is a dead category for understanding Pakistan but that faith, clearly, never dies.

The Zarb e Azb (2014) military offensive against the Taliban in the tribal areas, and domestic operations such as the ones carried out against criminal activities and ethnic conflict in Karachi city (2016) (efficacy, violations and excesses notwithstanding) have directly facilitated citizens' physical, economic

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and social mobility. Zaidi (2015) lists the multiple and seemingly paradoxical prevalence of 'the greater enhancement of women's condition in a country better known for killing them'. Apart from a reduction in the gender gap by way of political participation and educational achievements, Zaidi attributes causes for women's empowerment and visibility to a rise of the middle class and the role of women's organisations struggling for their rights.

However, while the impetus behind General Musharraf's 'enlightened moderation' policies may have been political gimmickry to project some liberal image to the West, the consequences have been such that there have been structural, legislative and attitudinal gains for women. However, these have not been harnessed or systematically studied for their potential contributions towards a new political economy for Pakistan. The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), the value of Lady Health Workers, the active role of women politicians at all tiers, the burgeoning number of women factory and domestic workers and high-earning women NGO workers have challenged the gendered social order and feminised the landscape of public spaces in unexpected and secular ways. Alavi did not foresee the meandering path that working women have had to negotiate. Neither did he anticipate the new-founded challenges that have little to do with the state or top-down Islamisation. Zaidi expands the scope of understanding women's relationship with the political economy when he points out that '[f]urther research is required to explore this intersectionality – focus on girls' education, women's empowerment and agency, more public spaces, an increasing debate about women's rights, focused donor programme, etc.' (Zaidi 2015). He does not, however, call for more research or debate on women's relationship with Islam in order to cultivate a new and egalitarian political economy for Pakistan.

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5 The Amnesia of Genesis

Adeem Suhail

This chapter aims to rethink Pakistan's political economy, prompted by S. Akbar Zaidi's critique of Hamza Alavi's influential paradigm. The Alavian model describes the relations between different institutions in Pakistan. These institutions interact with class formations, both 'indigenous' and 'metropolitan'. Zaidi (2014) and Akhtar (2008) amongst others have characterised this model as 'static' and 'dated'. Indeed, much has changed in the intervening forty-five years, both in Pakistan as well as in the study of the processes of political subjection in general. This chapter addresses these changes with particular reference to one of the most significant aspect of the Alavian model – his theory of the state.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING?

It is conceivable that Hamza Alavi might have glimpsed something right at the moment of its demise. His encounter with this spectre has become the cornerstone of his legacy. Alavi's scholarly corpus is undeniably sophisticated, substantial and significant, and his insights continue to animate important avenues of research on the political process in Pakistan and beyond. However, it is his theorisation of the nature of the postcolonial state that remains his most widely cited insight. Indeed, since its publication, Alavi's outline of this framework in the *New Left Review* has been cited, according to Google Scholar, more than eleven hundred times by scholars all over the world. This article outlining the idea of the 'Overdeveloped State' has been scholars' primary window into Alavi's work, being cited three times more than anything else he has written.

At the time, Alavi was responding to prevailing debates on the nature of the state internal to a community of scholars who identified themselves as

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Marxian or Marxist. Much of this debate followed the development of 'the state' in the European context from which were derived generally applicable models of the state. Alavi was responding to this geographic bias by considering the manifestation of 'the state' in postcolonial societies. His analysis was based on sociological observations made at a specific moment in the social history of Pakistan. This moment was the turbulent 1970s, when the political order was in flux and the eastern half of Pakistan had just managed to liberate itself to form Bangladesh. The debate Alavi was responding to, however, was not centred on Pakistan. His aim, much like his interlocutors at the *New Left Review*, was to arrive at a 'generalised' theory of the state.

By locating Alavi's work in its epistemological and historical space-time, this essay critiques that adherence to the idea of the state. The spectral notion of 'the state' remains a predominant fetish of political economy models that have come in Alavi's wake. However, while Alavi saw the state as an institutional mesh of transnational relations, other scholars contemporaneous to Alavi were developing different approaches to understand the ways in which the reproduction of the rule of capital was affected by the wider capitalist world.

The 1970s are generally regarded as the temporal location of a 'crisis' in state theory. Scholars of the time were responding to the sea change in the technologies of extraction and political domination all over the world. This 'sea change' would in subsequent decades come to be identified eventually as the advent of 'late capitalism' or 'neoliberalism'. Scholars attuned to the reverberations of these seismic shifts in political organisation were coming up with all sorts of solutions to the problem of the state (Nugent and Suhail, 2018). Dominant currents in historical materialism as well as political economy, by and large, remained anchored in the structuralist mode of theorisation that tended to reify the state. Other social scientists, however, were developing novel frameworks and models for analysing political domination – ones that did not rely on the reification or fetishisation of the state.

If the reification of the state in normative political economy models, including Alavi's, does not provide a robust understanding of political subjection, then without this reification it may be useful to consider, through *empirical research*, *what exactly is it that the state fetish not only fails to explain, but also happens to obfuscate*. It is only from a location in the materiality of everyday life, in which political subjection unfolds, that we may evaluate the efficacies of our received models. Therefore, in this chapter, I locate myself in ethnographic research from the township of Lyari in contemporary Karachi. This chapter interrogates how models that rely on the fetishisation of the state

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fail to capture the materiality of people's experience of political subjection, while reproducing the illusory idea of the state.

LOCATING ALAVI IN SPACE-TIME

The 1970s were a time of intense introspection and recalibration of thought in state theory. Within Marxian epistemologies, the role of the state as a 'committee for managing' the affairs of the bourgeoisie was giving way to different ways in which the 'the state' articulated with the 'dominant' class interest. The celebrated journal *New Left Review* became a theatre for many of the debates regarding the nature of the state amongst Marxist scholars.

In the pages of that journal, Alavi proffered his theory of the state. His analysis attended to the distinction between *forms* of colonial rule, and the difference in social structurations derived thereof. The state in postcolonial societies, he argued, was not simply an 'instrument' of any *single* class (Alavi 1972:61). Rather, the bureaucratic and military apparatuses in contexts such as Pakistan exist in tension with other sociopolitical formations that are relatively less stable. As such, these other social formations find it difficult to assert claims on the domain of the state and thus to articulate the diktat of processes aimed at the reproduction of capital.

What Alavi refers to as the 'postcolonial state', however, is as a term of foreclosure implying a functional–social location much more than a sociological–empirical one. That is to say, it is not descriptive of an objective reality, but a handle for the ways in which the military and the bureaucracy, assumed to be functionally and sociologically coherent institutions, mediate between 'indigenous' social classes that constitute the economic and political elite, and the putative metropolitan bourgeoisies. This state-as-foreclosure is important in two ways.

First, it allows Alavi as a sociologist to engage with categories already in circulation amongst his interlocutors. He chooses categories that transcend the metropolitan and postcolonial contexts, which he wants to hold in comparison to arrive at a generalisable Marxist theory of the state. Second, it allows Alavi to signal the 'synthetic' or 'inorganic' roots of the institutions that populate his notion of the state. What circulates in both the metropolitan and postcolonial contexts is capital and the presumed functional coherence of the bureaucratic-military nexus, nominally designated as the state. The two contexts can be distinguished from each other by virtue of the social relations this essentialised state formation is able to forge with other interested classes whether elite or subaltern.

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Thus, for Alavi, the 'essential problem' is not to simply etch out a 'national' political economy, but to elucidate the ways in which political dominance and capital are reproduced through global linkages between classes (1972:64). His argument articulates over a scale larger than the 'national' and to a large extent must close itself off from the contradictions and disorders internal to sub-national institutions and classes. At this scale of abstraction, the military and the bureaucracy – institutionalised manifestations of the state – articulate the interests of the metropolitan bourgeoisie with the indigenous bourgeoisie. The state mediates multi-scalar processes that transcend national political economies in the service of a more 'global' capital. Capital in Europe was already 'global'. Alavi shows how that held true for the post-colony as well (Wolf 2010). Interestingly, Alavi's work does not quite attempt a sustained engagement with similar questions contemporaneously being addressed regarding Latin America or Africa (Frank 1967; Rodney 1972).

Nevertheless, Alavi avoids the traps of a reductive, caricaturised 'imperialism-from-without' formulation that animates analyses centred on the territorialised *nation* state. He rather references the idea of the national political economy to distinguish the particular form of relative autonomy that the military-bureaucratic institutional mesh in Pakistan achieves from the indigenous bourgeoisie and metropolitan capital. Furthermore, in the case of Pakistan, Alavi saw political parties as both mechanisms of ameliorating popular resistance and as formations serving different permutations of the interests of the indigenous bourgeoisie and propertied classes.

What emerges is 'peripheral capitalism'. Here the indigenous bourgeoisie, the rural landowning classes and the metropolitan bourgeoisie are *not* competing for state capture; rather, in their 'weakness' they allow the state to manage their, often competing, interests. This weakness is relative to the hyper-rationalised state external to them (owing to the European and colonial roots of the state-idea). The state then becomes *state-ly* not despite, but precisely *because* in terms of dominance it exists in 'relative autonomy' to competing class fractions. As a mediator, the military-bureaucracy state appropriates the lion's share of surplus from all sectors of production, while holding the productive forces in underdeveloped stasis relative to metropolitan capital.

Alavi's model is a function of the time and space of its genesis. It comes from a post-1971 Pakistan, and can be discursively located in the scholarly debates around an emergent form of political subjection discernible in diverse contexts all over the world. Alavi's 'overdeveloped' postcolonial state emerged as a solid rebuttal to the polarities produced by the fabled Miliband and Poulantzas debate that putatively divided the academic left. Alavi demonstrates

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the narrowness of the purview of this debate – while leaving himself open to a somewhat similar critique (Miliband 1970; Poulantzas 1969, 1976). Nonetheless, Alavi addresses how the very variability of classes and class fractions at play in the material life of exchange and production coalesce into the abstraction of Capital in the periphery.

In 1972, when Alavi published his famous article, it was a time of immense flux in Pakistan. The idea of a political community organised around Islam was the ideological mask on which the impossible territorial unity of Pakistan predicated the subjection of a diverse population to the political dominance of its élite. Bangladesh shattered that mask. When a majority amongst 'Pakistanis' decided to not be Pakistanis anymore, a severe blow was dealt to the conceptual unity of the idea of a Pakistani 'nation'. Curiously, the myth of the unicity and coherence of the Pakistani state persisted.

Meanwhile, in what remained of Pakistan, Bhutto's flirtation with left-populism had already thrown down the gauntlet against the primacy of the patrician and praetorian classes. Political subjection was already responding to these shifts with the emergent mud and muck of class, ethno-linguistic and sectarian difference and their vulgar and protean play. The military-bureaucratic nexus that Alavi identified was no more the sole guarantor of a stable political and economic order – the very existence of Bangladesh was a clear indicator of that (Ali 2005). In fact, the military and bureaucracy were themselves undergoing a drastic sociological shift at this time (Mallick 2018).

The early Bhutto regime effected important gains for the working classes though these were often accompanied by violent co-optation, subversion and pacification of organic structures of popular politics (Shaheed 1978). There were spells of *etatisation* that were synchronised with global economic crises. There were land reforms that emboldened a newly emergent landowner class. There was a large-scale worker migration to the Middle East. New class fractions and social formations materialised. So, when the reformulated military-bureaucratic complex reasserted power, it did so with unprecedented violence, and 'it' was composed of a whole new set of class-based interests. The state may have appeared as a 'reality', an institutional mesh to Alavi; but what underlay that illusion was already different from that which had come before. To be sure, the classes that claimed to be the state had changed drastically.

It is a digression from my argument to list the possible critiques of the Alavian framework. Indeed, scholars of Pakistan have been, in some form or another been offering a critique of this model since its initial articulation (Akhtar 2008). Historians and anthropologists have shown how the postcolonial predicament is not entirely reducible to a colonial past, and that this past was not entirely

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'foreign' (Bayly 1996; Cohn 1996). Economists have challenged the idea of peripheral capitalism – some questioning whether all processes of production can be characterised as capitalist even if they articulate with the capitalist market at some point (Sanyal 2014). Often the framing narrative masks the antagonisms internal to dominant class formations to doggedly reproduce the dualism of structural Marxist forms that it is supposed to be critiquing.

Rather, what is interesting is that Alavi's critics often share with him the set of assumptions that are most open to a materialist critique. The question is, of course, not how well Alavi represented the relations between institutions formative of the state but whether these institutions are so coherent in the first place. Alavi's formulations explain how postcolonial societies such as Pakistan exist with an 'overdeveloped' state and an 'underdeveloped' society. The consistency of this institutional functionalism rests on the arrangement of abstractions, state and its 'other' civil society. Yet, the dynamic processes and materialities underlying these abstractions exert a resistive force to neat aggregations in a way that these locations as discursive elements do not.

Thus, as a point of comparison, it may be instructive to look to ethnographically and empirically grounded studies of political subjection as a contentious process. Zaidi (2014) has rightly temporalised Alavi's models. Scholars around the world interrogated questions similar to the ones Alavi was examining in his time. This scholarship produced different epistemological genealogies. The accountant-governor of Fordism did not resemble the banker-praetor *apres* liberalisation. If there ever was such a coherent position around which Capital organised itself, as Alavi argued, it is impossible to find it empirically since then without ignoring whole arenas of social processes.

As indicated earlier, abstract categories serve to outline a general structure for the state at the precise moment when the state as an identifiable institutional mesh ceased to be the primary conduit of political power (if it ever was thus). This was not a phenomenon specific to the post-colony or Pakistan, but a general shift in economic relations and corresponding political formations that scholars were beginning to be sensitive to in the 1970s all over the world. Across the world, scholars were becoming attuned to a sea change in the way power and capital functioned.

THE STATE OF STATE THEORY

Since the 1970s, scholars interested in the idea of the state have increasingly been able to show through empirical research in a variety of contexts all over the world that the state is neither a rational nor a coherent social location but a

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space of contentious politics (Roseberry 1994). Behind the mask of deceptively ubiquitous notion of 'the state' lie complex, contradictory and mutable processes of reproduction of rule. These processes articulate at multiple scales through diverse social forms and figures, with ongoing projects of state-formation.

As such these projects are never complete. They are material and discursive *state*ments made by a temporally delimited confluence of social forms and interests. These interests mime 'state'-ness by unfolding claims-making projects to normalise and mask the reproduction of rule. To do so, they need to recruit support for the projects of state formation they promulgate. This support comes from class fractions and actors who may be interested in investing in the project 'as if its presentations were reality' (Sayer 1994:374). The task for the analyst then is to examine how a certain claim to the domain of the state acquires stability, despite a multiplicity of projects in play simultaneously, all offering a different form for the mask of the state, depending on the class fractions, symbols, places, rituals and performances recruited to the particular project of state-formation.

What confounds analysis is the assumption that folk categories and heuristics, such as the state–society dichotomy, have a unicity and materiality within the lived experience of subjects of power. What exacerbates the confusion further is when models corroborate claims of the dominant classes. They perform the very mimesis that projects of state-formation discursively orchestrate in order to make a claim to be the state. The Weberian state is the most common form of this fantasy. The Weberian state has acquired a 'commonsensical' status in folk as well as analytical parlance. It can be argued that the much of the work of the structural Marxists Alavi was in conversation with in the 1970s is haunted by the spectre of the Weberian state.

Max Weber's idea of the state has been predicated on his much-quoted assertion that 'today ... we have to say that a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly over legitimate use of physical force within a given territory' (Weber in Gerth et al.,1946:78). Weber's temporal qualification (that is, 'today' or, to be precise, early twentieth-century Germany) was largely ignored, and scholars focused on this broad speculative outline, untethered from empirics in a world carved up at the time into empires, as a definitional category. Wrenched from its social, spatial and temporal context, Weber's state appeared as a specific set of institutions, with their own peculiar domains of intervention: the legal–juridical, the economic–extractive, the coercive–militaristic and the administrative–bureaucratic (Vincent and Nugent 2008).

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These seemingly disparate domains formed the 'core' of the Weberian state – which is conceived as either externally encompassing or situated vertically 'above' civil society (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). Moreover, this state was deemed to be territorialised, and stood at the intersection of the domestic-national and the global-international space. Such a formulation reproduced the state-form, as an abstraction, on a global scale while reaffirming the state–society dichotomy (*pace* Tilly 1985). The division of the world into these abstract entities called states by a certain strain in the production of knowledge ratified the carving up of domains of influence in the context of the Cold War. The treatment of the abstraction of the state as a fact worked for certain outcomes preferable to the overreaching and *trans*national interests of the Cold War powers who continuously ignored the territoriality, coherence and sovereignty of the so-called states.

Many scholars, since then, have critiqued the identification of the state with hyper-rationality and order. At the heart of the processes and projects identified with the state are intensely 'maddening' and irrational passions (Aretxaga 2003), rituals and symbolisms that reproduce *shifting* contours of bias and partiality (Herzfeld 1992) that often produce arbitrary outcomes and precarity (Gupta 2012). A highly influential contrapuntal lineage has emerged in engagement with the work of Michel Foucault (Brown 1995; Rose and Miller 2010). This scholarship looks to his thought on the nature of power, that is, bio-politics and governmentality, at the dual scales of the micro-political and the global (Foucault 2003, 2007, 2008).

Others have questioned the unicity of the state following Abrams' influential 'notes on the difficulty of studying the state' (1977). Abrams, like Alavi, was responding to the milieu of Marxian scholars to argue that the state as a category is a mask. The state is, to Abrams, an ideological project, and a bid to elicit support for and tolerance of, the insupportable and intolerable by presenting them as something other than themselves; namely, legitimate, mundane, disinterested domination. Furthermore, while the state has no material existence, the state-idea, understood as a claim, is extremely powerful, precisely because it has no fixed referent and can work on multiple scales, in multiple discursive registers.

One of these fields is the field of production of knowledge (Bourdieu 1994, 1998). As a departure from the detente posed by the Marxian state debates that reproduce the state-idea by obsessing over its interiority, Abrams suggests an unmasking of the state as incoherent and as an animating absence. The state-idea seeks to order disparate activities and social relations born of

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historically contingent power relations that have a life of their own, outside of the circumscribed domains of the state. The state-idea, therefore, serves to obfuscate the intersection and reproduction of relations of inequality and reproduces these as 'social' norms and the 'state' law.

Scholars, after Abrams, have recognised how state activities are actually often mired in a chaotic array of persons, rituals, performances and institutions that do not add up to any purposive logic across any appreciable temporality but percolate in the realm of the 'magical'(Taussig 1997). Alternatively, Mitchell (1991) argues that scholarship on 'the state' is implicated in producing 'state effects' by positing a hazy boundary between 'state' and an intermediate sociality of the 'non-state' and then policing that boundary. These masking and policing processes have multiple vectors, ranging from the docile and pedagogised bodies of low bureaucracy (Bayart 2009; Ferguson 1990) to dictators and generals (Mbembe 1992), and from highly visible presidential podiums to shady organisations – the spectral deep state – that operate in the shadows of the mundane and visible guise of 'the state'(Wilson 1999; Taylor 1997).

PAKISTAN AND THE STATE FETISH

Since 9/11, scholars have variously described Pakistan as a garrison state, a state of Islam, an 'agent' of/for the capitalist/ruling classes, as a fractured, failed and fragmented state (Ahmed 2013). There is a realm of circulation and consumption for this literature in the post-9/11 world. Not all this consumption is in the academic realm. Scholars in this circuit try to come to terms with an idea of 'the state' for Pakistan that can adhere to some notion of predictability in an increasingly destabilised geo-political zone. Yet, as the foregoing discussion indicates, the very task of 'finding' the state reproduces it discursively, while the corresponding materialities prove elusive. This is doubly futile in analyses that seek to posit the 'hidden logic' behind processes inherently contradictory hiding behind the mask of institutions mimicking rational actors.

Some commentators and 'policy experts' find a state in Pakistan, but when located it was discovered to be a 'failed' or fractured state (*pace* Zaidi, 2014). The idea that Pakistan is a bad example of what possibly exists somewhere else in time and space, naturalises and normalises the abstraction of the state while exceptionalising the case of Pakistan. Both are obfuscatory moves. Pakistan is not a unique or special case deviating from some global norm. The failed state discourse has its own arena of circulation outside the academy, in policy circles, and has been the object of stringent critique that makes a compelling case for moving beyond the discourse of fracture and failure.

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Conversely, an exciting trajectory has emerged that looks to the everyday as a way out of the impasse of representation between the materiality of life and the play of abstractions. The condition of production of this emergent florescence of social scientific inquiry into Pakistan requires a fuller treatment elsewhere (Bajwa 2013).Regardless, this generation of scholars looks at the ways ostensibly mundane and unremarkable processes of social life are implicated in reproducing political power. Much of this literature questions the taken-for-granted realm of 'state activities' and looks at the processes that govern the 'normal', 'legal' and legitimate realm of social action, identity and livelihood.

While some scholars have studied the everyday irrationality of institutions identified with the state, others have looked at how the multiple 'private' interests and actors that coalesce around a space, an event, a movement, a technique of power or a 'development' project produce the illusion of order, coherence and rationality where none exists. Detailed ethnographic analyses rarely regurgitate the normative political economy models of 'state–civil society' relations.

More directly within the intellectual genealogy of Alavi lies Akhtar (2008). Akhtar's engagement with Alavi is mediated through the writings of the Italian Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci. Akhtar's utilisation of a Gramscian framing following a long line of postcolonial theorists including the Subaltern Studies Collective which has been highly influential in transforming the historiography of South Asia (Guha 1982). To counter the 'static' nature of Alavi's structuration, Akhtar looks to the much more fluid Gramscian language of 'historic bloc' to introduce a 'flexible' concept that spatio-temporally delimits the confluence of interest of dominant classes. Interestingly, the Gramscian model tacitly acknowledges 'the state' as an empirically untenable category, yet a *culturally* significant one (Crehan 2011).

Bracketing the debate over the purported coherence regarding the notion of the state in Gramsci's corpus, his framework, at the very least, allows for class fractions and paradoxical actors to populate the domain of the 'state' in accordance with their abilities, in service of their needs. As Gramsci (Roseberry 1994) puts it:

> The subaltern classes by definition are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a 'State': their history, therefore, is intertwined with that of civil society, and thereby with the history of State and groups of States.

The history of the state, as an analytical concept, rarely delivers the materiality of the circulation of 'state-idea' in this intertwining. In the conceptualisation

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of a world divided into states, 'the state' appears as agent and accomplishment, without detailing the ways in which its continued assertions belie, contest and negotiate with the subaltern classes.

If the state appears as coherent and interested, the subaltern classes are rendered incoherent. They become spontaneous groups of recalcitrant actors whose interests and practices do not fit neatly into civil society or state even as they participate in transnational economies and 'state-like' functions of policing, regulation and production outside the realm of circulation of the 'formal economy' or 'the state'. They challenge the process of state formation, not from some position of ideological certitude so that they can easily be recruited to counter-state projects of 'resistance', but through their very material existence and practice.

Akhtar (2008) himself takes an ideological position, and identifies and circumscribes these as the 'politics of common sense'. However, the common sense at play here is not simply a tendency towards 'consent' acquired *by* the state in service to capital, from its positionality external to the subaltern class and its attendant subjectivities. Rather, the common sense is the mode in which a project of state-formation, ephemeral, unstable and with an ever-changing cast of characters and institutions, may be conjured up through the confluence of disparate class fractions at different times. In identifying this project as that of state-formation, Akhtar (2008) posits what appeared as a coherent positionality of the state to Alavi, as an incoherent and mutable process. Thus, the over-*developing state* is a constantly consolidating and fracturing molecule composed of different class fractions at different times. He does not, of course, explicitly take that step, even though his analysis heavily implies it.

The materialist critique of the state outlined here anticipates the next step forward. To recognise that rule and capital are processual rather than categorical elements, and these processes produce categories that appear rational, eternal, normal and stable to mask their inner relations that are anything but – that is the first step. If *overdevelopment* is a process, an unfolding, then why does its coalescence in time and space *as state* hold explanatory potential given that the very same category has historically confounded that very elucidation? A demystification of the state-idea as a mask is also to de-mystify the unicity of function and action attributed to the institutions claiming to be the state.

THE STATE IN LYARI: AN ILLUSTRATIVE CASE

It is a common misunderstanding that the 'everyday state' is a modality of the state 'from below'. Thus 'the state' as a mesh of seemingly coherent institutions

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manifests differently at different 'levels' or 'scales'. However, scholars in recent times have used the everyday *as a critique* of the state. Materiality deconstructs the world of abstractions and epistemic shifts necessitate radical epistemological critique. To rethink the nature of political subjection in Pakistan is to first confront the location in time and space of the materialities that are being assembled. To locate them thus is to understand how they *move* in relation to each. I will only paint a brief picture here, knowing that this is not the venue for detailed ethnographic engagement with the subject. The data I draw on is based on my own ethnographic and archival research conducted non-contiguously between 2013 and 2017.

Karachi at the start of the second decade of the twenty-first century saw much violence. The four years between 2009 and 2013 were some of the bloodiest in the turbulent history of Karachi. Regrettably, Lyari Town was often at the centre of the bloodletting. The economies of fear and the production of precarity that plague Karachi since the 1980s are far too complex to gain a full treatment here. However, this briefest of glimpses into Lyari will hopefully illustrate with clarity how far the economy of abstractions stands in relation to the material processes at play in the everyday life of subjects.

At the height of the 'gang war' in Lyari (c. 2004–2014), it was very difficult to get about town. Groups of young men armed with automatic weapons had made it their business to inquire as to the identity of passers-by and determine whether they had the right to pass by or were to be killed. To decide on the right, wayfarers had to produce a state-issued national identity card (CNIC). The address printed on the CNIC would signify belonging.

It was not the citizenship of Pakistan that was in question. Many in Lyari are Iranian citizens too – no one cares. However, it was important to these groups who decided on the right to pass or be killed what specific subdivision (Union Council or UC) or neighbourhood within Lyari Town one belonged to. For a little while, the identity card was also being read for names – names betray ethnicity. However, most of the time ethnic identity was not at issue. It was a matter of jurisdictions, these young men with guns would maintain. Jurisdictions needed to be maintained and policed.

Many of these groups of armed young men have been identified as the notorious 'gangs of Lyari'. Many of the jurisdictions they policed go in common parlance as gang 'turfs'. Many, but not all. Some others belonged to another notorious group – the local police. This group existed in complex relationships with the gangs. These relations were not institutionally defined; there was no purposive fixity to these relations. However, belonging to the

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institution of the police allowed for certain perils and possibilities in relation to the gangs.

The gang members, on the other hand, could rely on mutually beneficial relations with the police in some cases or toleration in others. They coexisted within the same 'jurisdiction' either way, for years. At a certain level, both recognised each other as clients (employees) of the ruling government of the time. Other groups were even more notorious because they were not *de facto* subordinates of the government even if they were *de jure*. They were the paramilitary wing of the Pakistan Army, the Rangers. No one joked about them. In the play of appearances there was an institutional density to them – they appeared solid, like a state. Much more so than the police.

To oblige these 'state' and 'non-state' groups of young men armed with automatic weapons many people carried a *fake* copy of the CNIC. It could be obtained at dozens of reliable joints in Lyari. In Gharib Shah, where I conducted much of my ethnographic fieldwork these 'copy' CNICs had dubious efficacy. The problem was that these encounters with the young men were usually unpredictable. The same characteristics could allow one passage by one group but land one in trouble with another. Some groups confiscated CNICs. An officer of the law I once met used to carry a whole bundle in his pocket.

Losing the CNIC was trouble for more reasons than the disruption of the many mundane processes that depended on them such as applying for jobs, accessing bank accounts, buying cell-phone lines, accessing remittances from family members in the Persian Gulf and so on (Suhail and Lutfi 2016). A lot depended on them. However, obtaining the CNIC in Lyari was never a simple matter; it was a hugely time-consuming and expensive hassle. The nearly two million residents of the township had only one government authorised NADRA (National Database and Registration Authority) office that could issue legitimate identity cards. This office was in Chakiwara in the 'heart' of Lyari.

In those days, not everyone could gain entry to that part of town without courting a certain measure of uncertainty and danger. The area was the turf of one gang or another, and it was hard to determine who controlled what area at what time. It was a time of 'gang war' after all, and 'armies' were losing and winning turf all the time. Therefore, people subscribed to the daily *Jaanbaaz* to reduce uncertainty. This notoriously predatory publication became a daily index of gang war developments in Lyari. Its viability depended on the spread of fear and the purveyance of death. Yet, things were more complicated still.

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This particular geography of control regulated by gangsters, was overlaid with other geographies of control, policed by armed groups that claimed to be agents of the sovereign state yet acted in much the same ways. Depending on whether one was going to Chakiwara or returning from there, one could get in trouble with the police or the Rangers. Respectable young men and women, after all, did not traverse vile and dangerous ganglands without a very good reason. Getting the CNIC was surely not worth risking one's life, would be the logic. Surely, one was abroad for a different, more insidious and sinister reason. Humiliations at the hands of the forces of law and order were and are commonplace in Lyari.

Yet, surprisingly, many officials who were affiliated with 'the state' found it equally difficult to navigate the mesh of jurisdictions. During those days, an elected ethnically Sindhi health officer in charge of a problematic Union Council (UC) did not dare visit his own constituency because he lived in another UC controlled by rival gangs. When I last met him, he was thinking of getting a fake CNIC with a local address that allowed him passage. Of course, it is widely maintained that in those days the elected member of parliament (MP) representing Lyari had not visited Lyari for the duration of his tenure. Confounding matters was the fact that this MP was a member of the ruling political party that was widely known to have been patrons of the very gangs that refused their party member entry into Lyari. An uncertain geography policed by 'state actors' as well as non-state actors, all with different inter and intra-group agendas was indeed a difficult terrain to traverse.

Things get more complicated still. Getting a CNIC in the first place was no mean feat in Lyari. One must first determine that one *really* needed the CNIC enough to venture through a night vigil in Chakiwara for it. For one must spend the night outside the NADRA office to bribe, push or meekly compete with hundreds of others for a token of entry. People who had a source at the office, would already have been allotted the tokens that gave one earlier access. When passed out at 7 a.m. the tokens were already opening count at the fiftieth or sixtieth position in line. Often people were not successful in obtaining any token of entry despite spending the night in wait. These usually were women and old people. Many maintain that things have not changed since those days. The gangs have been subdued, but the NADRA officers remain.

The savvy amongst the hapless folk know where one could find agents who could help them circumvent the process for a price. These agents are clued into an under economy of human traffickers. They have guarantors in the police. They have contacts in NADRA. They have cordial relationships with

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provincial, federal bureaucratic and political apparatuses. Birth certificates were acquired through these agents when none were issued at people's places of birth. These birth certificates would give surety of local domicile to people often born in Afghanistan, Balochistan and Iran. These documents would be official, state-issued documents with the seal of the Pakistani state. They are not accessible to all, only to those who know the right *dhaba*s and 'offices' with the right agents and have the money to employ their services.

It was commonly remarked that it was easier to get a gun license in Lyari than it was getting a CNIC. At the height of the gang war, roughly between 2010 and 2013, a prominent member of the ruling party proudly proclaimed on national television that he had issued tens of thousands of gun licenses to client groups in Lyari. Most of these client groups were commonly identified as gangs. Gangs used these licensed guns as tools to acquire turf and police their territory, as well as for other purposes including political persuasion. Part of their policing activities targeted regular people who could not get CNICs – or whose CNICs could reveal their out-of-placeness and doom them to death. State-issued CNICs were veritable passports in these times. A shifting border regime was in place that policed its territorial boundary with inscrutable logics.

There is not enough space here to sufficiently elaborate on the proliferation of uncertainty in Lyari, in the heart of Pakistan's biggest city and the epicentre of its formal and informal economies. However, the state of affairs at the height of the gang war clearly illustrates that the sets of actors, symbols and practices at play do not populate the normative domains marked off as the categories of state and civil society. Things always get more complicated. While the efficacy of the category of civil society itself has come under compelling scrutiny (Chatterjee 2004), the state remains the fetish of the political economists and social scientists *par excellence*.

The gang war in Lyari may, of course, be identified as a kind of a 'state of exception', but this exception from the realm of legality, formality and normativity is rather the rule (Agamben 2005). In fact, the so-called exception erupts all the time in different places all over Pakistan. The boundaries between state and society; law and outlaw; formal and informal; national, local and global are consistent only in their blurriness (Gupta 1995). The social formations that claim to be 'the state', often sporting symbolic emblems of 'state'-ness, both sanction and patronise the realm of the outlaw. At the same time, they fight a continual and unending war against that same realm in the name of security. They often expose themselves and others to immense precarity in doing so – be it Peshawar, Waziristan, Balochistan or Karachi.

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These patterns prove to be manic and chaotic only if we maintain the unicity and coherence of the state as a conceptual category.

CONCLUSION

In this essay, I first place Alavi within a set of problems that emerged in the 1970s. These were discursive problems internal to multiple epistemologies, both academic and leftist, pertaining to the changes in the way power functioned and the consequence that had for state theory. These discursive problems, I have indicated, were precipitated by material and historical shifts in the exercise of power underway at the time on multiple scales across the world. Different scholars addressed these shifts in different contexts. While Alavi adhered to the common sense of the structuralist state-centric models, other scholars such as Foucault, Abrams and Wolf adopted other approaches, some of which have been highlighted earlier.

Finally, by briefly addressing ethnographic field data collected over the past five years in Karachi, I have shown how inefficacious state-centric models prove to be in capturing the materiality and historicity of life at almost all scales of analysis. Abstract relationships such as the state–civil society model worked for a time, because they were designed to work *for that time*. Certain aspects of the totality of material and historical data were stressed and others dimmed to produce a functional model. I have argued that the *material* basis for state-centricism *never* existed, and the discursive basis for it has largely eroded as well, both within 'leftist' epistemologies as well in the social sciences writ large. The data in our times begs for epistemic conceptual shifts.

If Pakistan 'fails' to provide empirical evidence of a coherent 'state', it is not unique in doing so. As the foregoing indicates, similar processes have been identified across the world. To maintain Pakistan's 'crisis' as exceptional by invoking 'peculiar' circumstances of 'geopolitics', 'Islam' and 'terror' work to propagate a certain kind of an interested discursivity that is as removed from material life itself and only serves to perpetuate state fetish. The empirics of everyday life frustrate the population of the category of state equally, everywhere. If political 'order' thrives on a plague of fantasies (Zizek 1997), then the state-idea is a fantasy that serves to obfuscate the processes of reproduction of rule by appearing as a sublimation of process as object.

In *The German Ideology* (1846), Marx and Engels critique the German idealists for populating their framework with 'phenomenal' categories that abetted the obfuscation of immanent social relations affected by the capitalist

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mode of production in the name of the bourgeois 'state'. Part of their critique pertained to the idealists' inattention as to how they were implicated in these relations of domination. In the play of abstractions exclusion appears as inclusion, mystification as clarity, and all that is solid melts into air. The violence of abstraction may be the unavoidable residue of any process of exchange (Sayer 1987). However, there is an obvious disjunction between the economy of what Marx identifies as 'phenomenal categories' and any analytical framework capable of accommodating the materiality of everyday life (Hall 1980, 2003).

Beneath the world of abstractions there exists a world of people. In this world, people are fighting everyday battles for survival; hustling their way through sticky situations; participating in far-flung networks of trade, belief and kinship that continually flaunt international boundaries and laws; committing to activities that defy a systematic model of representation; dying and remembering. These lives and activities depend on socialised outcomes of many interlocking, multi-scalar operations and outcomes. Only standing atop a pile of plastic, shit, rags and possible human remains can one fully recognise that these outcomes spring from the kernel of destruction that lies at the heart of all processes of reproduction of capital and rule. These lives are the ultimate materialist critique of all abstract categories – state, society, nation – which began life as heuristics, but end up masquerading as social facts.

The conversation that Zaidi (2014) and Akhtar (2008) begin must effect more than a repudiation of Alavi's framework. A series of questions must first be answered. First, what does any aggregation of forces and materiality contribute to our understanding of the process of reproduction of rule? Second, to what extent does the process of reproduction of rule articulate with the reproduction of capital? Third, if the state fetish confounds an understanding of the reproduction of rule and/or capital, how may we derive alternative from the materiality and historicity of everyday life?

On the other hand, the subjects that populate the 'everyday' yield no pure interiority but participate in their own economies of abstractions, categories, objects, beliefs and materialities. This 'folk' economy also circulates the sign of 'the state', but herein the concept is heteronomous and heterogenic. It is an idiom, an illusion, a mantra of sorts that alludes to a historical sovereignty and gravity *the invocation*, rather than its referent, holds (Aretxaga 2000).

In the unfolding of forms neither a Weberian nor a Marxian state emerges. On empirical scrutiny, neither a fractured state nor a garrison state, and neither an overdeveloped state nor an undeveloped state finds clear verification.

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The state has instead been convincingly shown here to be a series of claims, undecided and in play, masking the processes of the reproduction of rule that articulates with other processes that unfold at other scales, in other times, in other places.

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6 The Political Economy of Uneven State-Spatiality in Pakistan

The Interplay of Space, Class and Institutions

Danish Khan

INTRODUCTION

S. Akbar Zaidi (2014) advocates a need for a critical reappraisal of the most influential works of Hamza Alavi on the postcolonial state of Pakistan. Alavi is significant because most of the critical political economic literature on Pakistan can trace back its roots from the original works of Alavi (Zaidi 2014:48). To understand Alavi's work, it is necessary to be cognizant of the following three broad conjectures: the historical legacy of colonialism, internal class formations of the postcolonial society and the relationship of the postcolonial state with the external world (core countries of the Global North). This chapter primarily focuses on the first two conjectures.[1]

This chapter builds on recent scholarship (see Akhtar 2018; Zaidi 2014) and presents a new understanding of the postcolonial state-society in Pakistan by drawing from Lefebvre's (2009) work on state-spatiality and the Marxian circuit of capital framework. It is argued in this chapter that the postcolonial state of Pakistan can be best characterised by *uneven state spatiality*. The dynamics of state-spatiality have been largely overlooked in the existing literature[2] on postcolonial Pakistan. It is time to draw from this rich strand of literature to delineate the inherent contradictions of the postcolonial state and

[1] The third conjecture is relationship with the core countries of global capitalist system. Alavi (1998) situates the postcolonial state of Pakistan as a 'periphery' in the context of global capitalism, that is, Pakistan is tied to the 'core' countries of the Global North in a patron–client relationship (see Khan 2016 for more details).

[2] Majed Akhter (2015) is an exception in this regard; he has brilliantly used Lefebvre's work to explain hydraulic regionalism and politics in Pakistan.

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society of Pakistan. Zaidi (2014) marks a major departure from Alavi's class formulation by arguing that institutions are more significant as compared to class in understanding dynamics of postcolonial Pakistan. This chapter adds to the class versus institutions debate by using the Marxian circuit of capital framework. It is argued here that both class and institutions are dialectically interlinked and they mutually co-determine the underlying political economic dynamics of postcolonial capitalism in Pakistan.

The rest of this chapter is structured as follows. The second section introduces the processual concept of the state. The third section presents the notion of state spatiality and socio-spatial dialectic and the next section juxtaposes the concept of processual state and state-spatiality in the context of the postcolonial state of Pakistan. In the fifth section, the political economy of informalisation in Pakistan is discussed in the context of the heterogeneity and fractured nature of the postcolonial state. The sixth section discusses the importance of using the Marxian circuit of capital framework to conceptualise the political economic processes as a dialectical interplay of class and institution in the context of the postcolonial state of Pakistan. The final section provides a conclusion to the chapter.

THE STATE AS A PROCESS

The existing scholarship on the postcolonial state of Pakistan conceptualises 'state' as a homogenous entity within a bounded territory. This approach is epitomised by Alavi's thesis of the 'overdeveloped state' in which state is envisioned as a 'closed institutional system that occupies a bordered geographical territory, as represented in the colours allotted to each country on a world map' (Brenner 2004:451). This chapter in contrast builds a 'processual' and 'spatial' understanding of the postcolonial state of Pakistan which is dynamic and open-ended. To develop a processual conceptualisation of the state, the works of post-modern Marxian thinkers, Steve Resnick and Richard Wolff provide an optimal point of departure. In the framework from Resnick and Wolff (1987) the state assumes a dynamic role being an active participant in multiple natural, political, economic, class and cultural processes. 'Marxian theory approaches the state as a site in society by specifying the particular social processes performed at and thereby defining that site at a particular time…. [S]tates in different capitalist societies will differ according to which social processes are or are not performed by them' (Resnick and Wolff, 1987:233).

To understand Resnick and Wolff's (1987) theory of the state, it is important to briefly point out salient features of their theory of class. Class is a dynamic

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process rather than a static entity in their framework. The production, appropriation and distribution of surplus is the defining characteristic of a class process. In other words, 'class' can only be understood in terms of its relationship with the 'surplus'.[3] Resnick and Wolff (1987) divided class processes into two sub-categories: fundamental and subsumed. Processes involved in production and distribution of a surplus value are fundamental class processes, and the processes through which surplus value is distributed across different economic agents are called subsumed class processes. Any process which does not involve the production, appropriation and distribution of a surplus is regarded as a 'non-class' process. Unlike orthodox Marxian frameworks where everything is reduced to class, Resnick and Wolff (1987) acknowledge that the totality of human society is a mixture of both class and non-class processes. By extension the capitalist state engages in multiple class and non-class processes. For example, the state can directly engage in class processes via state-owned enterprises. In such cases the state takes up the role of a 'capitalist' by directly appropriating a surplus value from direct producers.[4] Similarly, the state can also acquire subsumed class payments through taxation on the profits accrued by privately owned capitalist enterprises. Moreover, the state can generate its own revenue from non-class payments through taxation on salaried groups.

Similarly, a state engages in different non-class processes as well, for example, building a dam to create power generation capacity. Moreover, the rules and regulations of a political system are determined by the state. In terms of cultural processes, every state is likely to have a key role in providing education and creating ideological consent on the contours of the prevailing socio-economic system. The manner and extent in which the state engages

[3] It is important to point out that their unit of analysis is at a micro level (enterprise/household).

[4] The caveat here is that the Resnick and Wolff (1987) framework does not differentiate between processes of production that take place at private enterprises from those that take place at the state enterprises. State enterprise might enter a production process with a totally different set of objectives vis-à-vis a private enterprise. And this has huge political economic implications for the society. For example, the production of health services under the state-run National Health Services in the United Kingdom cannot be equated with the production of private health services in the United States. Moreover, the state can change the rules and regulations of political and economic processes as it enjoys total monopoly over means of violence. Thus, if the state engages in production processes it would have an extra advantage vis-à-vis any private enterprise and these are significant aspects of the living reality of the postcolonial societies which the Resnick and Wolff (1987) framework might not capture.

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in these processes depends on the balance of power between different classes/groups in a society. For example, if organised labour is strong, then the state is more likely to allocate funds for unemployment benefits and social security. Similarly, if the defence industry is influential and powerful, then the state is much more likely to undertake high levels of defence expenditures. In other words, the state is always pushed and pulled towards different directions. The processual conceptualisation of the state allows us to capture and decipher the role of class, politics and ideology in altering the power configuration of the state. That is why the need of a processual conceptualisation of the state is posited here.

STATE-SPATIALITY

To fully appreciate the complexities of the postcolonial state and associated social formations, this chapter incorporates state spatiality in addition to processual understanding of the state. The foundational work on state spatiality was undertaken by French theorist Henri Lefebvre. For a state (nation-state) to be effective, it must produce and reproduce space in ways which are synchronised with the state's functionality (Lefebvre 2009). Brenner (2004:450) argued that state spatiality should not be reduced to a 'fixed thing, container or platform'. Rather, it must be conceptualised as a dynamic and transformative process. Brenner (2004:451–452) eloquently explains the processes of state spatiality:

> The geography of state spatiality must be viewed as a presupposition, an arena and an outcome of continually changing social relations. It is not a thing, a container or a platform, but a socially produced, conflictual and dynamically evolving matrix of socio-spatial interaction. The spaces of state power are not simply 'filled,' as if they were pre-given territorial containers. Instead, state spatiality is actively produced and transformed through socio-political struggles in diverse institutional sites and at a range of geographical scales. The traditional Westphalian image of states as being located within static, self-contained territorial arenas must thus be replaced by a dialectical, processual analysis of how historically specific configurations of state space are produced and incessantly reworked through socio-political struggles.

Before we elaborate in detail the notion of state-space, it is important to highlight what this chapter means by the notion of 'space'. From a materialist perspective, human existence is incomprehensible without the combined notion of time and space. Space (environment/geography) contains human

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society within itself, this is the most common conception of space known as 'contextual space' (Soja 1980:209). This chapter opts for a more dynamic and nuanced understanding of space, that is, 'socially produced space'.

> Socially produced space is a created structure comparable to other social constructions resulting from the transformation of given conditions inherent in life-on-earth, in much the same that human history represents a social transformation of time and temporality. (Soja 1980:210)

The way *contextual space* is 'organised', 'used' and 'interpreted' is an outcome of socio-economic interactions and that makes it a *socially produced space* (Soja 1980:210). Harvey (2004) differentiates between contextual and socially produced spaces by using a tripartite of absolute, relative and relational spaces. He referred to contextual space as *absolute space* which is static and fixed; it is a frame in which events take place. Absolute space is exogenously given and it can be geometrically measured (Harvey 2004:2). In the context of socio-economic analysis, absolute space would be represented in terms of bounded territories such as administrative units, private property or an urban grid (Harvey 2004:2). Harvey explains socially produced spaces in terms of relative and relational spaces. *Relative space* exists as a relationship between different objects, that is, socially produced space. The conceptualisation of relative space depends on the objects which are being relativised (Harvey 2004:3). Contrary to the notion of absolute space, which can be conceptualised independently of time, relative space must be understood in a temporal context: 'spatio-temporality' (Harvey 2004:3). 'The movement of people, goods, services and information takes place in a relative space because it takes money, time, energy, and the like to overcome the friction of distance' (Harvey 2009 [1973]:14). *Relational space* refers to the notion that space contains object in itself. In other words, relational space cannot be conceptualised without the processes that take place in space. Thus, relational space is not exogenous to the socio-economic processes; instead, it is endogenous to these processes (Harvey 2004:4). Harvey (2004:6) eloquently captures these multiple dimensions space by using an example of a house:

> I recognize it [house] as a physical and legal entity that situates it in absolute space. I also recognize its position in relative space given its location with respect to places of employment, recreation, services and the flows of people, electricity, water, and money that sustain it as a living habitat. But then I also understand its relationality to global property markets, changing interest

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> rates, climatic change, the sense of what is or is not a historic building, and its significance as a place of personal and collective memories, sentimental attachments, and the like.

Social relations of production are simultaneously space-forming and space-contingent, that is, 'a producer and a product of spatiality' (Soja 1989:129). Soja (1980:211) referred to this as a socio-spatial dialectic – 'social and spatial relationships are dialectically inter-reactive, inter-dependent; … social relations of production are both space-forming and space-contingent'. To fully appreciate the socio-spatial dialectic, it is necessary to be cognizant of the multiplicity of the existing dimensions of 'space'. If one is not familiar with these different dimensions, then it is quite probable that space may become trivial and one may commit the fallacy of externalising space from socio-economic analyses without ever being aware of it. Foucault eloquently expresses this concern 'space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic' (quoted from Soja 1989:119).

The processes of capitalist development alter spatial organisation at multiple scales including state spatiality. Similarly, the changes in spatial configuration of both state and society have an impact on the processes of capitalist development. It is a two-way dialectical process. It is in the context of socio-spatial dialectic that this chapter brings in the logic of state-spatiality into political economic analyses of postcolonial Pakistan. Lefebvre (2009) conceptualises state-space in the following three dimensions: physical space, social space and mental space. Physical space refers to infrastructure such as networks of roads, rails, canals and airports which facilitate the flow of people, capital and ideas across the given territory of the state. Social space refers to institutions of the state such as the administrative–bureaucratic organs of the state including the police, military and civil bureaucracies. Mental space refers to ideological and cultural aspects promoted by the state to legitimise its existence and hegemony (Akhter 2015:852). Collectively these three dimensions of state spaces constitute the processes of state formation.

UNEVEN STATE-SPACE IN POSTCOLONIAL PAKISTAN

The concepts of state-spatiality and processual nature of the state allow us to critically reinterpret the works of Alavi (1972), Akhtar (2018) and Zaidi (2014). Alavi's (1972) conceptualisation of the postcolonial state is limited to the role and functionality of civil and military bureaucracies. There is no doubt that the role of the civil–military bureaucracy, especially that of the military, is of

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huge significance in the case of the postcolonial state of Pakistan, but this is only a partial understanding of the postcolonial state. By using Lefebvre's notion of state spatiality it becomes obvious that Alavi (1972, 1998) reduced the postcolonial state to only one dimension, that is, 'social space'. Zaidi (2014) has criticised Alavi (1972) for assigning a deterministic role to civil–military bureaucracies. This essentialist approach of Alavi (1972) hinders the dynamic understanding of the processes of change in the postcolonial state of Pakistan. Zaidi (2014: 48) noted:

> There seems to be a complete absence of the dynamics of change and transition in Alavi's work, and one wonders how a theory of superstructure could have been so easily formulated while ignoring social and class dynamics.

Akhtar (2018, 2008) criticised Alavi for assuming static class configuration within the postcolonial state of Pakistan. To show dynamic changes in class formation in postcolonial Pakistan, he focused his analysis on the rise of intermediate classes who have used access to state as a key strategy to actualise upward socio-economic mobility. In other words, the historical bloc (ruling coalition) in Pakistan has become expansive since 1980s. If we use the processual understanding of the state from Resnick and Wolff (1987), this can be reinterpreted as an improvement in the bargaining power of intermediate classes due to the changes in postcolonial state's engagement in economic, political cultural processes in the post-1977 era. Moreover, engagement of the state in political processes such as clientelistic networks has allowed it to develop a consent from below (Akhtar, 2018). The theory of the state from Resnick and Wolff (1987) allows us to develop a more abstract understanding of the processes of change in postcolonial Pakistan. Similarly, Akhtar (2014) highlighted the significance of ideology in the changing dynamics of state-society in Pakistan. By drawing from the works of Gramsci, Akhtar (2014) noted that the state of Pakistan does not command control over society (that is, produced space) solely via coercion, but it also develops a consensus (ideological hegemony) among the people to legitimise the power of postcolonial capitalism. In other terms, it is the interplay of both coercion (social space) and consent (mental space) which allows the postcolonial state to dominate over the lower orders of society. By using Lefebvre's framework, it can be noted that Akhtar (2014) highlighted the importance of the mental space of the state which was absent in Alavi (1972). Akhtar (2018, 2014) improved on Alavi's (1972) notion of the state by conceptualising the state in terms of the interaction between

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'social space' and 'mental space'. But the analysis of the 'physical space' of the state and its impact on society is absent in Akhtar (2018) as well. This is where this chapter makes an original contribution to the existing literature.

This chapter argues that all three aspects of state spatiality need to be incorporated to fully appreciate the underlying dynamics of the state configuration. The role of physical space is as important as the roles of social and mental spaces. The importance of physical space of the state can be illustrated by the state's decision to switch the capital city of Pakistan from Karachi to Islamabad in the 1960s. The military headquarters were built in Rawalpindi during the colonial period, and Karachi being the largest metropolitan city was named the capital of Pakistan at the time of independence. Among other things, the decision to shift the capital from Karachi to Islamabad was based on the latter's proximity to the military headquarters. There are numerous benefits of the proximity between two centres of state power (military headquarters and parliament/PM secretariat). The coordination between civilian institutions and the military becomes much easier and proximity tends to enhance the formal and informal control and command of the military over other state institutions. In later years it was observed that this proximity played an important role in the successful coup d'état of both General Zia and General Musharraf.

There is a dire need to pay attention to differences in processes of state-spatiality across Pakistan because one of the defining characteristics of postcolonial development is that it is highly uneven. Uneven development can be observed at inter-provincial and intra-provincial levels in Pakistan. The multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI) of Pakistan shows a clear spatial pattern of deprivation in the country. At the provincial level, Punjab is the least poor province with an MPI score of 0.152 and Balochistan is the poorest province with the MPI of 0.394 (UNDP 2016:15). Across all provinces, rural areas are poorer vis-à-vis urban (UNDP 2016:16). One of the stark facts revealed by MPI is that some of the best performing districts of Balochistan are comparable with the worst performing districts of Punjab (UNDP 2016:48). It is important to note that MPI is not based only on income or consumption patterns, it incorporates fifteen different variables including access to schools, health care facilities, sanitation, electricity and others. Therefore, MPI is a good proxy for assessing the level of development or lack thereof. Similarly, the industrial development of Pakistan exhibits a similar spatial pattern (Burki and Khan 2010). In Figure 6.1, except Karachi, most of the manufacturing jobs are in the Punjab (UNDP 2016:4). This uneven development also exists within provinces. For example, districts in central and northern Punjab have

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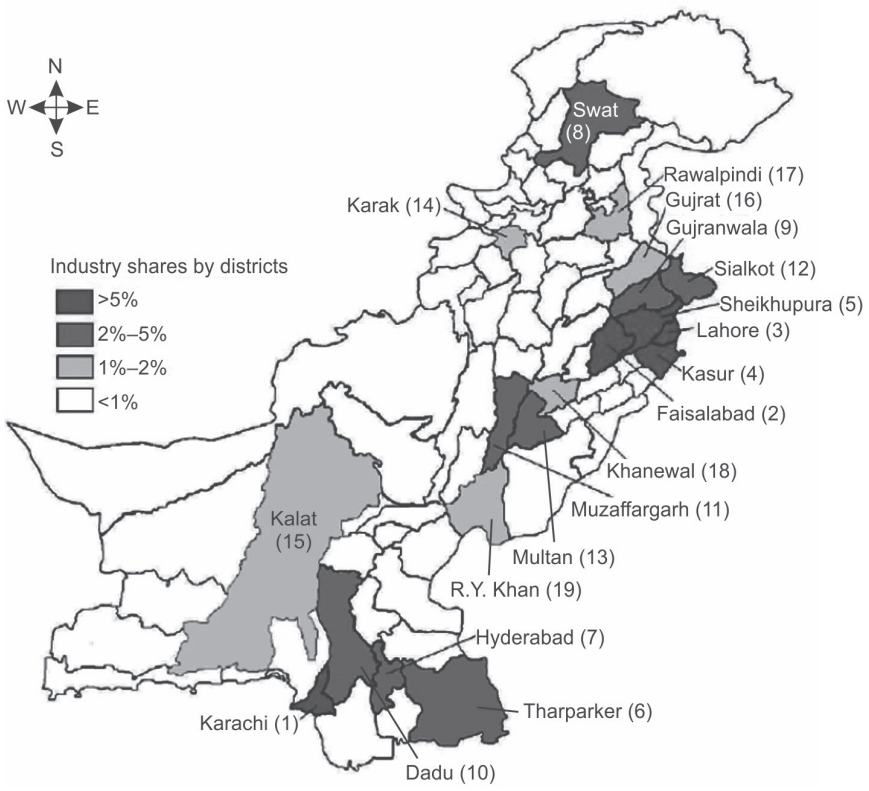
relatively better provisioning of public goods such as roads, electricity, and schools vis-à-vis districts in south Punjab (Burki and Khan, 2010; UNDP, 2016). Moreover, central and northern districts of Punjab – ruralopolises[5] – are more urbanised vis-à-vis southern districts (Qadeer 2000). Variations and differences in socio-economic development across Pakistan are dialectically linked with the development of state-spaces across Pakistan. In other words, uneven development of both society and state mutually regulate, mediate and over-determine each other.

Figure 6.1 Distribution of Manufacturing Employment in Pakistan, 2005–2006



Source: Burki and Khan (2010:4).

Note: Map not to scale and does not represent authentic international boundaries.

[5] Qadeer (2000) referred to 'ruralopolises' as spaces with high population densities with an agriculture-based economy.

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Therefore, it is argued here that the postcolonial state of Pakistan can be best explained by the notion of uneven state-spatiality. That is, the development of state-space (let it be physical, social or mental) is highly uneven across Pakistan. Instead of conceptualising Pakistan as an overdeveloped state as a legacy of colonialism (see Alavi 1972), it would be more appropriate to conceptualise the legacy of colonial rule in terms of uneven state-spatiality. For example, the physical state-space is more developed in Punjab vis-à-vis other provinces of the country (Ministry of Finance 2015). In terms of the road networks, Punjab has the most developed network of roads stretching across 107,805 kilometres (Ministry of Finance, 2015:167). Whereas in Balochistan, the road network covers only 29,655 kilometres (Ministry of Finance 2015:167). Based on these numbers the road density is more than six times higher in the Punjab than Balochistan. Similarly, canals, airports and railways are much more developed in Punjab as compared to other parts of the country.

It can be argued that these differences in physical space of the state have more to do with geography (including natural resources), demographic characteristics (especially population density) rather than the policies of the colonial and postcolonial state. The argument here is not to contest the significance of geography, demographic characteristics and market forces. Instead, this chapter argues that colonial rule in Punjab altered state-societal dimensions of Punjab in radically different ways as compared to other parts which constituted Pakistan in 1947. For example, the British colonial state was instrumental in shaping the patterns of infrastructural development in Punjab (Azhar 2016:98). The American Civil War in the 1860s was the key critical juncture which led to the development of the canal colonies (new settlements) in the Punjab (Azhar 2016). The American South was the major producer of cotton in the nineteenth century and the American Civil War resulted in a major cotton crisis in the global market (Beckert 2014:246). Consequently, cotton exports from the US to Britain fell from 3.8 million bales to zero (Beckert 2014:247).To resolve this economic crisis, the British Empire focused its attention on the Punjab. The British Viceroy of the time noted:

> England is calling aloud for the cotton which India does already produce in some degree, and would produce sufficient in quality, and plentiful in quantity if only there were provided fitting means of conveyance for it'. (GoI 1863:115, quoted from Azhar 2016:98–99)

Similarly, the following words of the Viceroy illustrate the central point here: 'The main consideration which should determine the selection of the

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railway network must be the extent of political and commercial advantages which it is calculated to afford' (GoI 1863:115, quoted from Azhar 2016:98–99). Consequently, the British colonial state in Punjab undertook massive infrastructural development projects to facilitate the exports of raw cotton from India to Britain (Azhar 2016:103). The idiosyncratic pattern of infrastructural development that emerged in the Punjab was directly linked to the peculiar needs and interventions of the British colonial state. As can be observed in Table 6.1, from 1872 to 1922, railway networks, canal infrastructure and road networks increased manifold in the Punjab. These spatial (infrastructural) shocks reshaped and reconfigured state and society in the Punjab.

Table 6.1 Infrastructural Development in Colonial Punjab

Year	*Railway Mileage*	*Canal Mileage*	*Roads Mileage*	*Cultivated Area (Million Acres)*	*Land Revenue* (Lakh Rs)*
1872	410	2,744	1,036	18.8	201
1882	600	4,583	1,467	29.4	306
1892	1,725	12,368	2,142	36.7	423
1902	2,025	16,893	2,268	26.8	630
1912	4,000	16,935	2,614	29	1,060
1922	4,441	19,664	2,938	30	1,400

Source: Azhar (2016:104), who compiled this from *Census of India: Punjab Report* (1931).

Note: *1900 as base year to control for inflation.

The domination of the Punjab-based civil–military bureaucracies over the postcolonial state, which is the defining feature of Alavi's theory of the 'overdeveloped state', can also be explained by uneven state-spatiality. For example, recruitment into the civil and military bureaucracies (social space) is disproportionately higher from the Punjab as compared to other provinces, especially in contrast to Balochistan (Fair and Nawaz 2010:16; *Dawn* 2016). Again, this can be traced back to the colonial era (see Pasha 1998). The postcolonial state has been unable to undo this colonial legacy in substantive terms. In fact, due to this inherent unevenness of state-space, the alienation and marginalisation of Balochistan has increased in the postcolonial period. Similarly, the ideological hegemony (mental space) of the state is also fractured and variegated across Pakistan, for example, it is weakest in Balochistan and strongest in the Punjab (Surendra 2009; *Dawn* 2015). These differences in mental spaces can also be explained by colonial rule (see Memon 2012). In

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other terms, the development or underdevelopment of 'state space' is marred by extreme 'unevenness' in Pakistan and this can be traced back to different colonial experiences of regions which constituted Pakistan in 1947 (see Azhar 2016). To understand the unevenness of the state-space, the correlation between Lefebvre's three dimensions of the state-space are simply suggestive. Similarly, this chapter does not claim that there is any mechanical relationship between Lefebvre's three dimensions of state-spaces. Rather, this chapter encapsulates three dimensions of state space in a dialectical relationship.

As an extension of the colonial state, the postcolonial state of Pakistan continues to engage in different (at times discriminatory) ways in political, economic and cultural processes across different regions/places in Pakistan. This has further fuelled a sense of deprivation among ethnic and religious minorities within Pakistan. An emancipatory decolonisation project would have been to reduce these differences between different ethnicities and regions (federating units) of Pakistan. Instead, the postcolonial state has reproduced or at times further perpetuated these differences, and this contradiction was epitomised by the politics which led to the separation of East Pakistan. Alavi's theory of the overdeveloped state cannot explain how social/political forces became more hegemonic than those of the overdeveloped state (civil–military bureaucracies) in East Pakistan during 1970–1971. This chapter can explain this conjecture by applying the notion of uneven development of state-spatiality within Pakistan. Moreover, this chapter deems uneven state-spaces as one of the most important and defining contradictions of the postcolonial state of Pakistan. It is time to depart from the canonical view of conceptualising the postcolonial state as a homogeneous entity and it should instead be seen in terms of the fractured and variegated processes of state-spatiality.

HOMOGENISATION–DIFFERENTIATION

> The military's hegemony has been questioned and at times even challenged after 2007 by institutions that had not been able to do so until then. The judiciary, parliament, and to some extent the media have tried to assert their independence and sovereignty over the public and political domain, in effect pushing the military aside and making room at the table for themselves. (Zaidi 2014:50)

Zaidi (2014) has highlighted an important dimension of the change in the power dynamics of postcolonial Pakistan. We contextualise this conjecture against the backdrop of uneven state-spatiality. The nation-state tries to 'homogenise'

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the space it commands to ensure its continuous reproduction. To an extent, every nation state is successful in achieving homogenisation in the following sense: 'within it [state space], all is equivalent, exchangeable, interchangeable' (Lefebvre, 2009:233). Examples include the use of a single currency, a unified legal code or a national culture. At the same time, there is a counter-tendency of differentiation, that is, the state space is 'fractured because it is processed in the form of lots and parcels and sold on this basis' through the institution of private property (Lefebvre 2009:233). Lefebvre (2009) conceptualises a modern capitalist state in terms of a dialectic of homogenisation-differentiation.[6] Akhter (2015) has noted that the homogenisation–differentiation dialectic in the context of the postcolonial state of Pakistan is rooted in the state's inability to produce 'organic intellectuals'.[7] That is, the postcolonial state of Pakistan has been unable to develop ideological hegemony outside mainland Punjab. In other words, mental-spaces in the postcolonial Pakistan are marred by uneven development.

This contradiction has deepened with the massive growth of private media in the early 2000s in Pakistan.[8] Prior to this, the mental space was mainly monopolised by the military via state television.[9] But the rise of private media provided a new and effective platform for civilian institutions, civil society and political actors to raise their voices and concerns.[10] Consequently, mental space became a highly contested space between different socio-economic forces. The role of the private media was instrumental in the movement for the restoration of democracy and judiciary under Musharraf's regime. A highly skewed distribution of power in favour of the military was tilted

[6] For Lefebvre, the homogenisation–differentiation dialectic is predicated on private property.

[7] Akhter (2015) draws from Gramsci (1971) and argues that the role of organic intellectuals is to develop an ideological hegemony and build a consensus among people on the hegemonic role of the state.

[8] An interesting way to see the rise of private media in Pakistan would be through the lens of accumulation by dispossession as it coincided with the liberalisation of the financial sector and privatisation of the erstwhile state-owned enterprises. Those interested in this are encouraged to see Khan and Karak (2019) for the application of the notion of 'accumulation by dispossession' on the rise of English Premier League and growth of private media in UK.

[9] A whole generation of millennials grew up watching drama series such as 'Alpha, Bravo, Charlie' which valorised and romanticised the role of military.

[10] Politicians and academics spoke relatively freely on private news channels on the role of military especially during the lawyers' movement during 2006–2008.

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slightly towards civilian institutions as noted by Zaidi (2014:50). But this is a dynamic process. The military establishment of Pakistan has learnt its lesson and has sought to become better entrenched among a large segment of the private media. Today, private media enterprises are highly polarised in terms of how they situate themselves in the civil–military imbalance within the state configuration. A major segment of the media supports the narrative of the military establishment and on a daily basis challenges the legitimacy of civilian supremacy on television screens (see Sulehria, Shah, this Volume).

So, the conjecture posed by Zaidi (2014) on the changing dynamics of power, specifically that the power of the military is declining, should not be conceptualised as a new equilibrium or irreversible in any sense. It reflects a fluid and dynamic situation and could move in any direction in the future. For example, since the attack on a renowned journalist and television anchor, Hamid Mir, and the fallout between Mir's media organisation, Geo, and Jang Group, the space in the media for dissenting voices who challenge the national security narrative of the military establishment has been reduced substantially (Ali and Priest 2015). Moreover, the sophisticated media campaign on print, electronic and online forums by the Inter Service Public Relations (ISPR) shows how important it is for the military establishment to dominate the mental space. This contestation between civil society and military establishment in the sphere of mental space is likely to continue over the coming years in Pakistan.

'INFORMAL' AND STATE

In his seminal essay, Zaidi (2014) alluded to the fact that the postcolonial state is fractured in the context of the large size of the informal economy in Pakistan. He noted:

> It is not just the economy that is a huge mass of the informal – or undocumented, underground, or black – but linked to the question of holding and articulating power, one could argue that the writ of the state does not run across Pakistan and has been replaced by localised interests, vested groups, and mafias. (Zaidi, 2014:51–52).

In the context of India, Roy (2009) has explained similar developments by referring to the 'informality' of the state itself. In Pakistan the share of the informal economy in total economic activity has steadily increased since the 1980s. This is a widespread phenomenon across developing countries (Heintz and Pollin 2003) (see also Figure 6.2). In 1975 only 39 per cent of

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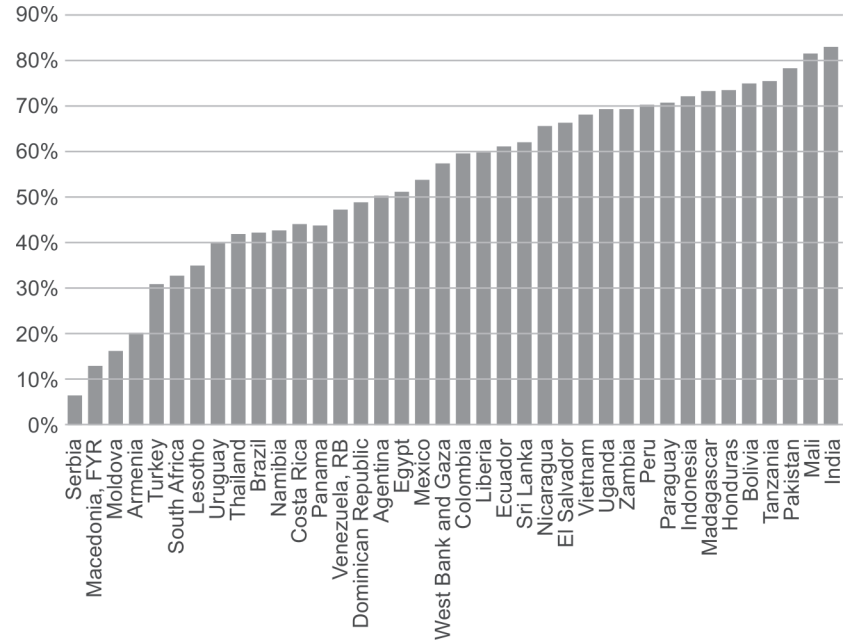
the labour force in Pakistan was part of the informal economy and by 1990 this number was up to 64 per cent (Heintz and Pollin 2003:12). According to recent estimates, around 73 per cent of the workforce was engaged in the informal sector of the economy in Pakistan (ILO 2012). But in sharp contrast to Zaidi (2014) this chapter conceptualises the growing power of 'localised interests, vested groups, and mafias' (Zaidi 2014:52) in the wake of changes in the global regimes of accumulation and uneven state-spatiality rather than 'weakness' of the state.

Figure 6.2 Informal Employment as a Per Cent of Non-Agricultural Employment for Selected Countries, 2010



Source: Vanek et al. (2014:9).

Local regimes of capital accumulation are constrained and mediated by global regimes of capital accumulation. In the post-World War II era, the state-led development or Fordist regime of accumulation was dominant which has been now replaced by a neoliberal or flexible regime of accumulation since the 1980s (Akhtar 2011). Heintz and Pollin (2003) argue that because of neoliberal reforms (and consequent shift to a flexible regime of accumulation) the informal sector has increased in size in developing countries. They proposed four interlinked channels to explain the rise in informalisation due

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to neoliberal policies. First, it is due to a decline in formal public employment prompted by neoliberal policies that aim to reduce the budget deficit and roll back the size of the state. Second, neoliberal policies prioritise an increase in exports and foreign direct investment. To ensure competitiveness, the labour cost must be kept low while labour productivity must go up. As a result, there is an increasing tendency to introduce labour-saving technologies. This leads to a limited growth of 'formal employment relative to informal employment' (Heintz and Pollin 2003:9). Third, under a neoliberal regime there is a shift in macroeconomic strategy from a goal of full-employment to inflation targeting. Consequently, expansionary fiscal policies that would create demand for employment are abandoned. Fourth, neoliberal policies have reduced the bargaining power of labour vis-à-vis capital and consequently wages do not increase in line with productivity growth. Thus, more members of a family engage in paid employment to sustain themselves. That is why it is observed that more women are engaging in paid employment for the first time and a majority of them find paid employment in the informal sector (Heintz and Pollin 2003:7-8).In the context of Pakistan, at a policy level these four changes have taken place to a significant extent (Ali and Malik 2009). Rodrick (2015) presented empirical evidence from around the world to demonstrate that countries of the global south are going through 'premature deindustrialization'. He used the word 'premature' because countries of the Global South are undergoing deindustrialisation at substantially lower levels of income vis-à-vis early industrialisers (Rodrick 2015:3). This is due to the adoption of labour-saving techniques in production and forces of globalisation (Rodrick 2015:3). As a result, decent employment opportunities in the formal sector of the economy are on a continuous decline and to survive most working people in the Global South must engage in the informal sector of the economy.[11] The role of the state is central here because the informal sector operates at the fringes of 'legality' which is regulated by the state. The informal sector is characterised by patronage networks (Akhtar 2011), and the workers/petty commodity producers in the informal sector rely on their access to the state to survive and navigate in the informal economy (Chatterjee 2008). The unevenness of state-space is manifested in ethnic and religious segmentation which facilitates

[11] Here I do not imply that informal sector operates fully independent of formal sector of the economy. It is observed that sub-contracting is done regularly in developing countries by big corporation to avoid labour and environmental regulations (Kus 2014).

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production and reproduction of patron–client relationships across urban spaces in Pakistan. At a higher level of abstraction, we can conceptualise the state-spatiality in terms of the regulation of social relations by state institutions (Brenner 2004:453) and in the case of the postcolonial Pakistan, the regulation of social relations by the state is highly uneven.

'INSTITUTION' AND 'CLASS'

As noted at the outset of this chapter that Zaidi (2014) marked a major departure from the Alavian framework by positing that 'institutions' rather than 'class' are more helpful in explaining the underlying dynamics of the Pakistani state and society.

> The analysis in Pakistan suggests that institutions rather than class determine the nature of the state. The media, judiciary, and parliament are all multi-class institutions, as is the military, although they all work for the defence of the capitalist order in which they function, with the purpose of accumulating more capital. (Zaidi 2014:51)

While building on Zaidi's (2014) work this chapter argues that neither institutions nor class in isolation from each other can fully capture the complexities of the postcolonial state-society of Pakistan. Therefore, it is important to look at institutions and class in a dialectical relationship with each other. The Marxian circuit of capital as illustrated in equation [1] provides us a pertinent framework to capture the dialectical interplay of institutions and class processes.

$$\mathbf{M — C\,[LP + MP] \ldots P \ldots C' — M'} \qquad \ldots[1]$$

M represents money capital, C represent two commodities, labour power (LP) and means of production (MP); P refers to production process; C' refers to new commodity produced and M' refers to money capital after a commodity is sold in the marketplace (Kotz 1991). In the first stage of the capital accumulation process, a capitalist outlays a flow of money capital to purchase means of production and labour power. To ensure the smooth and stable flow of this process, continuous supplies of natural resources, such as wood, bricks, electricity, oil and other inputs are required. Therefore, the organisation of the structure of natural resources and their supply is pivotal for the process of capital accumulation and the state has a key role in it (Gordon et al. 1984). In the case of Pakistan, the state has used some specific spaces/regions as a

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reservoir of natural resources. Natural gas from Balochistan is distributed across the country even though a majority of the people in Balochistan do not have gas connections. Similarly, the dynamics of the labour market (for example the structure of the family would have an impact on labour supply) play a central role in the process of accumulation (Gordon et al. 1984:24).The state has a key role to play in these processes as well. For example, under Musharraf's regime the rapid growth in services, insurance and banking sectors assisted in the growth of female labour force participation. Therefore, the state reversed some of its earlier policies and tried to popularise a narrative of 'moderate enlightenment'[12] among wider segments of society.

In the second stage of the circuit of capital, production takes place at the level of a firm. The structure of hierarchy in the firm and the organisation of the labour process are pivotal in determining the outcome of the production process (Gordon et al. 1984:24). The existing hierarchies in terms of caste, ethnicity and religion, which can be traced back to the colonial era, continue to play a key role in these processes in the context of Pakistan. This is followed by the final stage of the circuit of capital, which is realising profits via sales (consumption). Three institutional arrangements must be considered here: (*a*) demand for a good in the market through government spending, investment, exports or domestic consumption, (*b*) the nature of inter-capitalist competition and (*c*) distribution, marketing and retail structures. The fiscal policy and regulations of the state are instrumental in determining how things evolve in these processes. Therefore, at an intermediate level of analysis, the demarcation between institutions and class becomes blurred because the state (institution) is an integral component of a capitalist mode of production (Castells 1977).

The example of the Army Welfare Trust (AWT) illustrates this interplay between institutions and class processes in Pakistan.[13] The AWT is a conglomerate of publicly listed private enterprises controlled and managed by the military of Pakistan (AWT 2019). One of the primary missions of AWT is

[12] The tragic incidence of 9/11 and changes in the geopolitics of the region also pushed Pakistani state to opt for the narrative of 'moderate enlightenment'.

[13] The role of the military in the economic processes is seen in two distinct ways in the existing literature. On the one hand, there are those who see the role of the military in alliance with the landed elite and semi-feudalism (Dewey 1991). On the other hand, the military is seen as an institution which is solely interested in maximising its profits (Aziz 2008; Siddiqa 2007). This chapter finds both approaches reductionist and acknowledges that the military as an institution is pushed and pulled in different directions based on its ideological, institutional, economic and political interests.

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to ensure the welfare of army personnel, especially martyrs and their families (AWT 2019). To pursue this mission, AWT engages in diverse commercial activities ranging from speculation on financial markets, banking, real-estate, production of shoes, wedding-halls, energy, and so on (AWT 2019). AWT is arguably one of the most successful commercial enterprises in the country with a total worth of more than Rs 300 billion. According to conventional economic wisdom, the control over the enterprise is linked with the ownership of stocks in a company but in the case of AWT it is much more complex.

> [AWT] is administered via a committee of administration (COA) and a board of directors (BOD). The COA is composed of the chairman, a position held by the chief of army staff, the vice-chairman, who is the adjutant general, while the quarter master general and the chief of general staff are non-position holding 'members' of this committee. The 'board of directors' of this mega business conglomerate is composed of 11 retired and serving generals and brigadiers with the adjutant general as the chairman. The condition of holding certain key positions in the military is a prerequisite for earning the title of a surplus-appropriator in this mega economy. (Azhar 2019:10–11)

Being the Chairman of the COA, the Army Chief controls the processes of surplus appropriation and by extension occupies the class role of a 'capitalist' from the Marxian perspective. However, the key point here is that he secures this 'class' role based on his 'institutional' title. The dynamic interplay between institutions (access to state resources) and class is embedded in every socio-economic process of postcolonial capitalism. It can be argued that due to long periods of direct military rule in Pakistan, the military's role in the economy is a special case. But our argument is not specific to the role of the military. Many state institutions including civilian ones engage in commercial activities, especially in the urban-land economy. For example, commercial housing societies are developed by the Pakistan Administrative Services (elite group of civil service), the judiciary, the police force, Pakistan Railway, the Public Works Department (PWD) and the Central Board of Revenue (CBR), to name the few. The dialectic of accumulation of state power and capital characterises the dynamics of postcolonial capitalism in Pakistan (see Akhtar 2018:132–33). Thus, the role of the military in economic processes is not an aberration but, rather, it epitomises the inherent contradictions of postcolonial capitalism in Pakistan. The dialectic of accumulation of state power and capital characterises the dynamics of postcolonial capitalism in Pakistan (Akhtar 2018:132–133). The institutional or a class lens in isolation would not allow us to capture these complexities of postcolonial capitalism.

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CONCLUSION

This chapter has highlighted glaring contradictions in the existing literature on the postcolonial state of Pakistan. According to Alavi's (1972) theory of the overdeveloped state, power asymmetry exists between state institutions and social classes. This view cannot explain why this power asymmetry between state and social classes varies significantly from one region to another within Pakistan. Within the logic of Alavi's (1972) theory, the answer must involve varying degrees of 'overdeveloped-ness' of the postcolonial state in different regions of Pakistan. But this would compromise the consistency of Alavi's theory which is based on a singular notion of homogenous and static state. Similarly, the influential critiques by Akhtar (2018) and Zaidi (2014) do not problematise the implicit assumption of 'homogeneity' of the postcolonial state which is prevalent in Alavi's scholarship. This chapter problematises the conventional approach by introducing 'processual' and 'spatial' conceptualisation of the postcolonial state (Lefebvre 2009; Brenner 2004) and juxtaposes it on Alavi (1972), Zaidi (2014) and Akhtar (2018) to delineate dynamic interactions between state, class and institutions. It is argued here that the postcolonial state of Pakistan can be best characterised by 'uneven state-spaces'. Moreover, this chapter intervenes in the debate between those who assign primacy to class analyses (Alavi 1972; Akhtar 2014) and those who prioritise institutions (Zaidi 2014) in explaining the underlying political economic processes in postcolonial Pakistan. This chapter contends that both class and institutions are dialectically interlinked and when examined in isolation from each other would yield partial and suboptimal analyses. Therefore, this chapter posits that the Marxian circuit of capital framework should be used to delineate the dialectical interplay of class and institutions in postcolonial Pakistan.

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7 An Evolving Class Structure?

Pakistan's Ruling Elites and the Implications for Pakistan's Political Economy[*,1]

Rosita Armytage

It has been argued that Pakistan's class structure has been reconfigured over the past fifty years as the middle classes have become increasingly powerful and adept in their demands for political representation, government services and the redistribution of national wealth. Pakistan's class structure has indeed shifted significantly away 'from a largely agricultural, rural economy, where 'feudals' dominate the economic, social, and particularly political space' (Zaidi 2017), to one that has a large urban population and a small but highly visible upper-middle class. Zaidi (2014:51) has argued that Pakistan is 'a long way from the classical structuralist or even Marxist formulation of the Pakistani state dominated by landlords, industrialists, and the metropolitan bourgeoisie'. Yet recent ethnography (Martin 2015; Armytage forthcoming) demonstrates that the configuration of power in Pakistan is not such a long way from these formulations as may initially be supposed. This chapter argues that though Pakistan's class structure has undoubtedly changed, its ruling classes – which I define specifically as the economic and political 1 per cent – have retained their hold on political and economic resources very successfully.

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* An earlier version of this chapter was published as R. Armytage (2016), 'Alliance of State and Ruling Classes in Contemporary Pakistan', *Economic & Political Weekly* 51(31): 108–114.

[1] These findings draw on the long-term ethnographic fieldwork conducted by the author in the Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Islamabad Capital Territory and Karachi between October 2013 and January 2015, as well as interviews with over ninety of the nation's most politically and economically powerful politicians, businessmen, bureaucrats and retired military personnel generating a minimum of 100 million dollars in net income within the extended family unit of parents, children and grandchildren per year, and the development of extensive genealogies for a number of these individual's extended family groups.

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This chapter begins where much of the academic discourse on the location of power in Pakistan begins, by revisiting the foundational work of the influential sociologist Hamza Alavi on the relationship between the state and the ruling classes within the postcolonial nation. I then examine more recent scholarship that reconfigures Alavi's conception of this relationship. This oeuvre of scholarship poses an interesting challenge, but one that is usually peripheral to scholars of political economy: *As Pakistan's class structure has evolved, how have the ruling classes, and their position of dominance in Pakistani society, changed? And further, what are the implications for Pakistan's political economy?* Focusing first on the theoretical aspects of this challenge, the chapter then draws on ethnographic research conducted by the author between 2013 and 2015 to examine the shifting composition of the ruling classes and the implications for economic inequality and social mobility in Pakistan today.

Alavi concentrated his analysis of power within the postcolonial state on the state 'oligarchy' and the 'ruling classes', describing a structure of interlinking institutional power blocs, dominated by powerful members. He differentiated between the powerful oligarchic state, comprised of military Generals, the rank and file of the military, and the bureaucracy; and three separate propertied classes which existed outside of the state: the landowning class, the neo-colonial bourgeoisie, and the indigenous bourgeoisie. As studies of class generally, and Marxism in particular, fell out of fashion in academia, scholars seeking to understand the allocation of political and economic power in society began to preference analyses of 'elites', 'institutions,' and 'political economy' over 'ruling classes.' For those who focused on elites, despite the shift away from class, scholarship continued to be divided between those who followed a Weberian definition of 'status' groups which conceptualised elites as defined by the power and resources they possessed, and those who followed a more Marxist understanding, defining groups in relation to their role in the means of production and the social dominance or subordination this relationship determines. Despite their differences, both conceptualised elites as a group possessing power and resources (S.R. Khan 2012). Wright Mills (1956:10), for instance, defined elites as 'those who are able to realise their will, even if others resist it'. This analytical shift re-focused attention away from class interests and conflicts, to the interests and advantages of the individuals within these politically and economically powerful classes. In doing so, it illuminated the specific characteristics, networks and social advantages of individuals born into privilege, but sometimes obscured the structural advantages and disadvantages, alliances and antagonisms that Alavi and other scholars of class had sought to illuminate.

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The use of the term 'elites' in this chapter is a composite of each of these definitions. Rather than obscuring the class interests and conflicts of the nation's most powerful through an avoidance of class analysis, I use the terms 'elites' and the 'ruling class' synonymously to refer to the small group of Pakistani families possessing both the highest level of economic and political influence in the nation. These include the nation's wealthiest business owners, nationally or provincially influential politicians (many of whom are also powerful landowners with their own urban and/or rural bases and constituencies) and retired military personnel. The elite constitute distinct ruling classes with ownership, control and access to valued resources vastly disproportionate to the rest of the population. They also obtain broad advantages in the nation's economic, political and social spheres because of this ownership and the opportunities it provides; and their preferences determine the lives of the broader population.

The members of this class emerge from different *biraderi*s (extended tribal or kinship group), possess different ethnic and regional affiliations, and for the most part retain a strong preference for ethnic endogamy, yet they have also developed a strongly cohesive class-based identity that, for the most part, transcends regional and ethnic differences. Though other groups in Pakistan – particularly the military regime and certain religious leaders[2] – may hold comparative levels of political and (in the case of the military) also economic influence, this chapter focuses on the civilian groups at the confluence of extreme wealth, ownership of resources and political power (including *retired* senior military personnel).[3]

The broader class structure in which these ruling classes exist is important. Despite rapid urbanisation and consistent levels of economic growth, 65–80 per cent of Pakistanis continue to earn their living through manual labour (Durr-e-Nayab 2011). The middle classes,[4] variously defined and estimated by

[2] The military and religious leaders and groups are discussed in detail elsewhere in this volume and are not examined in detail within this chapter.

[3] The families that comprise this elite class each possess their own broad patronage networks including more distant kin relations, and often vast dependent networks of employees and/or local constituencies. These economically dependent groups benefit from their relationship as clients to these elite families but are not included among my definition of the elite, unless they possess access to economic and political resources in their own right.

[4] See Maqsood (2018) on the rise and characteristics of Pakistan's new middle class for a thorough examination of this group.

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economists to be from 18 to 34 per cent of the population, have been defined by Durr-e-Nayab (2011) as those with at least one family member with a tertiary education and one family member employed in 'non-manual' work in sales, clerical or professional positions. The upper middle classes (around 6 per cent of the population) can be categorised as those holding a college education from the nation's top schools and universities or being educated abroad, and members of this group are most likely to be employed as professionals, legislators, senior officials, managers, or in military roles. The uppermost elite – those who comprise the focus of this chapter – hold similar employment categories but tend to occupy more prominent roles with higher levels of income. The men in this class are almost certainly educated in foreign universities. The women of this class, if not foreign-educated themselves, will hold a university degree from one of Pakistan's top universities. This group is roughly estimated to comprise around 1 per cent of the population (Durr-e-Nayab 2011).[5]

WEALTH AND INEQUALITY IN THE POSTCOLONIAL STATE

In protecting and increasing the wealth held by a small (and very slowly expanding) number of families, the Pakistani elite has been very successful. In the 1960s, the Chief Economist of the Pakistan Planning Commission Mahbub ul Haq estimated that only 22 families in Pakistan controlled two-thirds of all industrial assets, 80 per cent of banking and 70 per cent of insurance in Pakistan (Haq 1968; Haq 1976). In the mid-2000s, Shahid-ur-Rahman (2006) listed forty-four business families as owning the nation's largest businesses, with combined assets on par with the budget of the state of Pakistan. Though no quantitative studies as comprehensive as Haq (1968) have been conducted in the intervening years, of the ninety elite businessmen[6] interviewed by this author between 2013 and 2015, most estimated that around 200 families dominate the nation's highest revenue and most profitable businesses (Armytage 2014).

[5] Scholars measure class in different ways using a number of different indicators, and there is significant variation between disciplines, within disciplines and across country contexts. Durr-e-Nayab's (2011) definition of class in Pakistan expands upon purely economic indicators of class to include level of education obtained, ownership of items representative of a certain standard of living in Pakistan and type of employment. These additional categories, though still limited, can be used to broad an outline of the economic and styles of life experienced by Pakistani individuals and families.

[6] As a baseline for inclusion in this project, the author's research examined only business families with a revenue of over 100 million dollars per year.

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The disparities in wealth that have emerged between this upper echelon and the vast majority of the population are astounding.[7]

The majority of Pakistan's business elite derive the largest proportion of their profits from real estate and large-scale industrial projects. Many businessmen have achieved high levels of profit through producing commodities in oligarchic domestic industries or through producing high-demand export commodities. The enormous profits they have generated are typical of those produced in uncompetitive markets with low worker salaries (M.H. Khan 2016) and contexts where taxation policy is regressive and characterised by pervasive evasion (K. Husain 2015; Talpur 2016; Siddiqui and Baloch 2015). In addition to widespread tax evasion and under-reporting, because wealth is owned and distributed collectively among most Pakistani families, taxation records often obscure the accumulation of wealth within a single extended family. Though taxation records reflect only a portion of actual earned revenue for many families, the tax records of the top twenty taxpayers in the country are revealing. Many of the highest reported income earners are members of the same family, and multiple families have upwards of five members in the top 100 taxpayers (M.Z. Khan 2015).

Partly as a result of these factors, inequality has become embedded in Pakistan's political, economic and class structure. Ishrat Husain (2000) aptly described the conundrum many economists and political scientists have sought to understand when he described Pakistan as an elite-dominated and exploitative state structure that replicated itself despite seemingly radical shifts in political leadership, stating the following:

> What is most puzzling is that the forms of government – democratic, nominated, directly or indirectly elected, dictatorial – did not matter. Nor did the professed ideological inclinations of the government in power – liberal, conservative, Islamic, leftist, rightist – make any significant difference to the general thrust of this model.… The same constellation of landlords, industrialists, traders, politicians, military and civil bureaucrats, and some co-opted members of the religious oligarchy and professional and intellectual groups dominated the scene under every single government…. The stranglehold of this elite group, accounting for less than 1 percent of the population, on the affairs of the state has remained unscathed. (I. Husain 2000: xiii–xiv)

[7] Recent studies have focused on much larger income categories that subsume the wealth of the elite within them. For instance, a recent UNDP (2016) study showed that Pakistan's richest 20 per cent consume seven times more than the poorest 20 per cent.

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The role of the state in Husain's model of elite domination is left vague, but the 'constellation' of elite power interests he maps is reminiscent of that articulated in the foundational work of Alavi (1972) and in the modifications he provided in his later work (Alavi 1990). Almost three decades on, a number of scholars now disagree with this formulation, including many of the authors included in this volume. Yet my ethnography reveals that though the power structure has shifted significantly among the lower and middle classes, it has remained remarkably stable at its uppermost levels – though with several adaptations which are explored later in this chapter.

Alavi's (1972) model of elite alliances and divisions, and their relationship to the postcolonial state, emerged in response to what he saw as the inadequacy of Marxist conceptions of the state and of class relations for explaining the dynamics of power in non-European societies. He argued that postcolonial nations differed from European states in specific ways and, consequently, that Marxist analyses of 'the state' needed to be reconfigured in these contexts. Whereas Marx had argued that the state functioned as the instrument of a single ruling class, Alavi argued that postcolonial nations had a number of separate and distinct ruling classes that interacted with the state in different ways. Further, he argued that the postcolonial state was interdependent with these ruling classes in both receiving and providing reciprocal benefits.

Specifically, Alavi argued that postcolonial states needed to be understood as comprised of an 'overdeveloped' bureaucratic–military oligarchy. He argued that this oligarchy had emerged in response to the challenges the metropolitan colonial power faced in subordinating multiple indigenous social classes seeking both to assert their own positions of dominance and to resist the constraints placed upon them by colonial rule. He stated that unless the lower and middle classes were already highly organised and conscious of class relations at the moment of independence, the overdeveloped oligarchic structure of the colonial state would inevitably be inherited by the newly independent state. This would result, Alavi argued, in a class of domestic elites which dominated the population in much the same way as the colonial administrators they had replaced.

As noted in the Introduction to this volume, Alavi defined the multiple 'ruling classes' of the postcolonial nation as being comprised of the indigenous bourgeoisie (the owners of industry and business), the metropolitan neo-colonial bourgeoisie (often in the form of transnational corporations), and of the landed classes. In his later writing, Alavi (1990) defined these ruling elites more precisely. He identified the indigenous bourgeoisie as being primarily comprised of the Gujarati business communities who migrated to Pakistan at the time of partition. The bureaucracy was comprised of 'the civil servants

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[who] effectively controlled the entire administration in the provinces' and who kept the politicians in power 'subject to their willingness to obey Central Government directives' (Alavi 1990:33). The military, he argued, was initially 'a junior partner' in the state, with its power and influence growing steadily through the 1950s, until the 1980s and General Zia's 'first truly 'military regime' in Pakistan' (Alavi 1990).

Alavi (1972) argued that in the postcolonial context, 'the bureaucratic-military state oligarchy' mediated between the competing interests of these three ruling classes. In Pakistan, the indigenous business class competed with transnational corporations for markets and profits, but also collaborated with them in setting up joint ventures. Transnational corporations relied on the support of local businesses to understand the new market, and the regulatory infrastructure they needed to navigate. In turn, their much larger infrastructure enabled domestic businessmen to scale up their enterprises to a level they may not otherwise have been able to achieve. Thus, these two classes both competed *and* collaborated with each other, even as the indigenous business class became increasingly reliant on the support and infrastructure of the transnational corporations with which they partnered. Alavi argued that this tension and competition occurred *via* the state: the ruling classes competed for state resources but did not *directly* negotiate or engage in conflict with one another. In this way the state was understood to mediate between elite groups while at the same time acting on behalf of each of them to preserve the social order in which their interests were embedded. Thus, initially, there was no great need for the separate ruling classes to heavily invest in fostering the linkages between them. They did not require each other's support to protect their separate and mutual interests. Instead, they formed an elite coalition based on their separate relationships with the state. However, this configuration was to change.

ELITES, CLASS AND POWER IN PAKISTAN

The relevance of Alavi's conception of the ruling classes and the postcolonial state to the conditions facing Pakistan today has been widely challenged. In particular, Alavi's theory has been critiqued for its static conception of the state and its relations with the ruling classes, and for failing to include or acknowledge the importance of institutional affiliations or of the agency of non-elite groups.[8] These critiques differ in their understandings of the ongoing

[8] Alavi (1990) included non-elite groups in his later analyses.

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role of elites and are explored in more detail in other chapters in this volume and elsewhere (Zaidi 2014; Akhtar 2008). In particular, many scholars of Pakistan now include large swathes of the middle classes in their own definition of the elite or the ruling class. Akhtar (2008:3), for instance, argued that Alavi's three propertied classes remain both powerful and central to Pakistan's ruling coalition, but that the intermediate classes and religio-political movements have formed 'qualitative additions to the ruling coalition'. He argued that the state has been able to *retain* its position of dominance because of its willingness to broaden access to state power and the benefits which flow from it to the intermediate classes and religio-political groups which might seek to challenge it (Akhtar, 2008:229). In this formulation, Alavi's bureaucratic–military oligarchy remains the dominant holder of power in society. The state has absorbed the potential threat posed by these groups through co-opting them into an expanded ruling class alliance.

Revising Akhtar's analyses of an expanded, but still united, ruling coalition, Zaidi (2014) argued that since 2007, the institutions of the judiciary, the parliament and the media have undermined and challenged the authority of the military so that it no longer dominates Pakistan's political processes but must compete for control and influence with these increasingly powerful institutions. These institutions, and the constituency of interests they represent, he argues, have surpassed and replaced the relevance of class affiliation and competition in contemporary Pakistani society. Zaidi interprets the failure of class-based movements to emerge, and the increasing independence and influence of the media, judiciary and parliament to indicate that class identity is no longer the primary determinant of the ability to hold power in Pakistan today. He does this by arguing that these institutions are no longer elite-dominated, but are instead 'multi-class'. Zaidi (2014:51) has gone so far as to argue that the class identities that once determined the allocation of power have been surpassed by institutional affiliations which cross class lines. But has class really been eclipsed as a viable category of analyses through which to understand struggles for power between different groups in contemporary Pakistan? And if it has not, how is power now configured among not only the various elite groups that Alavi identified but also among the new power holders who are increasingly amassing political and economic resources?

Zaidi's argument regarding the social shift within Pakistan identifies the emergence of new power holders in Pakistan's social structure but requires a reconfiguration. Though the media and a number of high-profile individuals within the judiciary could justifiably be defined as 'multi-class', the multi-

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class composition of the parliament and the degree of its independence and power within Pakistani society is questionable. The vast majority of members of parliament are also members of dynastic political families (Cheema et al. 2013). In Punjab alone, for instance, Cheema and colleagues (2013) found that between 1970 and 2008 two thirds of elected legislators had multiple family members who had previously contested national or provincial elections. The inter-generational pattern of political office they revealed serves as a useful, though imperfect, proxy for inherited privilege and political status.

Similarly, Akhtar's claim that the intermediate classes and religio-political movements have been incorporated into the ruling coalition identifies a critical shift in power but obfuscates the economic privilege and social freedoms that both accompany and define elite power. The rise of religio-political movements to the forefront of national politics in the decades following Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's overthrow (Nasr 2001; Haqqani 2005), the 2007 'lawyer's movement' against the unconstitutional dismissal of the Chief Justice by military dictator Pervez Musharraf, and even the growing incidence of mob vigilantism against alleged blasphemers[9] indicate the increasing willingness of middle-class groups in Pakistan to engage in political contestations – both within and outside of state structures. Yet, the conflation of the middle classes with the ruling classes obscures the distribution and allocation of political and economic power across Pakistan. Though they enjoy lives of increasing material comfort, the claim that Pakistan's middle classes – either middle class institutions or religio-political movements – now hold major political and economic power or pose a threat to the power of the elite families who dominate the economy and the structures of government is unsubstantiated.

Rather than appearing as 'additions to the ruling coalition' (Akhtar, 2008:3), these professional and conservative religious groups appear more clearly as a force of *opposition* to the ruling coalition with the *potential* to challenge their dominance and privilege. The 'lawyer's movement' that Zaidi referenced as evidence for his claim remains an isolated instance of challenge to the dominance of the elite from within the upper middle class. Scholars diverge on the significance of this movement and on the existence of a rising middle-class opposition to an elite-dominated state (see Aqil Shah in this volume;

[9] There have been over 1,400 blasphemy cases since the law was first enacted in 1986 (M.Z. Khan 2015; Hoffman 2014) and at least sixty-five people, including lawyers, defendants and judges, have been murdered over blasphemy allegations since 1990, according to figures from a Center for Research and Security Studies report and local media (Reuters 2016).

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Akhtar 2008). Jaffrelot (2015:371), for instance, sums up the ambivalence of many towards the actions of middle-class groups in his assessment of the lawyer's movement:

> Since 2007, lawyers have assumed the role of the quintessential opposition force, coming out against both civilians and the military in the name of the rule of law. But the extent to which this new actor can alter Pakistan's political and social situation remains to be seen.

The failure of the government to condemn religiously motivated vigilante groups (Ashraf 2018) may well indicate that these groups have formed an accommodation with the ruling elite, but it does not indicate either an alliance or an addition to the ruling coalition: these religious middle classes do not share in the wealth, privilege or social or kinship networks of the elites who seek to placate them. This separation of networks and difference in privilege is reflective of the significant social and kinship barrier that exists between the elite classes and the rest of the population.[10]

Both Zaidi (2014) and Akhtar's (2008) reconfigurations provide useful prisms through which one can understand the relationships of the ruling classes to the state and to other variously affiliated factions. Yet each is scant when it comes to conceptualising the composition of the ruling classes, and neither builds upon Alavi's conceptualisation of the dynamics of power *within* the ruling classes. Further, neither Alavi's theory nor its critiques anticipated or accounted for the fractures that have emerged within the elite classes based not only upon ethnic or regional differences or on institutional affiliation, but also on claims to status and class distinction.

This chapter contends that both the oligarchic state and the three propertied classes identified by Alavi (1972, 1990) continue to exercise a similar role of dominance in contemporary Pakistan, regardless of the new members they have incorporated and accommodated. Indeed, in the data obtained from the author's interviews (Armytage 2014) with business and political elites and senior members of the bureaucracy, most acknowledged the continued dominance of the military and the intelligence agencies in both the political and economic life of the nation. All of the elites interviewed also spoke of cultivating personal connections in the upper echelons of the bureaucracy. Many highlighted the

[10] There are a number of exceptions, for instance, certain members of the middle-class media, some mid- to high-ranking bureaucrats, and certain mid-sized landowners in rural contexts.

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gains to be made in entering into business partnerships with the military, in having their sons or daughters marry into the family of a General or Brigadier, and for those with the appropriate personal ties, the importance of nurturing relationships with well-placed individuals within these security agencies. A large number noted that they personally benefitted from the dominant role the military exercises in both the economy and in political decision-making across a broad array of areas.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE RULING CLASS

During the first few decades of the new nation of Pakistan, both Alavi's ruling classes – comprised of the indigenous bourgeoisie, metropolitan neo-colonial bourgeoisie, and the landed classes – and the bureaucratic–military oligarchy retained their separate identities and distinct spheres of influence. The state oligarchy did, by and large, mediate between the interests of the ruling classes, providing them with patronage in the form of privileges and regulatory or taxation exemptions unavailable to the broader population. In the lead-up to partition and independence from colonial rule, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the All India Muslim League, and an influential group of prominent Muslims active in civic and political affairs, sought to build a cohesive group of political supporters and financial backers from among the Muslim business community of India to fund the independence movement and their vision for a separate Muslim state. Recognising the enormous vacuum of industry that would emerge in Pakistan at the moment of partition, Jinnah began actively seeking investors for the new state. He sought these investors from among the friendship and broader social circles he had cultivated throughout the 1930s and 1940s in his work as a lawyer, and later, as the leader of the Muslim League. Jinnah's personal popularity and extensive network within the Urdu-speaking upper caste elite,[11] and among the powerful trading community of Gujarat, of which he was also a member, ensured that this endeavour was enormously successful.

To accelerate the growth of vitally needed industry, the government of Pakistan incentivised these traders (widely known as the Muhajirs or immigrants) both to migrate and to enter into industry by providing them

[11] The ancestors of this group had risen to prominence as a result of the land grants and benefits provided to them under the Mughal empire from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. British colonisation in the nineteenth century removed much of this power and autonomy and endangered the privileged position of this group (Jaffrelot 2015:9).

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with powerful economic inducements in the form of large publicly funded loans, grants and tax exemptions (G.F. Papanek 1970; Papanek, et al. 1991). Those with the closest and most established relationships with Jinnah were immediately incorporated into the Pakistani state, both in vital political positions as ministers and advisors, and in prominent industrial positions (H. Papanek 1972).

Government policy ensured imports were largely unrestricted between 1947 and 1952. Pakistan's decision not to align with India in devaluing the rupee following the British devaluation of the sterling left the Rupee overvalued but also made it uneconomic for Indian manufacturers to import raw materials (cotton, jute) from Pakistan (Ahmed and Amjad 1984). As punishment, and to ensure Pakistan did not benefit from importing significantly cheaper Indian imports, India imposed a trade ban on Pakistan in 1949 (Papanek et al. 1991). The ban heightened the urgent need for Pakistani entrepreneurs to invest in developing new factories within Pakistan, in both wings of the country. Liberal imports and an overvalued exchange rate also meant it was much cheaper to import large machinery and other industrial inputs from countries other than India. Pakistan quickly succeeded in drastically reducing its reliance on India. Because a huge range of basic commodities had previously been manufactured within the area that was now India, opportunities for industrialists to enter unfamiliar markets opened in almost every area of industry and manufacturing. The Muhajir traders who were best situated to enter these new markets quickly transformed into an industrial business class.

The reliance of the state on this group of wealthy traders tied their fortunes to that of the national economy and enabled the new industrial class to extract a disproportionate array of economic and political privileges. By the 1950s, the Muhajir business community had very successfully diverted government resources to their own advantage. In one striking example, between 1955 and 1960, the state allocated over 50 per cent of the national water supply and public housing to Karachi where most of this class had settled following partition, despite the city being home to only 2 per cent of the national population (G.F. Papanek 1970).

By the 1960s, personal petitions, bribery, entertaining and socialising with government officials was perceived to be an established component of major business in Pakistan (G.F. Papanek 1970). These relationships were seen to be so pervasive and problematic that sections of the military government felt the need to take drastic action to remove the bureaucracy from the 'unwholesome' influence of the business community in order to preserve its 'administrative

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integrity' (Hull 2012:40). These thoughts influenced the decision by Ayub's Planning Commission to relocate the nation's capital from Karachi to northern Punjab in the early 1960s.

However, Ayub's attempt to undermine the influence of the business community on the bureaucracy was simultaneously accompanied by policies in support of major industry which prompted the business class to make a lasting shift from reliance on the bureaucracy to powerful political actors – including the military. Individual capitalists began to cultivate relationships with specific political (and military) personnel who they hoped would support their preferred policy and regulatory reforms in return for generous campaign funding. In return for the favours they were successfully extracting from the military regime, the business elite began to serve as a powerful support base for military rule and helped legitimise the role of the military in politics and policymaking (M. Khan 1999) over the next six decades. However, by the late 1960s, the legitimacy of the military state among the broader population had become increasingly tenuous. The regime found itself heavily dependent on its industrialist support base and unable to enforce necessary limitations on their demands.

In the wake of (West) Pakistan's defeat in the civil war with East Pakistan and the emergence of the independent state of Bangladesh, a shift in national power politics occurred. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto[12] came into power, and Islamist political parties began to exert strong political pressure as a war-defeated nation sought to re-identify with its ethno-religious roots. The charge of the Islamic parties that the excess and irreligiosity of the ruling elite had led to the breakdown of the nation found a great deal of salience among the middle- and working classes (Jalal 2011), and Bhutto integrated religious rhetoric into his populist ideology (Jaffrelot 2015:11). Despite his own aristocratic heritage, Bhutto pledged to establish an Islamic socialist economy that would address Pakistan's vast social and economic inequality. The programme of nationalisation he implemented severely damaged, and in some cases destroyed, the fortunes of the majority of the nation's largest industrialists. Many of Pakistan's most successful business families had their factories nationalised almost overnight and most incurred huge financial losses from which a number of them never fully recovered (Amjad 1976). The huge losses experienced

[12] Bhutto came from an elite Sindhi family: his father was a powerful government official in the Indian princely state of Junagadh, and his family had thrived under the British colonial regime.

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caused many members of the ruling classes to rethink their dependence on the state, along with the avoidance of formal political involvement which many Karachi-based business families had upheld up until that point (Akhtar 2008:105; Kochanek 1983:187).

Unlike Bhutto, who had angered many among the elite, his successor, General Zia sought support for his military regime by seeking to implement policies that would promote and protect the separate interests of each of the nation's various power blocs including not only the ruling elite, but also the military, increasingly popular religious parties and organised labour unions (Noman 1989). To minimise possible opposition, Zia actively incorporated both industrialists and the landed elite into his military regime by including them as members of the National Assembly (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Background of National Assembly Members 1985

Landlords and tribal leaders	157
Businessmen	54
Urban professionals	18
Religious leaders	6
Other	3

Source: Noman (1989).

In his efforts to ensure the loyalty of the business elite, Zia also brought a number of industrialists into key advisory roles within his government, where they not only influenced economic policy, but also won large government contracts for their private businesses (Shenon 1991; Burki 1988). The families who rose to prominence in business were often relatives of senior Punjabi military officers and bureaucrats with high-level personal connections in the bureaucracy; these relationships enabled them to negotiate with ease the many bureaucratic obstacles imposed by the state (Alavi 1990). In an effort to both strengthen the economy and appease the industrial elite, Zia's government attempted to re-privatise the nation's still publicly owned manufacturing plants (I. Husain 2000). Industrial licenses were reinstated to most former industrial owners, strengthening the traditional alliance between the military–business bloc once again. Zia's regime also effectively facilitated the shift of wealth and power away from Karachi to Punjab through a range of policies preferential to Punjab, the stronghold of his own military supporters. By the time General Zia began the process of re-privatising many of the industries that had been nationalised, wealthy Punjabi families from the petty bourgeoisie whose

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families had worked as small shopkeepers, traders, small farmers and mid-level civil servants had established family relations throughout the bureaucracy and the military (Alavi 1990). As a result, they were particularly well positioned to benefit from the patronage system of the Pakistani state – and both the businesses they established and those they took over from the government thrived (Weiss 1991:11; Amjad 1983; Akhtar 2008). As a result, a significant number of upper middle–class families transitioned into the elite during Zia's rule (Cheema et al. 2013:4). The result was a dramatic shift in the composition of the ruling classes.

Unlike the Gujarati-speaking Muhajir businessmen who had migrated to Pakistan from other areas of India during partition, this rising group of Punjabi businessmen had long histories and roots in the local communities in which they lived. Many of these businessmen were also able to use their status as local employers and landowners to generate significant political support from the communities who were dependent on the wages and protection they provided (Weiss 1991:11). By 1982, for the first time in Pakistan's history, the annual incorporation of companies in Punjab exceeded that of Karachi (Rehman 2006). Punjabi business groups surged ahead creating larger and more profitable enterprises than those established in Karachi. This resulted in a permanent regional shift in corporate power that was accompanied by a Punjabi-dominated bureaucracy, parliament and military. The transition to a Punjabi-dominated bureaucracy occurred rapidly under Zia's leadership. In response, the largely Muhajir Karachi-based business families that had survived the economic shocks of Bangladesh's war of independence began a conscious strategy of engaging more actively with the nation's politicians and bureaucrats, expending effort on regular visits to Islamabad to lobby and relationship build with both bureaucrats and politicians.[13] In addition to the dominant Punjabis, two small *zaat*s (an occupationally specialised and largely endogamous community) were represented disproportionately in Pakistani business: the Memons and the Chiniotis. Despite representing a tiny fraction of the total population, 35 per cent of corporations represented on the Karachi stock exchange in 2006 were owned by individuals belonging to either the

[13] Jaffrelot (2015:133) notes that by 1983,

> 55.8 percent of the staff [senior civil service] were Punjabis, 11.6 percent were from the NWFP [KP], 20.2 percent urban Sindhis (a large majority of them Muhajirs), 5.1 percent Sindhis from rural areas in the province and 3.1 percent Baloch. In state-owned enterprises, the proportion of Punjabis was estimated to be 41 percent and urban Sindhis 47 percent, compared to 6 percent from the NWFP, 3.5 percent from Rural Sindh and 1 percent from Balochistan.

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Memon or Chinioti communities (Rehman 2006:66). In business, but in almost no other sphere, the Muhajir businessmen of Karachi continue to be a powerful economic force, second only to the growing strength of Punjabi business. A number of Sindhis retain their position in the nation's ruling class by virtue of their role as large landowners in rural Sindh and as politicians of these same areas supported by their large, dependent constituencies. The Baloch remain almost entirely excluded. Punjabi dominance of each of the nation's decision-making institutions has been normalised.

A FRACTURED ELITE?

The primary threat to elite class solidarity is, however, not based on ethnicity or regionalism. The ethnographic fieldwork undertaken by this author over fourteen consecutive months between 2013 and 2014 included over ninety interviews and extensive participant-observation interactions with businessmen and politicians owning businesses with a revenue of over 100 million dollars per year at their social gatherings, in their homes, at cafes and restaurants, and in their factories and offices. Despite the marginalisation of the nation's non-Punjabi ethnic groups, and the divvying up of ethnic representation amongst the nation's most powerful institutions, this and other research revealed that the elite members of these separate ethnic communities routinely socialise, engage in political negotiation and business deals, and when alliances between families from different ethnic communities need to be particularly robust and permanent, they intermarry (Lyon and Mughal 2016; Armytage 2015).

Beyond business skill, political acumen and intra-elite networking, the power of domestic elites is located in their ability to acquire and demonstrate distinction[14] and other forms of symbolic capital. These forms of distinction can be acquired from, for instance, partaking in foreign education or securing an advantageous marriage. Historically, this intra-elite alliance-making has been limited to families possessing multi-generational elite histories. The status of these families has rested primarily on their colonial-era legacy and inheritance, and the particular forms of distinction associated with these histories. These are the acquired dispositions, mannerisms and styles of living used to construct and evaluate the social world, and to perform a certain role within this world. These attributes are for the most part inherited, but they

[14] Entry into many elite groups is determined by possession of a particular sense of style and disposition that Bourdieu (2013) terms 'distinction' and 'taste'.

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can also be learned, particularly when acquired very early through schooling. These forms of distinction have been used by the elite to police the boundaries of their power and privilege and to limit new entrants.

Until recently, what constitutes distinction has been determined by 'Established Elite' families who have drawn their claims for distinction from hereditary sources. These claims of distinction depend largely upon family lineages intertwined with colonial power, and from symbolic capital associated with elite Western educational and cultural institutions (see Bhaba 1984 and Johnson 2013 for their work in other contexts). As largely middle-class institutions such as the military and the bureaucracy continued to expand and consolidate their power through political rule, they at the same time provided patronage and opportunities for rapid upward social mobility for a small group of new families. The families who transitioned into the ranks of the economic 1 per cent through their affiliations with the regime of General Zia ul Haq from the 1980s onwards (and earlier by many accounts) became widely known amongst the elite classes as 'new money', or as 'Navay Raje', meaning literally 'new lords'. Many maintained close ties with the military regime, either through personal kinship ties as the close family of senior (now retired) personnel in the Zia regime or through the maintenance of mutually beneficial business partnerships established with members of the military during General Zia, or later, General Musharraf's military regimes.

Initially, the Established Elites actively attempted to exclude prospective competitors in business and other fields from the informal social forums in which business and politics is largely conducted. The oldest and most prestigious of these families have served as gatekeepers of various elite institutions – private clubs; the school board of Pakistan's most exclusive boys' school, Aitchison College; exclusive parties; and as arbiters of appropriate and inappropriate marriage.[15] By gatekeeping these institutions, a small number of established families were able to ensure that those families not deemed suitable were denied entry to the social forums where decisions were made and resources allocated – regardless of their level of wealth. The application processes for entrance to the nation's most prestigious private clubs, for example, assess character and style, and whether or not they possess qualities that go

[15] Marriages in Pakistan extend well beyond the two individuals entering the marriage and have long been documented as a powerful strategy of political dynasty making (Cheema et al. 2013; Lyon 2012; Lyon and Mughal 2016) and as a strategy to increase resilience in the context of extreme political and economic insecurity (Lyon 2012; Lyon and Mughal 2016).

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into making what is broadly defined as being 'the right sort of person'. For many of the most prestigious clubs, this descriptor includes a vaguely defined liberal world view, including attitudes towards women, a permissive attitude to religious obligation, the wearing of Western suits for men, and habits such as the drinking of alcohol. Many Navay Raje were simply declined admittance (Armytage, forthcoming).

However, as Navay Raje elites have obtained influential roles in business, politics and the military, the Established Elite switched strategies. Being unable to fully exclude these Navay Raje elites, the Established Elite has have sought to integrate select new members into the class through rigorous processes of socialisation in schools and social clubs, designed to both develop, and test, the acquisition of a range of dispositions associated with the Established Elite. In absorbing these new class entrants, however reluctantly, the elite class has been able to curtail the distribution of elite privilege to a highly circumscribed group. In doing so, they have preserved the institutions through which their own power and privilege is acquired, circulated and protected. This method of alliance-making is the embodied form of the process Mushtaq Khan (2010) described as elites incorporating and absorbing other powerful factions as a means to subvert formal government institutions.

Some Navay Raje elites have sought to acquire the dispositions of the Established Elite, and many have successfully done so. However, many others are embracing new forms of distinction from distinctly Pakistani sources: broad political and social alliances including conservative religious groups traditionally eschewed by the Established Elite, the cultivation of provincial support-bases and by embracing ethnically rooted markers of distinction. These new forms of distinction are evident, for instance, in the displays of religiosity performed by Prime Minister Imran Khan in his public appearances and use of online media. The result is a splintering not only of accepted forms of distinction, but a broadening of elite class boundaries to include those from among the Navay Raje. As Navay Raje families acquire greater wealth and social status, the policing of elite class boundaries is undergoing a major shift as Navay Raje elites impose criteria for inclusion that are markedly different from those imposed by earlier elite groups. As these patterns of elite inclusion have been implemented selectively, tensions between Established Elites and socially excluded new elites have emerged, with new entrants seeking to access Pakistan's closely guarded elite social forums and to access the opportunities for economic and political advancement that comes along with inclusion in this social world. Yet, over time, the families with the greatest amounts of economic capital and political influence have become largely one and the

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same, occupying the highest positions in the nation's corporations, political structure, military and bureaucracy. The ruling classes Alavi described are now divided between NavayRaje and Established Elite. This development, rather than negating Alavi's analysis, adapts and provides nuance to his class analysis.

CONCLUSION

The composition of the Pakistani elite has changed over the past seventy years as a result of complex factors including demographic transformation, urbanisation and the pressures brought to bear by the influence of foreign powers. The state has, as Zaidi (2014) and Akhtar (2008) argued, opened up to some degree since the 1970s, providing space for new power brokers. The elite class has also adapted in enabling the entrance of a small group of newcomers to its ranks, slightly increasing the numbers of the elite with access to major political and economic power. But this broadening of state power is both less democratic and less an indication of greater public engagement in the decision-making processes of the state than Zaidi and Akhtar have suggested.

Increased economic growth in Pakistan has not entailed a new-found independence of the business elite from the interference of the state, nor the importance of the state in serving as a primary provider of wealth, opportunity and valuable connections. Instead, the role of the state in providing connections and opportunities has oscillated under different governments and at different points in time. It remains an extremely important source of employment and family wealth generation,[16] but the institutions critical for personal wealth accumulation shift back and forth, from the elected civilian government to the de facto military regime, to the large corporations which are increasingly becoming major sources of employment for Pakistan's small but growing middle class. Through shifting political regimes, the business and political elite (now comprised of both Navay Raje and Established Elite families) have pragmatically allayed themselves with the civilian or military ruler, depending on the balance of power achieved at each moment of time. By doing so, the elite have continued to exert a high level of influence over the state apparatus, and in particular, its economic and regulatory policy. This influence is critical to their ability to accumulate enormous quantities of wealth and to retain their dominant status within Pakistani society.

[16] See, for instance, Ali (2018a, 2018b).

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The specific composition of the elite and the dominant institutions with which it is variously associated will continue to evolve in response to broader social, economic and political changes in both Pakistan and the region. The pre-eminence of social class and the exclusionary nature of elite-held wealth and political influence in Pakistan are, however, likely to retain their salience in the foreseeable future. Unlike the ties that bind ethnic and other sectional communities together, the obligations of the ruling elite classes to one another are – like the ability to retain wealth and political power – much less certain, and require constant reinforcement through social practices, business and political processes that confine the distribution of privilege and power to within the elite class, and to the creation of more permanent intra-elite alliances through marriage. These processes serve to interlink elite families in a mutually beneficial political settlement. Regardless of the government in power, both the state and each of the nation's other elite factions remain central to elite strategies of economic accumulation and political domination. The result is a political economy of power and decision-making that has remained surprisingly stable over the past forty years: New groups have been accommodated, but the structure of the elite dominated state today remains remarkably recognisable as the structure of power Alavi described in 1972.

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8 The Segmented 'Rural Elite'

Agrarian Transformation and Rural Politics in Pakistani Punjab

Muhammad Ali Jan

INTRODUCTION

In his important essay 'Rethinking Pakistan's Political Economy', S. Akbar Zaidi has drawn our attention to the crucial task of updating the work of one of Pakistan's most seminal social scientists, Hamza Alavi (Zaidi 2014). Zaidi rightly points out that despite Alavi's path-breaking contributions to the study of Pakistan, his categorisation of the Pakistani state as a 'military–bureaucratic' oligarchy no longer holds as an accurate depiction of the state's evolution and needs to be reformulated. Not only have new power centres emerged from within state institutions, such as the judiciary, but formerly powerful ones no longer enjoy the kind of influence and prestige that they once possessed, most notably the bureaucracy and the landed elites. As a result, Alavi's thesis requires a major rethinking which takes into account these momentous changes in state institutions.

Two other observations by Zaidi are noteworthy: first, there has been a fracturing of state power in recent decades alongside the increasing informalisation of the economy, with many 'competing contenders for power, all located at different places in the class and state hierarchy' (Zaidi 2014:51); second, the bulk of studies analysing changes in the character of the Pakistani state tend to eschew class in favour of purely institutional explanations such as the competition (and co-operation) between the military, judiciary and the private media. Zaidi concludes by arguing that although the ruling bloc by and large works in the interest of reproducing capital, in the absence of rigorous research there is less certainty as to the component parts of this bloc.

This chapter aims to contribute towards a clearer understanding of Pakistan's changing class relations and their implications for state policy and politics, by

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observing more closely what Alavi identified as the 'most powerful indigenous class in Pakistan': the landlords and how their internal composition and power has changed over time and what it can tell us about Pakistan's changing political economy (Alavi 1998:27). Drawing on secondary literature and the author's own ten months of fieldwork in two districts of Pakistani Punjab during 2013, this chapter argues that greater attention needs to be paid to the internal segmentation *within* the landlord class. While in agreement with the work of those scholars of agrarian change who argue that the dominant rural elite in contemporary Pakistani Punjab are capitalist farmers and not 'feudal'(Hussain 1980; Javid 2011; Zaidi 2015), this chapter nonetheless identifies two broad strata out of which this class has emerged – the upper-caste/aristocratic landlords and the erstwhile 'peasant' castes of smaller landowners.

This chapter argues further how this segmentation has had important implications for the nature of class relations in the countryside, the patterns of accumulation off-farm and the character of local politics and access to state resources. By mapping the diverse paths from which the ruling groups emanate, a more concrete picture of the alliances within the ruling bloc and the type of capitalism existing in contemporary Pakistan can be ascertained. These are important elements in any updating of Pakistan's political economy.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section presents an overview of Alavi's main argument regarding the dominance of the landed elite and its relationship to the state structure. Alavi's argument is critiqued in light of recent agricultural census data which shows a declining influence of large farms in the economy along with the growing significance of non-farm sources of income. Nonetheless the chapter reaffirms the continuing importance of agriculture for economic and non-economic reasons that will be discussed later. The second section draws both upon the political economy literature on agrarian change in Pakistan as well as insights from the author's fieldwork. This section argues for the existence of segmentation within the rural elite along regional and status lines that can have important implications for agrarian change. The final section assesses the extent to which – as a result of these differences – the old landed aristocracy has lost power to a 'rural middle class' emerging from among smaller landowning castes. The chapter largely focuses on the Punjab, Pakistan's largest province, and is therefore not by any means exhaustive. Nonetheless, it offers some tentative conclusions as to the nature of agrarian transformation and its influence on rural politics which may go beyond Punjab but require further research.

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AGRARIAN CHANGE IN PAKISTAN: REINTERPRETING THE FARM AND VILLAGE

In his analysis of social classes in Pakistani society Alavi assigned pride of place to the large landowners, whom he considered the most powerful indigenous class in Pakistani society (Alavi 1976:336). Basing his argument on the 1972 Agricultural Census, he claimed that large landowners (that is, those owning 100 acres or more) representing less than 2 per cent of the rural population control approximately 28 per cent of total land while 76 per cent of total landholdings represented by farmers owning less than 12.5 acres possess no more than 24 per cent of total area. Moreover, 'middle-peasants' (owning between 5 and 12.5 acres) are often forced to supplement their farming through labour on the lands of large landowners and are therefore economically dependent upon them (Alavi 1976:336). This economic subordination often translates into political domination when they are recruited (often forcibly) into political factions dominated by landlords. Thus, for Alavi the landlords 'effective control' over both the peasantry and landless labourers makes them the most dominant class in the Pakistani social formation.

However, a cursory comparison between the agricultural census of 1972 that formed the basis of Alavi's argument and the last round in 2010 does indicate the apparent dilution in the power of the large landowners. Compared to 1972, the total farm area of 100 acres or more has halved from 28 per cent to 14 per cent in 2010 (Census of Agriculture 2010). Even more striking is the fact that total cultivated area by farmers owning 100 acres or more is 6 per cent, which means they are leasing out land more than they are leasing in. Basing his argument on census data from 1960 to 2000, M.H. Khan has also noted the steady decline in the number of farms above 100 acres and an even more dramatic decline in the area cultivated by them (2006:175–176).

In Punjab, where Alavi did his fieldwork, the figures are even lower than the national average, with farm area over 100 acres a mere 7 per cent of total and cultivated area at 5 per cent. The greatest growth has been in the small (between 5 and 12.5 acres) and marginal farmer (up to 5 acres) categories at the expense of medium (25 to 50 acres) and large farmers. This could also be due to the partitioning of land with each generation as a result of inheritance laws with only a minor contribution resulting from the several state-sponsored land reforms. Other reasons are the pressures of creeping urbanisation and the increasing conversion of agricultural land into housing estates, often as joint ventures between developers and owners of agricultural land (Hasan and Raza 2013:61). In other words, though the very large landowners continue

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to be powerful, they are no longer as economically dominant in the rural social formation as they were at the time of Alavi's research (Chaudhry 1982; Mahmood 1990).

Given these changes, Zaidi (2014, 2015) contends that the political power of the landed elite has been blunted to a considerable extent. Political parties, which were once simply vehicles for the interests of different factions of the landed elite, as pointed out by Alavi among others, now represent a wider set of interests and therefore possess far greater bargaining power vis-à-vis large landlords. The process began with the populist alliance of the poor and middle classes under Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), as documented in Jones (2003). As a result, political parties can now often bypass landed elites by providing patronage directly to the mass of the population (Wilder 1999). In addition, new challengers to the power of the landed elite, particularly agricultural traders and agro-processors have emerged as alternative sources of clientelism, leading to the latter's accommodation in factions led by landlords (Akhtar 2008:86–7). All these factors lead Zaidi to declare that the landed class does not hold power beyond its immediate locational foothold in contemporary Pakistan.

Furthermore, given the declining share not only of large landholdings but also of agriculture's overall contribution to national income, Zaidi also notes that Pakistan is 'for the most part, almost all urban' with non-farm sources of income dominating rural areas themselves (2014:52). Coupled with the proliferation of the informal economy and in particular the dominance of the private service sector, the relations of production and exchange have undergone massive transformations that are more important for the new political economy of Pakistan than agriculture.

Though Zaidi's contentions are powerful, a decrease in landholdings may not necessarily mean a concomitant decline in the social and economic power of the large landlords for even as the amount of land under cultivation decreases, sections of the landed elite may nonetheless increase their power by expanding their influence beyond the village in order to reproduce their power. As a number of scholars have shown, many large farmers have utilised their agrarian surpluses to invest off-farm in trade, urban property as well as industry, thereby widening the ambit of their economic power (Kochanek 1983:216; Qadeer 2006:127). Moreover, investment in their children's education has meant that many are now professionals (lawyers, doctors, engineers, teachers, etc.) and also retain a strong presence in the sub-district and district politics. In other words, class formation now takes place across a rural–urban continuum rather

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than simply at the level of the village, with access to state resources being a central plank of social reproduction.

Does this however mean that land has become unimportant to the reproduction of their social and economic power? If landowners now seek resources and investment off-farm and from the state, to what extent can one still call them 'agriculturalists'? At this point it is important to clarify that in economic terms, large landowners have either declined or, equally importantly, have transitioned into becoming capitalists farmers (Alavi 1976; Javid, 2011; Rouse 1983). Moreover, in cases where they have diversified off-farm they can be thought of as conglomerate capital (Chattopadhyay 1969) or provincial capital (Balagopal 1987; Parthasarathy 2013) to highlight their economic reproduction over a wider continuum. At the same time, it is also argued that there are important reasons for keeping the agrarian origins of their power in mind even as they have become capitalist not only in the sense of approaching farming as a business, but also diversifying their portfolios off-farm.

First, in many parts of the country, cultivation continues to be a specialised and highly profitable activity, with capitalist farmers cultivating remunerative cash crops for export or the domestic market. The cultivation of potatoes for export studied by the author during fieldwork in the Okara district of central Punjab constitutes one such example but there are other such zones of dynamism related to sugar cane, mangoes, tobacco, and so on, not to mention dairy farming (Jacoby and Mansuri 2008; Smith, Stockbridge, and Lohano 1999).

It is therefore difficult to fully accept Zaidi's contention that Pakistan is almost entirely urban and that agriculture is in national secular and uniform decline. A 2012 study by the Lahore-based Institute of Public Policy on Punjab's economy used a range of longitudinal data to highlight the continued importance of agriculture for the province as whole (Pasha 2013:75). Compared to the rest of the country, the report estimated that the contribution of agriculture to Punjab's GDP stood at 24 per cent while it was 17 per cent for all of Pakistan; in fact, the share of agricultural value added had increased slightly in the period between 1999 and 2011 owing largely to the up take in cultivation of horticultural crops and livestock (Pasha 2013:75).

Furthermore, even industry in Punjab was mostly small- and medium-scale enterprises with agro-industry being prominent (Pasha 2013:76–77). Finally, retail/trade constitutes a majority of the service sector in the province and also in the country's economy and even in the absence of exact figures, it is safe to assume that a large proportion of this is composed of agro-commercial trade

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located in hundreds of small towns that are the 'transportation and commercial/service hubs for the surrounding countryside' and represent the 'spine of urbanization in Pakistan' (Qadeer 2006: 84). In other words, agriculture continues to be of importance for the economy of the country, particularly of its largest province.

But even where farming constitutes only a part of their total activities, land continues to be of importance due to the political and social power associated with it. As scholars of Pakistani politics have noticed, simply owning land is no longer sufficient to secure voting blocs large enough for electoral wins (Mohmand 2014; Wilder 1999). Yet the 'village factions' of landowners continue to be their core constituencies from which larger local, regional and national alliances are secured. Landowners may extend their political influence by capturing new political and economic networks of capital and the local (or regional) state but their base in the village remains important in providing the necessary leverage to widen their influence. Thus, their political power continues to 'emanate' from their base and the loss of the former can be the undoing of the latter.

Finally, it is important to remember that definitions of 'large', 'medium' and 'small' are highly context-specific, depending not only on the region that one is concerned with, but also the type of technological and agro-ecological conditions. For example, a large farmer in many parts of India cultivates no more than 10 acres (Djurfeldt and Sircar 2017; Lerche 2015; Patnaik 1988), while in certain districts of rural Sindh a household owning close to 400 acres may still be considered a medium-scale farmer. Likewise, a smaller piece of land with good irrigation and access to high quality inputs and credit is able to farm much more intensively and generate higher income than a larger quantity of land in an area which lacks an assured supply of water (M.H. Khan 2006:ch. 3). Many commercial farmers may own smaller parcels of land but the greater intensity of cultivation brings much higher yields and returns to them. Therefore, the peculiarities of region, technology and agro-ecology are all important in delineating rural classes.

The issue of diversity in land-ownership and agro-ecological and technological conditions opens up a more fundamental theoretical and empirical question about who constitutes the landed elite in Pakistan (and Punjab in particular) and how can one identify it. More specifically, whether it is a relatively homogenous entity with a coherent social and historical background, well-defined interests and modes of pursuing those interests or whether in fact there is heterogeneity within it. Moreover, if heterogeneity

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does exist, along what axes can it be identified? Finally, how does the study of diversity within the landed elite help us update Alavi's work and also construct a new political economy for contemporary Pakistan? We discuss the issue of fractions within the same class and the axes along which they can be identified in the next section, drawing both on the literature on South Asia and insights from fieldwork conducted by the author himself.

THE COMPLEXITY OF CLASS: AXES OF SEGMENTATION AND AGRARIAN CHANGE IN PAKISTAN

In a brilliant critique of Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth*, Paul Baran argued that 'historical configurations … must be studied *concretely*' which does not mean jettisoning theory in favour of 'ploddy empiricism' but the interpenetration of theory and concrete observation, of theoretical work which draws its 'lifeblood from historical study' (Baran 1969:65). Unfortunately, too much work on class relations in Pakistan takes the class categories as purely logical abstractions, to be read *a priori* from an already given 'mode of production' without bothering with the vagaries of theoretically reflexive empirical research (I. Ahmad 1981; T.A. Khan 2000; Rahman 2012). This has led to scholars taking a whole range of categories, for example, 'landlords', 'feudal', 'capitalist', 'middle-class', as given, without looking at their historical evolution and interrelationship.

An important question to begin the inquiry is to ask is how classes, rooted in a concrete set of economic relations, take on historically specific forms. Though the possession and non-possession of 'property' (or means of production in the Marxist sense) is crucial in separating different classes, it is important to remember, as Batatu reminds us, that resources differ 'in character and significance in varying circumstances and can therefore be properly understood in specific historical contexts' (Batatu 1979:233). 'Property' may exist as a distinct form of its own or, as Weber has highlighted, as an element within a status group (Weber 1978:305); for example, in Punjab and Sindh families controlling important Sufi shrines are also substantial landlords, thereby combining religious (status) authority with class power (Ansari 1992; Gilmartin 1988). That they have now transformed into capitalist farmers adds another layer of complexity to the class–status dialectic.

Even more crucial for our purposes is the fact that classes contain within them sub-groups with separate interests; that is, though a group may share the same overall relationship to productive property and the process of

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accumulation with another, it may nonetheless have a relatively distinct location with specific political economic requirements and concrete interests that are often contradictory to those of other groups within the same class (Zeitlin and Ratcliff 1988:8). In other words, it is simply inadequate to define a class only in terms of a common relationship to the means of production, in as much as the degree or extent of ownership or control over means of production could be so great as to constitute a qualitative, and not merely quantitative, difference (Batatu 1978:7)

That intra-class differences have as much significance for political economic outcomes as inter-class differences can be ascertained from the important literature on 'intermediate classes' in South Asia (Fox 1984; Harriss-White 2003; Jha 1980): too often the term 'capitalist class' has only been used to identify the large corporate capitalist groups, the 'monopoly' bourgeoisie as it was called in the Indian and Pakistani literature (Alavi 1998; Mitra 1977). However, as has been pointed out by scholars, the smaller, 'non-monopoly' segments such as the merchants of small towns, rich peasants, small-scale manufacturers and retailers are an essential part of the total social reproduction of capital and have their distinct place within the capitalist class (Akhtar 2008; Harriss-White 2003; Javed in this book).

While many from within these groups may graduate to the level of the national, big bourgeoisie, the majority remains at the level of the small towns and countryside and may have interests opposed to the big monopoly fraction. It is now a matter of historical record that these groups were supportive of the measures taken by the Bhutto government to nationalise the properties of the big business houses, whom they accused of monopolising economic activity. This had significant implications for industrial investment as well as the rise of new industrialists, many of whom emerged from within the ranks of the 'intermediate' strata (Jones 2003; Sayeed 1996; Weiss 1991).

Intra-class segmentation may be equally important for agrarian transition and the social groups spearheading it. Burki famously identified a 'rural middle class' distinct from the landed aristocracy who were owners of 25 to 100 acres; owing to land constraints these smaller landowners had to treat it as a scarce resource and concentrate on intensive cultivation by investing heavily in tube well technology and mechanisation (1976:308–311). In other studies, particularly those by the Land Reforms Commission set up by Ayub Khan's government, the landed aristocracy was defined as those owning more than 500 acres of land (Government of West Pakistan 1959:30).

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Likewise, in his survey of different categories of farmers in the Sahiwal district of Punjab, Gotsch argued that the 'landowners' were segmented into those owning very large quantities of land (200–500 acres and beyond) which should properly be termed a 'rural aristocracy' and a middle-class whose lands were enough to capture the economies of scale of tube wells and tractors, but who farmed more intensively and had lesser political influence than the aristocracy (Gotsch 1971:51). This argument was also supported by Haider and Kuhnen who observed that in addition to the size of land, smaller landowners were less frequently absentee landlords and took a more active interest in the supervision and cultivation of their lands (1974:54).

On the other hand, Alavi rejected the argument that smaller landowners constituted a separate class from the large landlords, not only because the dividing line between the two strata was often arbitrarily drawn but because they had virtually the same interests on all matters of public policy such as 'prices of commodities, agricultural taxation and provision of subsidies' and because they shared an identical class position vis-à-vis the vast majority of the rural poor (Alavi 1976:340–341). According to Alavi, there existed a continuum of the same rural elite rather than a distinct segment with conflicting interests, an argument supported by Hussain (1982).

Alavi was correct in describing the often arbitrary manner in which differences between large and small landlords were posited and his contention that these differences in themselves do not constitute distinct class interests is also valid, particularly when both have become capitalist farmers and share the same overall relation to the mass of the poor and landless. However, the more nuanced argument that even while being members of the same class, intra-class differences between large and smaller landowners do exist and can have important ramifications for agrarian change cannot be dismissed entirely.

Two important factors need to be kept in mind when discussing the issue of segmentation within the 'rural elite'; first, aggregate data can conceal within it various regional specificities. In other words, the dominance of the landed elite or even its existence has to be placed within regional contexts. Not only are there immense variations in landownership patterns and agro-ecological conditions in the entire country, there are also differences within the same province. With a population of over 100 million people containing within it the *barani* (rain-fed) tracts of small and fragmented landholdings in the north (with high recruitment into the army) as well as large landlords sometimes own more than 5,000 acres in the fertile south of the province, with various shades in the middle, it is safe to assume that patterns of class formation and articulations of political power in Punjab will be reflected in these variations.

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The author's own fieldwork in two areas of central Punjab with different landownership patterns reflected these variations; in Toba Tek Singh (henceforth TTS) sub-district (part of TTS district) large landowners (owning more than 100 acres, for example) were virtually non-existent. In fact, as Table 8.1 indicates, we found that for the sub-district as a whole, households owning even more than 50 acres were extremely rare, which we found to be true for our sample villages as well. Here the majority of capitalist farmers belonged to the size categories of 25 to 50 acres but in delineating classes, it was the possession of farm implements, tube wells and tractors (not to mention access to credit and labour), and not simply landownership, which was of crucial importance.

Table 8.1 Area and Land Size in TTS

Farm size (acres)	*No. of farms*		*Farm area*		*Cultivated area*		*Average size of farm*	
	Total	*%*	*Total*	*%*	*total*	*%*	*Farm*	*Cultivated*
< 5	59,801	60	130,806	22	125,439	24	3.4	3.3
5 < 12.5	28,791	30	215,383	36	202,437	38	7.7	7.25
12.5 < 25	6,351	7	105,420	26	102,277	20	16.6	16.1
25 < 50	2,859	3	56,437	16	54,546	18	30.4	29.3

Source: Agricultural Department, TTS.

On the other hand, fieldwork in the Depalpur district of Okara highlighted the continuing economic power of large landlords (those in possession of more than 100 acres) as indicated in Table 8.2. In fact, not only did we find that large landowners were prominent in both ownership and area cultivated, but even these figures conceal the upper limits of their ownership; the largest landowners in the area owned and/or cultivated up to 700 acres of land, growing potato, maize and rice in various combinations and rotations. Capitalist farmers existed among both the very large landlords as well as smaller ones within the 50–100-acres category, with respect to ownership of farm equipment, farming for profit accumulation, hiring of wage labour and access to substantial amounts of credit; however, the specific constraints they faced did have important influence on their accumulation strategies.

Second, the distinction between the landed aristocracy and rural 'middle-class' is not simply about ownership of land but also about social status. As Weber has reminded us, social differentiation exists not only along 'economic class' lines but also through 'status' which refers to the ranking of groups along a social estimation of 'honour', gauged through the specific 'style of life' that members of the same status group are expected to have (Weber 1978:305–307).

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In general, status group membership is based not on wealth but on social prestige and lifestyle, particularly for traditionally dominant groups in the form of inherited prestige (such as aristocratic landlords) (Bendix 1966:87). In the case of rural Punjab, status differences historically took the form of caste differentiation between the elite Muslim *ashrāf* and the cultivating peasant castes that worked the land themselves (I. Ali 1987).

Table 8.2 Area and Land Size in Okara

Farm size (acres)	*No. of farms*		*Farm area*		*Cultivated area*		*Average size of farm*	
	Total	*%*	*Total*	*%*	*Total*	*%*	*Farmed*	*Cultivated*
<5	66,425	54	150,147	16	143,349	18	1.8	1.7
5 < 12.5	36,935	30	271,210	30	262,967	32	7.7	7.4
12.5 < 25	14,166	12	226,775	25	217,655	27	16	15.4
25 < 50	3,098	3	99,734	11	92,617	11	32.3	29.9
50 < 100	879	1	55,485	6	52,362	6	63.1	59.6
100 < 150	175	*	21,286	2	16,473	2	121	94.1
150 >	221	*	71,154	8	31,027	4	322	150.4

Source: Agricultural Department, Okara.

In Okara for example, we found that the very large landowners were from a social group considered highest within the status (or caste) hierarchy, that is, the Muslim *ashrāf* (meaning 'elite') such as Syeds (those claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad's family and leading various Sufi shrines), Rajputs (old warrior caste) and the Mughals (claiming descent from the erstwhile Mughal nobility) who were the traditional aristocracy, were once absentee landlords (though now capitalist farmers) and historically enjoyed a hierarchical patron–client relationship with their lower caste dependents (S. Ahmad 1977). The reasons for their continued importance in this area could be traced to the land grants given by the colonial state in order to preserve their inherited dominance under threat from commercial imperatives (I. Ali 1988:73).

On the other hand were members of the 'peasant' castes, who were traditionally self-cultivating family farmers (or 'yeoman' to use the term from British political economy) and were historically considered lower in the caste hierarchy from the rural aristocracy; in Punjab these were composed primarily of what the British termed 'agricultural tribes' primarily the Jatts,

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Arains, Kumbohs, Sainis and Gujjars, as well as a few other smaller groups (Chaudhuri2008:362). These *biraderi*s (kinship groups) were numerically more dominant than the aristocrats and had a self-identity different from the latter. They took pride in being 'self-cultivating proprietors who toiled in the fields', underpinned by what Bhattacharya calls the 'ideology of *khudkasht*' (self-cultivation) (1983:122).

Within TTS, owing to the historical pattern of land grants by the colonial government (78.3 per cent of total grants were given to members of 'peasant' groups from the eastern districts of Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur and, to a lesser extent, Lahore [I. Ali, 1988:21]), these kinship groups were overwhelmingly dominant. The largest 'tribe' settled in area were the Arain, a traditional Muslim 'market gardening' caste of small landholders who were considered to be, after the Jatts, the 'finest cultivators' by British ethnography (Ibbeston 1916:193–199).

Capitalist farmers in this area have emerged from within the ranks of these erstwhile 'peasant castes', with whom they share ties of *biraderi* (kinship). As Gilmartin has noted, *biraderi* relations are strongest among 'peasant castes' that despite the economic differences between members are organised around an ideology of 'corporate solidarity' based on mutual obligations and reciprocity along 'horizontal' lines (that is, between social equals) (1994:3–4). They are therefore qualitatively different from hierarchical patron–client relations between the landed aristocracy and their lower caste *kammi* (service) dependents.

During our fieldwork we found that groups belonging to these 'peasant' castes in both TTS and Okara strongly identified themselves as distinct from the large landlords, whom they referred to as *bade zamindar*s (big landowners) and *jagirdar*s ('feudal'/estate owners) but also from the mass of landless labourers from *mussali* (Dalit converts to Islam) castes. Their 'middle-class' self-identity was crucial not only in explaining their relationship to farming but also as the means through which they seek to access the state, using both clientelism and populist mobilisation to demand resources and organising under their leadership small and poor peasants (Sayeed, 1996:272), with whom they share ties of kinship.

To what extent can these differences in agrarian change and the social groups leading it explain the changing dynamics of Pakistan's political economy, in particular, the articulation of power at the village level, the deepening of electoral competition and the increasing incoherence of Alavi's overdeveloped state? The final section provides some tentative answers to these questions.

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AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATIONS AND CHANGING RURAL POLITICS IN PUNJAB

In an important work on state and class relations in Pakistani Punjab, Javid (2011:358) has argued that the colonial state apparatus rested on support from the province's landed elite. Even in the postcolonial period, as the overdeveloped state became increasingly vulnerable to pressures from social groups, legitimacy was sought mainly by tapping into the networks of powerful landlords and co-opting them into the state structure, often through engineered elections which provided the state with a veneer of legitimacy while reproducing the power of the landed elite. This led to a long-term relationship of 'mutual structural dependence' between the two, a relationship which endures even during 'democratic interludes'.

Likewise, Akhtar has posited that despite numerous changes in the social formation, the landed class has managed to entrench its power overtime, in the process also reproducing the hegemony of the state and the dominant social order (2008: ch. 4). Their power originates in the colonial state which established them as the 'organic link' between the state and the mass of the 'subordinate classes' and continues in a changed form to this day. Despite the rise of new social groups, in particular the urban, small town businessmen emerging as alternative patrons to the landed elite, the former have never really challenged the hegemony of the landed elite and instead seek accommodation within factions headed by landlords, thereby reproducing the power of the overdeveloped state and its social order.

What neither Javid nor Akhtar pays attention to is how the need for legitimacy may force the state to seek alliances outside the dominant landed elites and in the process create openings for new social groups, which may have the unintended consequence of dampening the power of both the landed elite and the coherence of the overdeveloped state. As Jones demonstrated in his book on the rise of the PPP in Punjab, it was the authoritarian regime of Ayub Khan that paradoxically sought to break the monopoly of social power of the landed aristocracy (whom he terms the 'rural notables') by explicitly patronising the 'rural middle class' (2003:35). Middle landowners (25 to 100 acres) benefitted immensely from the green revolution package of irrigation and high yield variety seed and received subsidised credit from the Agricultural Development Bank; according to the data collected by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) in 1968, some 70 per cent of total tube wells were found on farmers in the land size categories of 25 to 100 acres (Ghaffar et al. 1968:27) leading to an increase in economic mobility for them.

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More importantly, the regime sought to convert this economic mobility into political power through the election of Basic Democrats (BD) from small constituencies as a result of which the 'pocket boroughs' of the landed aristocracy were dissolved and middle landowners emerged for the first time as a force within the countryside. Of the total Basic Democrats elected in 1959, close to 55 per cent belonged to 'middle landholder' and 'rich peasant' categories with the landed aristocracy largely absent, numbers which were also reflected in the 1962 Assembly elections (Ashford 1967:128).

By the time of the 1965 elections a rapprochement had taken place between Ayub's regime and the landed aristocracy but not before the 'rural middle class' emerged for the first time as relatively independent of the influence of the landed aristocracy, who were henceforth forced to bargain with the former 'in political matters … resulting in a widening of the arena from which political influence was mobilized and negotiated' (Jones 2003:35) even as the form of political behaviour, that is, vertical integration into competing political factions remained the same. Not only this, it gave them for the first time relatively independent access to resources and an ability to interface with local bureaucracy which was crucial in directing goods and services to their factions and entrenching their power in the constituencies.

Qadeer believes that the rise of the 'rural middle class' was sustained well beyond the Ayub Khan era; through successive rural development programmes that created opportunities for upward mobility among members who were neither from traditional landlord families nor patriarchs of regionally dominant *biraderi*s (2006:143). By establishing access to commissioners, agricultural and irrigation officials, they were able to enrich themselves and/or direct resources towards members of their own factions, *biraderi*s and villages. This brought in roads, hospitals and other facilities but through a factional and clientelistic rather than a programmatic manner. Nonetheless, the ability to intercede on behalf one's own group and direct goods and services towards them has now become the hallmark of village politics in general across the province (Wilder 1999).

To what extent can these conclusions be generalised? Fine-grained ethnographic studies of the changing rural power structure are few and far between. An exception is Nicholas Martin's recently published manuscript on land, kinship and political factions in the Sargodha district of Punjab. Focusing on a village he calls Bek Sagrana, Martin describes the rise of a 'middle' landowning clan, the Gondal Jatts, bound together by close cousin marriages. The village was once dominated by a small, aristocratic clan of

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absentee landlords from the Makhdoom Syed caste. Over time, however, owing largely to their absentee status and their aloofness from the rough and tumble of village politics, the power of the Makhdooms was diluted and ultimately displaced by the 'far less wealthy but forceful and numerous' Gondal Jatts (Martin 2016:27). Today, political competition in the village exists between different factions of the Gondal Jatts who use a variety of means to outmanoeuvre each other and also assert dominance over the mass of landless labouring households.

My own fieldwork in the two districts of Punjab also supports Martin's study but with some regional specificities. In TTS, it is largely members of former 'peasant castes', most notably the Arain *biraderi*, that dominate the local economy and politics. Capitalist farmers have emerged from these strata and they have also diversified into local agro-commercial trade and processing, setting up flour and textile mills, while retaining their base in the village not just for economic reasons but for maintaining factional support. Intense competition exists at the village level between contending factions that are also represented by members of these numerically dominant peasant 'castes', not only the Arain but other small landowners such as Jatts and Dogars, who share kinship ties with poor peasants in the village.

On the other hand, members of the upper-caste landed aristocracy such as Syeds and Rajputs have managed to remain important in the factional politics of Depalpur, Okara but bargain intensively with smaller (but numerically dominant) landowners (from Wattu, Arain, Jatt and other *biraderi*s) whose control over village factions is increasingly independent of the former. Moreover, with the end of share-cropping and the development of a casual labour market for agricultural labour, the landless labouring castes (most notably the *mussali*) are no longer as economically dependent on the large landlords as they were in the past, which has led to a loosening of traditional hierarchical ties. This means that the lower castes are no longer captured vote banks of the landed aristocracy and shift alliances depending on the situation. In other words, the hegemonic power of the large landlords, despite their economic accumulation, is heavily circumscribed.

In conclusion, can these studies point to a general trend of the decline in the large landed elite and the rise of a rural middle class? What other aspects of the nature and direction of agrarian change are necessary for building a more coherent picture of Pakistan's contemporary political economy and update the work of Alavi? The chapter has based itself on literature and fieldwork largely on the Punjab and is by no means authoritative; nonetheless, a few tentative conclusions may be reached and can serve as guides to future research.

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First, the size of landholdings has definitely declined according to the aggregate data but needs to be disaggregated in regionally specific contexts; it may not always mean a concomitant decline in the power of large landowners, not only because an active lease market may allow them to cultivate more than they own but also because of the importance of off-farm investment for the reproduction of economic power.

Moreover, the status or caste backgrounds of landholders adds another layer of complexity with implications for rural politics and economics; for example, given that land ceilings do not effectively exist, large landholdings may be consolidating in a region according to the data but may have been recently purchased by groups that were earlier small landowners, traders, and so on, and not from the *ashrāf* landed aristocracy. In other words, the continuity of large farms may conceal a profound change in the ownership of property with consequences for political economy. Likewise, a decline in large landholdings and an increase in medium and small holders may mean more than simply an economic change insofar as it can transform social relations between different groups with consequences for state–society relations. More ethnographic studies of specific areas are needed to build a more coherent picture of agrarian change and its impact on political economic outcomes.

Second, it is no longer possible for those members of the landed aristocracy still relevant in politics to rely on their wealth and status to garner votes (Wilder 1999:177). Instead, as Mohmand highlights in her study of voter behaviour in Punjab, they have had to 'cater to the demands from their constituents for private and club goods in exchange for their votes' (2014:14) and must be seen to be delivering on those promises. In Punjab's competitive politics it is now clientelism and not inherited wealth which is the true marker of success. Kinship articulates in all kinds of complex ways with 'service delivery', clientelism and party identification, all of which require the attention of scholars.

Third, while in agreement with Akhtar (2018:65–66) that new patrons in the form of urban traders and transporters have emerged as alternatives to landowners, the chapter disagrees with the overall conclusions. First, in many cases traders and transporters may simply be landowners diversifying off-farm and not exactly new groups; for example, in Okara we did discover that the biggest agro-trading firms were owned by formerly 'lower' caste non-landed biraderis but in TTS it was landowners that were dominant in the market. Second, and more importantly, though Akhtar pays attention to the rise of urban traders as alternative patrons to landlords, the argument made in this chapter is that a more profound change at the local level may be taking place

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with the dilution of large landlord power and the increasing prominence of a 'rural middle class'. In other words, new patrons different from the landed elite may now exist even at the village level with implications for rural politics and economic change that need to be fleshed out further.

This brings us to the final conclusion of the chapter, that the continued hegemony of the overdeveloped state and the reproduction of the social order claimed by Akhtar may in fact be overstated. With the rise to dominance of new social groups even in the countryside, the loosening of traditional patronage ties between landlords and the poor peasantry/landless labourers, as well as the increasing competition between different factions for resources and political power, neither the relationship of structural dependence between landlords and the authoritarian state claimed by Javid (2011) nor the coherence of Alavi's overdeveloped state claimed by Akhtar may be un-problematically reproduced, a fact rightly noted by Zaidi (2014:52).

The state is now increasingly pulled in different directions by the often contradictory demands of various social groups and finds it difficult to retain its 'relative autonomy' (just as the landed aristocracy cannot retain its power locally without extensive bargaining with other social groups). This has repercussions not only for the coherence of policy, but more fundamentally for the coherence of the state itself. The demand for patronage in rural areas (like in cities) often outstrips the state's capacity to supply it, and this creates new fissures not only among social groups but within the structures of the state itself. Thus, even in the absence of 'dramatic' challenges to the state structure in the form of large-scale social movements or revolutionary seizures, a slow but profound process of transformation has indeed taken place which may not always result in better outcomes for the mass of the rural (and urban) poor.

Before concluding it is important to note that the chapter has primarily focused on highlighting differences between two key social groups *within* the agrarian social order. This does not however mean that those asserting power *over* the Punjabi countryside can simply be reduced to these two segments. Nor does it imply that understanding the complexities of agrarian transformation requires that we solely focus attention on classes *internal* to the villages. As we have alluded to at the start of the paper and as a long tradition of scholarship has persuasively established, the agrarian order is inextricably linked with different forms of capital and the state in all kinds of complex ways that are necessary for understanding the trajectories of change (Djurfeldt and Sircar 2017; Shanin 1971). One key social group already mentioned is the mercantile class which has played a critical role in the commercialisation of agriculture

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since the colonial period (Mishra 1982). It has not only invested surpluses from grain and cash crop trade into agro-industry but has also bought and leased-in land for cultivation in more recent years (Jan 2017).

But the state bureaucracy has also been an integral part in Punjabi agriculture for more than a century; this included the revenue officials who created the legal property rights regime and the irrigation bureaucracy that constructed one of the largest canal systems in the world in the colonial period (Gilmartin 2015). It also included grants to army officers both in recognition for services rendered to the state as well as for horse breeding to meet the army's needs (I. Ali 1988). As agriculture became increasingly commercialised in the postcolonial post-green revolution period, it also came to include a number of new departments, most notably the food procurement bureaucracy as well as the agricultural extension officials providing new seed, fertilisers and machinery, as well as advising farmers on methods of optimal farming methods. Unfortunately, compared to its Indian counterpart, the agrarian bureaucracy of the Pakistani Punjab has seen a considerable decline in both its capacity as well as legitimacy in all departments, with the irrigation and food bureaucracies widely viewed as riven with corruption and rent-seeking (S.M. Ali 2015:81; Sims 1988) and the extension services as largely ineffective and redundant (Davidson and Ahmad 2002).

As the technical complexity of farming increases alongside declining state capacity, the vacuum has been filled not only by the small- and medium-scale agricultural trading capital highlighted earlier, but also by transnational and local corporate capital, with seed, fertilisers and machinery increasingly being provided from these sources. The private extension system is quickly outstripping the state system but has a bias towards larger and wealthier farmers (Davidson and Ahmad, 2002). Further upstream, though the seed market is relatively more competitive, there is increasing evidence of cartelisation in the fertiliser industry where a handful of conglomerates, namely Engro, Fauji Fertilizer (run by the Pakistan military's welfare organisation for retired officers, the Fauji Foundation), Pak Arab and Pak American dominate the market (Competition Commission of Pakistan 2013). A final element that has recently been added to the mix is contract farming; this involves arrangements between farmers and transnational corporate giants such as PepsiCo where the latter control the seed, timing and quantity of produce in exchange for a guaranteed market (*Dawn* 2009).

Evidently all these crucial changes will be important in shaping the contours of the countryside, the composition of new social groups and the political

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conflicts not only within agriculture but also between farmers, the state and private capital. These complex and contradictory trajectories of agrarian transformation need to be studied more deeply, a momentous task towards which this chapter is a very modest attempt.

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AGRARIAN CHANGE IN PAKISTAN

The chapter has attempted a brief engagement with Alavi's seminal contributions to the study of state and society in Pakistan (particularly Punjab) and Zaidi's call to update the work in light of new realities. Specifically, it has paid attention to the patterns of agrarian change and their implications for rural politics. Drawing on secondary literature as well as fieldwork in Pakistani Punjab, it has argued for a more regionally grounded political economy which maps the changing contours of the agrarian structure, specifically the decline in the power of the old aristocracy and the prominence of the 'rural middle class', its impact on rural politics and its engagement with the Alavian overdeveloped state.

Not only does the chapter highlight the importance of economic differences in delineating segments of the rural elite, but argues for attention to be paid to the social origins of different landowners, especially their caste backgrounds which have been important not only in how farming has evolved, but also how rural politics has transformed. It argues that smaller landowners (or those from formerly smaller landholding social groups) have become increasingly prominent in Punjab's rural social formation and, coupled with the increasingly mobility of the landless, has meant that landlords from aristocratic backgrounds find it difficult to survive (where they indeed survive) without extensive bargaining with these social groups.

A 'democratization of patronage politics' has taken place with service delivery being the marker of political success in rural areas (Wilder 1999:199). While this may mean that new openings are created for social groups to assert themselves and demand resources from the state, it coexists with the decreasing ability and capacity of the state to deliver on many of these promises, leading to increased factionalism and a lack of coherence in policy as well as the state structure. It may also coexist with the newly dominant rural social groups asserting their power over the landless and poor even more forcefully than the old elite, leading to increased violence. These contradictory impulses and pulls mean that the old Alavian nexus of the 'military–bureaucratic oligarchy' and its

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social base among the landed elite does not enjoy the kind of hegemony it once did. Whether provincial patterns of dominance are emerging to replace the old oligarchy (such as the PML-N in Punjab and PPP in Sindh) remains an open question and one which requires research outside the scope of this chapter.

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9 Ascending the Power Structure

Bazaar Traders in Urban Punjab

Umair Javed

Recent scholarship on Pakistan's political economy is in broad agreement about the need to revise extant formulations. The principal starting point for this revision is Hamza Alavi's (1972) notion of a powerful, 'overdeveloped' state apparatus bequeathed by colonialism, controlled by the powerful civil–military bureaucracy and supported by an entrenched landed elite.

The Alavian formulation, as Akhtar (2008) and Zaidi (2014, 2015) argue, does not hold true for twenty-first-century Pakistan in its original shape. Transformations such as deepening capitalism, increased urbanisation, and gradual, albeit often curtailed, democratisation during the last four decades have changed the terms of state–society engagement and, consequently, the nature of the political sphere itself. As a result, there is a growing realisation among authors contributing to this volume that the unilateral power of a cohesive and autonomous Pakistani state, as envisioned in both Alavi's writings and subsequent work that emerged in its long shadow, no longer holds true. In its stead has emerged a state internally fragmented along the civil–military axis, and consisting of new institutional pockets of authority in the form of parliament and the judiciary, both of which place sporadic checks on the military's control of the political sphere.

Alongside these changes internal to the formal state apparatus, the nature of authority and power has also transformed due to urbanisation and the opening up of spaces for political participation and contestation. In particular, the old landed elite, which according to Alavi was responsible for incorporating subaltern groups within the immediate postcolonial power dispensation, has seen its political monopoly diffused among a variety of propertied classes. In turn, it is these new classes that are now central to the reproduction of an unequal, or as Akhtar (2008:14) calls it, an 'oligarchic', structure of power in contemporary Pakistan.

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The socialisation of power within an expanded dominant coalition, and the exercise of authority by ascendant societal fractions is the focus of this chapter. Specifically, this chapter brings attention to the political and social ascendancy of one particular group – the bazaar traders – in Pakistan's largest province, Punjab.

Before proceeding further, the particularities of Pakistan's capitalist transformation since Alavi's original theorisation, and the emergence and expansion of multiple classes, demands a clear delineation of the societal fraction that lies at the centre of this study. A bazaar trader, or *tajir* in the Urdu language, is a qualitatively different actor compared to a number of others working in commerce and trade. As per classifications established in countries such as Iran (Keshavarzian 2007), traders engage in commercial activity (retail-wholesale of goods) in designated marketplaces, commonly known as bazaars.

Across much of materialist analyses through history, bazaar traders have often been categorised as part of a broader middle-class formation. In particular, given their position with regard to the overall relations of production, they stood out awkwardly in older Marxist accounts of class that saw capital and labour as the only two social groups occupying structural positions (Wright 1985).

Due to an overwhelming focus on locating class in the realm of production, the petit bourgeoisie – the term often used by Marxist analysis to describe traders, merchants and other businessmen associated with commerce – were considered anomalous, and it was predicted that they would be subsumed into the two polar classes with the gradual advance of capitalism. Their predicament (and reality) was summed up in their condition as possessors of some amount of capital, but not enough to support their livelihoods without engaging in labour.

During the 1970s, debates over the middle class, and specifically the persisting and, in fact, growing presence of small-scale capitalists, traders and other similar actors, under capitalism led a series of scholars, most notably Michal Kalecki (1972), to come up with the concept of 'intermediate' regimes and intermediate classes. These regimes of capital accumulation were characterised by an incomplete transition to monopoly capitalism, and thus they experienced the persistence of classes that occupied 'contradictory' class locations (Wright 1985:333). Because the focus was on tracing classes in the structure of production, the persistence of these intermediate classes could only be explained by the absence of truly capitalistic social relations.

The sparse literature on commercial actors in Pakistan follows some antecedents set by both earlier Marxist formulations and Kalecki's theorisation of the intermediate classes, but thankfully moves away from its teleological ethos. Akhtar (2008), for example, places greater emphasis on the complexity

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and uniqueness of Pakistan's socio-economic transformation, and classifies bazaar traders as part of a larger intermediate class formation, steeped in a continuously expanding informal sector. Similarly, earlier works by Sayeed (1995) and Cheema (2003) explain the emergence of an intermediate class of traders and small manufacturers as permanent fixtures of an urbanisation process built on agrarian commercialisation, increase in migration and the introduction of remittance capital that has been so central to the country's consumption economy since the 1970s.

In present-day Pakistan, commercial actors who can be distinctly classified as traders generally post turnovers over the taxable threshold of 50,000 dollars per annum, generate high amounts of capital surplus and employ labour over and above that drawn from within the family. Their scale of operation differentiates them from self-employed craftsmen and petty producers (*mistri*), street vendors (*thailay-walay*) and small shopkeepers (*dukandār*), and places them in the upper-most quintile of the income distribution. Calculations using labour force survey data from 2014 show that there are close to 285,000 bazaar traders falling above this threshold, with an estimated 165,000 operating in the province of Punjab alone (Labour Force Survey 2014).

This chapter's purposeful focus on the dynamics of traders in Punjab (over other federating units) is a function of both the bazaar's centrality to the provincial economy, and the province's historical and contemporary salience in the country's overall political economy dynamics. As the most populous province, Punjab holds the largest number of seats in the national legislature.[1] Winning power at the federal level in Pakistan is unlikely without winning power in the Punjab. Furthermore, in the context of rapid urbanisation, the province's urban propertied groups – of which bazaar traders are an important component – continue to play a significant role in national and local politics, similar to the well-documented historical role played by its old landed elite.[2]

[1] Punjab holds 148 out of 272 constituencies in the lower house of parliament, the National Assembly.

[2] The province was also the stronghold the Pakistan Muslim League–Nawaz (PML-N), led by three-time Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif who won the 2013 general election. The party drew most of its leadership from within the rural and urban propertied classes, and had a strong base of support in the province's towns and cities. There is no work on how capitalists (both manufacturers and traders) from other provinces interact with the political sphere. However, the prevalence of other fault lines (ethnicity, in particular) suggests that political economy dynamics may differ outside Punjab.

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Since the late 1970s, traders in Punjab and elsewhere have expanded their involvement in urban politics and through this their influence on matters of governance and policy administration. Their influence is, in part, rooted in the structural trajectory of domestic capitalism itself. Over the past three decades, Pakistan's neoliberalising economy has been characterised by stagnant industrialisation and rapid growth in the services sector, which now accounts for 54 per cent of total gross domestic product (GDP), and employs approximately 40 per cent of the working population (State Bank of Pakistan 2015:7, 81). By way of comparison, employment in the manufacturing sector has hovered around the 20 per cent mark over the same period. Therefore, in terms of labour absorption from rural areas – a key characteristic in urbanisation – the services sector has taken the lead over these past three decades.

The services sector as a whole is bifurcated into different sub-sectors. The largest among these is the bazaar sub-sector, that is, retail and wholesale trade, which commands substantial space in the economy of Pakistan. It currently contributes 18.4 per cent of total GDP, and employs approximately 18 per cent of the total labour force, and 41 per cent of the working population in towns and cities (Labour Force Survey 2014). While overall economic growth has averaged a paltry 3.5 per cent per annum since 2007, the bazaar sector has grown by nearly 6 per cent per annum in real terms during the same time period. Its estimated value is now approximately 42 billion dollars, with annual sales (consumption) reaching 155 billion dollars through 1.6 million establishments (Ministry of Commerce 2013).

A central facet of the bazaar is its role in the growth and consolidation of the informal economy.[3] According to most recent figures, 91 per cent (or 240 billion dollars) of the total economy is functioning without registration and government oversight (Akhtar 2011). In terms of employment, 65 per cent of the total urban labour force is informally contracted. That means approximately 11.6 million individuals are working beyond the ambit of social protection and minimum wage laws and without any recourse to social security and employment benefits (Labour Force Survey 2014).

[3] 'The informal sector consists of economic units that produce goods and services legally, but engage in operations that are not registered or regulated by fiscal, labor, health, and tax laws. Informal workers include the self-employed, who own and run a business in the informal sector with few or no employees, as well as casual labor, who work through subcontractors either for an informal or a formal sector enterprise. The primary difference between informal and formal workers is that the latter are protected and regulated under state law while the former are not' (Portes et al. 1989).

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A significant portion of this informal economic activity and employment is found in bazaars across the country. An estimated 94 per cent of the enterprises in retail-wholesale trade operate without government registration or formal regulation (Labour Force Survey, 2014). Similarly, 90 per cent of the sector's workforce, constituted by 4.2 million individuals, is informally employed, mostly through verbal contracts. Recent trends show that while formal distribution channels outside of bazaars (such as shopping malls and hypermarkets) have opened up, these constitute less than 5 per cent of total commerce. In fact, formalisation and corporatisation within trading is still in its infancy, as new businesses prefer to maximise autonomy and profit by operating as unregistered entities (Williams and Shahid 2016).

The growing surpluses generated through the informal economy as a whole, and the bazaar sub-sector in particular, have grown in tandem with the political salience of its entrepreneurs. After winning the 2013 general election, the re-elected, now former, Chief Minister of Punjab, Shahbaz Sharif, held one of his first post-victory meetings with representatives of various bazaar associations. During the course of this meeting, he declared that 'bazaar traders formed the backbone of this country' and 'resolution of their problems is the responsibility of this and every subsequent government' (*The Nation* 2013:14). While his party, the Pakistan Muslim League–Nawaz (PML-N), has been widely acknowledged for its deep ties with the bazaar community, all main opposition parties, including those rhetorically against the status-quo, also utilise bazaar traders as electoral candidates in urban areas, and rely on their networks for financing and political support.

Despite this prominence, the role of bazaar traders in Punjab's, or for that matter Pakistan's, political economy remains considerably understudied. Barring Noaman Baig's (2015) excellent account of piety and cultural production in Karachi's marketplaces, there is little work on how actors associated with the bazaar economy have historically come to attain positions of privilege in contemporary urban hierarchies, or how these positions are reproduced through everyday relations. This is in contrast to neighbouring India, where a sizable literature on the 'intermediate classes' has documented the political economy dynamics of traders, merchants and other entrepreneurs operating in informal processes of production and exchange (Raj 1973; McCartney and Harriss-White 2000; Harriss-White 2003). As Pakistan undergoes a prolonged phase of procedural democratisation, wherein participatory institutions remain characterised by persistent elite capture, the salience of appreciating similar underlying political economy dynamics has grown manifold.

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To address the gap in the literature, this chapter makes two empirical contributions. First, this chapter historicises the political entrenchment of bazaar traders, tracing their integral role in the 1977 mobilisation against the Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) populist government under Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Subsequently, it explains how General Zia ul Haq's martial law regime after 1977 allowed the traders further incorporation into a ruling dispensation through selective disbursement of state patronage. Second, this chapter provides a broad overview of the strategies through which bazaar traders reproduce their contemporary social status. These include frequent associational action and the cultivation of dense patronage networks with state functionaries, political party elites, religious organisations and the urban poor.

ASCENDING THE POWER STRUCTURE: 1977–1988

The Bazaar and the Anti-Bhutto Movement

The bazaar's first notable foray into the political realm took place during the late 1970s in opposition to the populist government of Z.A. Bhutto. The sector's initial appraisal of the Bhutto government was relatively positive. Trader organisations had supported the populist mobilisation of the late 1960s against Ayub Khan, and saw the PPP's expansive nationalisation programme as conducive for an opening up of new avenues for small- and medium-size mercantile capitalists (Zaidi 2015:785).

However, by 1976 dissent in urban areas began to grow after the government nationalised sectors dominated by small manufacturers and bazaar entrepreneurs. In the fourth and final wave of takeovers, 2,752 flour mills, cotton ginning mills and rice husking facilities were nationalised. The government also issued an ordinance that empowered a state corporation, the Trading Corporation of Pakistan, to take over all trading of lucrative commodities such as sugar, cotton and rice (Waseem 1994:267). By taking over agro-processing and manufacturing as well as sugar, cotton and rice trading, the government had encroached upon both the supply chain as well as a major source of profit in the wholesale economy. According to one official estimate, in 1975, trading in agricultural commodities constituted nearly 35 per cent of the total revenue base of the wholesale sector in the Punjab (Government of Pakistan 1981). One major outcome was that while the government had stepped in on the pretext of curtailing profiteering, hoarding and black market activity, it actually incorporated the nationalised sectors into localised patronage networks. In the trading sector, for example, PPP loyalists and influential

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supporters were rewarded with the authority to distribute licenses on behalf of the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (Sayeed 1995; Cheema 2003).

In this context, an explicit point of contention in the 1977 election was the management of the economy. Even though the combined opposition, labelled the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), was led by religious parties, it was largely financed and backed by large segments of Punjab's business community (Kochanek 1983:142). Thus while its electoral rhetoric was explicitly religious and talked about imposing an Islamic system of government, it also clearly articulated the promise of privatising all nationalised units and trading sectors as part of its manifesto (*Nawa-i-Waqt* 1977a:2).

Following two months of acrimonious campaigning, voters went to the polls on 7 March 1977 to elect representatives to the National Assembly for only the second time in thirty years. As results came in by the morning of the 8th, it became clear that the PPP had swept seats in every province, except the NWFP (now Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa). In total, it won 155 out of 200 seats, with the PNA winning only 36. The wide margin of the PNA's defeat led to vociferous accusations of rigging and a wholesale rejection of the election results. The outcry against electoral malpractice was not baseless. Apart from pre-poll rigging through the state machinery, poll day rigging in certain constituencies took the shape of ballot stuffing, voter intimidation and, in some cases, the kidnapping of counting officers. International observers from both *The Guardian* (1977:12) and *The Times* (1977:19) declared that the polls were marred by a host of dubious practices.

Stung by the scale of defeat, and what it perceived as the brazen attitude of the government towards its allegations of rigging, the PNA decided to put up a fight. On 11 March 1977 the opposition alliance took to the streets demanding an end to Bhutto's government and a full re-polling on all seats. From a geographic point of view, the opposition movement was firmly anchored in the province of Punjab. While the PNA's electoral alliance had gained support of parties based in all four provinces, it was in the Punjab, and in particular, urban Punjab, where it managed the greatest degree of street mobilisation. Between March and July, there were upwards of 700 anti-Bhutto demonstrations, involving hundreds of thousands of participants, in towns and cities of the province (Government of Pakistan 1978).

Underpinning the PNA's successful mobilisation was the joint mobilisation of two ascendant groups on the urban landscape: bazaar traders and religious activists. As Mumtaz Ahmed (1990) highlights, there was a degree of overlap between the local leadership of religious parties and various bazaar elites in

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urban Punjab. Prominent examples included the leadership of the Jamiat-Ulema-Pakistan (JUP) in the cities of Multan, Chishtian, Shahdadpur, Kabirwala and Sahiwal, which were largely drawn from major cotton yarn and agricultural produce traders (M. Ahmed 1990:210).

The integral role of bazaar traders and religious activists is further confirmed through research on Punjab's capital, Lahore. The city's bazaar community formally joined the movement in a Friday prayer strike-and-protest held on 25 March 1977. The time and day was chosen strategically as it allowed traders to bypass government curfew on the pretext of offering prayers. The main site for the protest was Makki *masjid* (mosque) in Anarkali bazaar, located just outside the historical walled city. The mosque itself was controlled by a religious organisation affiliated with the JUP. Worshippers from the marketplace gathered around midday to pray, after which the bazaar association's leaders took over the mosque's loudspeaker system and asked those gathered to join them for a demonstration against Bhutto's tyranny. By the time the procession walked up to the end of Mall Road, the city's main commercial district, it had attracted nearly 3,000 participants (*Nawa-i-Waqt* 1977b:1).

Between 25 March and 30 June, there were twenty-one recorded instances of bazaar-led shutter-down strikes and demonstrations in Lahore alone. Many of these were held on either Fridays or Saturdays, and each attracted upwards of 500 people. These took place in addition to protests organised by other groups, such as political parties, lawyers, transporters and student groups affiliated with the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), in which bazaar traders were involved as participants.[4]

At the apex level, coordination for protests and strikes was managed through the Lahore-based All Pakistan Anjuman-i-Tajiran (All Pakistan Association of Traders, APAT), an apex organisation that had been formed in April 1976. The founding members were all prominent leaders of Lahore's trading community. These included Khwaja Sadiq and Haji Ashraf Bhatti of Anarkali market, Haji Inam Elahi of the Mall Road traders' association, Sheikh Nadeem Riaz of Beadon road and Haji Maqsood Ahmed Butt of Shah Alam Market. The APAT leadership felt that the renewed mandate awarded to the government in the 1977 election would embolden it to further nationalisation, including the lucrative trade in cotton yarn. Thus their support to the PNA was in large

[4] Review of *Nawa-i-Waqt* and *Daily Dawn* copies between March and July 1977. Bazaar-led protests were classified as such when convenors were identified as market association heads. All other protests were classified separately.

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parts motivated by their fear of losing out on another major source of profits from the bazaar economy.

During the four months between March and July, clashes between PNA activists and the combined strength of various security forces and PPP supporters led to 350 people being killed and nearly 8,000 arrested. By the beginning of July 1977, violence, fatigue and months of instability created the conditions for a series of potentially fruitful talks between the government and the imprisoned PNA leadership. The initial indication was a selective re-poll on particular seats, though some accounts suggest Bhutto was by then willing to cancel the results and hold fresh elections (Waseem 1994:320). However, on the 5th of July, as deadlock over the exact terms of the agreement threatened another bout of street confrontations, the military under General Zia ul Haq marched in, arrested Bhutto and took control of the state. While this signalled a rather abrupt end to the PNA movement, the alliances generated during its mobilisation and the discourse underscoring its politics both reverberated strongly into the next decade.

Patronage and Political Incorporation under Zia

The bazaar's unprecedented mobilisation against Bhutto elevated its status as an ally for the incoming martial law regime. After Bhutto's execution in 1979 and the wholesale repression of independent labour and student unions, Zia's regime sought to limit opposition through a variety of other political interventions. On 24 and 26 September 1979, it held local government elections on non-party basis to consolidate support at the sub national level. The process through which these were carried out, as well as their results, is instructive. Under Martial Law Regulation (MLR) 61, candidates with past PPP associations were disqualified on a number of charges. The few PPP candidates who managed to contest were disqualified after they had won. In essence, the political field was purposefully left open for groups which had mobilised against Bhutto two years earlier.

The results of the 1979 local government elections validated this aim. In Lahore, several prominent bazaar traders were elected as city councillors, including three out of the four founding members of the APAT. The elected mayor of Lahore, Mian Shuja-ur-Rehman, was a businessman involved in the manufacture and trade of pharmaceuticals, and his brother Misbah-ur-Rehman was at that time serving as the president of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI). While there is no systematic analysis of the contesting

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candidates, existing accounts agree that a large number of bazaar traders were elected as councillors throughout urban Punjab (Qadeer 1983:188). There is also a suggestion that many of these individuals had no previous involvement in politics, and had only emerged during the PNA movement.

The new-found electoral success of the bazaar was made possible by a number of factors. The violent demobilisation of labour and professional unions had rendered these occupational groups ineffective in local politics. Labour leaders, who during the late 1960s and early 1970s commanded respect in working class neighbourhoods, were ineffectual without their organisational platforms (Malik 2014). Relatedly, the non-party nature of these elections meant that ideology and horizontal solidarities across urban geography were far less important than personal financial clout and ability to divert public resources to private use. In this context, a personalised, vertically structured form of patronage politics came to take precedence over the class-based mobilisation of the Bhutto era (Kamran 2009).

Bazaar traders were well suited to capitalise on these dynamics for two main reasons: First, their control over financial resources allowed them to finance patronage schemes and influence the direction and targeting of public services through rent-seeking and bribery. Second, given the importance of religion in stoking up anti-Bhutto sentiment, bazaar traders active in the movement had accumulated both name recognition and an entrenched association with Islamic piety during street protests. Both of these were useful with urban voters who had been left disillusioned by Bhutto's brand of autocratic socialism.

At higher tiers of politics, the accommodation of the newly empowered urban propertied classes continued in a variety of ways. In 1981, General Zia established a consultative council of 228 members to formulate the regime's legislative agenda. The rural members came from the traditional landed class, while the urban members were drawn, in part, from the ascendant bazaar trader community (Baxter 1985:77). From Lahore, for example, those nominated included Haji Maqsood Butt, head of Shah Alam traders' association and the President of the APAT, and Sheikh Inam Elahi, another prominent bazaar leader from the PNA movement.

By March 1985, the regime opened up the national electoral arena through non-party based polls for national and provincial assemblies. The composition of the assemblies elected through these polls reflected the political and social trends from the preceding seven years. As PPP activists chose to boycott the elections, in part due to their non-party nature, the choice on the ground was largely between competing pro-regime elites. In rural constituencies, nearly all the candidates elected came from well-established landed elite background,

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whose family members had been in politics for decades. The situation in urban areas, however, was quite different. In the towns and cities of Punjab, nearly half of the winning candidates were those who had entered politics only in the last seven years. This is further affirmed by the fact that a full 31 per cent of the total assembly consisted of individuals who had been elected in the local government exercise of 1979 (Zaidi 2015:786; Gallup Pakistan 1988).

By occupation, 54 out of the 207 members of the National Assembly were businessmen which amounted to roughly 26 per cent of the legislature. If only urban constituencies are considered, then the number of businessmen elected goes up to 60 per cent (Zaidi 2015:786; Gallup Pakistan 1988). This is in stark contrast to the 1970 assembly, wherein businessmen held only 5 per cent of seats in the legislature and 13 per cent of those from urban areas (Jones 2003:81). While there is no available breakup on the different types of businessmen-turned-politicians (trading versus manufacturing), trends from the 1979 and 1983 local government elections suggest that bazaar traders constituted the largest segment among those who graduated to provincial and national politics.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION

The period following Zia's regime all the way to the present has witnessed bazaar traders consolidate their political position through a variety of means. A reversion to democracy between 1988 and 1999, and then again from 2008 onwards, did little to alter the composition of the ruling coalition in urban and rural areas. Legal restrictions and the cultural shifts towards patronage politics introduced by non-party polls under the Zia and Musharraf military regimes meant that political parties, including the once powerful PPP, were reduced to groups of self-financing politicians who could withstand the cost of contesting elections and distributing patronage. This condition by its very nature has shut off the field to middle- or working-class occupational groups, and placed businessmen in general, and bazaar traders in particular, at the centre of all urban political contestation (Mufti 2011).[5] Their political prominence is

[5] From Pakistan's first general election in 1970 to its tenth in 2013, the presence of businessmen from both manufacturing and trading backgrounds in the Punjab provincial legislature has grown exponentially. In the last electoral exercise, businessmen were the second biggest occupational group, after agriculturalists/landlords, at 37 per cent of the total assembly. Within urban constituencies, businessmen stood and won from nearly 72 per cent of all seats in the province's burgeoning towns and cities. This trend is highly pronounced for the provincial capital

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reflected in the general thrust of state policy over this period, which has been heavily favourable towards the trading economy. Economic liberalisation that began in the 1990s and accelerated under General Musharraf's military regime during the 2000s have eased import tariffs and non-tariff restrictions thus proving to be highly beneficial for the traders as a whole, and in particular for those engaged in retail and wholesale of consumer goods.

In Punjab alone, a six-year consumption boom between 2001 and 2007 saw the number of retail and wholesale establishments grow by nearly 40 per cent.[6] The built fabric of both big and small cities transformed at the turn of the twenty-first century, as vehicle ownership rose dramatically, new real estate investments generated urban sprawl and commercial spaces cropped up everywhere to cater to new consumer preferences through imported goods. During this period, the contribution of the bazaar sector to total GDP increased from 17 per cent in 2001 to an all-time high of 21.5 per cent in 2007 (State Bank of Pakistan 2015:17).

Apart from protecting their interests through political office, bazaar traders have also grown adept at influencing policy through a variety of lobbying strategies. In the domain of municipal administration, influential traders forge rent-seeking ties with local state functionaries in order to evade taxes (E. Ahmed 2010; Piracha 2014) and enclose government land in commercial spaces (Ezdi 2009). These mutually beneficial relations are further protected under the political patronage of elected representatives, which, as mentioned earlier, often belong to the business community.

At a broader level, the associational networks formed within marketplaces to provide club goods, resolve internal disputes and establish informal sources of credit also act as integral vehicles for mobilisation. These Anjuman-i-Tajran (traders' associations), first seen in action during the PNA movement, have allowed them to stave off efforts by successive governments to document and tax the bazaar economy. In June 1998, for example, a PML-N government at the centre attempted to extend the General Sales Tax (GST) net onto the retail sector through a clause in the annual budget legislation. Using the associational networks functioning at the marketplace, district and provincial level, bazaar elites acted effectively through the legislature, operationalised backdoor

of Lahore, where 81 per cent, or thirty-one out of thirty-eight, of the national and provincial representatives elected in the 2013 general election worked as full-time traders or small-scale manufacturers.

[6] *Punjab Development Statistics* 2010, Government of Punjab.

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channels and carried out general strikes to weaken and ultimately overturn the government's resolve (*The Nation* 1998:11). Similarly, in 2000 and 2001, the military government of General Musharraf launched a documentation drive aimed at assessing the actual turnover value of the retail sector net. Despite the regime's insulated, authoritarian character, it too was unsuccessful in the face of successive bazaar strikes in Punjab, including one that lasted for eleven successive days (*Dawn* 2000:14).

The bazaar's ability to mobilise effectively and utilise their 'shutter-power' remains a significant feature of contentious politics in Pakistan (Wilder 1999:105). Between 2005 and 2010, bazaar traders were the second-most mobilised occupational group, after government employees, and accounted for approximately 15 per cent of all protests and strikes (Butt 2016). These included demonstrations against state service delivery failures (electricity outages, gas shortages and law and order issues), religious causes such as defence of the blasphemy law (Blom 2008) and political issues such as Indian aggression in Kashmir.

The variety of non-economic issues around which bazaar elites have mobilised reflect their embedded status within Pakistan's contemporary civil society sphere. In particular, the relationship with organised religious actors is of central importance at a number of levels. By mobilising in defence of the blasphemy law, or supporting demonstrations against perceived religious violations, bazaar traders play an active role in shaping the cultural contours of political discourse and the moral boundaries of the public sphere. As research elsewhere shows, this bazaar–mosque relationship, initially forged during the PNA movement, is central to the growing clout of Islamist groups and the entrenchment of their exclusionary politics in the province of Punjab (Javed 2016).

Second, the bazaar–mosque relationship is also central to the political incorporation of marginalised groups, such as informal labourers, new urban migrants and slum dwellers. Bazaar traders play an integral role in administering local religious charities and offering alms and assistance, especially around the holy month of Ramadan. The interplay of what Clemens (2010) calls social closure through associational work and obligation hoarding through charitable acts elevates their own status as model citizens and benevolent elites, and helps culturally legitimise their material role as local patrons.

The social capital generated through charitable acts and personalised patronage ties further reinforces the positioning of bazaar elites in political contestation at local elections. In local government elections held in 2015, 184

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out of 268 candidates of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN), and 167 out of 256 candidates of the main opposition party Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) were traders or other commercial entrepreneurs.[7] Among the 273 candidates that won city council seats, thirty-eight were presently serving as office-bearers of their local Anjuman-i-Tajran.

CONCLUSION

The ascendancy and entrenchment of bazaar traders in the political sphere signals a substantive transformation of the Alavian nexus of power in Pakistan. Their ability to forge favourable rent-seeking relationships and avoid attempts at documentation shows that a hypothesised overdeveloped state has been socialised 'from below' to a considerable extent. This stands operationalised through the opening up of institutional spaces to capture power, in the shape of elections and mass mobilisation. As demonstrated by Akhtar (2008) and Zaidi (2015), underlying all these shifts is the increasingly informalised and fragmented nature of capitalism in Pakistan. With the economy continuing to expand in large pockets outside of codified regulations, personalised and localised patronage relations necessary to generate and sustain surpluses continue to chip away at the autonomy and cohesiveness of the state apparatus. One major implication of this is the hollowing out of the Pakistani state's capacity, in terms of its organisational effectiveness needed to carry out basic tasks. This is most visible in its struggles to expand its revenue base beyond a narrow group of documented taxpayers, which generates binding fiscal constraints and prevents greater amounts of pro-poor spending.

The transformations of the past few decades are of considerable significance for the nature of Pakistan's nascent democracy. As shown in this chapter, ascendant propertied groups such as bazaar traders have adroitly utilised democratic institutions including elections and civil society platforms to reinforce their social and economic privileges. Given that informalisation continues to dictate both the labour market and patterns of urban growth, the pliant incorporation of subaltern groups within an unequal power structure will continue to take place through personalised patronage relations, often underpinned by religio-cultural sensibilities. For the foreseeable future, it appears these structural trends will continue to forestall the development of

[7] Occupational data for legislators and local government candidates gathered through fieldwork in party offices in Lahore during December 2015 and December 2016.

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horizontal solidarities, representative platforms, and thus a more substantive form of democracy in the country.

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10 Democracy and Patronage in Pakistan

Hassan Javid

Much of the literature on politics in Pakistan starts with the assumption that the country is characterised by clientelistic politics. Such politics can be defined as the politics that comes into being when powerful patrons drawn from the ruling elite perpetuate their hold on power through the use of their official position and access to the state, to provide voters and constituents with goods and services in exchange for the latter's continued support. Whether it is landlords in Punjab (Javid 2011; Martin 2014; Mohmand 2014) or criminal networks aligned with political parties in Karachi (Gayer 2014), the proposition that citizens support politically connected elites capable of providing them with patronage amidst the existence of a broadly undemocratic and dysfunctional system of governance, what Akhtar (2008) has referred to the as the 'politics of common sense', is one that has achieved the status of conventional wisdom. However, despite a broad consensus on the existence of patronage politics in Pakistan, comparatively little work has been done on outlining the precise mechanisms through which this form of politics operates; while it is acknowledged that patron–client politics exists, and ethnographic work on the subject has demonstrated the everyday forms of negotiation and contestation that characterise it at the local level, there is a corresponding lack of focus on the institutional framework of patronage politics, particularly in terms of how legislation, political parties and the formal apparatuses of the state shape and determine the receipt and disbursement of patronage.

The lack of attention paid to the actual institutional moorings of patronage politics in Pakistan is compounded by an absence of analytical work focusing on the changes and opportunities generated by the country's recent transition to democracy. While there is a considerable body of scholarly work that has examined the impact of colonialism and military authoritarianism on the

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structure of Pakistan's political institutions, less has been said about the ways in which almost a decade of uninterrupted, if often flawed, democracy has begun to transform the country's politics into something arguably akin to what Chandra (2004) has called a 'patronage democracy', in which the public sector remains an essential provider of employment and services,[1] and in which those charged with distributing state resources can exercise considerable discretion in doing so. Although the military establishment continues to enjoy a tremendous amount of influence on political decisions and outcomes, and confrontation with the civilian government remains a regular feature of Pakistan's political life, the years since the ouster of General Pervez Musharraf in 2008 have arguably witnessed the consolidation of civilian power – albeit displaying numerous twists and turns since then – with important implications for the manner in which politics is conducted in the country. The emphasis this chapter places on civilian actors and institutions and the roles they play as part of the broader system of patronage politics in Pakistan does not necessarily imply a corresponding reduction in the power of the country's military establishment (see Shah in this volume). The military continues to exercise a tremendous amount of influence over Pakistan's politics and, more importantly, remains a significant economic actor and source of patronage in its own right (Siddiqa 2007; Shah 2014). However, as Pakistan continues to transition towards democracy, it is important to understand precisely how the dynamics of electoral competition, the legislative process and the development of civilian institutions and capacities are all shaping the country's political dynamics.

In this chapter it will be argued that institutions, as rules and constraints governing human interaction (North 1991), arise out of processes of contestation and cooperation involving different social actors, and that the framework of politics in Pakistan is thus one geared towards perpetuating the power of the ruling class. In this context, it will be argued that the provision of patronage is one of the strategies through which the ruling class has historically maintained its control, and that Pakistan's recent transition to democracy has paradoxically provided elite civilian political actors with the means through which to further entrench their position by strengthening the country's system of patronage politics. This chapter is divided into five sections. The first of these outlines the theory underpinning the chapter's conception of institutions and how they

[1] According to a report published by the National Commission for Government Reforms, the federal and provincial governments in Pakistan have 3.4 million employees – almost 6 per cent of the country's total employed labour force.

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relate to class power. The next section proceeds to discuss precisely where patronage comes from in Pakistan and who actually presides over the system of patronage politics. The third section focuses on the 18th Amendment to the Pakistani Constitution that was passed in 2010 and the introduction of new local governments in Pakistan, showing how these particular actions have allowed democratically elected governments to reinforce elite power and patronage politics. This is followed by a section on the role played by political parties as gatekeepers determining who does or does not gain access to state patronage in Pakistan. The chapter then concludes with some reflections on how democratic consolidation can be accompanied by a corresponding deepening of elite power, and of some of the tensions inherent in this process.

CLASS, STATE AND POWER

In his seminal work on the postcolonial state in Pakistan, Hamza Alavi (1972) argued that the power of the military and bureaucracy in Pakistan marked a continuation of the colonial political order, with an 'overdeveloped' state continuing to exercise a degree of autonomous power. While some of the more constructive critiques of Alavi's thesis have tended to focus on how the autonomy of the state could be maintained amidst a deepening of capitalism and capitalist social relations, thereby resulting in the eventual subordination of the state to a now-dominant bourgeoisie (Saul 1974; Leys 1976; Wood 1980), and while they have highlighted how Alavi's work must necessarily be updated to reflect the changing class structure of Pakistan and the politically ambiguous role played by an emergent middle class (Akhtar 2008; Zaidi 2014), the question of how ruling class domination – whatever the constituent elements of this 'class' might be – has been overlooked. More specifically, given that the power of the dominant classes is premised on using the apparatuses of the state, both coercive and non-coercive, to solidify their position, it is necessary to examine the evolution of the institutional framework through which this domination is made possible, and the direct role played by elements of the ruling class in forging a configuration of laws, policies and organisations that is conducive to the pursuit of its interests.

If institutions are to be understood as rules and constraints governing human interaction (North 1991), then the question of where those rules come from and how they emerge is of fundamental importance. Contrary to many mainstream variants of institutionalist analysis, which often take the existence of their objects of analysis as a given and proceed from there,

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Mahoney and Thelen (2010) suggest the use of a power-distributional approach to the study of institutions which emphasises how different actors continually engage in contestation over the formulation, interpretation and enforcement of institutional arrangements, with control over power resources such as property, public position and membership within privileged groups, often determining the outcomes of these struggles. Following from this, institutional change itself erupts out of these processes of engagement, either due to conflict within dominant groups, or due to challenges mounted from below by previously disenfranchised or marginalised actors.

This view of institutions – as rules that are contested within the constraints they impose – is not entirely dissimilar to an older tradition of analysis rooted in Marx's famous dictum from the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon: 'Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.' In *What Does the Ruling Class Do When It Rules,* Goran Therborn seeks to show how the institutional structure of the state plays a direct role in reproducing the power of the ruling class under feudalism and capitalism. Noting how 'a state apparatus operates simultaneously as an expression of class *domination* ... and as the *execution* of the supreme rule-making, rule-applying, rule-adjudicating, rule-enforcing and rule-defending tasks of society', Therborn (1978:47) draws attention to the fact that the mere presence of a ruling class does not necessarily explain much about the nature of state power. Indeed, for Therborn, any attempt to understand the precise mechanics of class domination is one that must necessarily begin with an appreciation for the way in which the institutional structure of the state varies from context to context, and of the effect that this variation can have on the articulation and pursuit of specific class interests. Taking this particular line of argument further, Jessop's 'strategic–relational' view of the state recognises that the state is a 'social relation' whose power, 'is a form-determined condensation of the balance of forces' but whose structure is also, 'the crystallization of past strategies … privileging some over other current strategies. As a strategic terrain the state is located within a complex dialectic of structures and strategies' (1980:269). This approach is, according to Hay, useful because it allows for a conceptualisation of the way in which the state and its institutions are 'strategically selective', favouring certain strategies over others even as continued rounds of interaction with different social actors 'transform … the context within which future strategies are formulated and deployed' (1999:170).

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What, then, does the Pakistani ruling class do when it rules? As has been argued by scholars using a more explicitly institutionalist approach to understanding politics in Pakistan (Jalal 1995; Stern 2001; Aziz 2008; Oldenburg 2010; Javid 2011; Tudor 2013), the persistence of elite power can be explained by how the circumstances surrounding the country's independence, coupled with its colonial legacy, created opportunities for the military and coalitions of the propertied classes to assume control of the state. More importantly, as argued by Aziz (2008), Oldenburg (2010) and Javid (2011), what ensued after independence was a process of path-dependent institutional development in which both the military and the propertied classes used their position to create rules – in the form of laws and patterns of behaviour – that continually shaped and reshaped the political terrain in their favour. This was not a process free from contestation. The military and its civilian allies have repeatedly attempted to carve out greater space for themselves relative to each other. Elements within the ruling class often compete with each other as evidenced, for example, by the tremendous factionalism that characterises electoral politics from the local level upwards. The establishment has also had to deal with challenges from below such as the anti-Ayub movement of the late 1960s that brought the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) to power under Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Yet, over time, the framework of politics that has emerged in Pakistan is one that bears the imprint of elite dominance, and it is within this context that the country's contemporary transition to democracy is taking place.

WHO ARE THE PATRONS?

Before embarking upon a more detailed discussion of the mechanisms that underpin the politics of patronage in Pakistan, it is first necessary to engage in a brief discussion of precisely who it is that has control of the commanding heights of the country's political economy. For Alavi (1972), the notion that Pakistan was dominated by three distinct class fractions – the indigenous and metropolitan bourgeoisies, as well as the traditional feudal elite – was rooted in a specific understanding of how the changes wrought by colonialism in the subcontinent had created an economic system characterised by the persistence of contradictions between these elements of the ruling class. While Alavi (1998) did make a tentative attempt to incorporate the middle class – defined by him as urban traders and agricultural middlemen – the significance of these actors as a political and economic force, and their incorporation within networks of privilege and patronage, has been discussed at length by LaPorte Jr. (1985), Sayeed (1996), Cheema (2003), Zaidi (2005, 2014) and Akhtar (2008).

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For the purposes of this chapter, however, it is important to distinguish the class *character* of the state from the actors who actually wield power and serve as lynchpins of the broader system of patronage politics. While dense networks of kinship, friendship and exchange are fundamental to the exercise of class power by individual actors, access to state patronage is ultimately channelled through actors enjoying formal political power and public authority. The construction of a road, the provision of a gas connection, the adjudication of a dispute in a police station and the granting of a government job, all are dependent on being able to work the levers of the state, using developmental funds and direct connections to the bureaucracy and ruling party in order to get things done. For example, Cheema and Mohmand (2007) document instances in which winning politicians in rural Punjab rewarded their supporters by building drains that passed in front of their houses, even as they actively excluded voters living on the same streets who had voted for their opponents by ensuring they were not provided with connections to these new sewerage systems. Similarly, Chaudhry and Vyborny (2013) show how being connected to ruling party politicians provides individuals with preferential access to funding under the Benazir Income Support Programme. The disbursement of patronage at the local level forms the basis through which elites can cultivate and mobilise political support for themselves and their parties, reinforcing their ability to gain public office and utilise it for the pursuit of their individual and class interests.

This emphasis on formal, institutional access to state patronage is not meant to imply that more privatised forms of patronage do not exist or are not significant in Pakistan. Across Pakistan, for example, economically powerful landlords can make use of their wealth to provide clients with credit, jobs and even healthcare and schooling at the local level, and can even withdraw patronage by evicting villagers from their homes or by having them subjected to persecution by the police (Martin 2014). This is the assumption that underpins much recent work on 'state-in-society' approaches (Migdal 2001) and 'multiple sovereignties' (Hansen and Stepputat 2006) that sees state power as being contested and appropriated at the local level by an array of historically constituted actors. However, it could also be argued that private patronage of this sort is still ultimately dependent on connections to the state, and that it is access to public office, or individuals that hold it, that determines the capacity of traditional politicians and local level elites to provide patronage on a relatively large scale and to engage in significant rent-seeking as part of this process (Sidel 2013).

Here, the distinction between patrons and brokers is one that is of considerable analytical significance (Stokes et al. 2013). Patrons are those with

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direct connections to the state and its resources, by virtue of holding prominent positions within the government and the state apparatus. Brokers are local intermediaries, such as constituency politicians, who use their embeddedness within local networks to provide information to parties, mobilise vote blocks and act as conduits for the distribution of patronage. In return for performing these services, brokers benefit from their proximity to those who exercise power, and also exploit the opportunity to extract rents from the patronage being disbursed amongst their constituents. Thus, while brokers – in the form of local landed elites, neighbourhood strongmen and the leaders of civic associations – might be able to draw upon a repertoire of social, economic and coercive resources to aid their clients or impose sanctions upon them, their capacity to provide access to public goods and services is ultimately dependent on their connection to patrons directly plugged in to the state.

In addition to playing a vital role in perpetuating the structure of elite politics in Pakistan, patronage – as acquired through access to the state – also plays a pivotal role in the process of capital accumulation. As argued by Papanek (1972), White (1974), Amjad (1976), Kochanek (1983) and Khan (1999), Pakistan's early period was characterised by the existence of powerful business families who used their close connections to the state – as well as their occasional forays into public office – to manipulate industrial policy in their own favour. Events since the 1970s have reduced the power of these once-dominant industrial families, but there is considerable reason to believe that the smaller capitalist groups that have emerged in Pakistan in the subsequent decades and now play a substantial role within the economy also make extensive use of their connections with the state to facilitate the process of accumulation (Weiss1991; Sayeed 1996; Cheema 2003). This relationship between state and business elites is a reciprocal one, with the former receiving rents in exchange for favours extended to the latter. The extent to which political connections matter to business in Pakistan has been demonstrated by Khawaja and Mian (2005), who show how politically well-connected firms in Pakistan are more likely to receive credit and debt relief than their counterparts who are not politically well-connected.

Following from this, it is reasonable to conclude that the two main sources of state patronage in Pakistan remain the bureaucracy and elected office. In both cases, it is necessary to recognise that the type and amount of patronage that can be accessed and disbursed by any given individual will ultimately depend on their position within the hierarchy of their institution; while even the lowest-ranked employee in the bureaucracy might be able to use their

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contacts within their department to pull strings on behalf of a client, their ability to do so will obviously be less than that of a superior enjoying greater perks and privileges, just as the resources available to an elected member of local government will not be on the same scale as those at the disposal of a member of the National Assembly.

In the case of the bureaucracy, as argued by Islam (2004), Zaidi (2005) and Akhtar (2008), the broadening of its base of its recruitment in the 1970s, as a result of reforms introduced by the government of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, has meant that a civil service that was once the exclusive preserve of the elite has now been opened to a significant amount of middle class capture. This capture has in turn provided elements of that strata of society access to state patronage in a more direct manner than had previously been possible. In the electoral arena, on the other hand, there is evidence to suggest that Pakistan's upper and lower houses of parliament remain dominated by a small group of propertied elites competing against each other for control of the country's representative institutions. Recent work by Cheema, Javid and Naseer (2013) demonstrates that in Punjab, elections to the Provincial and National Assemblies since 1970 have overwhelmingly been won by candidates drawn from a pool of just under 400 dynastic families, with the other provinces displaying a similar trend. While this does not imply that only members of these families are able to compete in these elections, the data suggests that candidates with relatives who previously contested elections are likely to enjoy a significant advantage over non-dynastic candidates, essentially ensuring that power remains concentrated in relatively few hands.

Although Cheema, Javid and Naseer (2013) do not offer definitive conclusions regarding the class composition of the dynastic families they identify, they do endorse the assumption that many of these families are likely to be drawn from the propertied classes, representing a combination of the traditional landed elite, the industrial and financial bourgeoisie and, to a lesser extent, urban professionals. This corroborates the findings of Shafqat (1998) and Zaidi (2004), and also builds on the insights of Baxter (1974), whose account of the ruling class in Pakistan during the 1970s highlighted the strong inter-connections, through kinship and marriage, of the country's political, economic, bureaucratic and military elite. Whatever the relative balance of power may be between the different fractions of the ruling class, it is clear that they are bound together by dense networks of blood and reciprocity.

Finally, Cheema, Javid and Naseer (2013) also argue that even though the membership of the 400 dynastic families they identify in Punjab has changed

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over time, the overall number of families competing in elections has remained largely unchanged. This volatility can be explained in a number of ways. An exogenous shock, such as the imposition of the requirement for candidates to possess Bachelor's degrees in 2002, can open up opportunities for fresh political faces to emerge. The rise and fall of individual families over time, due to a variety of factors, can generate changes in the system of dynastic politics. However, the overall stability seen in the total number of dynastic families may be explained by the number of seats open to contestation in national and provincial elections. As a consequence of this, while there may be many individuals who could conceivably be categorised as part of the ruling class, the number who can become patrons at any given time, through access to the representative institutions of the state, is limited.

The manner in which the configuration of representative institutions constrains the supply of patrons is also pertinent to understanding the role played by local governments in contemporary patronage politics. As will be discussed later, local governments play a crucial role in the acquisition and delivery of patronage as they constitute the lowest formal tier of the patronage system. While both the scale and nature of patronage available to and from members of Pakistan's local governments are both different from, and partially dependent on, that of the provincial and national tiers of government, they often act as a first point of contact for clients seeking access to the state. In this context, the total number of directly and indirectly available positions available in local government – almost 7,500 in Punjab, for example – helps in determining the total number of individuals currently occupying formal positions of authority that enable them to act as patrons.

Bringing all of these observations together, it is possible to construct a picture of how the state and different social actors come together to create the system of patronage politics that exists in contemporary Pakistan, and the roles played by its constituent elements. The representative organs of government – parliament and other elected bodies – remain the preserve of a small and dynastic ruling class that uses these institutions to craft laws that facilitate the pursuit of its interests and the consolidation of its power. This elite is also able to use its formal position to supplement its extant sources of social power – based on the ownership of property and social capital generated through membership within kinship networks – by accessing and disbursing state patronage in the form of development funds and the provision of public goods to clients and constituents. Different levels of government provide holders of public office with different degrees of power, ranging from hundreds of millions of rupees

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in constituency funds for Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) to the decision-making power members of local governments have over the utilisation of government resources in their constituencies. At the same time, bureaucrats act as gatekeepers, employing executive authority to approve or veto the development schemes that constitute patronage and overseeing the implementation of these projects at the behest of their political patrons. This entire system of patronage is underpinned by networks of influence and reciprocity, with the connections between politicians, bureaucrats and different kinds of brokers forged through the common experience of holding and exercising state power, linking them together in the pursuit of their interests.

THE RULES OF THE GAME

The historical domination of Pakistan's legislative institutions by the propertied classes – landed and capitalist - both during periods of democracy and in tandem with military governments, is significant because it has allowed them to shape the rules governing how politics is conducted. They have used the legislature to enact laws conducive to the pursuit of the interests of the propertied classes, such as by resisting moves towards the imposition of agricultural income taxes or undermining attempts at land reform (Javid, 2015). Pakistan's traditional elite have also used their position to forge close connections with the bureaucracy, as exemplified by the country's experiences with various local development programmes since the 1960s. This has been documented at length by Burki (1969) and Waseem (1985). Schemes like the Rural Works Programme and the People's Works Programme have historically come to be dominated by local landlords and other influential elites who have been able to successfully direct resources allocated to these projects towards patronage spending on their constituents and subordinates.

In contemporary Pakistan, the constituency development funds that have been allotted to all MNAs and Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) since 1985 arguably serve a similar purpose (Tsubura 2013). Every year, MNAs are automatically entitled to an average of 15–20 million rupees to spend on 'development' in their constituencies, with additional funds awarded at the discretion of the Prime Minister and the different provincial governments. For example, in 2011, the government of Punjab awarded MNAs and MPAs constituency grants of 23–29 million rupees to be spent on schools, hospitals, and sanitation (Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives 2011). In 2017 reports in the press suggested that 130 billion rupees was provided to members

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of parliament belonging to the ruling Pakistan Muslim League–Nawaz (PML-N) party over a three year period (Rana 2017). The funds for these development grants are generally provided through the Federal and Provincial Development Sector Programmes, with the assumption being that this money enables legislators to fulfil promises made to constituents during their campaigns, and also allows for the more effective targeting and utilisation of public funds at the local level. However, these funds also constitute one of the main forms of patronage disbursed by the state, and distinguish those with formal positions in the state from those who might simply possess other forms of wealth and power.[2] The importance of the public funding for patronage is also illustrated by the case of local government in Pakistan. As has been pointed out by Cheema, Khawaja and Qadir (2005), largely non-party based local governments in Pakistan have historically been used by military governments as a means through which to acquire legitimacy and support, providing the former with a direct connection to local brokers that circumvents the need to operate through provincial governments and political parties. Following the ouster of General Pervez Musharraf in 2008, the local governments his regime had put into place fell into abeyance. Local governments were revived with the passage of the 18th Amendment in 2010 and the subsequent introduction of provincial-level legislation delineating the structure and calling for the election of new local governments that were finally put in place in all four of the country's provinces by 2015–2016.

The significance of the 18th Amendment lay in how it repealed the 8th Amendment, which had granted the president and provincial governors the power to dismiss the national and provincial assemblies, while also devolving considerable power to the provinces. As Adeney (2012) has argued, the Amendment's enactment during the often fractious tenure of the PPP government that was then in power was partly the result of a fear shared by all the major parties regarding the misuse of excessive executive power, anxieties on the part of the smaller provinces regarding the outsized role played by Punjab, and the belief, within Punjab, that the devolution of power to the provinces would not necessarily alter the overall balance of power within the federation. While it is still too early to judge the extent to which the Amendment has succeeded in its attempts to rectify the imbalance between

[2] The constituency development funds given to legislators generally have a partisan character, with members of parliament from the ruling parties being given preferential access to funding at the expense of their counterparts in the opposition.

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Punjab and the other provinces, one very significant effect it has had is on the power of provincial governments within their jurisdictions. Whereas previously the federal government was able to deploy the tremendous administrative powers at its disposal to undermine the provinces, the devolution of a large number of departments, such as health and education, to the provinces has had the dual effect of increasing the amount of patronage at the disposal of these governments while simultaneously granting them greater control over the bureaucracy itself. It is for this reason that Waseem argues that the 18th Amendment achieved its purpose of empowering the 'strongholds of the political class' (2015:144).

It is in this context that Pakistan's new local governments must be understood, and while there are some differences between the local government legislation passed by the four provinces, these are differences of degree rather than substance. What all of them have in common is a structure that provides the provincial governments with almost complete financial and political control over the lowest tiers of government. This control is exercised through two main mechanisms, namely the Provincial Finance Commissions (PFCs) and the Local Government Commissions (LGCs)[3] created in each of the four provinces. The PFCs are charged with allocating and distributing funds to the local governments from the provincial governments. Local governments have minimal revenue and taxation powers of their own. The LGCs exist to coordinate activities between the provincial and local governments while also allowing the former to exercise oversight over, and even dismiss, the latter. Both PFCs and LGCs are comprised of provincial legislators (with a majority drawn from the ruling party/coalition), bureaucrats selected by the Chief Minister of the province and a small number of local government representatives picked by the government. In addition to this, the different Local Government Acts also ensure the presence of other kinds of oversight and control. Each tier of government, from the lowliest Union Council to the district level administration, will include a bureaucrat – called the Chief Officer[4] – nominated by the provincial government whose task it will be to draft and approve local budgets. Areas such as health and education will be placed

[3] In Balochistan, this body is referred to as the 'Divisional Coordination Committee'.

[4] For district-level governments, the Chief Officer is the District Coordination Officer or, in the case of Punjab, the Deputy Commissioner. For lower tiers of government, these officers are selected from different parts of the provincial bureaucracy.

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under the control of appointed bureaucrats and technical experts.[5] Finally, all the provincial governments have retained the right to 'exclude' regions from the purview of the new local government systems, essentially retaining the ability to end local governments in their entirety should the need arise.

The accumulation of power in the hands of Pakistan's provincial governments also has interesting implications for the bureaucracy and its relationship to the broader system of patronage politics. There is a widespread belief that the system of district management that was put in place by the British and inherited by Pakistan – centred around the figure of the powerful Deputy Commissioner wielding far-reaching executive and magisterial powers – acted as an effective check on the power of elected representatives until its abolition by the Musharraf government in 2001 (Niaz 2010). Since then, in addition to the progressive dilution of the powers of the local bureaucracy, the 18th Amendment has provided provincial governments with greater mechanisms through which to exert control over the civil administration. With the devolution of a large number of federal departments to the provinces in 2010, the provincial governments now have more power than before to appoint, transfer and remove bureaucrats. Provincial governors no longer have the power to dismiss or overrule chief ministers Greater amounts of recruitment to the bureaucracy now take place through the provincial, rather than federal, administrative services.

One of the effects of this institutional change has been how it has altered the incentive structure confronted by most bureaucrats. Before 2010 questions of promotion and transfer and rent-seeking were not directly related to cooperation with the provincial governments. The landscape since

[5] While this template is the basis for all four of local government systems adopted by the provinces, there is one significant variation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where the power exercised by the provincial government has been slightly diluted through two main mechanisms. First of all, the LGC put in place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a more equitable representation of members drawn from the government and opposition benches and second, the district-level governments in the province have been given the authority to supervise and inspect the lower tiers of the system without interference from the LGC. Together, these two measures arguably empower the local governments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa more than their counterparts in the other provinces. This difference can possibly be attributed to the nature of coalition politics in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: as a province it has had a strong anti-incumbent bias in every election since 1993 and a history of coalition government. It is possible that negotiations between the parties in power in 2013 prevented greater centralisation of power in the hands of the provincial government.

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2010 is one in which alignment with a party in power has become one of the principal means through which to ensure career advancement. In this context, bureaucrats are now faced with the choice of either acquiescing to the demands made by the parties in power, such as by keeping local governments in check, or they risk transfer and dismissal. This is perhaps best highlighted by changes that have taken place in Punjab in recent years. In addition to the effects of the 18th Amendment, the passage of the Civil Administration Act of 2017, which replaced Musharraf-era District Coordination Officers with watered-down Deputy Commissioners, has weakened the bureaucracy even further. Commissioners no longer have magisterial powers, and have essentially been reduced to acting as coordinators between the provincial and local governments, ensuring that the writ of the former is enforced over the latter. This reintroduction of Deputy Commissioners has been accompanied by a reduction in the number of positions within the district administration. The number of available postings has been reduced from 293 to 153 which has generated even greater competitive pressures within the bureaucracy and thereby made it even more important for ambitious public officials to align themselves with the party in power.

What all this means in practice is that rather than creating an autonomous and empowered tier of government designed to be more responsive and accountable to constituents, the local governments that have been put in place across Pakistan are essentially factotums for the provincial administrations, incapable of functioning effectively without the continued goodwill of the ruling party. At the same time, the control exerted by the provincial governments over the bureaucracy has deepened the power of ruling parties, providing them with am even tighter grip over the machinery through which patronage is dispensed. This is not an accident, and is to be entirely expected given the structure of patronage politics in Pakistan. Rather than opening up an arena of local political competition, legislators in each of Pakistan's four provinces have instead opted to engineer a system designed to meet the twin imperatives of funnelling patronage and securing the position of the ruling elites through a centralisation of power in the hands of the provincial governments and the parties that control them.

PARTIES, PATRONAGE AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

As has been argued in the preceding sections, the control exercised by the propertied classes over Pakistan's legislative institutions, and the way they have

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been able to cultivate close connections with the bureaucracy, has facilitated their ability to acquire and disburse patronage to their clients. However, it has also been argued that access to this patronage is not unfettered, and that the occupation of, or proximity to, positions within the state apparatus is crucial to the process. Here, the role played by political parties, particularly in Pakistan's contemporary era of democratisation, is vital to understanding precisely how the country's system of patronage politics is regulated.

It is often assumed that traditional constituency politicians, particularly in the countryside, are relatively autonomous actors possessing the resources and legitimacy required to mobilise vote blocks (Alavi 1974; Mufti 2015). This suggests that the stereotypical 'electable' has little need for membership of a political party, and that parties themselves have few means through which to retain and discipline such politicians. This belief is compounded by the dynamics of actual electoral campaigning. Most campaigns are self-financed by candidates, with minimal support from the parties they belong to, and many candidates are chosen precisely because they have the means to win independently. This is arguably borne out by the high rate of party factionalism in Pakistan – as measured by the number of defections from one party to another prior to elections – as well as the ability of independent candidates to win elections (particularly at the local level) (Hasnain 2008; Qadri 2014). Both these facts suggest that, for many politicians and voters, party loyalty and identity are of secondary importance.

While there are many reasons why these parties suffer from poor organisational structures, a lack of distinct ideological identities, and an absence of properly programmatic platforms (Gazdar 2008; Mufti 2015), the notion that parties have a minimal role to play in helping candidates succeed is misleading. For one, parties in Pakistan do serve as a solution to a collective action problem. While individual politicians might be able to get themselves elected, membership within a party allows for coordination between hundreds of members of parliament and other elected representatives, enabling them to better use the state machinery for the pursuit of their private interests. Indeed, as long as Pakistan functions under the rules of a democratic or quasi-democratic system of government, with parliaments, local governments and elected executives being charged with the formulation and implementation of policy, parties will necessarily be required to organise private interests in a way that allows for these tasks to be undertaken. In this sense, Pakistan's parties are not particularly different from their counterparts in other parts of the world, in form if not in substance (Stokes 1999).

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Of greater significance, however, is the role played by parties as the main regulators of who can or cannot directly access state patronage. As can be seen from the often rambunctious competition over party tickets that usually erupts prior to elections, membership within a party, particularly one that is likely to win power at the provincial or federal level, is prized by politicians who recognise that alignment with a dominant party is the only credible means through which to ensure steady access to state patronage. A candidate who becomes a member of the National Assembly will, for example, have access to development funds that will not be available to a rival candidate who fails to win an election, even if that rival candidate might otherwise possess all the traditional markers of a privileged class position.

Membership within a party of government at the provincial or national level is even more important when considering how the goodwill of these parties is required to get things done. Particularly after the passage of the 18th Amendment, parties in power now have considerable means at their disposal through which to reward their supporters and punish their opponents. Bureaucratic appointments and transfers, permitting and funding local development schemes and awarding contracts, all fall under the purview of the ruling parties in the provinces and at the federal level, providing them with a considerable amount of discretion when it comes to the provision of state patronage. This is perhaps best illustrated with reference to Pakistan's new local governments as discussed earlier. The absence of significant revenue generation capacity, coupled with the control exerted by the PFCs and LGCs ensures that only local bodies aligned with the provincial government will be able to successfully discharge their responsibilities.

The implications of this are clear for patrons, brokers and voters. Incumbency clearly confers electoral advantages on political parties, allowing their governments to dispense patronage in a targeted fashion conducive to success at the polls. Incumbency also facilitates the appointment of pliant local-level officials to oversee the polling process. In a context where the ability to actually provide voters with services in exchange for their support necessitates the maintenance of a good relationship with the ruling party, aspirants to public office have little choice but to throw their lot in with the party most likely to win. Failing that, would-be patrons and brokers can choose to either contest and win their elections as independents, in the hope that they could be absorbed within the ruling party or align themselves with second or third tier parties with a view towards consolidating their base and remaining politically relevant for future elections. For voters, all of this links

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back to Akhtar's politics of 'common sense' (2008). Given a choice between an ideological or programmatic vote for a party lacking the support of powerful electables or with a limited chance of winning power, and one enjoying the advantages of incumbency and a likelihood of victory, it is entirely rational for voters to pick candidates offering tangible forms of patronage as opposed to ones selling abstract ideas of reform and change. The institutional framework of Pakistani politics is one that encourages patronage politics, rent-seeking and the maintenance of a status quo in which a traditional elite is able to maintain its monopoly over the levers of power.[6]

Having said all of this, it is also important to note that there are some exceptions to this system of patronage politics. For one, as shown by parties such as the Muttahida Qaumi Mahaz (MQM) and the Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP), as well as the Baloch nationalist movement, ethnicity remains a powerful force for mobilising voters in Pakistan, with this tendency arguably being strengthened by the provincialisation of politics following the 18th Amendment. The appeal of these parties in any given election may be tied to their relationships and alliances with other power-holders at the provincial and national levels, in terms of their ability to acquire and disburse state patronage. The presence of large ethnic vote banks both undermines the purely transactional nature of patronage politics, and also contributes towards exacerbating intra-class conflict between different sections of the Pakistani ruling elite. A similar point can be made about the enduring role played by Islam in Pakistan's politics and public discourse. While much has often been made of the inability of religious parties in Pakistan to win elections, the persistence of a stable religious vote bank across the country (religious parties can usually be relied upon to win 5–10 per cent of the vote in any given constituency), as well as significant electoral victories for entities such as the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) (a conglomeration of religious parties that was elected to power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2002), demonstrates how not all voters are swayed by the logic of patronage politics. Finally, and perhaps mirroring developments

[6] While the advantages of incumbency in this context are clear, it is important to remember that the democratic process in Pakistan can be subverted by the machinations of the military establishment, as was suspected in the months leading up to the 2018 general elections when the PML-N, widely believed to be in a position of considerable political strength, was cut down to size by a campaign of accountability and the defection of many of its politicians to rival parties—both of which were believed by some to be part of a broader strategy of pre-poll rigging aimed at preventing the party from returning to power.

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in India (Wilkinson 2007), the emergence of a predominantly urban middle class in Pakistan has potentially significant ramifications for the demand and supply of patronage, with economic power both reducing the need voters have for state patronage while simultaneously increasing expectations with regard to public service delivery.

DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION AND PATRONAGE POLITICS

The institutional roots of Pakistan's patronage politics can be traced back to the colonial era, during which powerful local landlords were provided with formal political support and power in exchange for their loyalty to the British. It might also be correct to argue that this variant of decentralised despotism was adopted and reinforced by successive military regimes in Pakistan. The country's recent transition to democracy has thus far given little reason to believe that this mechanism for exercising political control will change in any substantive way. Legislation such as the Alienation of Land of 1901 and the Court of Wards Act of 1872 underpinned landed power during the British raj. Non-party based elections coupled with the dispensation of state patronage ensured civilian support for the military following independence. The 18th Amendment and subsequent Local Government Acts have provided Pakistan's ruling parties with the means through which to ensure their consolidation of power through the perpetuation of patronage politics. It is not coincidental that Pakistan's democratic politics has evolved in this fashion. The country's mainstream political parties remain vehicles for the articulation and pursuit of elite interests, dependent on local brokers to cobble together the votes required to win power and form governments. That these elements of the propertied classes would then use their position in parliament, and their connections with the bureaucracy, to shape the political terrain in their own favour is not surprising.

Of particular interest is that amidst the consolidation of elite power under democracy, divides can already be seen emerging between the patrons and brokers at the heart of Pakistan's political system. For one, it is clear that while legislation like the Local Government Acts is designed to perpetuate patronage politics, it also serves the purpose of strengthening political parties relative to the electables upon whom they rely for mobilising local support. By using control of the provincial government as a means through which to regulate access to state patronage, the country's ruling parties have essentially increased the incentive for individual politicians to remain loyal,

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with defection or insubordination creating the risk of being separated from the means through which to access and distribute patronage and engage in rent-seeking. This also manifests itself in the competition between local brokers for party tickets, and the tendency for those who fail to receive one to contest elections as independents. The local government elections held in Punjab in 2015 revealed multiple local factions aligned with the ruling PML-N vying with each other for party tickets, with the PML-N making it clear that they would be willing to accommodate any independents who managed to win an election despite not being formally selected as the party's candidates. In the event, the PML-N managed to win 44 per cent of the available seats while 39.4 per cent went to independents, the majority of whom subsequently aligned themselves with the ruling party.

While the centralisation of patronage in the hands of a ruling party provides it with a considerable amount of leverage vis-à-vis brokers at the local level, the consequent increase in competition for party tickets and support opens up the possibility of considerable factional conflict between different elements of the traditional elite. Historically, this factionalism, often borne out of existing local rivalries, has accounted for the fragmentation of the elite amongst different political parties. While it might make sense for an 'electable' politician to align themselves with the ruling party at the provincial or national level, an inability to win a party ticket might lead them to pursue alternative strategies for acquiring power. Although the PML-N government in the Punjab was able to come to an arrangement with the large number of independents who won elections at the local level in 2015, the fact that so many individual politicians could win without the formal support of the party indicates the existence of a significant pool of politicians who could eventually prove to be a source of opposition to the government. It is conceivable that there could be situations in the future where an inability to satisfy or incorporate powerful independent candidates might induce defections to rival parties that would seriously undermine any party in power.

This also highlights another aspect of contemporary patronage politics in Pakistan, namely the way in which regular elections can potentially generate competitive pressures that induce parties to move away from patronage to programmatic politics. Evidence from India shows that there are two main mechanisms through which this can happen; first, as parties outbid each other in their attempts to acquire support through patronage spending, rising deficits can introduce fiscal pressures that render this form of electoral mobilisation unsustainable over time and second, as voters become better off, the escalating

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costs of providing services to middle-class voters with higher expectations serves to further constrain governments and parties reliant on patronage to win votes. In this context, parties can start shifting towards more ideological and programmatic, rather than targeted, patronage-based appeals to mobilise voters (Wilkinson 2007). Similarly, as repeated rounds of elections slowly generate pressures for parties to perform or lose votes, tensions can emerge between party leaders and local brokers with regard to acceptable levels of rent-seeking, with the former attempting to reign in the more rapacious tendencies of the latter in the interests of maintaining electoral credibility in the eyes of voters (Stokes et al. 2012).

As is demonstrated by the increasing levels of debt being accumulated by the federal and provincial governments in Pakistan, much of which has been used to fund investments in infrastructure under the Development Sector Programmes, it is clear that parties in power will potentially encounter the fiscal constraints on patronage spending experienced by some of their counterparts in India. Moreover, unlike Pakistan's periods of direct military rule and indirect military interference in the electoral process, the country's current transition to democracy has opened the possibility of competition between parties, not only for the retention of brokers and voters but also in terms of using campaign pledges and promises to win power, leading to the emergence of more programmatic politics.

Despite these factors, it is important to consider how a shift away from authoritarianism does not necessarily suggest a corresponding move towards a more inclusive or participatory democracy. As this chapter has attempted to demonstrate through its brief analysis of institutional development in Pakistan, the dynamics of law-making and party competition are likely to ensure that the country's framework of politics will remain one that privileges elite interests over others. The provision of greater public goods and services through patronage does not, in and of itself, require deeper democratisation, as illustrated by the success of post-authoritarian, patronage-based single and dominant party systems in Mexico (Magaloni 2006) and South-East Asia (Sidel 2013). Systems of patronage politics may indeed be viewed by voters as being legitimate despite their apparent incompatibility with democracy – what Gilmartin (2014) calls 'the paradox of patronage and the people's sovereignty'. In the absence of significant movements from below, explicitly mobilising the subordinate classes to pursue more radical redistributive policies, it is unlikely that a more egalitarian and participatory form of democracy will emerge. It is not difficult to see how the persistence of Pakistan's patronage democracy

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– and its associated 'politics of common sense' – will continue to militate against more substantive democratisation. While there is considerable reason to welcome Pakistan's transition to democracy, this optimism must be tempered by recognition of how elite domination of the country's politics could ironically be further entrenched as part of a new democratic order.

CONCLUSION

A lot has changed in Pakistan since Hamza Alavi first wrote about the 'overdeveloped' postcolonial state and its relationship with the different fractions of the ruling class. The expansion and development of capitalism in Pakistan has increasingly blurred the lines between Alavi's national and metropolitan bourgeoisies, as well as the traditional feudal aristocracy. An emerging, heterogeneous middle class has also increasingly come to be incorporated within the power structure by embedding itself within the same networks of patronage and influence that have historically shaped politics in Pakistan. At the same time, the weakening of the bureaucracy since the 1970s, coupled with the legislative power exercised by political parties since 2008 and the subsequent passage of the 18th Amendment, has meant that governments at the national and provincial level have been able to consolidate their position by initiating institutional reforms that give them greater control over the non-military apparatuses of the state, as well as the disbursement of patronage.

While these developments seem to corroborate the idea that politics in Pakistan is likely to remain dominated by a relatively small economic elite, it is important to recognise that there are cracks and fissures within the edifice of ruling class power that could lead to significant institutional change in the future. The continuing appeal of ethnic politics, strengthened by the 18th Amendment, as well as Islam, can potentially split the ruling class and fragment the system of patronage politics currently in place. This process may have already begun with the devolution of power to the provinces in 2010. Similarly, electoral competition between different parties is likely to create pressures, both within parties and between them, that might force a shift away from an exclusive reliance on patronage to maintain the loyalty of local politicians and win votes. Perhaps unsurprisingly, attempts to consolidate and centralise democratic power through patronage politics may generate the very contradictions that expose the limits of the system.

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11 From Overdeveloped State to Praetorian Pakistan

Tracing the Media's Transformations

Farooq Sulehria

In his seminal essay, Hamza Alavi (1972) characterised the state in post-colonial societies as an overdeveloped superstructure, a notion Zaidi (2014) contests for the case of Pakistan. Owing to the huge socio-political transmutations Pakistani society has undergone ever since Alavi penned his thesis, Zaidi argues for reconsidering, if not entirely dismissing, the notion of the 'overdeveloped state'. Alavi (1972) conceptualises the 'overdeveloped state' as a top-down, centralised structure apexed by a triumvirate of feudal lords, the local bourgeoisie and metropolitan capital. According to Alavi, this triumvirate in turn is dominated by the civil–military oligarchy.

Alavi's thesis, although perhaps not surprisingly, ignores the role of the media even if the role of ideology and culture is hinted at in passing in his delineation of the overdeveloped state. Zaidi (2014), by contrast, places the media at the centre stage as a key player in understanding the transformed political economy of the Pakistani state. This view is justified in light of the changes to the landscape of the media since the 2000s, though Zaidi is not alone in making this point as demonstrated later. In partial agreement with Zaidi (2014), in this chapter, I will show that in light of the transformations of the state–society nexus in Pakistan since the 1970s, Alavi's thesis is not a cogent framework to explore, in particular, the role of the transformed Pakistani media. However, assigning primacy to the media – despite the rapid growth of the media in output and outreach – is an exaggeration. Therefore, this chapter argues the following. The Pakistani media is commanded and controlled by a mutually accommodating troika consisting of the military, commercial interests

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and the Urdu-Punjabi middle class.[1] In this configuration, the nature of control is hegemonic and manipulative rather than authoritarian, as was the case until the 1990s. Consequently, while the overdeveloped character of state offers a useful framework to analyse the media until the 1990s, the political economy of the new-look media and state-media relations today can be best described through an understanding of Pakistan as a praetorian state. The role of the media can be best explained by what Althusser (2001) called the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). Therefore, this chapter will begin by placing the media at the interstices of state and society. A qualification is in place here. The empirical references in this chapter will largely be to television owing to its near universal outreach which has effectively marginalised the press as well as radio to a considerable extent.

THE IDEOLOGICAL ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN A PRAETORIAN STATE

In order to demonstrate that Zaidi (2014) has assigned an exaggerated contemporary role to the media in Pakistan, this section outlines the political economy of the media and its ideological role to better understand its position in Pakistan's polity.

In terms of its ideological role, the media constitutes an element in what Althusser (2001:86) called the ISAs which along with the Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) help reproduce a system of production. The RSAs include 'the government, the administration, the army, the police, the courts, the prisons, etc', which function 'by violence'. The ISAs consist of 'the education system, the family, the legal system, the political system, the trade unions, the media, and culture'. In a Gramscian sense, sections of the media can also play a counter-hegemonic role. Whether a media outlet is playing a counter-hegemonic role or constitutes a cog in the ISA machine is determined by its political economy.

The media's political economy is influenced by who owns and controls it. While ownership is easy to establish, it is an understanding of the 'control' that helps demystify the myth of an 'independent media'. Here, Herman and

[1] For a sense and size of Pakistani middle classes, see Zaidi (2017). Quantifying on the basis of income and consumption of goods, he estimates the middle class in the region of 84 million (42 per cent). In terms of political and social outlook, Zaidi (2017) argues, this class is 'Islamist', intolerant, conservative, pro-capitalist and pro-privatisation.

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Chomsky's 'Propaganda Model' broadens this political–economic framework. Herman and Chomsky (1994:2), basing their analysis on a study of the US media, asserted that the US media largely functioned through a class-based monopoly of ideas, whereby 'money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant interests to get their messages across to the public'. They identified the following five filters which ensure that a message released to the public does not disturb the status quo: (*a*) concentrated ownership, (*b*) advertising as the primary income source, (*c*) the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power, (*d*) 'flak' as means of disciplining the media and (*e*) anti-communism as the 'national religion' and control mechanism. Arguably, the 'Propaganda Model' cannot be mechanically applied to the Pakistani media. However, it can be expanded and adapted to the Pakistani situation. For instance, the fifth filter can be adopted in Pakistan as the 'Two Nation Theory' (that is, imagining Pakistan as India's nemesis).

While Alavi (1972) in his passing reference to ideology and media, implicitly, assigns the media to the realm of ISAs in an uncritical manner, Zaidi (2014) does not cater to either the ideological role determined by media's political economy or such nuances as media manipulation, media bias, agenda setting and coercion. He has cast the entire media in the role of an apparatus of counter-hegemony. On the contrary, the contention of this chapter is that equipped with the notions of the Propaganda Model and media as a component of the ISAs, the role and place of the Pakistani media can be best understood if the state is perceived of in terms of its praetorian character. A praetorian state as defined by Perlmutter (1977:93), is a state which 'favors the development of [the] military as the core group and encourages the growth of its expectations as a ruling class'.

In praetorian Pakistan, the military as a core group has not merely emerged as a dominant section of the RSAs but has successfully established its hold over the ISAs. In the process, Pakistan has emerged as a praetorian state conducive for 'Milibus'. Siddiqa (2007) employs the concept of Milibus, defined as 'military capital used for the personal benefit of the military fraternity, especially the officer cadre'. This concept helps us understand the motivation of the military to dominate the ISAs. While Milibus relies on the dominance of political power, this in turn cannot be separated from the need to dominate the cultural sphere. Grounded in such a conceptualisation, we must examine the present-day Pakistani media. However, before the state monopoly of airwaves

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was withdrawn, the overdeveloped character of the Pakistani state was very much in place as will be shown in the next section.

THE OVERDEVELOPED STATE AS A MEDIA MANAGER

In Pakistan, state-media relations can be neatly periodised into the pre- and post-liberalisation phases. The pre-liberalisation phase constitutes the 1947–1988 period. While the 1990s served as a transitional buffer, the years after 2001 saw the liberalisation of the airwaves radically transform the media. The television medium phenomenally expanded, and the outreach and influence of the traditional press likewise declined. Social media soon caught up as an apparently new challenger to the traditional media. Therefore, as will be shown later, Alavi's thesis is not a cogent framework to examine this latter phase. When Alavi was writing 'the media' as we define it did not exist. However, the notion of the overdeveloped state could be a sound approach to analyse the Pakistani media during the first period as is validated by a number of conjunctural developments.

Ironically, the first inadvertent victim of a newborn Pakistani state's overdeveloped tendency was the founding father, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, himself. Jinnah's 11 August 1947 speech to the Constituent Assembly, where he chalked out a secular character of the state, displeased certain bureaucrats. They thought his speech was a negation of the Two Nation Theory. Hence, the Press Information Department (PID) advised the press to censor it. The daily *Dawn* resisted the pressure and the speech was reported verbatim (Niazi 2010:58–64). The Safety Act Ordinance of 1948 was given legislative muscle by the national parliament in 1952. The Act was instituted to control the restive national opposition but was frequently invoked with the aim of gagging the press as well. The Press Commission of Pakistan 1959 identified thirteen laws (eleven of them from the colonial era) that could be deployed to discipline the press (2010:64). Initially, nationalist publications and progressive periodicals were the principal target.[2] The first attack on the press was waged against progressive broadsheets*: Svera*, *Naqoosh* and *Adb-e-Lateef* which were banned for six months in 1948. Poet laureate Faiz Ahmed Faiz, heading a chain

[2] For instance, Quetta-based weeklies *Khurshid* and *al-Aslam* were banned in 1948 while Sibbi-based weekly *Al-Haq* was forced to close as it could not pay the security money. The editor of *Istaqlal*, once edited by Abdus Samad Achackzai, was arrested which led to the closure of this newspaper. In NWFP, same year, Red Shirt's weekly organ *Pakhtoon* was banned (Niazi 2010:76–77).

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of papers published under Progressive Papers Limited (PPL), was arrested in 1948. Fiction writer Saadat Hasan Manto found himself in the dock on the charge of obscenity in 1949. Both were acquitted by the court but Faiz would spend a few more years in jail later on and Manto was also back in the dock soon afterwards. The Karachi-based *New Orient* was another left-wing publication stifled in 1948 (2010:58–72). During 1952–1953, fifty newspapers were warned while another thirty-nine lost their deposited security money. At least three publishers and printers were sentenced to jail (2010:97–98). Nationalists and the socialist press were the first targets of an overdeveloped state after independence.

What explains this vicious censorship from the outset? 'Before Partition, it [press] had established a relationship of goodwill and mutual confidence with the Muslim League leaders. In the post-independence era ... League leaders in all provinces demanded unstinted support from the press for the coterie, which was in the corridors of power in all the five provinces', explains Niazi (2010:72). This claim, however, does not explain a permanent regime of censorship even when the League leadership was replaced by the military and later the PPP while publications launched post-independence had no pre-Partition baggage. The explanation lies elsewhere. The oligarchy in the 1950s was not ready to concede any democratic freedoms especially when their confidence had been shaken by the electoral victories and mass mobilisations by the nationalist opposition allied with various left-wing political projects. The freedom of the press echoed more general liberal freedoms in Pakistan. When the first military rule was imposed in 1958, the military did not merely restrict itself to the interpellation of the press (and cultural apparatus in general), instead, it actively sought to modernise the press. The overdeveloped character of the state was most visible under the first military ruler, General Ayub Khan, after 1958.

Since General Ayub had sought legitimacy by casting himself in the role of a great moderniser, the project of cultural and social modernisation involved a successful bid to control the cultural sphere through a combination of the takeover of the existing institutions and the formation of new ones. Consequently, while the PPL was nationalised (Niazi 2010:127), the National Press Trust (NPT), financed by twenty-four industrialists, was established to 'monitor and smother any traces of independent thought' (Noman 1988:29). The regime also initiated the 'Writers Guild' to co-opt writers (Toor 2011:88).

The strategy of using documentary film-making for the government propaganda was also pursued. The first major project was *Nai Kiran* (A New Ray of Light), an hour-long feature length film. *Nai Kiran* had the well-defined

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objective of dismissing politicians and politics as corrupt and projecting General Ayub as a saviour. Through martial law orders, it was made mandatory for every cinema house to run the film. During the 1960s, over fifty films were produced hailing the imposition of martial law (Gazdar 1997:73–74). PTV was launched in 1964 in a bid to meet the regime's propaganda needs (Nasir 2013: v–vii). Pakistan Radio's network was expanded from five stations in 1950 to ten in 1961 (Khan 2011:33). While PTV and Pakistan Radio (the latter being the largest medium until the 1980s) were run by bureaucrats and the NPT by a cohort of trusted journalists, sections of press were still beyond the direct writ of the PIDs. Subsequently, to control the press, 'the blackest of the black laws' (Niazi 2010:168), the *Press and Publication Ordinance*, 1960, was promulgated and was repealed only in 1997.

The first democratic interregnum (1972–1977) did not fundamentally alter the overdeveloped character of the state in relation to the media. PTV, Pakistan Radio (renamed as Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation) and the NPT remained in official control. Bhutto only replaced the top bureaucrats. With the imposition of the Zia dictatorship after 1977, state repression peaked. General Zia had such special penchant for PTV that the PTV staff began to call him the 'super programme manager' (Nasir 2011:81–95). While the banning of newspapers was not new to Pakistan, in 1979, for the first time, four journalists were flogged. More novel was the fact that the 'super programme manager' deployed Islam as a means to stifle journalistic and cultural expression.

While PTV was Islamified by introducing dress codes for women actors and enhancing its religious content (Nasir 2011: 79–81), *ulema* (theologians) were appointed as members of the National Film Censorship Board and they begin to sit on all five PTV stations to vet the PTV programmes (Toor 2011:133–153).[3]

Fashioning media apparatuses, Zia-style, in line with the needs of a sitting regime can be understood only if the media is viewed in the context of the state–society nexus discussed earlier. An overdeveloped state, assuming its praetorian character (a process accelerated under the Zia dictatorship), would not tolerate any democratic transformation. This resulted in media censorship

[3] Sections of press and journalists' bodies offered fierce resistance. Besides open defiance, there were innovative ways to subvert censorship. But space will not allow an exploration of various struggles for a free press in Pakistan. Also, this chapter is restricted to the case study of TV medium.

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and a top-down control to project the military as the pivotal institution. An expression of this praetorian control of media in the 1980s onwards was the attempt to deploy PTV as an amplifier of Jihadi thought via the drama genre. Therefore, Alavi's thesis can be applied to the Pakistani media only in a qualified manner. However, in the post-liberalisation period, as it pertains to the role of the media the overdeveloped state as a concept is not nuanced for two reasons. First, social media has added a radically new dimension to any analysis of the media. Second, a regime of censorship/repression has been replaced with a structure of manipulation (including episodic violence) as will be examined in the following section. Aided by agenda-setting, the manipulated media content is overtly and covertly pro-military, a salient feature of the Pakistani media that Zaidi (2014) simply ignores.

Therefore, to demystify Pakistani media's misconceived role as an 'independent' entity, the next section starts by briefly demonstrating the expansion of the media spectrum in Pakistan since the 2000s and also briefly documents scholarly works suggesting that state–media relations have been transformed since 2000. The final section will demonstrate that the media remains state/military-dominated unlike the prevalent notion whereby the media is projected as being independent enough to have emerged as a separate actor in Pakistan's political economy.

THE PROPAGANDA MODEL IN A PRAETORIAN STATE

There were four television channels in 2003, nineteen in 2006 and ninety-one by 2013 (PEMRA 2014:25).[4] Ever since, a few channels have gone off-air while a couple of new channels have been launched. Expansion in the television spectrum has otherwise stalled. In terms of outreach, television has emerged as the largest medium: the internet reaches 20 per cent of the population, the radio 7 per cent, newspapers 18 per cent, while 73 per cent of the population spends time watching television (Orient 2013:39). The percentage could be higher, since these numbers are under-reported. In a country of more than 180 million people, 124 million (21 million out of 26.5 million households) have access to TV. However, cable and satellite penetration is restricted to 11.5 million households (Gallup Pakistan 2014:4).[5]

[4] In addition, twenty-eight foreign channels have landing rights.

[5] As signposted in the Introduction, given TV's domination over other media segments, this chapter restricts itself to television.

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When Zaidi (2014) refers to the media, at least implicitly, he is implying to news channels. By 2017, there were thirty-five news channels commanding 20 per cent of the audience share. A majority, 57 per cent, instead watches entertainment channels (Aurora 2017). In practice, noisy news channels despite a decline in their popularity (but not their influence) continue to engage the attention of media critics as well as scholars researching on Pakistan. Ahmed (2009:10), for instance, claims that unlike other states that have three mutually balancing centres of power, that is, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, Pakistan has six 'existential' pillars of the state: 'Legislature, Executive, Judiciary, Army plus the Establishment, Media, and Jihadi Organisations'. Jaffrelot (2015:411–426), likewise, has described the Pakistani media as the 'fifth estate' at least during the last phase of the Musharraf dictatorship.[6] Anand (2014) and Ahmad (2011:456–457) also foreground the media's enhanced role in the polity of Pakistan. While acknowledging huge transformations that the Pakistani media has undergone since the 1990s, including an expanded TV spectrum and the emergence of social media, the argument in this chapter is that the changes have occurred in the *forms* of media rather than their *substance*.

Arguably, three key elements help analyse the political economy of the media: agenda-setting, ownership and representation. In terms of agenda-setting, the military guides and coerces as it sees necessary. In terms of ownership, traditional media houses have consolidated their position and the global media have largely stayed away for various reasons. Representation wise, a 'white' authority consisting of the Urdu–Punjabi[7] duo dominates the screens. I will begin by examining and explaining the military's role in agenda-setting which will contradict Zaidi's reading of the Pakistani media whereby the media has been assigned an oppositional and independent role. Empirical evidence does not substantiate such a characterisation.

The Media is Khaki in Content

Zaidi (2014) views the Abbottabad operation to hunt down bin Laden as an important episode that pushed the military on to the back foot. Ironically, the media coverage of the military's role in that episode shows that a vital question

[6] Siddiqa (2016), however, argues that the military was consolidating its domination of media during this period.

[7] Urdu here denotes geography (Karachi) rather than strictly symbolising an ethnicity.

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regarding the military's responsibility in this showdown was marginalised. For instance, monitoring of three news channels – Geo, Dunya and PTV – between 2 and 11 May 2011 (ten days after bin Laden's assassination) shows the results encapsulated in Table 11.1:

Table 11.1 Coverage of bin Laden's assassination in 3 major Pakistani channels

Channel	*Topics discussed in headlines*	*Headlines discussing the failure of the military*	*In terms of %*
Geo	216	14	6
Dunya	184	9	5
PTV	63	7	11

Source: Marwan (2015).

The table shows the very minimal focus on the perceived failings of the military regarding the Abbottabad operation. This was not a coincidence. On 6 May, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) summoned twenty mainstream anchor-persons and journalists to be briefed by the army chief, General Kayani, and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief, General Pasha. Following the briefing, the Pakistani media single-mindedly began to propagate the conspiracy theory that no operation was ever conducted in Abbottabad (self-monitoring).

The expansion of the media has allowed the military to systematically encourage a narrative that is not merely friendly in relation to the security establishment but has also allowed the military to develop 'a new nationalist discourse to keep its institution relevant not only for the state but for society as well' (Siddiqa 2017:328). There is accumulating evidence suggesting that the military retains a strong control of the media. The military manipulates the Film Censor Board, sets the news agenda, funds and facilitates feature films, drama serials and social media sites that amplify pro-military narratives (Abbas 2017; Farooq 2015; Ansari 2014) and, when necessary, employs violent means. Amongst the many more recent manifestations of intimidation and retribution were the threats passed to Absar Alam in 2017, who was the head of the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) at that time. He held a sensational press conference and sought government protection against the military.

Consequently, not merely is military corruption edited out, the media seldom broaches topics the military would find unpalatable and nor does it deviate from the military-dictated narratives on such strategic questions as Balochistan,

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Kashmir, Afghanistan and the Taliban. How has the military muscled in on the media's political economy as an agenda-setter?

Arguably, there are four very good reasons to explain the military's command and control of the Pakistani media, 2001 onwards. First, the military as the architect of the media market's liberalisation was able to shape policies relevant for the electronic media. PEMRA was, in fact, midwifed by the ISPR. Likewise, the Frequency Allocation Board (FAB), which allocates frequency to television channels, is over-represented by the government and channels require a clearance from the security agencies to get their licenses. Second, the military commands a substantial infrastructure to influence and manipulate the media through both the ISPR and ISI's 'Media Cell'. In 2013, for instance, pro-military 'TV analyst' Zaid Hamid was accused by his former personal secretary of taking monthly bribes from the ISI to amplify pro-military narratives.

Third, the element of ideological affinity between the military and on-screen celebrities has further facilitated the hegemonic khaki hold over the television medium. Finally, when carrots do not serve the purpose, the stick is deployed to discipline an anchor-person or a channel not following the desired line.[8] In 2010, *The News*' correspondent Umer Cheema was kidnapped and tortured; in 2011, *Asia Times*' Saleem Shehzad was murdered; Hamid Mir, Geo TV's star presenter, was injured in a gun attack in 2014. Each time, fingers were pointed at the ISI by the victims or their families. In fact, the attack on Hamid Mir triggered the most high-profile row between the military and the Jang Group, Pakistan's most influential media house. Despite a helping hand lent to Geo by the civilian authorities (Nauman 2014), the Geo–ISI dispute was soon settled in the favour of Pakistan military, demonstrating the relative places the media and the military occupy in the Pakistani polity. In a month's time, Geo was publicly and privately offering apologies and Geo's position had eroded as a market leader as it had lost 80 per cent of its viewership (Khan 2014). There was a widespread view that the military was chastising Geo (DW 2014). For days, apologetic statements had not merely cluttered the Geo screen but also *The News* and *Jang* (the group's flagship broadsheets) were flashing the management's apology.

[8] That many media moguls have corruption cases pending in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), an institution established during the Musharraf era to investigate corruption cases, makes the task of the 'Media Cell' easy. Any media house not toeing the line can be summoned through the NAB.

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Further evidence of the military's might over media matters is the civil–military dispute over Bol TV. The rival channels in league with the civilian authorities wanted this outlet, seen as a protégé of the military establishment, to go off-air. Bol TV was launched by a Pakistani billionaire who was later implicated in a scandal of fake degrees which provided PEMRA the pretext to ban it. However, in less than two years, the channel was back.

A combination of all the factors just described – and illustrated through the instance of Geo network's row with the ISI – has transformed the privately owned commercial channels into mouthpieces of the military establishment. The military–media alliance is further facilitated by the fact that the commercial interests of the 'white authority' in the Pakistan media tie in well with GHQ's 'security concerns'.

'WHITE AUTHORITY' IN PAKISTANI MEDIA

'White authority' in the Pakistani media is a concept I borrow from Arif (2014). According to Arif, most decision-makers in the North American media are 'White', and the way the prevalence of 'Whiteness' in the media helps reinforce white privilege, also suggest that that the Pakistani media is also dominated by a kind of 'whiteness'.

This 'white' authority in the Pakistani media constitutes people from two particular ethnic and linguistic groups who hold important positions, and these people promote and protect privileges and interests of particular groups. The evidence is clear. From among the top 100 columnists and anchors in Pakistan, more than 50 are from the Punjab, based in Lahore or Islamabad–Rawalpindi, whereas 25 to 30 are Urdu-speaking individuals from Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore. Among them, 12 to 15 are retired civil and military bureaucrats largely from Punjab (Arif 2014).

One explanation of this 'white' domination is commercial logic. A case in point is the coverage of the Balochistan province. Being unattractive for advertisers, Balochistan is simply excluded from TV coverage. A sign of Balochistan's exclusion is the absence of 'People's Meters' in the province in order to measure television ratings or TRPs. In 2007, 675 'People's Meters' were installed in eight cities of Pakistan, including 365 meters in Karachi alone. There was not a single meter installed in the entire Balochistan province by 2013 (Siddiqui 2013).

Ironically, Alavi (1972) had highlighted 'two outstanding facts' about Pakistani politics, the dominance of the civil–military oligarchy and the

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nationalist challenge to the oligarchy. The nationalist challenge to either the military manipulation of the media or the 'white' authority in the media has not emerged from the nationalist/periphery forces. An examination of the major media houses will reveal a nationalist presence as a second-tier player while an element of 'white' authority in the ownership of media is evident.

MEDIA MONOPOLIES

Before the liberalisation of the airwaves, the three major media houses were Dawn, Jang, and Nawa-i-Waqt. All three were founded at the cusp of Pakistan's creation in 1947. Another important media player which entered the business of journalism in the 1990s was the Lakson Group. All these were Karachi/Lahore-based groups and have consolidated/maintained their dominant position, post-liberalisation, despite the emergence of new players such as the ARY network (offering eight channels). However, the emergence of new players such as ARY or Dunya TV has only reinforced the 'white' authority in the media market. Owing to language barriers and the lack of economic might as well as cultural capital, 'non-white' networks such as the Sindhi-language channel KTN, has not posed any challenge to this Urdu-Punjabi domination.

Similarly, metropolitan capital is largely absent from the Pakistani media. Both these factors ('white' domination and absence of the metropolitan capital) highlight inadequacies of Alavi's thesis as a tool to examine the media, since the nationalist political challenge to the civil–military oligarchy never translated into a nationalist media threat to the civil–khaki hegemony. Likewise, metropolitan capital has shied away from the Pakistani media market. Zaidi (2014) does not cater either to a disarticulation of nationalist demands in the media or to the exclusion of subaltern classes. The media, in Zaidi's narrative, appears as the universal spokesman of Pakistani citizens. An insurgency has raged in Balochistan since 1999 but otherwise noisy channels have never articulated the nationalist Baloch concerns just as they have also ignored Sindhi and Pashtoon questions. Zaidi (2014) in his critique of Alavi (1972) also ignores the global dimension of the transformed Pakistani media besides their 'whiteness'. Since Zaidi (2014) poses his critique as a signpost for further research on the political economy of the state in Pakistan, his analysis may also serve as a launching pad for the future analysis of the Pakistani media in the context of state–media relations. His emphasis on a class-based analysis is equally vital to examine the media in the country as the 'media boom' has bypassed the subaltern and working classes. For instance, while

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even the mainstream press has been rendered ineffective by the 24/7 TV model, the working-class press, such as *Weekly Mazdoor Jeddojuhd*, has almost disappeared.[9] Meanwhile, launching even a modest television channel is beyond the financial capacity of the working classes. The costs of launching a TV channel in Pakistan can be roughly 10 million dollars, which is way beyond the limited financial resources of trade unions and other leftist organisations.

CONCLUSION

History and the role of the Pakistani media mirror the evolving character of the Pakistani state since 1947. This is not unique. Typically, in any given country, the state of the media is reflective of state–society relations. In the case of Pakistan, Alavi's notion of the overdeveloped state very much characterises the history of the Pakistani media until the 1990s. However, even prior to the 1990s, Alavi's overdeveloped state was not a perfect framework for understanding the political economy of the Pakistani media as the international bourgeoisie was largely absent. However, an element of top-down development and utter repression was determining the shape of the media in Pakistan roughly in line with Alavi's thesis.

Nevertheless, as Zaidi (2014) points out, the changing nature of Pakistani state–society relations have rendered Alavi's concept invalid. This chapter shows that the praetorian character of the Pakistani state gives us a better understanding of the media's political economy. In the present matrix, the military, in collaboration with the 'white' authority in the Pakistani media, controls and commands the political economy of the Pakistani media especially when we restrict our analysis to the medium of television.

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[9] I have documented the marginalisation of the subaltern classes in the transformed media post-1999 elsewhere (see Sulehria 2017).

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