PRACTICALLY FROM THE moment of its creation in 1947, Pakistan has been plagued by ethnic tensions, mis-management, and corruption. The profound incompetence of its civilian rulers in the first decade of independence created a political vacuum filled by the generals, who have ruled or dominated Pakistan, directly or indirectly, for much of its history. The country's dismal political record and lackluster socioeconomic development are all the more remarkable when contrasted with the relative success of its gigantic neighbor to the east. To be sure, India has also encountered ethno-religious conflicts, widespread poverty, and many other challenges, but it has remained a functioning democracy with an increasingly promising economic future. Why has Pakistan failed where India succeeded? Why has it become an authoritarian state? Why have its armed forces been able to dominate its political life?

To place Pakistan's predicament in the proper perspective, we should consider the roots of its sovereign statehood--the colonial past, the circumstances of its founding, and the early years of its independence--and trace the evolution of its principal political player, the military. Three points are key. First, the political legacies of British colonialism impacted India and Pakistan differently. Second, the circumstances of British India's 1947 partition and the events of the immediate post-partition period suggest several reasons for the different political trajectories of its two successor states. Finally, within the first decade of its independence, the authoritarian mold of Pakistan's political system was cast, and since then we have witnessed different permutations of that early prototype. Thus, the Pakistani experience supports the argument that the fate of political transitions is frequently determined in the first few years after the fall of the ancien regime.

The British legacy

FEW IMPERIAL POWERS succeeded in leaving behind such a durable imprint on their subject peoples as the British did in South Asia. And after more than six decades of independence, no other Pakistani or Indian institution retains as much of its British origins as the armed forces, owing to their members' extensive training by and exposure to their British counterparts during the colonial era, the continued education of their elites at British institutions and, no doubt, to the military's relative separation from the rest of society. Four distinct legacies of the British India Army (BIA) are particularly relevant here. Three of these--professionalism, ethnocentric recruitment, and the army's aid to civil authorities--have had a similar effect on the armies of both successor states. The fourth--the British insistence on clear separation between the political and military domains--had a strong impact on India but eluded Pakistan. Let us take a closer look at all of them.

Professionalism. The British provided rigorous and modern military training and an attractive career option to qualified native Indians. The cream of the crop received officer education at Sandhurst in
England, but training was ongoing in the garrisons and bases throughout British India. Until 1939 the officer corps was relatively small and tight-knit, but the need for a much larger force in World War II required its quick expansion, which resulted in the changing ratio of British to Indian officers from 10:1 to 4.1:1. (1) Most importantly, the British instilled a military ethos that put high value on professional competence, and the officer corps of both independent Pakistan and India has kept these traditions alive.

Ethnic preference in recruitment. A more controversial legacy is the discriminatory view of the warlike qualities of various ethnic groups. One of the pillars of the BIA's success was its careful staffing policy. Recruiters generally avoided enlisting Bengalis and drew from regions in the west, especially the Punjab, which had mostly remained loyal to the British at the time of the anti-colonial Mutiny of 1857. The British firmly believed in "martial races"--that people originating from the northwest corner (Punjab) of India, Sikhs, the Gurkhas of Nepal, and members of the ksatriya (warrior) castes were better suited for military service than others (such as Bengalis or Sindhis). Promotion was based solely on ability and merit, and the BIA developed a distinctive and powerful esprit de corps. The obedience of the vast majority of rank-and-file soldiers was the result of attracting politically reliable and pliable individuals.

After more than six decades of independence, the remnants of the "martial races" idea are still present in India and continue to dominate Pakistani recruitment policy. Although the Indian government abolished ethnic, religious, and caste identity as the organizing principle of military units decades ago (the air force and the navy have long been completely integrated), in the army this process has not been completed. A few single-group regiments of the army have survived; they are the repositories of tradition and history--some originated in the 18th century--and are characterized by high morale and pride in service.

In Pakistan's army, however, ethnic imbalances are far more conspicuous. Bengalis, long considered unsuited for military life, suffered harsh discrimination and constituted only a small percentage of military personnel. Even though they were Pakistan's majority population in the 1960s they made up only 7 percent of the army--their proportion in the bureaucracy was 24 percent. (2) Not surprisingly, these inequities fueled their drive for independence, which bore fruit in 1971 with the breakup of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. Since the loss of East Pakistan, the discrimination against those from Baluchistani and Sindhi backgrounds has grown even sharper. On the other hand, the high regard for the martial virtues of Punjabis and, to a lesser extent, Pashtuns, has continued. Roughly three-quarters of all soldiers come from three districts of Punjab and two districts of the Northwest Frontier Provinces that contain only one-tenth of Pakistan's population. Nevertheless, Punjabis and Pashtuns (who share ethnic identity with about 50 percent of Afghans) are divided on a number of issues, especially on their views of the Taliban. Most Pashtun pilots, for instance, refuse to shoot at or bomb the Taliban.

Aid to the civil power. The British developed a system, called "aid to the civil power," for contingencies when local disturbances could not be contained by law enforcement personnel. In such situations military units augmented the police in putting down communal rioting. In exceptional
cases, martial law was imposed and authority was passed from the civil administrator to the local military commander for the duration of the conflict. After independence, the Indian Army's involvement in containing civilian--mostly ethno-religious--conflicts has become more frequent and pervasive, occurring dozens (and sometimes hundreds) of times annually. This practice is indicative of the state's growing reliance on the military for internal security duties and constitutes the most troubling aspect of Indian civil-military relations. The army's "aid to the civil" has concentrated in Kashmir and the tribally unstable northeast and, during the 1980s, in the Punjab.

The Pakistani army's conviction of civilian incompetence was reinforced from early on by similar and frequent "aid-to-civil" missions when the civil administration called out the troops to quell sectarian unrest. Because the local authorities have meager resources to work with, and because they lack confidence in the conflict-resolution capacity of the police and other internal security providers, they constantly ask for the help of the regular armed forces in subduing disturbances. In this respect, then, the British heritage equally affected both successor states.

Separating the army from politics. Although in the early years some of the proconsuls who governed British India were military officers, the BIA soon settled into a position that remained outside and above politics. The principle of the army's political subordination was unambiguous and the division between the civil and military spheres was unassailable: The army was responsible for recruitment, training, discipline, and strategic advice. Beyond that, civilians made the decisions, including when and in the service of what objective the army should be deployed.

This most important of British legacies has been preserved only in India. There the separation of the military establishment from politics has been so comprehensive and uncompromised that the problem actually is that politicians rarely seek the advice of, or benefit from the expertise of, top military specialists when formulating defense and security policy. In stark contrast, the pervasive civilian ineptitude in Pakistan created not just the opportunity but, from the perspective of concerned army officers, the need to enter politics and make things right after only a few short years of independence.

Generally speaking, the British have left a deeper impact in India than in Pakistan for a very simple reason. Some regions of Pakistan, especially in the west and northwest, were colonized only in the late 19th century, whereas much of what became India was under British rule from the 1770s. Notwithstanding the many adverse effects of British reign, it established a number of institutions indispensable to democratic governance: an independent judiciary, effective and relatively upright civil service, political parties, apolitical police and armed forces. Moreover, the British--planning for the long haul--also made huge investments in infrastructural improvements and developed, famously, the railway network that India still relies on for mass public transportation. Consequently, Pakistan, with its much more limited exposure to these institutions, was at a serious disadvantage when independence came.

Partition and its impact
THE PARTITION OF British India into an independent India and Pakistan in 1947 remains the formative moment in the subcontinent's political path and explains some of the profound differences between the two states. More specifically, it helps us understand not so much why India became a democracy but, far more so, why Pakistan did not.

The Muslim movement in British India was distrustful of democracy due to its firm belief that in an independent India the large Hindu majority would marginalize Muslims. The All India Muslim League, their main political organization, announced its support for a separate state to be named Pakistan as early as 1940. The League's longtime leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, wanted a homeland for Muslims but not an Islamic state; nonetheless, the campaign for Pakistan acquired powerful religious overtones in its final stages. The most ardent support for an independent Pakistan originated principally from British India's minority Muslim provinces, provinces which were to remain with India; in fact, most of Pakistan's leaders came from there. In the provinces where Muslims were in a majority they expected to retain political control and, therefore, saw no need for a separate Muslim state.

On Independence Day (August 14, 1947) Jinnah, originally from Bombay, became governor-general of Pakistan and his close associate, Liaquat Ali Khan, who spent most of his life in north India, became prime minister. Resentment built quickly against these "foreigners" in the new state because they monopolized leadership positions and designated their mother tongue, Urdu, as the country's official language even though Urdu language and tradition were alien to much of Pakistan--and to all of Bengali-speaking East Pakistan. Many Muslims who felt that their interests lay with India or were unable to emigrate stayed there: They now comprise the world's biggest, and increasingly marginalized, religious minority.

The British ruling on the boundaries of the two states was based in part on the result of the 1945-46 elections for the Constituent Assembly and various other legislative bodies, and on the Radcliffe Award, which was named after its author, Cyril Radcliffe, who had never set foot in India and worked from outdated maps and census information. Pakistan was carved out of five provinces of British India--including two partitioned provinces, Punjab and Bengal--and some princely states. The arrangement required the relocation of as many as 10 million people--some 6 million Muslims from India to Pakistan and 4 million Hindus and Sikhs to India--and its announcement was followed by extensive riots in several regions, particularly in the Punjab. The ethno-religious bloodletting that took place after independence was a series of massacres and counter-massacres, looting, and arson, and it claimed the lives of at least half a million people. The British failure to make the necessary preparations to help accommodate the population exchange exacerbated the situation. The matter of the princely states' accession on the eve of independence heightened the animosity between Muslims and Hindus and ultimately brought the military into the conflict. Although parts of the armed forces became embroiled in the violence and could not be relied upon to reestablish order, most of the army units involved--British, Indian, and Pakistani--tried to contain the killing and prevent even more destruction.

The eastern part of Bengal (which became East Pakistan and, after the 1971 civil war, the
independent state of Bangladesh) was slightly more populous than West Pakistan and comprised of about 85 percent Muslims with a 15 percent Hindu minority. All in all, the population of Pakistan was about one-fourth that of India. Many disagreements can be traced back to the hastily prepared partition and the pro-India sympathies of Lord Mountbatten—the last viceroy of the British Empire and independent India's first governor-general (1947-48). The feud regarding the state of Jammu and Kashmir could not be resolved and eventually led to war in October 1947, ending with a United Nations-brokered ceasefire the following January. This issue has not yet been settled and has been the source of numerous serious conflicts, some armed, between the two states.

Muslim suspicions about Hindu intentions were only reinforced by India's handling of the division of British India's assets. Delhi refused to release large amounts of funds that were Pakistan's due and cut off the flow of water of the Indus River, despite a water sharing agreement, because it did not want to aid Pakistan while they were embroiled in an armed conflict in Kashmir. In protest of what he deemed unjust Indian policies, Mahatma Gandhi started a well-publicized fast in January 1948 which he declined to break until the government adopted an "honorable" course regarding the release of Pakistan's property. (3) India's disreputable treatment extended to the BIA's military equipment, which was to be divided between the two successor states. The Delhi government failed to honor its pledge to deliver Pakistan its share: For instance, only 3 percent of the Pakistani portion of 165,000 tons of ordnance stores was delivered by April 1948 and none of its allocation of 249 tanks was ever transferred. (4)

In terms of military personnel, Pakistan's inheritance was a paper army of roughly 150,000 officers and men in 508 units-40 percent of them still on Indian soil on Independence Day. In fact, the staff of the new Pakistani General Headquarters in Rawalpindi arrived only in October 1947, but without many key documents because Indian officials refused to release them. (5) The officers of the BIA were told to choose between the Indian or the Pakistani armed forces. For Muslim officers who lived in India, and for the far fewer Hindu and Sikh officers living in Pakistan, partition meant having to leave their homes, uproot their families, and lose their property. After partition nearly all Muslim officers went to Pakistan and virtually all Hindu officers moved to or remained in India proper. Nevertheless, during the politically tense years leading up to partition a remarkable amity prevailed among most Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh officers.

In spite of their different post-independence developments, at the time of partition the two armies were not that different from one another. They came from the British India Army, shared a single ethos and institutional culture, and played no role in the political movement that led to independence. Owing to the shortage of high-ranking officers, both the Pakistani and the Indian armed forces employed British personnel for more than a decade after independence. Pakistan's army should have had 4,000 officers but there were only 2,500; to fill this deficiency the government retained 500 British officers and accelerated the promotion of native officers to fill higher ranks. (6) The real difference lay in the political culture in which the two armies were to function. The very nature of the creation of Pakistan goes far in explaining their different evolution.

Six effects of partition on Pakistan
THERE ARE MANY reasons why Pakistan has failed to sustain democratic governance and why its armed forces have assumed a dominant political role. Six of these are rooted in the partition itself. The geographic and social separation between East and West Pakistan. The geographic division between East and West Pakistan was produced by partition and it facilitated the isolation of the politically less influential but numerically superior Bengali population. The Pakistani political establishment was itself responsible for shortsighted and divisive policies--e.g., Bengali, the mother tongue of the majority of Pakistanis, did not become an official language; Bengal's economic development was impeded by pro-West Pakistan (and especially Punjab-centric) economic policies--that all but ensured losing the eastern part of the country. During the 24-year union of East and West Pakistan (1947-71) tensions between the two were constant because of Islamabad's patronizing, discriminatory, and heavy-handed policies toward its citizens in the east.

The social consequences of partition. The partition had two major long-lasting effects on Pakistani society. First, the movement of millions of migrants to the new state created instability and social upheaval. Second, the superimposition of the Urdu-speaking political and intellectual elite that was alien to the extant population of Pakistan (comprised of numerous distinct ethnic groups) generated widespread and long-term resentment and mistrust and made governance more difficult.

Low-level social development, incompetent and corrupt civilians. The state structures the British developed stayed in India. In terms of political and administrative infrastructure, Pakistan started with little more than nothing. It is worth looking at the photographs of a 1948 issue of Life magazine depicting the seat of the new Pakistani government as a row of tents. Contrasting this image with the palatial government buildings of India housing a small army of experienced and capable administrators makes the quandary of the young Pakistani state easier to appreciate. In 1947 Pakistan was essentially a feudal country with land concentrated in the hands of a few families, virtually no middle class, and a minuscule intelligentsia. Pakistan started out with extremely weak political institutions; its bureaucracy was small, disorganized, and incompetent. In fact, the only functioning state institution Pakistan inherited was the armed forces. Therefore, the inability of civilians to control the educated, disciplined, and ambitious officer corps is hardly surprising. The disparity with India, with its relatively cohesive institutions and a strong political leadership bent on subduing the military, could hardly be sharper.

Bad luck with founding fathers. Sheer misfortune also contributed to Pakistan's woes. Within a year of independence its founder, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, died of tuberculosis, and the country's first prime minister, Liaquat Khan, was assassinated at a political rally in 1951-one of the first in a long line of Pakistani politicians to be murdered. The contrast with India is, again, striking. While India benefited from brilliant and practiced leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and others who represented stability and continuity in the country's formative years, Pakistan became rudderless soon after independence, at a time when political direction, constancy, and steadfastness were most needed. This pattern has continued to play out since then: India has been led by legitimate and by and large effective civilian leaders while Pakistan has not been so fortunate.
The insecurity syndrome. From the beginning, Pakistani elites believed that India was an adversary, out to harm their country, and therefore that turning Pakistan into a fortress against India was essential. Pakistan's obsessions with security was bolstered by and partly rooted in India's failure to adhere to the terms of partition, viewed by Islamabad as an act of supreme betrayal. (9) Being the smaller, less populous state with what has been viewed an untrustworthy larger neighbor has continuously reinforced Pakistan's need to maintain a strong military machine. Most important, Pakistan's security deficit justified the disproportionate share of the state budget to be devoted to defense, thus increasing the armed forces' influence and diverting scarce resources from social and economic projects. The Pakistani Army, then, came to have a vested interest in continued hostility--thus rationalizing its claim on public resources. In fact, the Kashmir conflict was a readymade cauldron that the army had a stake in keeping at a boil.

The military as a state builder. In traditional societies the armed forces often fulfill three functions: maintain the established order, provide a channel for upward mobility, and spearhead modernization. (10) Over time, the Pakistani army fulfilled all three of these missions. They were more disciplined, deeply patriotic, and, especially early on, better educated than civilian elites. The primary motivation in the Pakistani generals' drive for political power was not self-enrichment but guarding the national interest. Although they were not responsible for achieving Pakistani independence, they did play a crucial role in keeping the country together. Circumstances practically forced them to abandon the "military-stays-out-of-politics" dictum of the BIA and become the essential state-building institution.

A few months after Pakistan's founding, its army was deployed against its former brothers-in-arms in the October 1947 Kashmir war. The military acquitted itself well, despite its restrained all-British high command, and made an important contribution to the stabilization of the post-partition regime. Given the yawning political vacuum and the feebleness of public institutions, it was only a matter of time until the army was to take charge of Pakistan's political administration. From the perspective of democratic development, this was a most ominous position for the armed forces to be in. In stark contrast, the Indian military's political masters succeeded in ensuring its continued apolitical stance. The hold Pakistani generals have managed to develop over their country's domestic politics originates from and is a direct result of the internal and external political conditions they encountered during the first few years of statehood. The earliest experiences of Pakistan forced its leaders to recognize the need for strong state institutions to protect the country's basic interests. But who were the individuals who comprised the state as a collection of institutions? Young, mostly inexperienced bureaucrats on the one hand and army officers with superior discipline, education, and a record of personal sacrifice on the other.

The early political role of the Pakistani generals was, in spite of repeatedly revised constitutions and quasi-democratic interludes, a prologue to several decades of military rule. To be sure, as coup-makers in many other contexts, the top brass usually enjoyed significant support from a population fed up with dishonest and inept politicians and were quick to justify their political interventions on the basis of the inability and dishonesty of civilian rulers.
A praetorian state

THE DISPARITIES BETWEEN India and Pakistan suggest that the political interventions of Pakistani generals should have been anticipated. Instead of the general elections that followed India's independence, in Pakistan only indirect elections were held through provincial assemblies. Elections, starting with those held in the Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province in 1951, were soon tainted by allegations of foul play. After the assassination of Liaquat Khan, the swiftly deteriorating conditions of Pakistani domestic politics were signaled by the rapid turnover of prime ministers and other top officeholders. Two important clues of the erosion of democratic practices were offered by Governor-General Ghulam Muhammad: In 1953 he dissolved Prime Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin's cabinet and, a year later, he disbanded the legislature when it attempted to place checks on executive authority.

The traumatic experience of partition, the Kashmir war, and a number of subsequent war scares increased the Pakistani officer corps's distress about military weaknesses and soon convinced them that the exigencies of state-building overrode the old British insistence on the separation of politics and the armed forces. In 1951, army officers in Rawalpindi, dissatisfied with the government's moral and material support of the military in Kashmir, conspired to assassinate General Douglas Gracey, the army's British commander-in-chief, and some top officials. The plot that came to be known as the Rawalpindi Conspiracy was easily foiled, but it hinted at the army's future political involvement. In fact, it was the beginning of the army's turn toward political power, fully realized when General Mohammad Ayub Khan, who succeeded Gracey as commander-in-chief in the same year, mounted a bloodless coup in 1958.

Considering Pakistan's strategic environment after independence, it was perfectly commonsensical for its government to grant the armed forces priority treatment. Already in 1948 Liaquat Khan announced that "the defense of the state is our foremost consideration; it dominates all other governmental activities." (11) Appointing General Mohammad Ayub Khan as defense minister in 1954, however, was unnecessary and, in fact, was tantamount to relinquishing civilian supremacy over the military establishment. Matters deteriorated further when, in October 1958, President Iskander Mirza--himself a Sandhurst-educated former general and defense minister--responded to the protracted political instability by abrogating the two-year-old constitution, abolishing political parties, removing the civilian government, and appointing Ayub Khan as chief martial law administrator. Three weeks later Ayub Khan deposed Mirza in the first of four Pakistani coups to date, thus starting a troubling history of military rule (1958-71, 1977-88, 1999-08).

The first four years of Ayub's rule were a moderate martial law regime in which the military's chain of command was preserved and major decisions were reached at its General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. Relying on elected and unelected representatives with a local administration "acting as the eyes, ears, and stick for the central government," this was a form of "guided democracy" not unlike Sukarno's experiment in Indonesia after 1957. To stabilize the political situation, Ayub Khan created an equal relationship between the army and the civilian bureaucracy and ended up running the country more efficiently than his civilian predecessors. Through the coercion of some politicians
and the co-opting of others, the military established a reasonably successful political regime that accommodated its own corporate interests. At the same time, Ayub's policies did not alter the economic position of ruling elites and actually widened the already deep inequities between East and West Pakistan and between rural and urban areas. In 1960, having retired from the army, Ayub became a civilian president and began to involve influential civilian politicians in governance.

In 1969, amid growing political unrest and agitation, the ill and increasingly isolated Ayub Khan handed power over to General Yahya Khan, the chief of army staff, who declared a new martial law regime. This second bloodless coup was exceptional because the new leader had no plans to reform the state or to "straighten out" Pakistan's political order. Furthermore, the transition was unconstitutional since in a case of presidential resignation power should have been transferred to the speaker of the assembly. Even though Ayub Khan strengthened civilian institutions in the second half of his reign, the top brass were reluctant to give up power. The transition from Ayub to Yahya merely underscored the armed forces' supra-constitutional authority.

During his short-lived regime (1969-1971) Yahya Khan extended the military's role as the guardian of the country's "ideological frontier," a notion that has prevailed ever since. His rule is most remembered by the December 1970 general elections, the country's first, and the war that followed and eventually resulted in Pakistan's dismemberment. The Awami League won 160 of the 162 seats reserved for East Pakistan in the 300-seat National Assembly; the runner-up Pakistan People's Party (PPP) took only 81 of the 138 seats reserved for West Pakistan. The two parties' support came exclusively from the eastern and the western parts of the country, respectively. Post-election talks between the two sides went nowhere because West Pakistani elites were unwilling to be ruled by the despised easterners.

In particular, PPP founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was loath to be deprived of the prime ministership and urged Yahya not to recognize the election results. The latter indefinitely postponed the pending National Assembly session, precipitating massive civil disobedience in East Pakistan. In March 1971, despite a military crackdown, the Awami League leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, proclaimed East Pakistan's independence as Bangladesh. As fighting escalated between the Pakistani military and the Bengali freedom fighters, about ten million Bengalis, mainly Hindus, sought refuge in India. In early December, India intervened on the Bangladeshi side and within two weeks the outmatched Pakistani forces surrendered. Yahya Khan handed over power of the much-diminished country to Bhutto.

Although Bhutto took political, administrative, and legal steps to disengage the military from politics, some of his closest advisers were generals; he shared the army's hawkish views on national security matters; and he embarked on an ambitious weapons acquisition and modernization program. Furthermore, when the new chief of army staff, General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, changed the armed forces' credo to Iman, Taqwa, jihad fi Sabil Allah (Faith, piety, and jihad for the sake of God), Bhutto did not object. Zia's coup in 1977, the third in Pakistan's brief history, signaled the return of military rule. He managed to stay in power for more than a decade in part because he maintained his control over and enhanced the role of the armed forces as the quintessential political
institution of the state. Zia's 1988 death, in a plane crash, was followed by a military-controlled transition to civilian rule and a decade-long experiment with democracy, featuring four elections and four civilian governments (two each headed by Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif), none of which completed their scheduled tenure. Even during this brief quasi-democratic interlude there was merely an appearance of civilian supremacy over the armed forces. In Pakistan, only a thin line separates military and political power, and once generals decide that their institutional and corporate interests are not sufficiently safeguarded, they are likely to take over the reins of government. So did, in October 1999, General Pervez Musharraf who stayed in power for nine years before very reluctantly allowing the return of a civilian administration.

Failed praetorians

SOON AFTER INDEPENDENCE, a political system began to take shape in Pakistan in which army generals hold the ultimate levers of power. Whatever authority they grant to civilian politicians and for how long is entirely up to them. There are different ways to explain this outcome but, as I argued above, historical circumstances--namely, the colonial heritage, the partition and its aftermath, and the formative years following independence--played an exceedingly important role.

Military rule is a terrible alternative to functioning democratic governance. At the same time, one must not be blind to the fact that not all praetorian systems are equally oppressive or incompetent, and some are actually preferable to other kinds of authoritarian rule. Military regimes in South Korea (1961-87), Brazil (1964-85), and Chile (1973-90), for instance, had all compiled respectable records of socioeconomic development, even if they were resolute in suppressing their political opposition. The point is that, unlike some of their colleagues elsewhere, Pakistani generals--and, to be fair, their occasional civilian counterparts--excelled in no substantive area of social or economic policy or administration.

Contemporary Pakistan has become the key to the satisfactory conclusion of the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan, who have gone further than establishing a mere foothold in Pakistan: They managed to become the de facto authority in an expanding swath of Pakistani territory. Although not yet a "failed state" by the exacting definition of social scientists, Pakistan has been wrecked by chronic instability compounded by its inability to control its own territory. Its military rulers have been incapable, particularly in the past two decades, of containing Islamic extremism and terrorist organizations that have threatened their own state and democracies near and far. The country is on course to become an Islamist state, not just an Islamic one. Pakistan's military governments have left it in the shaky position it now inhabits.

(1) Stephen P. Cohen, The Indian Army (Oxford University, 2001), 145.


(3) H.V. Hodson, The Great Divide: Britain, India, Pakistan (Hutchinson, 1969), 504-507.

(5) Shuja Nawaz, Crossed Swords: Pakistan: Its Army and the Wars Within (Oxford University, 2008), 32-33.


(7) Even today, these Urdu-speaking migrants, termed Muhajirs, constitute a distinct ethnic group in Pakistan.


(13) Haqqani, Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military, 51.

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