

## Pakistan: Identity in Foreign Policy and Anti-Westernism

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**Abstract:** *This article aims at dealing with different dimensions of Pakistan's foreign policy, particularly the challenges to it during and after the Cold War. These challenges were mostly unilateral in the sense that Pakistan was captive to the grand American design in the Middle East and in Western Asia. There is much anti-American and anti-Western rhetoric by right-wing parties, both religious and non-religious, particularly after 9/11. The article attempts on developing an understanding on identity constructions that accompanied the Pakistani foreign policy collaboration with USA., the research seeks to understand what national identity constructions were attempted by the Pakistani foreign policymaking elite in the context of a foreign policy convergence between Pakistan and the USA. Therefore, examines the contradictions in the attempts at identity construction that how Pakistan the pursuit of security and consequent policy is accompanied by certain identity constructions highlighting the conformity non-conformity" of the element of "anti-western.*

**Key Words:** Pakistan Foreign Policy, Anti-Western Sentiments, Politics

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### Introduction

Pakistan is a South Asian country, culturally closer to Central Asian and Middle Eastern countries. It shares its border with Iran and Afghanistan in the west, India in the east and China in the north, and is one of the most strategic and sensitive areas of the world. Since its independence in 1947, its foreign policy has been security- centric due to the long eastern border with India, with whom Pakistan has fought three wars. After the invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, both the eastern and western borders became volatile. One of Pakistan's greatest challenges was the Soviet-Afghan war (1979–89) and its proxy presence in that war, but it also provided the opportunity to sort of rejuvenate its relationship with the US. Pakistan's enormous economic reliance on US aid and financial

institutions increased especially during the war with Afghanistan. Pakistan's relationship with the US had been fractured during the 1990s; despite that, it became a significant non-NATO ally in the war on terror in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Research Methodology

This paper is based on the conceptual framework of the qualitative research method combined with discourse analysis. The analysis of the document has become a systematic approach for evaluating and reviewing the document both in print and electronic format. The determinants of foreign policy and its ideology vis-à-vis international political factors has been analyzed particularly of the period after 9/11. The dynamics of the situation after 9/11 necessitates Pakistan's

foreign policy to bring fundamental changes to undertake reforms particularly fostering Madressah reforms, disrupting radical network, and resource denial to radical groups, in order to become a front line state in fighting terrorism in the world. This was a major point of convergence of interest between Pakistan and the United States to address the terrorism being the next-door neighbour of Afghanistan. However the US policy towards Muslim states, including Pakistan created some divergence and anti-western sentiments particularly in the religious political parties in Pakistan, which has will be described and analyzed through the content and discourse analysis of the documents available.

### **Hypothesis**

On the basis of above description, the following two inquiries are made in this paper:

**One:** Anti-Western feelings in the post-colonial states including Pakistan have been a defining feature of such regions; however it has been contextualized more after 9/11. The anti-Westernism exists in Pakistan as an outcome of Pakistan foreign policy towards West and United States, particularly being Pakistan as a front-line ally of the war on terrorism. It has generated populist anti-Western feelings which are conceived on the basis that West and U.S.-Pakistan relations were not based on shared perspectives. Theoretically, it predicts that in the current neo-colonial era, anti-Western feelings might create more Islamic and less democratic attitudes. The turn toward thick populism characterized by anti-Western discourses in which the West is resituated as the 'other' of Pakistan political and religious identity.

**Two:** Pakistan's geopolitical environment remains a threat to its external and internal security, the policy makers remain to impinge between the ideology as one dimension of the foreign policy and to harmonize it with the reality of international politics and economy. Pakistan relations with West and United States will stand or fall is based on whether they converge with the ideology and identity conceived by the religious parties and as a

result, Pakistan relationship with the West and United States will increasingly intersect with issues that go far beyond the war on terrorism.

### **Pakistan's Identity during the Cold War Era**

Pakistan is a Muslim state with strong theological/ideological underpinnings. The renowned historian Paul Kennedy considered Pakistan among the nine 'pivotal states' which are emerging markets exerting regional influence. From day one, Pakistani leaders were of the opinion that the division of India was not consistent with the wishes of the Indian National Congress; in less than a year after its birth in August 1947, skirmishes started in the region of Kashmir; and the UN declared it a disputed area between India and Pakistan. Thereafter, Pakistan and India became rivals. Pakistan's foreign policy became principally India-centric. In the early years, due to the socialist leanings of India's first Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru, India accommodated the erstwhile Soviet Union more than the US. Pakistan, meanwhile, signed defense pacts like SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation) in 1954, and a year later, CENTO (Central Treaty Organization) to secure its defense needs. In 1955, Pakistan also signed a defense pact with the US to secure its border in case of a Russian threat; such concerns over her borders' security enabled Pakistan to develop more cordial relations with the US.

Foreign aid was a vital component of Pakistan's Cold War military alliance with the US. Pakistani leaders felt confident that Pakistan would now be able to defend its boundaries. In 1956, Pakistan received US\$ 162.5 million, in aid from the US which was much higher than India (which received US\$ 92.8 million). Pakistan furthered this US interest in other directions for other reasons, for instance, to contain the Communist bloc; for example, one of the American military bases in Peshawar was being used for spying on the Communist bloc. This, in turn, diminished its prospects of better relations with the Soviet Union; in fact, Pakistan was even threatened by the Soviet Union of serious

consequences if it allowed any of its territory to be used by the US against the Soviet Union. In turn, the Soviet Union further strengthened its relations with India, and also gave diplomatic support to Afghanistan for not accepting the Durand Line as the permanent border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In the backdrop, “in this period, and during the course of her alliance with the US, Pakistan suffered at the global level by adopting policies according to the US wishes in important international developments of the time. Thus, Pakistan’s Foreign Policy attracted a lot of criticism from within different segments of the society, particularly from those belonging to the extreme left and right of the political divide”. (Amin, [2000](#))

Pakistan earned the wrath of the Soviet Union particularly after the U-2 spy plane piloted by Francis Gary Powers was shot down over their territory in 1960. The Soviet Union threatened to wipe out Peshawar city from which the U-2 aircraft took off. Soon after, following the Sino-Indian border war of 1962, the US provided huge support to India; consequently, Pakistan felt that it was being ignored in the South Asian scenario of that time. Though Pakistan was never happy with US support to India, it always remained attached to the US as a lackey of the Western bloc because it had no other choice if it wanted to avoid any strong relationship with the Communist countries due to mutual ideological differences.

Pakistan's withdrawal from SEATO in 1972 and CENTO in 1979, and in turn joining the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), showed its fraternity to 'Third World' countries who wanted to break free from US tutelage. Still, Pakistan remained under the shadow of the US' foreign policy. There was, however, criticism within the US of providing more aid to Pakistan since the US always tried to pamper India, considering it an emerging power in South Asia and a future rival of China in the making. As a result, US aid to India increased tremendously by 1965: aid to Pakistan now amounted to only 50 percent of what India was receiving from the US. This

added to the frustration of policy-makers in Pakistan and the country protested to the US against its increased support to India arguing, that it had disturbed the Pakistan–India military balance causing anxiety that this military support would be used against Pakistan; this anxiety grew on the Kennedy’s changing policies towards Pakistan after the Sino-Indian clash in 1962. Pakistan suggested that the non-aligned countries should play the role of a bridge between the two antagonist military blocs – NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Agha Shahi (Foreign Minister of Pakistan from 1977–82) observed that military aid to Pakistan was kept carefully limited so that the country could not achieve military parity with India (Hafiz, 1987: 164). This was a question mark in Pakistan's alliance with the US since Pakistan was actually the defender of US interests' vis-à-vis the Communist threat. However, "out of growing security concerns, Pakistan tried to build ties with the three main neighbouring countries, i.e., India, China, and the Soviet Union, on which it actually should have focused earlier. During the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965, China extended its full support to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. As a result, Pakistan developed cordial relations with China and the Soviet Union and decided to reappraise its foreign policy, moving from an alliance with the West to non-alignment as a fundamental principle of Pakistan’s foreign policy”. (Amin, [2000](#))

### **Period of Transition in Foreign Policy**

Pakistan had no direct conflict with the Soviet bloc, but by joining the pacts aimed against the countries of the Warsaw Pact it allied itself with NATO and thus made itself an adversary of the Warsaw Pact countries; it began when the first Prime Minister Liaqat Ali declined a visit to the Soviet Union in the early 1950s and chose to visit the US instead. Thereafter, Pakistan got disappointed not only by the change in US policy which was increasingly tilting towards India, but also by the moments of tension between Pakistan and the USSR. When Russia accused Pakistan of supporting the future plan of the Western powers for the

Suez Canal, it directly affected bilateral relations with Egypt and hit an all-time low during the Suez Crisis. In due course, Pakistani policy-makers decided to alter the pro-US imbalance in its foreign policy by actively developing relations with China, India, and the USSR. "After the war between India and Pakistan in 1965, Pakistan and the Soviet Union entered into a number of agreements for economic and technical cooperation. The Soviet Union agreed to assist Pakistan in implementing 30 development projects during the phase of the third Five Year Plan (1965–70), and also agreed to review its policy of one-sided support to India on Kashmir issues". (Bajoria, [2014](#))

In the same period, Pakistan–China relations also improved, and different agreements on military and economic aid were signed. Both sides reaffirmed that the Kashmir dispute should be resolved in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kashmir. The first personal contact of the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger with a Chinese leader was facilitated by Pakistan, when Kissinger flew to Beijing from Islamabad, and actions that eventually led to the visit of US President Richard Nixon to China later on. However, when war broke out in 1971 between India and Pakistan, the US re-imposed the arms embargo (previously imposed after the India-Pak war in 1965). As a result, Pakistan had to import arms mainly from China, and from Iran and Turkey. After the loss of East Pakistan in 1971, Pakistan had to give a fresh look to its foreign policy as most of the pacts signed between Pakistan and the West were aimed against the Soviet bloc, and it was understood that military aid provided by the West would not be used against India.

Under such compulsions, Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto envisaged liberation of the foreign policy from its (pro-US) Western alliance. "He secured military and economic ties with China, and also focused on developing relations with Islamic countries. Bhutto started stressing Pakistan's Middle-Eastern character and asserted that Pakistan drew its purpose and identity principally from the sands of the Arabian Peninsula. He made

efforts to restore the country's prestige in the international community and recognized East Germany, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Vietnam, Guinea Bissau, and Cambodia. Following the major policy challenges for Pakistan after the war of 1971, Bhutto tried to widen the horizons of foreign relations with China (his idea of Islamic Socialism was especially useful in building relations anew)". (Ahmad, [2014](#)) Mao Zedong announced the cancellation of a US\$ 110 million debt to Pakistan that had accrued during the 1965 war with India; similarly, Bhutto visited the Soviet Union in 1972, which could in turn diminish the Indian threat to Pakistan, and made it obvious that Islamabad's policies did not threaten Soviet interests. He was seeking better diplomatic relations with Eastern Europe: with Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, and Romania, and technical, economic and trade agreements were signed. The ties to these Communist nation-states provided Pakistan with an added sense of security. Above all, his determination for developing nuclear technology, and thereby cementing Pakistan's relationship with USSR and China made the US more apprehensive. Bhutto announced publicly that "It is vital for Pakistan to give the greatest possible attention to nuclear technology, rather than allow itself to be deceived by an international treaty limiting this deterrent to the present Nuclear Powers. The US was highly sceptical about Pakistan's nuclear power programme, whereas India had not faced any such disapproval from the US even after conducting a nuclear test in 1974. Kissinger threatened that the US would make a horrible example of Bhutto — the letter indicating this was shown to the public at a meeting in Rawalpindi. The military coup a few years later by General Zia ([1977](#)) and the hanging of Bhutto (5 July [1977](#)) are considered to pertain to this threat. The anti-American sentiments, which had been simmering since the late 1950s and were reflected strongly during and after the war between India and Pakistan, resurfaced at this time". (Ahmad, [2014](#))

While evaluating Pakistan's foreign policy

in 1958, Bhutto argued that Pakistan needed to improve its relations with the Soviet Union, China, as well as generally Asia and Africa. Though at various stages of his political career Bhutto moderated his anti-Western rhetoric, he never surrendered his fundamental suspicions of the United States. Americans perceived all this as an indication of Bhutto's 'negative' attitude towards the US and, consequently, in 1977–78 they withdrew their economic and military assistance to Pakistan. The stand taken on nuclear development by Bhutto is also considered to be the reason why he was removed from power.

### **General Zia and Pakistan's Afghan-Centred Foreign Policy**

With the toppling of the democratic government in Pakistan, General Zia-ul-Haq took power in 1977. Shortly thereafter, the Soviet Union's army intervened in Afghanistan on 27 December 1979. "It was an event of far-reaching geo-political implications for Pakistan. Pakistan viewed this development as a violation of independence and sovereignty of a neighbouring, non-aligned, Muslim state by a superpower; Afghan refugees fleeing their country and entering Pakistan caused a socio-economic problem; and the presence of large numbers of Russian troops could add pressure on the dissident elements in Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP). Zia reacted strongly to the intervention and demanded the withdrawal of Russian troops. He also described it as a 'serious violation' of the norms of peaceful co-existence and the principles of the UN charter". (Bajoria, 2014)

Zia wanted to make Pakistan a fortress of Islam. The US exploited Zia's love for Islamic ideology and used it successfully against the atheism of the Communists in Afghanistan. "Pakistan experienced an intense process of 're-Islamisation' during Zia-ul-Haq's military rule (1977–88), which the USA supported in the context of its opposition to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s. Zia consistently strived towards making Pakistan a truly Islamic state and thus sided with the US

in its policy to oust the Soviet Union from Afghanistan". (Amin, 2014) He was open to providing support to the *mujahedeen*<sup>1</sup> as it could serve the purpose of fighting for Pakistan's security. Zia took a middle-course foreign policy by manoeuvring with flexibility on multiple fronts to ensure security. Pakistan's decision to assist the *jihad* in Afghanistan compelled the country to put political pressure on the Soviet Union alongside strengthening its ties with the US, while at the same time also avoiding giving the impression to the West that it was helping the *jihad* on the command of the US. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan had shaken the US, which now pushed to review its own policy towards Pakistan. This was a time of revival of economic ties between the US and Pakistan. General Zia tried to capitalise on the situation and refused the initial grant of US\$ 400 million offered by the US to Pakistan, stating that it was a 'peanut' compared to Pakistan's security and economic risks during this war. This rejection seemed to restore the credibility of Pakistan in Western countries. In 1981, a new aid package was offered to Pakistan, amounting to US\$ 600 million annually, both for development and defence. However, on the nuclear issue, the US maintained the same policy of non-approval for Pakistan, though on Zia's assurance that it will be used for peaceful purposes, the US Congress enacted a legislative measure in 1981 enabling the President to waive, for six years, the application of the Symington Amendment to Pakistan and, consequently, allowed the restoration of US security assistance. Meanwhile, the US started supporting Islamic fundamentalism against the Soviet Union, and it is well known that the Reagan administration published a lot of Islamic material and distributed it in Afghanistan and the areas bordering on Afghanistan. "It supported the jihad against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and spent millions of dollars producing fanatical schoolbooks which were then distributed in Afghanistan. These books were developed in the early 1980s under a US AID grant to the University of Nebraska Omaha, and its branch in Afghanistan. The

primers are filled with talk of *jihād* and featured drawings of guns, bullets, soldiers and mines. They have served since then as the Afghan school system's core curriculum". (Bajoria, 2014)

This situation provided Zia with the best opportunity to prolong his own rule in Pakistan. The signing of the Geneva Accord finally initiated the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. From the Soviet perspective, there were two main reasons for the withdrawal: first, the downward trend of the Soviet economy due to the war and political instability; and second, ideological conflicts within the communist party of the Soviet Union and dissention in the communist regimes of Eastern Europe ultimately proved to be fatal for the Soviet bloc and resulted in the fall of the Berlin Wall and disintegration of the Soviet Union. Now the favourite allies of the US, the Taliban, and religious fundamentalist (in Afghanistan) were declared enemies of the US, and Pakistan became the front-line ally of the US' in its War on Terror after 9/11. This affected the internal security of Pakistan because the stream of refugees from Afghanistan (around 3 million people) destabilized the social equilibrium in the north-western region. It was not only an additional burden on Pakistan's exchequer but it also pushed Pakistan towards a more religious, fundamentalist order. It was a Western strategy to create, encourage and applaud the Islamic *mujahedeen*. "The American Intelligence (CIA) had played a major role in bringing Muslim fighters from across the world to get them trained by the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and use them as proxies against the Soviets. Today, these *mujahedeen* groups have turned against the Western forces that nurtured and legitimized them, and are condemned and opposed as terrorists". (Amin, 2000)

### **Post-Cold War Era and Challenges to the Pakistani Foreign Policy**

The challenges to Pakistan's foreign policy did not end with the end of the Cold War. Pakistan, at this time, was not just facing the

challenge of Afghan refugees but also isolation since the withdrawal of the Soviet army from Afghanistan reduced the strategic utility of Pakistan, particularly for the US. As a result, Pakistan was left alone to deal with issues of security (e.g., Kashmir) as the international system transformed from a bi-polar to a unipolar system. "Pakistan's strategic relevance declined further as US priorities in South Asia shifted towards seeking Pakistan's cooperation to non-proliferation and repairing the damage caused to its relations with India due to its Pakistani-Afghan policies of the 1980s". (Amin, 2000)

Pakistan's political and economic instability made it difficult for the country to adapt to the post-Cold War order; her nuclear program remains the major issue in its relations with the US. Pakistan was asked by the US for the discontinuation of the nuclear programme, and the US imposed sanctions on Pakistan by invoking the Pressler Amendment. Following a nuclear test performed by Pakistan in May 1998, further economic sanctions were imposed.

The era of the Afghan and Soviet war had impacted on Pakistan's sociocultural, political, economic, and strategic interests. Pakistan was once again left alone, and general anti-Western sentiments surfaced underwritten by a belief that the US was not a reliable partner of Pakistan. "Many local militants, in particular the Pakistani Taliban, now target the Pakistani state, and terrorism and related violence is on the rise. Almost all religious parties hold the US responsible for this increasing violence, and for suicide bombings inside Pakistan" (Ahmad, 2014)

### **Post 9/11 Era and Pakistani Foreign Policy**

"Pakistan's strategic location was pivotal to the global dynamics of the Cold War era and remained crucial to the post-9/11 murky scenario. The events of 9/11 and the Global War on Terror changed the fundamental fabric of Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan became a frontline state in the war on terrorism". (Bajoria, 2014) The world's view of Muslim states was changing. There were two targets of

the US — Afghanistan and Iraq, which actually pointed towards Muslim countries in general. The ideological articulation of Huntington's (1993) 'Clash of Civilisations' and Francis Fukuyama's (1992) 'End of History' divided the world into the Western Christian civilization on one side, and on the other, older ones, like the Chinese, Indian civilization and Islamic civilizations. Pakistan directly faced this pressure of 'do more' "after President Bush's statement either you are with us or with the terrorists, to which General Musharraf succumbed immediately, and announced publicly that 'This decision was taken to avoid immense damage and loss that could accrue to Pakistan if it did not cooperate with the US. The US forces were allowed unrestricted use of at least three of Pakistan's military air bases. This policy decision allowed Pakistan to escape international isolation; the West and U.S. applauded the Musharraf regime. Pakistan's unequivocal support, including logistical and intelligence assistance in the US war against terrorism, and its abandonment of the Taliban regime in Kabul had *prima facie* prevented the US from declaring Pakistan a terrorist state". (Ahmad, 2014)

Consequently, Pakistan resumed its economic and military ties with the United States and by 2003 received assistance amounting to US\$ 1,766 million, with a pledge of further support of US\$ 3 billion in grants for economic and military assistance. The majority of *ulema* (religious leaders) did not approve of a policy of cooperation with the US in the War on Terror; they were of the opinion that all Muslims should not be labeled as terrorists, as only some groups of Muslims had adopted the attitude of religious extremism. International security, which was not at the centre of international relations in the decade from the dissolution of the Soviet Union to 9/11, is back as a core issue after the War on Terror.

The events of 9/11 were a critical threshold in Pakistan's foreign policy; the post-9/11 foreign policy of Pakistan faced challenges of its image as an extremist and

terrorist state, thus limiting its policy options to securing its own strategic interest.

### **Anti-Western/Anti-American Sentiments**

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The resumption of democracy in Pakistan in 2008 was a great challenge not only for internal politics but also for the foreign policy of Pakistan. Pakistan suffered unprecedented human and economic loss in terrorist attacks; the death toll has been put at more than 50,000 and the total cost after 13 years of involvement in military activities is more than US\$ 102 billion, borne by Pakistan. Pakistan is currently facing critical internal security issues, which have generated a lot of controversy concerning the violation of Pakistan's territorial sovereignty particularly in the wake of US drone attacks on Pakistan's territory targeting terrorists but which also cause civilian deaths. "There is a resurgence of a sentiment of anti-Americanism/anti-Westernism; the two elements seem to have folded into one another. Many, if not most, Pakistanis see the War on Terror as contributing to a number of terrorist attacks within Pakistan. Indeed, despite the argument that cooperation with the US may sometimes serve Pakistan's security interests, it is now dangerously at odds with Pakistan's public sentiment". (Bajoria, 2014).

Pakistan's foreign policy after 9/11 was particularly focused on the single issue of terrorism and projected as the national interest of Pakistan. General Pervez Musharraf (Chief Executive/President of Pakistan 1999–2008), just like General Zia, wanted to prolong his stay in power under this canopy (of fighting terrorism). This was not accepted commonly by the people and generally did not match public sentiment as it created a great hindrance not only to the democratic process but also to Pakistan capitalizing on its economic interest during the alliance with the US. Democratic leaders and their governments aspire for their foreign policy to match public sentiments and national interest. The strong anti-Western rhetoric that emerged in public discourse led to the rise of anti-US sentiments. As extremism

and terrorism increased in Pakistan, political leaders demanded the re-prioritization of international relations and policy-thinking that went beyond terrorism (as economic development was marred by terrorism). After the 2008 general elections, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), which is considered to be a progressive political party, came to power and followed the earlier policy of siding with the US to curb al-Qaeda and the Taliban. It was, however, very difficult for the PPP to get along with such policies as they also had to be involved with the religious groups of Pakistan who were very strongly anti-US. The obscurantist ideas of religious extremists could best be countered by raising public consciousness and by securing the active support of the moderate and more educated *ulema*. Much anti-Western and anti-American rhetoric could be seen in foreign policy issues, mostly by religious groups and political leaders particularly during the election campaign/public speeches to win votes in their favour for the 2013 elections. Imran Khan, who is the leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) and considered the third political force in Pakistan after the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) and the PPP, took advantage of popular anger to raise his own profile. After the Abbottabad incident where Osama bin Laden was killed by American forces, there was an open public reaction and demonstration against the US. In these circumstances, Khan made space for anti-Americanism and announced that the PTI would hold a sit-in to block NATO supply routes into Afghanistan, and blamed the army for having failed to counter or even notice the US raid conducted on Abbottabad without prior intimation to the Pakistan government. This was in stark contrast to the reaction of the PPP, which welcomed bin Laden's death, and the PML(N), which issued a strong note of protest against the US' incursion into Pakistani airspace. Imran's anti-Western stance gained popularity as Pakistan-US relations kept deteriorating following the Abbottabad raid. He was able to cultivate his votes, particularly in the Pashtun region, due to his anti-Western rhetoric in the 2013

election campaign. He put the entire blame for the drone attacks as well as for the current critical security situation in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa on the US, and labeled the Taliban as 'freedom fighters' and 'nationalists', suggesting that they were carrying out some sort of jihad against the foreigners. However, Khan's stand can also prove highly misleading: although his economic policies seem liberal, his foreign policy and attitude to religion appear to be conservative, as observed by Haroon Ullah, (2014).

The anti-western rhetoric surrounding Pakistan's role in the War on Terror, often employed by the Jamiat Ulema-i Islam (JUI-F) led by Moulana Fazlur Rehman (also known for its anti-Western rhetoric, and as a mediator with the Pakistani Taliban), continuously created a problem for the Pakistani government. After the blockade of NATO supplies (which was supported by Khan's PTI. Imran Khan stated in a press conference that the party would continue to resist the reopening of the NATO supply routes. He further added that Pakistan was no longer a strategic partner of the US and urged the government to review the country's foreign policy and its role in the ongoing war against terrorism. In a public address, Rehman stated that 'The policies of the US and the West will no longer work in Pakistan'. Confronted with current anti-Western sentiments, it is difficult for political parties to explicitly distance themselves from such extremist points of view.

The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) is a religious, fundamentalist party with a rigidly centralized structure. The JI is willing to side with any country or political party that opposes progressive thinking and the secular model of government. It is known for its anti-Western and anti-American rhetoric. At the national level, its political participation does not always yield extremist positions though it is instrumental in sustaining religion as political rhetoric. Jamaat-e-Islami acts as the unofficial arbiter of Pakistan's status as a nation founded on Islamic identity. The JI claims in its manifesto that it will end 'US slavery to restore Pakistan's independence and sovereignty'; it took an anti-Western stance on a number of



strategic foreign policy issues of Pakistan, while its chief, Syed Munawar Hassan, at a public meeting in Rawalpindi, stated that intelligence agencies of the US and Israel were involved in attacks on military institutions, that the Taliban were not involved in terrorist attacks in Pakistan, and it were US agents who played dirty games in the country.

Parties like the JI find it best to identify themselves as being *anti-West*, being *Islamic*, and using anti-Western rhetoric and slogans in their politics. This was echoed in the election campaign of 2013 which showed a resurgence of conservative, semi-religious, anti-Western sentiments by both Nawaz Sharif and Imran Khan, the purpose of which was political gain. Their public condemnation of US policy, particularly regarding drone attacks, allowed them to gain more political legitimacy. Such sentiments now encompass all sectors of Pakistan which is misread by the West, and particularly by the US since they assume that the incumbent government will form a 'strategic partnership' with the West & US and would be able to turn the public opinion in favour of their policies, but the government is very much constrained by mass public opinion. US officials believed that Pakistan's government could turn public opinion around as the two countries' priorities began to merge. Washington did not seem to understand the degree to which the Pakistani government and its officials felt compelled to take on board the opinion of its citizens; nor did they seem to understand the degree to which street-level concerns had a tendency to elevate sovereignty over civilian control of strategic and military affairs.

Moreover, anti-Western sentiments are often used as a political tool by the government for political leverage: for instance, when in November 2011 US air strikes inadvertently killed 24 Pakistani troops on the Afghan border, and the government was compelled to suspend diplomatic contacts and blocked vital land routes for US and NATO troops in Afghanistan due to a large protest by the Islamist political parties which turned public opinion against NATO. It is not a single

incident that has caused such anti-Western sentiments/rhetoric but a chronic phenomenon which can be categorized as one of 'us and them', where the US is not perceived as a counter-terrorism ally of Pakistan but as a threat to Pakistan's sovereignty. Even if there are some disagreements among members of the government regarding blocking NATO's supply lines, they have had to dance to the public's tune.

Generally, the opinion of the elite can be different from public opinion, but when it comes to foreign policy, the elite's opinion is not radically different from that of the man on the Pakistani street. For a long time, Indophobia was a central feature of Pakistan's foreign policy, but for more than a decade anti-American and anti-Western rhetoric has dominated public discourse. Many Pakistanis believe that if Americans just went away, the Taliban would too. The public approval of Pakistani leaders closely allied with the US is dropping rapidly; the greatest challenge facing the current government of Nawaz Sharif is to understand how to 'balance' national interest and public sentiments in Pakistan's foreign policy.

As currently Islamophobia is growing around the globe and this trend also brings negative sentiments of the Muslim around the world against the West. Since it links specific attitudes of Muslim to terrorism, extremism and violence. As per the research of Sabri Ciftci (2012) the "perceived realistic and symbolic threat is the most significant source of Islamophobic attitudes in the West. While individuals cognitively differentiate between general feelings toward Muslims and their specific characteristics, higher levels of education significantly reduces negative sentiments". (Amin, 2000) Therefore West is most likely to tend to link Muslims with terrorism which is a threat to their culture and existence. The situation is equal for Pakistan, and is concerned the worsening situation politically between Pakistan and the West. Politician of religious parties do express that western countries, have spread hatred against Muslims for political gains as Islam is a religion of peace and harmony, but they have

presented Islam and Muslims like their enemies. He was further of the view that "All Muslim countries of the world should join hands and present the real Islam to the world." (Ahmad, [2014](#))

## Conclusion

The geo-strategic location of Pakistan places it in a volatile region; it is at the centre of connections to the Middle East, South Asia, and Central Asia. It provides the shortest routes for gas and oil resources from Central Asia. Therefore, terrorism is not only a threat to Pakistan's internal security but also for the regional and international system. Despite that, Pakistan's substantial efforts to provide unconditional support to the war on terrorism ironically made it face looming international criticism for 'not doing more'; Pakistan is suffering enormously for being helpful in Afghanistan (Shaikh [2007](#)). Regardless of all odds, Pakistan remains a major player in fighting terrorism and is obliged to follow an economics and security-driven foreign policy to be self-reliant. In the past, it was a marriage of convenience between Pakistan and the US; the future, however, is cloudy. Pakistan has come to the conclusion that the force it created to combat the Soviet Union has become Frankenstein's monster, and nowadays Pakistan is all out to eliminate the *mujahideen*, who turned terrorists, within the soil of Pakistan. Not only has the real message been hijacked by religious extremists (the Taliban) but, ironically, the West also misperceives Islam as a religion of extremism, which offends the people. If Pakistan wants to be successful in eliminating such elements which have now become diabolic, it has to start a cultural and economic structural revolution to wipe out all elements of religious fundamentalism. Until such time that the demons of extremism and fundamentalism (which translate into anti-Western sentiments) are liquidated, they will keep on limiting Pakistan's foreign policy options.

The study reveals that "the identity constructions that attempted to accommodate the Pakistani foreign policy of collaboration

with USA. The periods of collaboration that are viewed are from 1947 to 1962, from 1979 to 1989, and from 2001 to 2012. During the first period of collaboration with the USA, Pakistan saw a primary existential threat from India. Pakistan's foreign policy makers felt that Pakistan's security and development objectives could be met through an alliance with the USA". (Amin, [2000](#))

It is worthwhile to understand that "the identity that was projected during this period was one where the values of the new state of Pakistan were shown to be in alignment with the values of USA. The alignment was in the important areas of the political system and the development model. To stabilize the identity construction in support of the cooperation with the USA the leaders of Pakistan invoked religion. After sixteen years of little or no cooperation the interests of the USA and Pakistan, once again, converged around a foreign policy of pushing back the USSR out of Afghanistan. This objective was the basis of collaboration between Pakistan and the USA during the 1979 to 1989 period. The constructions of the resistance in terms of a struggle for freedom and Islam were central to rallying support for ousting USSR". (Bajoria, [2014](#))

However, "the Pakistan policy primarily relied on the construction of an identity position that placed Islam as the defining feature of the struggle and for the USA it was a narrative that primarily projected support for freedom. The end of the Cold War and the end of the USSR brought changes in Pakistan's relationship with the USA. The Pakistani leaders were disappointed at the abrupt withdrawal of support and funding by the USA. Pakistan also faced sanctions from the USA in the 1990s on account of the USA's nuclear non-proliferation policy". "The events of 9/11 and the subsequent War on Terrorism saw Pakistan pushed, once again, into cooperation with the USA. This cooperation led Pakistan to construct an identity that sought to show the terrorist as a threat for Pakistan. Pakistani values were projected to be in conflict with the terrorist and in consonance with the USA". (Amin, [2000](#))

In the backdrop, "the identity of the new state of Pakistan was affected by continuities of the pre-partition communal interactions between Muslims and Hindus in the Indian subcontinent. The initial interactions between the two communities, in the ninth century, included intermittent wars and conquests. These interactions provided the foundation for constructing inter-communal resentment and insecurity. The British colonial rule over the subcontinent was consolidated after 1857 and, subsequently, Muslims competed with Hindus for economic benefits and political power". (Ahmad, [2014](#)) "The actions of the Hindu majority, on receiving political power in the elections of 1939, provided the Muslim minority concrete substance for consolidating the construction of a threat to the Muslims from the Hindus. The political and religious identity of a distinct and homogenous Muslim community in the Indian subcontinent was stabilized in light of the threat and insecurity it faced from the Hindus. The insecurity faced by the Muslim nation on account of the threatening Hindu nation was balanced by a sense of security obtained by cooperating with the British. To facilitate cooperation with the British a relational identity was constructed to accommodate the cooperation. In pursuit of this cooperation the narratives that were suppressed were the Muslim Arab confrontation with the Christian West in the eighth century and the religious difference between the Christian faith and the Muslim faith. There were also silences that were maintained with regards to the British treatment of Muslims internationally". (Bajoria, [2014](#)) "The cooperation with the British was strengthened by the portrayal of the strength and power of the British and by viewing the British as a source of economic and political benefit for the Muslims. Thus, on the threshold of partition, the Muslim nation felt insecurity in its relations with the Hindu nation and security in its cooperation with the British. Pakistan, after partition, viewed the international system it faced as one that operated on the principle of the law of the jungle. In such a system a defining element of the national identity of Pakistan was that it

was a weak and insecure state. In the early period after partition, the prime source of insecurity was India and the violence of partition and the war of 1947 reinforced this view". (Amin, [2000](#))

However, "in the second period, the main threat came from USSR; and in the third period the prime threat came from terrorists and the War on Terrorism. There was a considerable difference in the contexts in which the cooperation with the USA took place and the commensurate attempts at identity constructions reflected the difference. The first period of cooperation with the USA involved Pakistani identity constructions that sought to build convergences around shared values of democracy and progress". (Ahmad, [2014](#))

"In the second period of collaboration there was no overriding attempt to forge convergences on the basis of shared values. During this second period, for Pakistan, the primary construct that accompanied the policy of ousting the USSR from Afghanistan was Islam and saving Muslims. In the third period, following 9/11, the cooperation between Pakistan and USA was guided by the USA led War on Terrorism". (Bajoria, [2014](#))

"The identity constructions in this third period focused on a delineation of the world views of moderate Islam from the radical views of the terrorists. Pakistan identified itself as a country that was upholding a moderate Islamic world view. Islam is an aspect of identity that is important during the three periods of Pakistan's cooperation with the USA. However, Islam is invoked in different manners and, overall, no single identity construct has anchored all three periods of cooperation between Pakistan and USA". (Amin, [2000](#))

"The Pakistani attempts at identity constructions, in support of cooperation with the USA, are destabilized because of inherent contradictions. The importance of the Islam provides for a significant contradiction in Pakistan's identity constructions in support of a policy of security cooperation with USA. This contradiction can be seen in the inability

of the USA to support Muslim countries, particularly in the Middle East. The second major contradiction weakening the Pakistani identity construction in support of cooperation with the USA was the divergence between USA's political preference for democracy and Pakistan's intermittent dictatorships. The third major contradiction that identity constructions to support cooperation with the USA in the War on Terrorism had to face was how cooperation in the War on Terrorism was compromising Pakistan's sovereignty". (Ahmad, [2014](#))

### **Conclusion**

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While concluding this paper it has been observed that Pakistan's foreign policy has been facing challenges during and after the Cold War period due to anti-western sentiments at large but on an individual basis.

These challenges were mostly unilateral in the sense that Pakistan was captive to the grand American design in the Middle East and in Western Asia. There is much anti-American and anti-Western rhetoric by right-wing parties, both religious and non-religious, particularly after 9/11. The article attempts on developing an understanding on identity constructions that accompanied the Pakistani foreign policy collaboration with the USA, the research seeks to understand what national identity constructions were attempted by the Pakistani foreign policymaking elite in the context of a foreign policy convergence between Pakistan and the USA. Therefore, examines the contradictions in the attempts at identity construction that how Pakistan the pursuit of security and consequent policy is accompanied by certain identity constructions highlighting the conformity non-conformity" of the element of "anti-western.

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