This chapter examines the evolution of counterinsurgency in Pakistan and Pakistani counterinsurgency doctrine. Generally speaking Pakistan practices a more population-centric approach to counterinsurgency (hereafter CI) in its core territories of the Punjab and Karachi and by contrast resorts to pacification operations in its dealings with peripheral regions such as East Pakistan, Balochistan, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (hereafter KP, formerly the NWFP – Northwest Frontier Province) (Gazdar 2006: 1952). (See map of Pakistan on page 228.)

In terms of the implementation of CI in peripheral areas, Pakistan has under-emphasized the components of population security, economic development and political strategy because these are costs usually beyond the reach of Pakistan’s treasury (Lalwani 2009: 5). It has relied instead on pacification, with an emphasis on the intimidatory use of firepower, and exploitation of regional ethnic tensions to deter centrifugal resistance. While operations in the Sindh and Balochistan have achieved pacification, the application of military force in East Pakistan in 1971, Karachi in 1992–7, and since 2002 in KP achieved either an unsustainable stalemate, or have an uncertain future. Popular explanations for Pakistan’s failure in regard to pacification centre on its lack of civilian oversight of the military, the lack of political will in a fragmented democracy, and a perceived lack of skill and interest in counterinsurgency by the Pakistan Army (Jones and Fair 2010: 83; Mullick 2009: 1–9). Moreover, Pakistan’s military is reluctant to engage target populations that constitute its Punjabi, Pashtun or Mohajir soldiery. Pakistan consists of a military and political system centred around the Punjab (with a population of 90 million). The remaining 36 million Sindhis, 27 million Pashtun, 13 million Mohajirs, eight million Kashmiris and six million Baloch, play either a semi-peripheral or peripheral role in the state apparatus, and are therefore occasionally exposed to less liberal applications of CI. Pakistan also lacks the finances for long-term socio-economic development outside its core territory of the Punjab, and is reluctant to intervene against non-separatist regional populations where existing ethnic tensions permit divide-and-conquer rule.

Counterinsurgency

Pakistani scholar Eqbal Ahmed (2006: 37–64, 38–42; 1999, pers. comm., 22 April) distinguished four kinds of CI applicable to Pakistan:
Counterinsurgency in Pakistan

1. the Conventional-Establishment approach uses military force to hunt the insurgents and the police to re-establish order (Karachi);
2. the Punitive-Militarist approach, where pacification is achieved through terror rather than a political solution (East Pakistan, Baluchistan, Khyber-Pakhtunkwa);
3. the Technological-Attritive approach which is a genocidal application of force; and
4. the Liberal-Reformist (approximated by counter-terror operations in the Punjab 1994–7) approach involves the use of military and police forces within a broader socio-economic and political strategy, and is the preferred strategy NATO and the United States would like to see Pakistan adopt.

Pakistan’s typical practice is a combination of Conventional Establishment if CI is conducted in a friendly population, and Punitive-Militarist approach if conducted against a peripheral population. Pakistan’s prospects for adopting a Liberal-Reformist approach are hampered by a lack of resources for development, low interest in improving local representation in governance, and political costs in accessing local resources (such as the Sui natural gas fields in Balochistan) (Lalwani 2010: 1; Jones and Fair 2010: xv, 129).

Pakistan does not formally have a CI doctrine, though it is widely believed to be in the process of finalizing one (Iqbal, Major Ali 2010, pers. comm., 24 August). Pakistan has traditionally employed the Westminster terminology of air–to–civil power (Cohen 1975: 208), and of Low Intensity Warfare (LIW) (Lalwani 2009: 10; Iqbal 2009: 203; Jones and Fair 2010: 8). The first and politically significant application of an aid–to–civil power operation was the March 1953 deployment of the Pakistan Army in Lahore to quell the anti-Ahmadiya riots. Many of Pakistan’s former military leaders received CI training at Fort Bragg during the heyday of Vietnam, such as General (later President) Zia ul-Haq, but there is a general reluctance to distract attention from the pressing Indian conventional threat preoccupying most of Pakistan’s military (Housepian 1980: 141; Jones and Fair 2010: 37). Consequently CI training in the Pakistan Army is reduced to historical studies of major Western experiences, such as wars in Malaya and Vietnam (Rashid 2009: 8). In 2008 the Pakistan Chief of the Army Staffs (COAS) resisted a US offer to train two brigades of the Interior Ministry’s Frontier Corps (FC). The Pakistan army is therefore poorly structured, equipped, and trained for CI (Markey 2008: 12; Rashid 2009: 8; Lalwani 2009: 4). Pakistan’s junior and mid-range officers also have little interaction with other armies (Markey 2008: 43) and consequently have little knowledge of population-centric approaches to CI (Jones and Fair 2010: xiii) and recommended force ratios (Lalwani 2009: 12). What CI terminology it does use appears mainly to be an appeasing form of public diplomacy for the benefit of the United States, and its close ally China (with which it is conducting joint counter-terror operations against Uygur insurgent groups hiding out in Pakistan) (Jones and Fair 2010: xiv; Fair and Jones 2009–10: 162).

Pakistan’s military, when it does act in the CI role, does so with less restraint when operating against the periphery, and more reluctantly in the Punjab or KP because of the sympathetic ethnic composition of the army. The army is constrained by the over-representation of Punjabis (60 per cent, mostly from Pindi, Jhelum and Attock) and Pashtuns (Yusufzai, Utman Kel and Kataka from Kohat and Mardan) in the Inter Services Intelligence Agency (at 30–40 per cent) (Kukreja 2003: 51; Jones 2002: 139; Elliot 1968: 70, 73, 77–85; Korbel 2002: 73), the officer corps (22–25 per cent) and soldierly (22 per cent) (Nawaz 2008: 571; Roberts 2009: 33; Johnson and Mason 2008: 65; Tellis 2008: 39), and Mojahirs in the senior positions of the army and bureaucracy (Frotscher 2008: 107). The 1971 attempt to restore order in East Pakistan resulted in large-scale defections of East Bengalis from the ranks of the army, navy and air force, and there are concerns that operations against the Pashtun could again fissure the army (Gazdar 2006: 1952; Masood 2010: 6–8).
The Conventional-Establishment approach: pacification of East Pakistan (1971)

Pakistan’s crackdown and subsequent occupation of East Pakistan from March 26 to December 1971 was achieved through a combination of a Conventional-Establishment approach, in which the Pakistan military occupied key urban centres, and a Punitive-Militarist approach, in which paramilitaries terrorized separatist-minded Awami League activists and Hindus (Zaheer 1994: 164). As with other peripheries of Pakistan, a divide-and-rule method of governance was applied, in which the Pakistan armed forces, consisting primarily of Punjabis and Pashtun, was aided by immigrant Bihar Muslims engaged in an quasi-ethnic conflict with the local Bengali population (Cohen 1975: 208). Against a largely hostile population of 60 million Bengalis and approximately 100,000 Indian-trained Mukti Bahini insurgents, by October Pakistan deployed 34,000 soldiers, Special Services Group commandos (SSG) and Rangers, 11,000 Civil Armed Forces (CAF), 16,500 mostly non-Bengali police and another 20–35,000 paramilitaries of the Industrial Security Force (ISF – 3,000 strong), Vulnerable Points Force (VPF – 3,000 strong), Razakar Mujahids (consisting primarily of Bihar and non-Bengali militia), Razakar Ansaris (lathi-armed Bengalis), Shanti Committees and religiously-motivated al-Badr and al-Shams militia organized by Pakistan’s Jamaat-i-Islami political-religious organization (Ziring 1992: 69; Garg 1984: 125, 130–1; Niazi 1998: 52, 76–9, 82; Clodfelter 2002: 669; Sisson and Rose 1990: 162–5; Zaheer 1994: 170, 180–1; Mullick 2009: 20).

The initial crackdown was called Operation Searchlight and consisted of seizing and killing key leaders of the Awami League (such as Mujibur Rahman), though most escaped, and overcoming approximately 50,000 combined Bengali army, police and Awami activists (Zaheer 1994: 167, 169; Garg 1984: 117; Sisson and Rose 1990: 165; Mascarenhas 1971: 114–15). Within eight weeks the Pakistan Army had asserted control over East Pakistan, with the final tally of losses by December 1971 between 200–300,000 Bengalis and Biharis killed in ethnic conflict, 9.8 million refugees fleeing to India and 2,950 Pakistani Army deaths (Siddiqui 1972: 152; Niazi 1998: 65; Laporte Jr. 1972: 105; Frotscher 2008: 43; Clodfelter 2002: 669). The pacification operation relied on firepower, such as the use of artillery at Dacca University (Laporte 1972: 102; Ali, Rao Farman 1999, pers. comm., 26 April). The Pakistan Army had already had experience of this type in its operations in Baluchistan and KP (Payne 1973: 53; Khan, Tkka 1999, pers. comm., 25 April). The lack of clearly defined army rules of engagement prompted different standards of treatment of locals, and there were undoubtedly abuses of the local population, rapes, reprisals against villages, lethal enforcement of curfews and collateral damage, some of which resulted in prosecutions by the Pakistan Army against its senior officers (Zaheer 1994: 175, 323; Niazi 1998: 50, 282–3; Mascarenhas 1971: 115; Torture in Bangladesh 1971–2004 2004, p. 8; The Secretariat of the International Commission of Jurists 1972, p. 36).

However, most of the actual killing was conducted by the Islamist Al-Badr militias, with their better knowledge of East Pakistan, and their assigned task of targeting the Awami League, its many sympathisers, and East Pakistan’s Hindu population (Garg 1984, p. 165; Zaheer 1994, p. 172; Mascarenhas 1971, p. 117; Ziring 1992, pp. 71–2; Torture in Bangladesh 1971–2004 2004: 7–8; The Secretariat of the International Commission of Jurists 1972: 23–5, 36; Rushbrook 1972: 74–5; Ali, Rao Farman 1999, pers. comm., 26 April). The Pakistan Army had little difficulty overcoming organized resistance, but in the following months it was confined to urban areas, cantonments and border outposts linked by air and water resupply due to the threat of rural interdiction by insurgents. Rural sweep operations temporary restored access between
May and October of 1970, but the emerging conventional threat from India caused the Pakistan Army to relinquish control of the countryside by October (Zaheer 1994: 167–9, 171, 175, 177, 182; Niazi 1998: 51–2, 82; Garg 1984: 133; Johnson 2005: 152–3).

**The Punitive-Militarist approach: the five uprisings of Balochistan**

Pakistan’s pacification technique of punitive raiding and direct application of force against Baloch insurgents mimics the Khan of Kalat’s nineteenth-century tax collection raids against the Baloch town of Dera Bugti (Lalwani 2010; Matheson 1967: 62). When the Khan of Kalat (Balochistan) refused to merge with Pakistan and declared independence, the Pakistan Army invaded on 14 August 1947, and remained to suppress a subsequent tribal uprising in 1948 (Bansal 2008: 184; Khan 2009: 1072). Similar revolts followed in 1958: a Baloch reaction to its merger into a larger Punjabi-dominated West Pakistan necessitated the Pakistan government’s dispatch of the Pishin Scouts to the town of Dera Bugti to preempt any mass tribal uprising. In 1962 the Pakistan Army was deployed to suppress a low level insurgency of left-wing separatist militants, which was to last until 1969 (Khan 2009: 1072, 1076; Matheson 1967: 186–7). From 1973 to 1977, a major uprising of 55,000 Baloch tribals in Khuzdar and Kohlu was suppressed by 80,000 Pakistani troops using aircraft, napalm and borrowed Iranian helicopters, resulting in 5,000 insurgent and 3,300 military deaths (Bansal 2008: 184; Khan 2007: 126; Khan 2009: 1077; Lalwani 2009: 28; Gazdar 2006: 1952). The operation was successful and deterred, in combination with political engagement, any further uprising for two decades (Lalwani 2010; Khan 2009: 1077; Sahadevan 2002: 132). The underlying cause of the insurgency was Pakistan’s exploitation of resources without Baloch consent or benefit (such as natural gas), and their political marginalization (Bansal 2008: 183, 185–6; Weinbaum 1977; Mullick 2009: 22–3).

The Punitive-Militarist approach was successful because of an absence of significant numbers of Baloch in the military, the non-Baloch composition of the Baloch Regiment, the FC (primarily Pashtun), and that only 25 per cent of the Baloch provincial police were Baloch (Sahadevan 2002: 132; Bansal 2008: 185–6). An inter-tribal divide-and-conquer form of governance by Islam-abad has not worked among the well-coordinated Baloch tribes. Pakistan has encouraged, therefore, ethnic inundation by Afghan Pashtun refugees, who have been granted the right to vote, and has supported immigration by Punjabis and Sindhis along the strategic Mekran Coast (though this has resulted in ethnic riots, such as in 1991) (Bansal 2008: 188–9; ICG 2007: 8, 1087).

Since 2003 renewed insurgency among the Dera Bugti and Marri tribesmen of Kohlu led the army to begin pacification operations in December 2005 (Bansal 2008: 182). To that end Pakistan has deployed army artillery elements, 750 Defense Security Guards (DSG) and 10,000 FC and Frontier Constabulary. Pakistan primarily conducts vital point security of gas fields and other infrastructure, combined with mass detentions (12,000 plus 600 missing), raids and assassinations, such as that of Baloch insurgent leaders Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti in August 2006 by gunship, and Nawabzada Ballach Marri in November 2007 (Bansal 2008: 183, 196; Khan 2009: 1082; ICG 2007: 3–5; Khan 2007: 126). When the resistance is substantial, Pakistan routinely blockades Dera Bugti and conducts punitive artillery strikes, as the army did in 2002 (Khan 2009: 1082; Bansal 2008: 184, 190, 192, 196).

**The Punitive-Militarist approach: anti-Dacoit operations in the Sindh (1983–9, 1992)**

As part of operations by the military government of Zia ul-Haq to suppress Sindhi separatism in the form of the Movement to Restore Democracy (MRD), 40,000 soldiers of the Pakistan army
were deployed between 1983 to 1989 to combat bandit attacks on police stations, trains and local administration. Through the use of helicopters, special courts, thousands were detained, villages were raised and order restored, with the loss of several hundred lives (Frotscher 2008: 108; Ahmar 1996: 1048; Gazdar 2006: 1952; Khan 2002: 213, 225, 228; Newberg 1987: 319). The military also made use of private landowner armies, while the ISI helped sponsor the creation of the Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad (IIJ) to counterbalance the influence of the main Sindi nationalist parties (Khan 2002: 226–7, 229). Again in 1992, as a preliminary to operations in Karachi (Operation Clean-up), the Pakistan army conducted anti-Dacoit sweeps through rural Sindh (Operation Sindh) (Frotscher 2008: 136; Mullick 2009: 21).

The Liberal-Reformist approach: Karachi and the MQM (1992–7)

In response to the Sindi-Mohjar ethnic conflict in Karachi that instigated the formation of the pro-Mohajir Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) and the effective paralysing of Pakistan’s wealthiest city by use of terror and attacks on police stations, Nawaz Sharif dispatched the army in 1991 (Frotscher 2008: 127, 174, 185, 187, 217). The army was initially reluctant to become involved because of the significant Mohajir population, who were well represented in the national bureaucracy (Ahmar 1996: 1046, 1048; Frotscher 2008: 37, 225). Operation Clean-up, begun in May 1992, involved two infantry brigades, 20,000 Rangers, SSG, and the ISI-sponsored Haqiqi faction to suppress the MQM’s urban guerrilla war (for a force to population ratio of 3.2 to 1,000) (Frotscher 2008: 218–19; Lalwani 2009: 28; Mullick 2009: 21–2). The hub of MQM activity, Karachi University, was secured, and the city isolated by cordon and search operations that involved the shutting down of basic utilities for extended periods in hostile neighbourhoods (Ahmar 1996: 1041; Frotscher 2008: 115). The primary goal was capturing the MQM leadership cadre, though this was not achieved and the army’s activity stoked up greater levels of popular support for the MQM (Ahmar 1996: 1053, 1047). The army employed Punjabi, Sindi and Jamiat-i-Islami-sponsored student groups, criminal gangs (such as the Salam group), detention of relatives, extrajudicial killings and raids (Frotscher 2008: 115–16, 220–1, 223). The Terrorist Affected Areas Act of 1992 and the removal of the regulation banning forced confessions permitted torture, but the army could not overcome the MQM’s solid community base of support, and so it withdrew on 30 November 1994 (Frotscher 2008: 223–4; Ahmar 1996: 1035; Haq 1995: 1001).

A second Operation Clean-up, along the lines of a Liberal-Reformist approach, was conducted primarily by the Rangers and police in July 1995, and relied more heavily on intelligence and informants rather than neighbourhood sieges, but was supplemented by state-sanctioned extrajudicial killings. It consisted of 35,000 personnel versus 1,500 MQM militants and 4,000 supporters (Waseem 1996: 628; Frotscher 2008: 226–7, 230). The MQM leadership was more effectively dealt with so that by 1997 relative peace was achieved (though assassinations by both sides continued) (Frotscher 2008: 228–31, 235, 240; Abbas 2009: 17). This operated in parallel with political success by the MQM in municipal and national political representation (Frotscher 2008: 222–3).

The Liberal-Reformist approach: counter-terrorism in the Punjab (1994–7)

Pakistan’s counter-terrorism operations in the Punjab are the penultimate example of Pakistan’s Liberal-Reformist approach to CI (ICG 2009: 7). In the Punjab success was achieved through an orthodox population security approach involving community policing, intelligence and legal and extrajudicial methods, and made politically possible by strong public support for the
operation (Lalwani 2010: 2). Under Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, the PPP (People’s Party of Pakistan) government cracked down on militants in the Punjab between 1994 and 1995 (ICG 2009: 18). Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s PML (Pakistan Muslim League) did the same in February–May 1997 and January 1999 against the SSP (Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan) and the LJ (Lashkar-e-Jhangvi), arresting 1,500 militants and sympathisers and pushing them into Afghanistan (ICG 2009: 4; Abbasi 2009: 17; Nasr 2000: 185). The ISI was subsequently tasked with conducting the extra-legal disappearances of a large number of Pakistani militants between 2004 and 2007 (ICG 2009: 19; Tellis 2008: 4). When the Pakistan state faced a direct challenge from militants at the Lal Masjid Red Mosque in Islamabad in July 2007, the Pakistan SSG (Special Service Group) was dispatched to neutralize its occupants (ICG 2009: 11).

The Punitive-Military approach: the tribal Pashtun problem

Pakistan’s policy in the KP at Partition was too under-funded to mimic the British practice of tribal subsidies, and its military was too preoccupied with India to permanently pacify the Pashtuns, so it granted more local autonomy than had the British (Schofield 2003: 250). Pakistan relied for its governance on the 1902 Frontier Crimes Regulation, which permitted punitive and collective punishment (ICG 2009: ii, 2, 4–5, 18). Pakistan’s general governance strategy in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) is divide-and-conquer, in which tribes are counter-balanced by the political agent, and favourite leaders are temporarily supported (a practice that might be termed ‘crown the warlord’) while more hostile leaders are assassinated. This approach was exemplified by the backing of Pashtun militant leaders Hafiz Gul Bahadur, Maulvi Nazir Ahmed, Jalaludin Haqqani and the Uthmanzai (N. Waziristan) and Bhittani Ahmedzai (S. Waziristan) militias, or the neutralization of Abdul Gaffar Khan, the Faqir of Ipi, Fazl Akbar and Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai (ICG 2009: 7, 18; Rehman 2009; Franco 2009: 278–9, 286; Jones and Fair 2010: 57–8).

Recent divide-and-conquer approaches have largely failed due to the coalescence of 30 clans under the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). In cases of failure Pakistan relies on punitive raids, bombardment and economic blockades to maintain law and order, while generally neglecting development and political strategies due to their high cost (Lalwani 2009: 11–12, 39; ICG 2009: ii; Tellis 2008: 25–6; ICG 2009: 21; Rashid 2009: 9). Kilcullen characterizes Pakistani operations in the KP as largely static and dependent on firepower instead of patrolling, reliant on insurgent killing rather than population security, and focused on the marginalizing of local forces (Kilcullen 2009: 10–13; Lalwani 2009: 9; Jones and Fair 2010: 31, 80). Fair and Seth have also identified a preoccupation among the Pakistani military with conventional warfare training that results in low mobility in mountainous terrain and a reluctance to hold territory after it has been cleared of insurgents; this results in the creation of a large flow of internally displaced persons (IDPs) as well as poor local cooperation and follow-on political-economic development planning (Jones and Fair 2010: 81–2).

Operating in KP and the FATA since 2010 are 150,000 personnel of the Army’s 11th Corps, including the primarily Pashtun-manned FC, Frontier Constabulary and provincial police (Lalwani 2009: 33; ICG 2009: 17–18). In an auxiliary role under the control of the political agents are the organized tribal Levies and the self-armed tribal Khassadars (ICG 2009: 17). The Federal Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) is ultimately responsible for coordinating the political agents and their responsibility in turn for allowances to cooperative Maliks (traditional political leaders), and is often at odds with the locally elected officials. Estimated government killed-in-action has ranged from 1,000 to 3,000 between 2004 and 2010 (Jagadish 2009: 41; Markey 2008: 7).
Peace deals have usually been the equilibrium outcome in the absence of Pakistani domestic support for CI in the KP and the tribal areas. The underlying principle is that selected tribes can be neutralized to counter-balance others, or even simply to remain anti-separatist within their autonomous areas, regardless of the resulting violence (Markey 2008: 30). Pakistan has learned, in its management of Pashtun uprisings since 1951 and especially between 1960 and 1963 in Bajaur and Dir, that local lashkars, or armed gangs, can remain loyal even against Afghan instigation and infiltration (Dupree 1973: 538–42). This policy has failed because it provided time for insurgents to re-group for further resumption of hostilities (Fair 2009; ICG 2009: 1; Lalwani 2010: 3). Support for military action grew in Pakistan following the collapse of the Swat peace in July 2009 and the October attack on the army’s General Headquarters in Rawalpindi (Kilcullen 2009: 2–3; Jones and Fair 2010: 31, 80; ICG 2009: 7).

From 2001 until 2008 Pakistan practised an alternating combination of Conventional-Establishment CI in the KP and PATA, and Militarist-Punitive CI in the FATA and tribal areas. Pakistani support for the US operations at Tora Bora in the autumn of 2001 until 2004 consisted of porous blocking operations along the tribal frontier and limited raids against al-Qaeda (Operation Kazha Punga in S. Waziristan) (Franco 2009: 275–7, 280; Jones and Fair 2010: 41–3, 46–7). Operation Al Mizan (2004) in S. Waziristan was intended to clear the FATA of foreign Chechen and Uzbek militants, but resulted in the introduction of the army (as part of Operation Kalosha II) after an ambush of the FC. Tactically the army had poor cordon-and-search techniques which alienated the local population through a scorched earth policy and airstrikes; it also strategically instigated the consolidation of the insurgents against pro-government Maliks, as well as failed to destroy foreign militant cells. It did mark the first use of US-trained Pakistani CI special forces (Lalwani 2009: 7; Jones and Fair 2010: xiv, 3, 47–50, 53–5). Operation Azam Warsak (June 2006) in Mohmand Agency, a sweep against foreign militants, was executed successfully because of local support (Franco 2009: 275–7, 280; ICG 2009: 6). Operation Zalzala (2008) in South Waziristan was provoked by an insurgent uprising against the FC, and targeted foreign militants, their militant Mehsud hosts and the source of suicide bombings, and was, at least temporarily, successful (Jones and Fair 2010: 34, 57–60). The operation made heavy use of firepower and the creation of outposts for rapid reoccupation by the army. It made innovative use of combat engineering support, armour and jamming of militant communications, but produced significant destruction through collateral damage and collective punishment of villages, resulting in 200,000 IDPs, and failed to stem the return of militants (Jones and Fair 2010: 59–62).

From 2008 onwards Pakistan shifted to a hybrid Conventional-Establishment and Liberal-Reformist CI technique in Bajaur Agency, where the government had a modicum of urban support. Operation Sher Dil (2008–9) in Bajaur made more effective use of mobile and dispersed forces, targeted SSG raids, local follow-on aid, basing for population security, local political and community contact and intelligence, and favourable kill ratios. However, it continued its heavy reliance on air and artillery bombardment producing collateral damage, weak patrolling, concentration in large bases, failure to isolate the battlefield against an influx of militants (though successful at blocking escape), failure to weaken local tribal support for militants, absence of a successful clear–hold–build approach, and produced 500,000 IDPs (Lalwani 2010: 7; Rashid 2009: 8; Jones and Fair 2010: 64–5, 75; Khan 2009; ICG 2009: 5–6; Mullick 2009: 55).

Operation Rah–e-Rast (2007 and 2009) in Swat consisted of two phases, both targeting the Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM). When the FC failed in its intervention against resurgent activity in October 2007 (Operation Mountain Viper), the army was deployed in November and successfully applied its standard practice of battlefield isolation followed by
cordon-and-search. But this local level strategy was coupled with weak applications of civil–military coordination, population security, media support, social development through quick impact projects, community consultation, intelligence, and worsened by a paralysed regional and national political strategy (Iqbal 2009: 5, 15–29, 42–7, 54–81, 84, 87, 89, 91–103, 121, 207, 209, 217; Jones and Fair 2010: 66–8). Normalcy was restored for a period in 2008, facilitating elections, but the overall lack of political strategy led to a resurgence of militant activity in 2009 and the second phase of Operation Rah-e-Rast (Iqbal 2009: 124, 137–48, 167–70). The army augmented its usual practice of cordon-and-search with significant use of artillery, fixed and rotary-wing firepower, coupled with more successful application of dispersed night patrols, SSG raids in Fighting in Built Up Areas (FIBUA) conditions, base locations for population security, air strikes against leadership targets, and the setting-up of local lashkars, resulting in favourable kill ratios for the army, but also producing one million IDPs (Perlez and Shah 2009). While there persists an absence of a national strategy, in Swat the army has managed to maintain continuous operations in lieu of a ceasefire (Iqbal 2009: 200, 223).

Operation Rah-e-Nijat (2009–10) in S. Waziristan was intended as a follow-on to Operation Zalzala after a resumption of terror attacks in the Punjab, and reverted to a Punitive-Militarist mode of CI. The army did engage friendly clans and militias (such as Mullah Nazir and Hafiz Gul Bahadur) in an operation that opened with air strikes (October 2009) against militant concentrations, and successfully overran the primary urban centres of the TTP by December. In conjunction with the United States, drone attacks killed both Beittullah (August 2009) and Hakimullah (January 2010) Mehsud, the leaders of the TTP. The army made heavy use of firepower, deliberate movement to counter Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), scorched earth tactics, with a low emphasis on winning of hearts and minds, resulting in 100,000 IDPs. Attempts to stem the TTP terror were of limited initial effectiveness as an unprecedented 12,632 died from terror attacks in Pakistan in 2009 (a greater number than suffered by Afghanistan) (Jones and Fair 2010: 8–9).

Pakistan has nevertheless evolved its tactics, however imperfectly, since beginning operations in 2001, and it appears that the Liberal-Reformist approach, as exemplified in operations in Bajaur is likely to be applied more widely in KP and the PATA. But in the absence of a large scale foreign-funded development programme, the Pakistan Army is likely to continue its reliance on the Punitive-Militarist approach to CI in the tribal belt.

Achievements of counterinsurgency

Assessments vary on the final tally of Pakistan’s success with its hybrid pacification (Conventional-Establishment and Militarist-Punitive) and CI (Liberal-Reformist) approaches to insurgency. One estimate suggests that Pakistan succeeded in all instances except East Pakistan, but in that case, without Indian military intervention, Pakistani military domination was sustainable (Mullick 2009: 24). If the Pakistan military could have dispensed with the need to prepare for a conventional war against India in 1971, its available military assets would very likely have been sufficient to restore order to East Pakistan, though not legitimacy. For that matter, if Pakistan’s sizable military could be diverted from its deployment areas along the Indian frontier, Pakistan could at a minimum triple its assigned forces in KP and the FATA.

Alternatively, Pakistan had achieved resounding success in its use of Reformist-Liberal CT in the Punjab, and managed to pacify the Baloch and Sindhis, but achieved no more than a political stalemate in Karachi in the 1990s and among the Pashtuns. Insurgencies do poorly in the Punjab, which is the more or less satisfied core of the Pakistan state. What terror does occur in the Punjab is either imported or very far outside the mainstream interests of the population.
Public cooperation with the state in the Punjab is easily obtained. The Baloch and Sindhi under-representation in the army (which is no longer the case among the Sindhis), permitted a far more aggressive punitive response in those peripheries. Operations against the Pashtun areas are far more problematic, given the over-representation of the Pashtun in the army coupled with their political under-representation. The Pashtun are divided by their suspicion of Punjabi domination of Pakistan, coupled with their seemingly compatible views of militant Islam. The result is not a measured response, but overwhelmingly disruptive uses of force followed by political-economic paralysis.

Increasing democratization and socio-economic development of the peripheries, and the shifting recruitment base of the Pakistan Army may make pacification approaches to resolving regional grievances less politically palatable for Islamabad. The result seems to have played out in the FATA, where successful cordon-and-search operations are followed by extended military occupations without economic development or popular mobilization. It is this paucity of funds that seems to drive Pakistan’s practice of Militarist-Punitive CI, rather than simply an historical inheritance from British practice.

Notes
2 Rao Farman Ali asked me what I would have done had I been in his shoes and students were shooting at my artillery train.

Recommended readings

References
Counterinsurgency in Pakistan