

America's Pakistan

by [Zia Mian](#), [Sharon K. Weiner](#)

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David Ignatius, *Bloodmoney: A Novel of Espionage* (W. W. Norton, 2011).

Anatol Lieven, *Pakistan: A Hard Country* (Public Affairs, 2011).

Philip Oldenburg, *India, Pakistan and Democracy* (Routledge, 2010).

Bruce Riedel, *Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America and the Future of the Global Jihad* (Brookings, 2011).

Howard B. Schaffer and Teresita C. Schaffer, *How Pakistan Negotiates with the United States* (US Institute of Peace, 2011).

American policymakers and their advisers are struggling with the question of Pakistan. The last ten years have produced a host of policy reviews, study group reports, congressional hearings and a few academic and more popular books, with more expected as the 2014 deadline for the end of US major combat operations in Afghanistan nears. Much of this literature sees Pakistan as a policy problem and seeks to inform Washington's debate on how to get Pakistan to do what the United States wants it to do. The literature also reveals the limits of American knowledge and power when it comes to Pakistan.

The welter of new material reveals a profound confusion in Washington about Pakistan as a state and society. "Much about Pakistani behavior remains a mystery," claims Bruce Riedel, a former CIA officer who has been advising American presidents about Pakistan since 1991 from a series of posts in the National Security Council and the Defense Department. He is now a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington. His book *Deadly Embrace* offers a detailed participant's view from the vantage point of policymaking on Pakistan over the past two decades. Riedel says, "Pakistan's complex behavior and motives are certainly difficult for outsiders -- including US presidents -- to grasp." As a result, "Pakistan can be frustrating."

The confusion and frustration are not new: US experts have struggled to understand Pakistan since it became a state in 1947. US policymakers have an

almost equally long history of trying to induce Pakistan to fit into their plans. [1] For America, from 1954 to 1969, Pakistan first figured as a possible ally in defense of Middle East oil, then as a staging ground for eavesdropping on the Soviets. Later, from 1979 to 1989, Pakistan was the means of safely managing a proxy war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. After 2001, Pakistan was to be a comrade in arms, albeit press-ganged, against al-Qaeda and the Taliban. In none of these cases, however, have things gone as planned for the United States.

Pakistan clearly has been pursuing its own interests. In the 1950s and 1960s, Pakistan used American support to arm itself for war with India. In the 1980s, under cover of the Afghan war, Pakistan developed nuclear weapons, in contravention of US wishes. Since 2002, Pakistan has diverted direct US military aid and equipment intended for Pakistani counterinsurgency operations against the Taliban in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) bordering Afghanistan to prepare for the next war against India. Pakistan also has been rapidly increasing the size of its nuclear arsenal. Finally, Pakistan's government continues its support for radical Islamists, evident lately in the mass rallies being organized in major cities by the Difa-e Pakistan (Defense of Pakistan) Council, which brings together 40 Islamist groups and political parties including the banned Jamaat-ud-Dawa -- the former Lashkar-e Taiba. This last group was established to fight in Kashmir and was behind the 2008 attacks in the Indian city of Mumbai.

All of this double-dealing could have been expected. In the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who had seized power in a coup in 1999, addressed the Pakistani nation and explained that the country faced a critical choice: Support the United States in the imminent war against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan or suffer the consequences. He explained, "We have to save our interests. Pakistan comes first; everything else is secondary." Musharraf said, "Our critical concerns are our sovereignty; second, our economy; third, our strategic assets (nuclear and missiles); and fourth, our Kashmir cause." It was to defend these interests that Pakistan gave its support to the United States and distanced itself from its Taliban allies.

Terrorism and Trust

For America's current relationship with Pakistan, the most important issues are the war in Afghanistan and the threat of terrorism. The US concern today is the efforts of the Taliban to shake off the American-led occupation, destabilize the government of Hamid Karzai and restore their own authority. A resurgent Taliban could give more secure refuge to al-Qaeda or other extremists, creating a safe haven from which such groups could plot new attacks on the US homeland, or against troops and civilians abroad. Although many analysts remain worried about the al-Qaeda-Taliban connection, questions have been raised about whether years of running and

hiding, frequent drone strikes and the killing of Osama bin Laden in May 2011 have ended al-Qaeda's days as a viable transnational terrorist group.

Despite an estimated \$22 billion in US military and economic assistance, Pakistan has choked the delivery of military supplies to US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. Further, and in defiance of constant US pressure, the Pakistani army's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) has persisted in supporting, training, financing and manipulating some of the Afghan Taliban groups the United States is fighting. It is a long-standing relationship that goes back to the early 1990s, according to Riedel, when "soon after the movement's founding, Islamabad, including the ISI and the Ministry of the Interior, began to give it significant support...[including] critical oil supplies...and crucial military advice and assistance." The Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, had received ISI training in the 1980s as part of the mobilization of Afghan mujahideen to battle the Soviets then occupying their country.

The ISI is also responsible for introducing the Taliban leadership to Osama bin Laden. These links came into public view in 1998, when President Bill Clinton ordered cruise missile strikes upon bin Laden's camp in Afghanistan -- a camp built by Pakistani contactors and funded by the ISI, according to the US Defense Intelligence Agency. The casualties included ISI officers who were training Islamist militants for the war in Kashmir. Retired Gen. Ziauddin Khawaja, an ex-head of ISI, has even claimed that Pervez Musharraf, who held the positions of chief of army staff and president from 1999 to 2008, knew that Pakistani intelligence had sheltered bin Laden before the US raid that killed the al-Qaeda leader in the Pakistani city of Abbottabad. [\[2\]](#)

Despite this history, the United States has been forced to rely on a deeply distrusted Pakistani army and ISI to pursue its war against al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The layer upon layer of suspicion and contrivance involved in this *pas de deux* are vividly captured in *Bloodmoney*, the compelling spy novel written by influential *Washington Post* columnist David Ignatius. It is a tale of kinship, revenge and remorse, replete with drone attacks that kill terrorists and innocents in FATA, off-the-books, plausibly deniable covert operations, and cold-hearted CIA and ISI agents who both cooperate and compete.

A fascinating figure in the story is the hyper-nationalist ISI chief. This character bears a striking similarity to Gen. Shuja Pasha, who stepped down as head of the ISI in 2012. Ignatius describes his fictional spymaster as someone who, like many young army officers of his generation, received training in the United States. Although he disliked the United States, he pretended otherwise; he "knew how to sham, in the way that is an art form for the people of South Asia." The ISI chief is "a professional liar," but one who believes "a man's honor is his most precious possession." In this cloak-and-dagger world, the ISI boss is aiding the CIA all the while seeking out Pakistanis who were "opening to American eyes the family secrets of Pakistan." These were traitors, "dung beetles...burrowing into the shit of the

motherland and then scurrying away to the West.” In these machinations, Ignatius observes, “To say that the Pakistani was playing a double game did not do him justice; his strategy was far more complicated than that.”

A real-life example of the intrigue that Ignatius describes is the case of Raymond Davis, the CIA contractor who killed two people in the Pakistani city of Lahore in January 2011, with a third bystander run down by the car sent from the US consulate to aid him. The ISI believed Davis was running his own intelligence operation without Pakistan’s knowledge or approval. The response was outrage in Pakistan, which the ISI then used to gain additional leverage over the scale and scope of American intelligence activities in Pakistan.

As Ignatius recognizes, and Pakistan never tires of repeating, America had a hand in creating this relationship. For six decades, American funding and trust have been vested overwhelmingly in Pakistan’s army and, since the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the ISI has been a cheap if not dependable ally. The ISI has taken American training, money and weapons, and been more or less willing to initiate other actors into the black arts to aid the pursuit of US interests, in the process saving American lives and affording Washington some measure of deniability about its involvement.

But the ISI’s help has come at a price: It has also used its resources and influence in quests for Pakistani security goals that are often at odds with American interests. For example, in September 2011 testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, Adm. Michael Mullen, the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, claimed that the Haqqani network, a Taliban group based in FATA that carries out attacks across the border in Afghanistan, including the late 2011 bombings of a US base and the US embassy and NATO headquarters in Kabul, “acts as a veritable arm of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence agency.” [\[3\]](#)

Ignatius’ story follows this narrative except for one crucial difference. Although both Pakistan and the United States are hard-core realists vying for control and influence in South Asia, US interests are short-term and revolve around terrorism. Pakistan, in contrast, is worried about state survival and security against India. As a consequence, the United States and Pakistan have the basis for a temporary alliance, but the United States should expect Pakistan to siphon resources and will away from the fight against the Taliban toward its project of securing a predominant position in Afghanistan. Pakistan also seeks to limit growing Indian influence there, and to renew the six-decade-old fight over Kashmir.

What is often missing from discussions about terrorism is the Pakistan Taliban, which has launched an insurgency in FATA, the area where al-Qaeda and some Afghan Taliban groups found sanctuary after the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. The Pakistan Taliban (Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan) is a network of mostly Pashtun Islamist militant groups, formed in 2007, that wages war against the

Pakistani government with the goal of creating a fundamentalist Islamic state. Taliban gains in Afghanistan would bolster the hopes of the Pakistan Taliban that they can prevail against a deeply divided army and notoriously weak administration in Islamabad. From cross-border hideouts in Afghanistan, the Pakistan Taliban might carry out a drawn-out campaign of their own.

The American Relationship with Pakistan

Yet all of America's fears converge in one way or another on the prospect of Pakistan falling into the hands of extremist Islamists. This event would lead to instability, and the dreadful possibilities of Pakistan splintering or nuclear weapons coming under the control of terrorists who might target the United States or attack India, plunging the region into war. In *Bloodmoney*, David Ignatius has the US president's chief of staff describe Pakistan as "two hundred million pissed-off people, plus nuclear weapons. Scary shit."

On the Pakistani side, there is widespread anti-Americanism. Many Pakistanis now believe the United States is the hidden hand behind many of the problems that plague their country. A June 2011 Pew poll found that 75 percent of Pakistanis held an unfavorable view of the United States; 70 percent believed the US is an enemy rather than a friend; and 70 percent saw the US as a possible military threat to Pakistan. The November 2011 cross-border attack on a Pakistani military outpost by US and NATO forces, killing 23 soldiers and wounding 13 others, seemed to confirm these fears. It led Pakistan to shut down the conduit for NATO supplies into Afghanistan and end US access to the Shamsi air base, used for CIA drone operations. Some of these restrictions may be easing, but the prospects look grim for the US-Pakistani relationship.

As Bruce Riedel describes it, the US alliance with Pakistan has always been turbulent and destructive: "For the past 60 years, American policy toward Pakistan has oscillated wildly.... In the love-fest years, Washington would build secret relationships (which gave rise to the U2 base in Peshawar and the mujahideen war in the 1980s) and throw billions of dollars at Pakistan with little or no accountability. In the scorned years, Pakistan would be demarched to death, and Washington would cut off military and economic aid. Both approaches failed dismally. Throughout the relationship, America endorsed every Pakistani dictator, despite the fact that they started wars with India and moved their country ever deeper into the jihadist fold."

The "love-fest" years and the "scorned" years were not a matter of whim, however. In general, when Pakistan was useful as a military ally, the United States has tended to ignore issues related to domestic politics, Pakistan's relationship with India or nuclear proliferation. During periods without an overwhelming security interest involving Pakistan, the United States has tended to distance itself and

bring half-hearted pressure on the country to democratize, make peace with India and forgo nuclear weapons. Throughout these years, leaders and ordinary people in Pakistan knew what was going on and had their own agendas.

One reason why US approaches to Pakistan have crashed and burned so often is that the modern US foreign policy tradition, born out of six decades of superpower status, has an expectation of how easy or hard it should be to elicit the acquiescence of other states. Howard Schaffer and Teresita Schaffer, a husband-and-wife team with long experience in the US Foreign Service, including in Pakistan, explore the US-Pakistani diplomatic relation in *How Pakistan Negotiates with the United States*. The Schaffers argue that Pakistan seeks to keep America engaged on issues that matter to Pakistan as a means of gaining additional influence both in the region and on topics where US interests diverge from those of Pakistan. Where to exercise this leverage is determined both by what the United States wants and by domestic politics in Pakistan.

In this effort, the Schaffers argue, senior Pakistani officials raised in a very hierarchical society resort to cultural practices of dependency and patronage. Pakistan plays up its weakness and vulnerability to elicit expressions of obligation from a United States that sees itself as powerful and responsible. While playing this role, however, Pakistanis know power can be fickle and have sought to exploit American interests: “Since 9/11 and on previous occasions as well, Pakistan has based its approach to the United States on two assumptions: that Pakistan is vulnerable and that the United States needs Pakistan more than the other way round.” Being played in this way by Pakistan is manageable for the time being, propose the Schaffers, but trouble may come “if Pakistan continues on the democratic path...[where] a resentful public opinion...may place greater limits on what the United States and Pakistan can do together.”

Pakistani weakness and American power dominate Anatol Lieven’s sprawling *Pakistan: A Hard Country*. For Lieven, a former reporter for the Times of London who spent time at various Washington think tanks and is now a professor in the War Studies Department at Kings College, London, “Pakistan is divided, disorganized, economically backward, corrupt, violent, unjust, often savagely oppressive toward the poor and women, and home to extremely dangerous forms of extremism and terrorism.” It is kept afloat by “islands of successful modernity and of excellent administration...a few impressive modern industries...some fine motorways; a university in Lahore...a powerful, well-trained and well-disciplined army...[and] a number of efficient, honest and devoted public servants.” Above all, though, Pakistan is dominated by kinship, which Lieven claims is “central to the weakness of the Pakistani state, but also to its stability.”

A reliance on the explanatory power of kinship, largely seen as a fixed and uncontested category, leads Lieven to portray Pakistan as a place of tradition, continuity and old social forms, but to miss what is changing and being fought over.

[4] At times, Lieven sounds like a British officer trying to parse the peculiar ways of the natives. This impression is strengthened by his repeated citation of nineteenth-century colonial commentaries on South Asian and Muslim notions of honor, loyalty, honesty, the virtues of Islamic law, the role of saints, the withering away of old feudal families, Pashtun leadership and culture, Sindhi architecture and Baloch tribal structure, to give only some examples. The dilemmas of this backward-looking gaze are most striking in his discussion of the Pakistan Taliban, where he resorts to observations on tribal rebellion offered by the last British governor of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, Olaf Caroe.

When the tribal kinship and tradition explanation falters, to his credit, Lieven concludes that "while certain Pathan cultural and ideological traditions have continued little changed, Pathan society has in some respects changed quite radically." One wonders why, for Lieven, the rest of Pakistan is assumed not to have changed just as radically.

According to Lieven, Pakistan is a weak state because it has no enduring basis for a national identity and no political processes that can transcend kinship. Even the Pakistani army, otherwise lauded as modern, is described as a clan. Pakistan's weakness vis-à-vis the United States leads Lieven to evince concern for Pakistan's wellbeing and to call for US restraint and consideration. Western strategy, he says, "should include recognition, at least in private, that it has above all been the US-led campaign in Afghanistan which has been responsible for increasing Islamist insurgency and terrorism in Pakistan since 2001." The worst thing the United States could do is send troops into FATA to fight the Taliban, thus challenging Pakistan's sovereignty.

Bruce Riedel, on the other hand, tends to see Pakistan as a capable state that can articulate its foreign policy preferences; the simple fact is that these preferences are at odds with those of the United States. Moreover, he says, "Pakistanis and Americans have entirely different narratives about their bilateral relationship. Pakistan speaks of America's continual betrayal, of America promising much and delivering little. America finds Pakistan duplicitous, saying one thing and doing another.... These attitudes will not change overnight, or even in a few years. They are the legacy of America's ties with Pakistan."

Riedel and others in Washington believe that in time Pakistan will come around. They see the answer in American programs to sponsor democracy and development. Such was the premise of the 2009 Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act, a five-year, \$7.5 billion aid package that will end in 2014. The bill suggested the possibility of a second aid tranche of \$7.5 billion to run from 2015 to 2019. The hope is that this extended assistance will buy lasting friendships for Washington in Pakistan and facilitate the convergence of interests. In particular, the two countries share the goal of avoiding nuclear confrontation in South Asia. This logic, however, assumes that Pakistan will eventually come to see the error of its ways and

embrace US interests, rather than continue to have its own ideas about what it wants. The United States and a more democratic Pakistan may still have irreconcilable differences.

Pakistan's Troubles

It is a truism that the development of democracy in Pakistan has been hindered by the power of the military. Washington treats the army's anti-democratic propensities as an unfortunate, if at times useful, fact of life. It has been less concerned about understanding why it has come to pass. This gap is filled by Philip Oldenburg in his very thoughtful study *India, Pakistan and Democracy*.

Oldenburg argues that geographic and political realities at the time of the partition of British India in 1947 resulted in Pakistan being created without the grassroots political organizing that accompanied independence in India. This history underlies the subsequent failure of democratic institutions, especially mass-based political parties. Pakistan, Oldenburg says, lacks "a political society with a thick layer of institutions and leaders who have forged their identities and capacities in some sort of struggle for democracy, and have then been able to maintain and develop the citizen-politician link, typically through a vigorous party system, once the democracy begins to function." Critically, he suggests, "Politicians with that base of legitimacy can win the critical battles for authority with the state apparatus, in its bureaucratic and military form." According to Oldenburg, civilians have been in complete control for only two periods of time: from 1947 through 1958 (for almost half of this time the civilians in control were actually bureaucrats rather than politicians), and from 1972 through 1977 under the authoritarian rule of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. For the rest of Pakistan's history, the military has been directly or indirectly in control of the country.

The army has seized power on three occasions, ruling for about a decade after each coup. At other times, it has actively manipulated the political process by supporting right-wing and religious extremist groups to help build pro-military political coalitions or intimidate political opponents. In February 2012, Pakistan's Supreme Court resumed hearing a case about the ISI's illegal funding of right-wing political parties and candidates in the 1990 general elections to prevent a possible victory by Benazir Bhutto and the Pakistan People's Party. The head of the ISI at that time, Gen. Asad Durrani, has conceded to the Court that this funding took place, and revealed who was paid and how much, claiming that the operation was ordered by Chief of Army Staff Gen. Aslam Beg and the president of Pakistan, Ghulam Ishaq Khan. The hundreds of millions of rupees that were spent were extorted from a leading banker, who has testified to the Supreme Court on how he was arrested and mistreated when he initially refused to cooperate. The case had first been brought to the Court in 1996, but the prime minister at the time, Nawaz Sharif, was among

the politicians accused of receiving ISI funds. Sharif's government was overthrown by Gen. Musharraf.

The failure of democracy in Pakistan is most evident today in the rise of political violence directed against the state. One such threat is the religious sectarian groups that seek an Islamic state. The other is the ethnic movement in Balochistan that demands self-determination and secession. The first has been largely ignored by the state -- and sometimes supported by it. The second has met with brutal repression.

Religion has been present in Pakistani politics since the beginning, a natural outcome of the demand for a homeland for the Muslims of British India that led to its creation. It offered an easy way to bolster a fragile, undeveloped nationalism and foster support for the state. Despite its obvious risks and drawbacks, religion was used by the Pakistani state to try to hold its various major ethnic groups together, all but one of which (the Punjabis) have at one time or another sought to secede. The majority population of the original Pakistan, the Bengalis of East Pakistan, won independence in 1971 and became Bangladesh.

Religion was also used to counter Pashtun ethnic nationalism, which sought to build an identity linking Pakistani Pashtuns and Afghan Pashtuns -- at times expressed as a demand for a Pashtun state. It has also been used to deflect a growing national sentiment in Balochistan.

Islamist parties and Muslim sects have campaigned and fought for their own versions of an Islamic society, often by denouncing others as unbelievers, heretics and infidels worthy of assault and deserving death. In 2011, Islamist militants killed Punjab governor Salmaan Taseer and Federal Minorities Minister Shahbaz Bhatti for supporting calls to amend Pakistan's blasphemy laws, which carry a mandatory death penalty. The persecution of religious minorities is now endemic, with the targets being mostly Christians, Hindus and members of the Ahmadi sect of Islam. The more spectacular attacks are directed by Sunni militias against Pakistan's Shia, fueling revenge attacks by Shiite militants. The death toll is in the hundreds each year. [\[5\]](#)

Over the last five years, Pakistan has seen a sharp increase in attacks by religious extremists across the country. There are now ideological, organizational and individual links between Islamist social and professional organizations, political parties and armed jihadi groups -- some that go all the way to FATA and al-Qaeda. The rise of the Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan in FATA has brought Punjabi Islamist militants to train and fight in the Tribal Areas. High-profile al-Qaeda members have been captured in Pakistani cities in homes and mosques run by the Jamaat-e Islami, a major Islamist political party.

The result has been an increase in the intensity, sophistication and extent of Islamist violence -- with insider help in some cases. There have been attacks on

national leaders, including multiple attempts to kill Pervez Musharraf and the murder of Benazir Bhutto. The Pakistani army's general headquarters were attacked, as were ISI offices in Peshawar and Lahore. Other prominent targets have included the air force base in Sargodha, the army ordnance factories at Wah, the Mehran naval base in Karachi and the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, as well as the eleventh-century Data Darbar shrine in Lahore and many other shrines, mosques and markets.

The other pressing problem of domestic political violence, one often neglected in America's view of Pakistan, is the episodic insurgency being waged by the Baloch. Balochistan is the largest of Pakistan's four provinces, bordering Afghanistan, Iran and the Arabian Sea, and the most underdeveloped. It has over 40 percent of Pakistan's land area but around 5 percent of the total population. Like the tribal areas in Pakistan's northwest, the Baloch assumed they would be independent in 1947 but were annexed in 1948 and were subsequently never fully integrated into Pakistan's federal government.

There have been insurrections in 1958, in 1962 and from 1973 to 1977; the last proved to be a brutal struggle, with thousands of Baloch militants, soldiers and civilians killed. The current insurgency erupted in 2005 and has seen widespread repression by the Pakistani state, which has resorted to kidnapping, torturing, killing and dumping the bodies of possibly hundreds of Baloch activists and their supporters. [6] Baloch nationalist fighters, for their part, have attacked soldiers, major natural gas pipelines and other infrastructure linking their province to the rest of Pakistan, as well as government workers and immigrant settlers from other provinces. The Baloch argue that Islamabad has proven eager to take the province's abundant natural resources but provided little in the way of economic development or political empowerment.

When the United States mentions Balochistan, it tends to focus not on the issues raised by the Baloch, but on the possibility that the province is harboring members of al-Qaeda or the Afghan Taliban -- most famously the Quetta *shura*, which is believed to be a key part of the Taliban leadership in exile. Islamabad, in turn, argues that the Baloch insurgency is largely enabled by India and bent on destabilizing Pakistan. A new generation of Baloch leaders have said they would accept Indian support if that is what it took to gain freedom from Pakistan. The United States was thrust into this struggle in February when Republican Congressman Dana Rohrabacher from California chaired a hearing on Balochistan and introduced a resolution declaring that "the people of Baluchistan, currently divided between Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan, have the right to self-determination and to their own sovereign country." This move has triggered outrage in Pakistan about American interference in Pakistan's internal issues.

Pakistan in Flux

In trying to understand Pakistan, Washington focuses on security issues and the interests of its interlocutors -- the army, the ISI and select members of the elite -- in the hope of deepening engagement on terms set by America. This approach tends to neglect how much Pakistan is changing and the contests for power that, increasingly, are undermining existing state institutions and elites.

One area where change is clearly noticeable is how Pakistan thinks about India. The army and their political allies have fostered anti-Indianism for decades, since it allows them to offer up a discourse of nationalism, identity and the need for a powerful state. Not all Pakistanis are anti-Indian, of course, and Pakistan was not always anti-Indian in the way it is now. The antipathy, nevertheless, sank deep roots.

But times are changing. Over the past few decades, as governments in India and Pakistan pursued a ruinous arms race, fought wars, developed nuclear weapons and fomented one crisis after another, a determined cross-border, people-to-people peace process began to emerge. This citizens' diplomacy movement now embraces thousands of activists, scholars, businesspeople and retired government officials. They have carved out common ground on issues ranging from national security and cross-border conflict to economic and trade ties, education reform, ecology, the rights of women and minorities, and arts and culture.

Political leaders now feel obliged to meet delegations of visiting citizens from the other country; visa restrictions have eased; new cross-border transport links have been established; trade is increasing rapidly; cross-border theater, film and music festivals are emerging; and two major mainstream media groups in the two countries have launched a joint campaign to promote peace and better relations.

Polls show that 70 percent of Pakistanis want better relations with India, and about the same majority support further diplomacy and increased trade. In November 2011, after a 15-year delay, Pakistan finally agreed to reciprocate India's offer of Most Favored Nation trading status. It is expected that the current \$2.6 billion of India-Pakistan trade (with another \$10 billion in smuggled goods) will grow substantially. The trade potential has been estimated at up to \$40 billion a year. Indian vegetables are appearing in the Pakistani bazaar; soon, so will fruit. Pakistan is also about to begin importing gasoline from India.

Pakistan is changing in other ways as well, pointing to basic shifts in social power and relationships. The changes are the result of the increasing presence and mobility of capital, labor and information that have swept over Pakistan, and all of South Asia, in recent decades. These shifts have been made possible by rapid and uneven economic growth, long-running neoliberal policies that have privatized public assets, large amounts of foreign aid, remittances from overseas workers, foreign direct investment, especially from the oil-rich Gulf states, the increase in trade (including from smuggling) and a property boom in Pakistan's cities.

Pakistan's population has grown rapidly and people are on the move from the countryside to the city. Manufacturing and service sectors of the economy have grown, and women are more often at work in the formal and informal sectors. The opening of television channels to private companies, the advent of the cell phone, and the growth in literacy and education have changed what people know about each other and the world. All of these processes are forging new identities.

There are also signs of the slow decentralization of the Pakistani state. The eighteenth amendment to Pakistan's constitution, enacted in 2010, devolves power from Islamabad to the provinces. There is also new legislation increasing the legal protection and rights of women. Parliament has held the first debates over Pakistan's military spending since the 1960s, and the Supreme Court has increasingly confronted the military and political leadership.

Among ordinary people, there is tremendous frustration about the difficulties of everyday life -- evident in frequent, widespread urban rioting over shortages of electricity and natural gas -- the dire state of the economy, the lack of accountability and the denial of the rights of citizenship. This crisis of democracy and the spiraling political violence have nothing to do with the US war in Afghanistan. These problems would have exploded regardless of the September 11 attacks and the American response thereto, and they pose an internal challenge to Pakistan's stability and prosperity. US policy, however, will be central in the coming elections, expected sometime in 2012 or early 2013, which may prove to be pivotal for the future of Pakistan.

Endnotes

[1] The best source for the history of this alliance from the US perspective is Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001).

[2] See Khawaja's December 11, 2011 interview with Dawn News at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DThgijCy9gA>.

[3] *New York Times*, September 22, 2011.

[4] A very different view is offered in Arif Hasan, *The Unplanned Revolution: Observations on the Process of Socio-Economic Change in Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[5] See, for instance, International Crisis Group, *Pakistan: The Militant Jihadi Challenge* (March 2009) and *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan* (April 2005).

[6] Human Rights Watch, *"We Can Torture, Kill or Keep You for Years": Enforced Disappearances by Pakistan Security Forces in Balochistan* (New York, July 2011); and *"Their Future Is at Stake": Attacks on Teachers and Schools in Pakistan's Balochistan Province* (New York, December 2010).