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Regime-Type Oscillation
Version 1.0

In 1999, General Pervez Musharraf surprised many observers when the Pakistani army overthrew the civilian government of Nawaz Sharif in a bloodless coup. Such events were supposed to have been artifacts of the past, as liberalism and democracy have emerged triumphant. In fact, the literature on the military coup d'état has become largely abandoned and of what exists historically focused. While the recent events in Pakistan certainly warrant further exploration of the dynamics which underlie the military coup, it is the oscillation between military and democratic regimes in Pakistan and other states whose explanation is the ultimate objective of this study. However, to answer this question, it is necessary to explore two regime-change processes: (1) the potentially-violent military overthrow of civilian governance and (2) the relinquishment of power by the military to a successor civilian government.

The Oscillation of Regimes: A First Pass

The proposal here is reactive to two literatures of comparative politics (1) classic modernization and (2) triumphant liberalism. Included in the first group are such stars as Samuel Huntington, the latter would include Francis Fukuyama. Modernization theorists sought to provide guidance to American foreign policy by offering economic explanations for political outcomes. Seeing many dictatorships launched after the retreat of colonial powers they suggested that economic development of these societies would create a middle class which would facilitate and force a transition to a democratic final regime. In Political Order in Changing Society,

Samuel Huntington goes a step further. He welcomes dictatorships as a bulwark against communism and treats them as only a way-station on the road to modernization which democratic capitalism defined. The economic changes of modernization are inherently socially disruptive creating winners and losers. It is a process which is difficult to execute under democratic governance. The temporary benign dictatorship can shepherd a state through this shaky period and relinquish authority after societal changes have been affected. For Huntington the rise of these (right-wing) dictatorships was a good thing. Here it is argued that authoritarian rule need neither be short-lived nor beneficial to societal development. In fact authoritarian phases may be part of a cycle of stagnation. The second literature of interest here is similarly unresponsive to empirical discrepancies. Fukuyama in his *End of History* et al treat the arrival of a state-society at liberal democracy as at an end point from which no further substantive development is warranted. That society is modern. The argument here is there is no end to historical development, transition begets transition in an interactive game amongst a variety of societal forces. Democracies can in fact fall. This inquiry seeks to tap this question: Why do states cycle between democracy and dictatorship while the dominant paradigms of development politics see a one-way march of history?

Post-partition political development in Pakistan has followed a discernible cycle of oscillating between military dictatorship and illiberal democracy, spending half of the country's lifespan under each regime type. At its founding, Pakistan was a secular constitutional republic. A key champion of Pakistan's separation from India, Muhammad Ali Jinnah was a strong voice for secularism amongst a population mobilized by confessional identity. Jinnah never served as

Prime Minister of the new state and died soon after partition¹. Pakistan's civilian governments used Islamist appeals to establish public support and create a national identity². It is important to remember, the Pakistan of 1947 to 1971 included the present state of Bangladesh (then, East Pakistan). Bengalis accounted for 56% of the population, densely concentrated 1200 miles away from the capital across hostile India in relative deprivation. Bengalis were underrepresented in the officer cadres and national civil service relative to their share of the population. West Pakistan itself was ethnically divided with the dominant group, Punjabis, but also Pithiness, Baluchistanis and Sindhis adding to the mix. The new state adopted Urdu, the classical language in use by the ulemas, as its official language. Democratic governments, dependent upon popular support at regular contests, have seized upon the Islamist appeal, de-secularizing Pakistani society. As this process has run afoul of civil liberties guarantees, rights have been restricted. These actions continue to a point at which the constitution or stability of the Pakistani state is in question. The army intervenes in defense of the constitution, halting Islamicization of the country. After a variable period of time, the military responds to its lack of legitimacy by liberalizing society and eventually promising democratic elections for a successor civilian regime.

Regime Type	Response to the Legitimacy Question
Democratic	Building an Islamist Constituency (Contraction of Rights)

¹ A counterfactual to consider in future work would assess the potential role Jinnah could have had in ameliorating the conditions of the vicious cycle to be described below.

² The construction of Pakistani identity is another area which could use more development in the academic literature.

Military Dictatorship	Expansion of Civil Liberties
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Political Actors and Programs in Pakistan

There are five major actors in Pakistani politics, regardless of regime-type: (1) the army; (2) separatist or minority factions; (3) Islamists; (4) established politicians and (5) India. Survival-maximizing politicians consider these actors and their inter-relationships when formulating their actions.

One of the major political actors in Pakistani politics over the past half-century has been the army, or more specifically the officer cadre of the army. As in many post-colonial states, the military is the most highly-organized institution in Pakistani society predating currently-active political parties and being designed to efficiently carry-out the action-decisions of superiors. The individuals who comprise this group are disproportionately drawn from small-land holding families of the Punjab. The army is the dominant branch of the armed forces in terms of manpower and budgetary allocations. The literature on military coups (Aguero, Nordlinger) has found the officer grades to be the pivotal subset of the military in executing the overthrow of governments in developing countries. The Pakistani officers share confessional, ethno-linguistic and class origins which form a reenforcing cleavage in a potentially divided society. This Pakistani army has participated in political processes in a variety of manners from pressuring policy-making decisions to the seizure of the state apparatus.

The second player in Pakistani politics is formed by the collection of separatist or autonomy-seeking minority (non-Punjabi) factions. These politicians capitalize on perceptions in their consistencies that Islamabad does not represent their interests as it is Punjabi-dominated. Never being able to rule the nation, these minority factions have advocated for policy

initiatives ranging from decentralization to separation. Often the activities of the factions have had a locally-destabilizing undermining the current government's, regardless of regime-type, ability to maintain law and order. The military government of Ayub Khan and the civilian government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto capitalized on the previous regime's inability to resolve the Bengali question. Musharraf's law and order claim was centered upon Sharif's failure to ameliorate MQM agitation in the Sindh. Politicians seeking national control face legitimacy questions when unable to successfully, defined as stopping the instability not necessarily peacefully, resolving separatist pressures.

Thirdly, Islamist factions command the loyalties of millions of Pakistanis and are endowed with institutional hierarchies apart from the state. While founded as a secular state, Pakistan has to this point experienced difficulty in constructing a national identity apart from the confessional one of the vast majority of its citizens: Islam. The important leaders of Islamic hierarchy are the ulema (and their supporting politicians). While a variety of policy prescriptions are advocated for by the Islamists, ranging from increased funding for religious schools to the imposition of a Taliban-style regime, all call for the de-secularization of Pakistan. Working for a credible basis for identity construction and an institutional hierarchy widely dispersed in society and independent of the state apparatus, Islamists have become a powerful element in Pakistani society.

Politicians ultimately are the decision-makers under the civilian regimes. Responding to questioned legitimacy claims prompted by an inability to manage economics, corruption or societal order politicians have turned to Islamizing policies. The calculation is simple: in a multi-ethnic, class-divided society with an underdeveloped national civic identity religion

provides the potential cohesive element to bind the people and the government, or at least defuse ulema-agitated criticism from the Islamist factions.

While not formally a component of Pakistan's government-selection process, to leave India out of the mix would be a mistake. India's role as the other is employed by both nationalist factions as a unifying tactic. Specific policy calculations take India into account. Furthermore, no description of the Musharraf coup of 1999, on which this model is based, could be told without a discussion of Pakistan's relationship with India. India, the more powerful ex after a bitter divorce, fulfils the role as an enemy for the variety of social groups within Pakistan. Possessing a conventional military advantage of three-to-one or more across all the major military and demographic categories, and sharing with Pakistan a history of hostility and past conflict India is a latent threat to Pakistani self-conceptualizations. Following Herrman and Fischerkeller's approach³ Pakistani elites perceived India in an enemy image⁴. In image theory all actions of India would be interpreted in light of the conception of that country as an enemy: positive actions must have alternative motives. Being ever-watchful for future conflict becomes a concern of all governments furthermore, internal instability is doubly-dangerous as it incurs not only domestic difficulties but weakens Pakistani capabilities relative to India. In another context, India as enemy is useful. Like the American treatment of the USSR during the Cold War, the powerful enemy is used to rally support around a given political faction and impeach the authenticity of political enemies of said faction. In this way, India cannot avoid being a political factor in

³ Herrman & Fischerkeller. Beyond the enemy image and spiral model: cognitive-strategic research after the cold war. International Organization. 1995: 415-50.

⁴ My A Cognitive Approach to the Kargil Crisis of 1999: Indian Decision-Making at a Time of Crisis (forthcoming thesis) is an attempt to use image theory to explain behavior from the other side.

Pakistani calculations.

Phase I: Democracy to Dictatorship

Drawing upon the history of the Pakistani case, some broad generalizations can be put forward. When democracies fail to perform in a state in which the normative value of democratic governance is insufficiently established, the regime faces a crisis of legitimacy. **Civilian regimes respond to crises of legitimacy by contracting rights.** In seeking-out political allies to sustain power, these civilian governments ally themselves with exclusionary factions based upon salient identities of a social group large enough to provide sufficient support. To satisfy their new allies, civilian governments adopt policies which support the social groups aims, often contravening the constitutional state and trampling upon the civil liberties of dissenters.

There are five key ingredients to a military coup⁵ (1) economic stagnation, (2) a perceived threat to the military's corporate interests, (3) an officer cadre disproportionately drawn from a subgroup within the society, (4) politicization of the junior officer cadres and (5) history of political involvement by the military. Economic stagnation is defined as zero or negative real GDP growth per capita over a period of at least three quarters. The military's corporate interest is comprised of not only budgetary allocations but autonomy in the selection of its leaders. These interests are threatened when a government reduces the share of budgetary allocations, micro manages operational policies or selects senior officials (e.g., army chief of staff) to whom the officer cadre is opposed. This is a dichotomous variable; threats to the military's corporate interest will be coded as present, based upon events data, when (1) military-

⁵ Sections of this typology are based upon unpublished work by Richard Sisson.

controlled budget allocation exhibit real decline (2) personnel numbers fall or (3) there is civilian intervention in operational or promotion activities. As noted above, an officer cadre drawn from a non-representative subset of society may collectively act upon common interests equating them with those of the institution. The percentage of commissioned officers belonging to the military's most populous politically-salient social group is divided by the percentage of that social group in the entire country yielding an indicator of over representation. The Sandhurstian tradition of military subordination to civilian authority can be undone with politicization of the individuals in the military. Islamist politicians drawing upon confessional affiliation which extends into the military population have politicized especially the enlisted servicemen. Higher ranking officers perceive this, quite accurately, as potentially detrimental to maintaining a clear chain of command. The spending by political parties and their affiliates in media markets surrounding military bases as a proportion of their total spending divided by the residents' proportion of the population is used as the measure.⁶ The precedent of past political involvement by the military establishes the operational procedures by which it is to be executed again. Recorded is the time (in years) elapsed since the last coup. A previous coup within the personal life span of officers increases the likelihood of a future coup. These form the structural enabling conditions for a military coup but any coup requires action by bureaucratic leaders, typically of the officer cadre. Officers choose to act on a calculation of their interests being advanced or defended by such action.

When seizing the state apparatus in a coup, the military disputes the civilian

⁶The goal here is to detect whether parties are targeting the military for political support. Another indicator may be better employed.

government's legitimacy on three grounds (1) economic mismanagement (2) corruption and (3) a failure to maintain law and order. These criteria are then the test of the new government. Military regimes initially address the issues by taking actions against the supporters of the previous regime reportedly to weed out the corruption. Martial law is imposed to restore order in unstable areas.

Phase II: And Back Again

Military regimes themselves face difficulties in establishing legitimacy. While under performing democracies can reference their popular mandate, even if it is becoming dated, military dictatorships rely upon wholly instrumental legitimacy. The military governments of Pakistani history have enhanced their claims to legitimacy through a process of liberalization: terminating martial law, extending civil liberties, and committing to relinquish power to a new civilian government. **Military regimes respond to crises of legitimacy by expanding rights.** While the military may peacefully surrender power, it need not be voluntary. If the army is unable to deliver on its coup promises (1) economic growth (2) clean governance and (3) stability, there may be little choice but to loosen reigns on power. Non-democratic regimes depend upon if not the support of the population, its cooperation. When approval rates fall, military regimes must take two choices to gain popular compliance (1) coercion or (2) concessions. The latter, often less expensive, has always been chosen by the Pakistani army regimes. They attempt to draw in additional supporters for the regime by offering a degree of liberalization and power-sharing.

Hypotheses

When faced with crises of legitimacy the belief on the part of relevant segments of the population in the government's right to authority, civilian regimes contract rights and military regimes expand them. These processes combine to form a cycle by which regime type oscillates. This study does not account for how the initial regime-type is selected. There have been extensive studies considering macro-variables and regime-type (see Crenshaw, and others). One finding was US and UK colonies have been setup initially as democratic regimes with preindependence autonomy establishing the institutions. It is speculated that the (1) preindependence institutions (2) political culture of the mother country (3) character of the independence struggle and (4) preference of specific leaders would influence the selection of the initial regime. While the initial regime type question is interesting for future exploration this model can be entered at any point in the process. It begins with a civilian regime as that is what the derivation case Pakistan's history entailed.

(1) Civilian Regime [Initial Regime-Type: Dichotomous coding civilian or military. What is the type of regime?]

(2) Unable to Effectively Govern (Crisis of Legitimacy) as defined by their successors stated criteria namely a failure to achieve economic growth for three quarters, root out corruption or maintain law and order in areas relevant to national cohesion. [Economic growth: real GDP growth per capita (CIA estimate which uses PPP conversions); Corruption Rating: Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index⁷ score increased over the regime's term; Law and Order: Tatu Vanhannen's (1999) index of ethnic violence scale coded from events data increased

⁷ Uses a 10-point scale with 0 highly corrupt (<http://www.transparency.de>)

over the regime's term].

(3) Turns to Exclusionary Factions for Political Support. An evaluation of parties and factions in the governing coalition. All parties in the coalition are assigned an exclusiveness score on a five-point scale, weighted for their share of parliamentary seats. An increase in exclusionary support for the government is coded as trait present.

(4) Implements Policies for Its Allies (Contraction of Rights). In return for support on confidence votes new exclusionary allies the coalition leaders need to implement policies advocated for by the factions upon which they are dependent. [Policy Action on Civil Liberties: Change in the Freedom House Freedom Country Rating scores from the previous year. Does a given regime expand or contract rights?]

(5) Tramples Upon Military Interests. The military has a number of interests, some of the most fundamental are maintaining the institutional and territorial integrity of the constitutional system, as well as defending its own corporate interests. [Do these policy shifts threaten any of these core interests?]

(6) Military Coup [from events data]

(7) Military Regime [Regime-Type: Dichotomous coding civilian or military. What is the type of regime?]

(8) Unable to Effectively Govern (Crisis of Legitimacy) [same as above]

(9) Seeks Allies in Society Consistent with Aims. Initially the military regime will impose martial law for the period during which it establishes itself. Yet if it fails to effectively govern, seeking to avoid overthrow or mass unrest, the regime forges an alliance with social groups in exchange for policies. [change in the number of non-military government officials holding core

portfolios]

(10) Liberalizes (Expansion of Rights) [Policy Action on Civil Liberties: Change in the Freedom House Freedom Country Rating scores from the previous year. Does a given regime expand or contract rights?]

(11) Transfers Power to Civilian Regime [from events data, change in regime?]

For most of the variables mentioned data sets will have to be constructed (not available pre-packaged for Pakistan). At this point it would be useful to address alternative explanations.

Firstly, this model assumes rationality but not perfect information. The political choices of governments here are made based upon their perceptions their calculations which may also utilize more scientific methods including polling can be inaccurate. Two critiques would attack the failure to account for agency or political culture. This is a structural model once it begins which again is beyond the scope of the project. The actors here are representatives of institutions fulfilling the institution's rational interests. Actions are so structurally constrained that actors will not be able to have a significant effect. This of course is an empirical question. While the political culture of a specific country Pakistan may influence the derivation of the model, by testing cross-nationally, the factor will be isolated. If this model fails to have explanatory value future studies will have to consider the role of these alternative factors in the derivation case.

Cases and the Domain of Applicability

Although this study focuses upon Pakistan over its independent history to generate the model, the domain to which tests should be performed extends to all states which meet the following conditions (1) moderate to strong threats to territorial integrity as perceived by political

administrative or military elites (2) incongruities in policy preferences between the most highly organized group in society and the most widely organized affiliation (3) incomplete construction of national identity (the stateness question) and (4) a crisis of legitimacy. At present the Pakistani case will be vetted in great detail for empirical derivation of the model. Besides Pakistan, systematic structured-focused case study comparisons over the post-independence periods of Nigeria, Turkey, Thailand, Argentina and Chile was be considered. The model will be empirically tested against each of these to evaluate the presence of the trend or whether this is a Pakistan-only phenomenon. As Chile varies in terms of its ability to have periods of stable democracy it will be especially important to see which parts of the causal chain postulated are missing. These six cases drawn from five of Huntington s civilizations while they should not be seen as emblematic of their civilization type offer the potential to control for cultural factors.

Expected Findings and the Goal of the Project

Unlike some other studies, this one explicitly aims at prediction. When tested, the findings will show that the trend repeats again and again in Pakistani history. Furthermore, this cycle of military and civilian regime oscillation is expected to continue in the future. The major policy-oriented question is: How can Pakistan stop this cycle? What can the histories of these other countries tell us? Will Pakistan democratize and Turkey return to military rule? One of the regime types must demonstrate itself effective in governance on the three criteria listed above forming the basis for instrumental legitimacy upon which a more long-lasting form can be built. For a sustainable democracy to take root (1) the army must adopt the practices of Sandhurst and

(2) a civic identity must be constructed for the country.

What are the implications for US foreign policy? The foremost objective in terms of humanitarian motives should be to facilitate the creation of stability. Regime oscillation retards economic development and degrades society's ability to advance. Regardless of regime-type stability will require popular legitimacy, first on the basis of performance of governance and later for the system itself. External actors can help through directed economic assistance as deprivation is at the root of the problem. The cases may inform of whether these policies if attempted have been effective.