

Hybrid Regimes and state failure in Fatima Bhutto's *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*

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Abstract

Hybrid Regime is a system of government in which some aspects of liberal democracy are incorporated with autocratic ones and there is a relationship between degree of Hybridism and likeliness of state failure. The present research studies The Shadow of the Crescent Moon in the context of hybrid regimes. Fatima Bhutto's novel is set in Mir Ali, a small town in the tribal areas of Pakistan close to Waziristan. The novel presents Pakistan as a state where lawlessness abounds, and people's fundamental rights are frequently usurped, which the present research regards as state failure and locates this failure in Hybrid Regimes. Qualitative content analysis technique is used for data analysis. The works of Fareed Zakaria and Ayesha Sadiqa on hybrid regimes are used to form a conceptual framework for this research.

Keywords: Fatima Bhutto, Pakistan, hybrid regimes, state failure, fundamental rights

1. Introduction

It is important to note at the outset that Fatima Bhutto, a Pakistani writer and a member of famous political dynasty, the Bhuttos, might be regarded as politically biased because members of her family came in direct conflict with the state of Pakistan. Her father, Murtaza Bhutto, was murdered under mysterious circumstances when his own sister, Benazir Bhutto, was the prime minister of Pakistan. So, Fatima Bhutto's stance regarding the state of Pakistan as depicted in the novel under discussion might seem extreme.

As a developing country of the third world, the state of Pakistan has been facing serious problems regarding economy, human rights, law and order, fundamentalism, etc. since its making in 1947. Unlike other countries who

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got independence in the same decade (e.g. China and India), Pakistan has been subjected to a political system which works on a self-contradictory principle. On the one hand, it is declared as a republic or a democratic country; on the other, the country has been victim to a number of military coups in the name of better governance and to set up a better system for accountability of the corrupt politicians cum business tycoons. Ironically, even when the [so-called] democracy is in practice, the military intervention in the governmental affairs is evident. As a general perception of the common man, the army generals are always at work to destabilize the democratically elected governments. This, in turn, results in a system of government which can be called 'hybrid regime system'. As fiction is an important source of [indirect] information regarding a society and its predicaments, the present study will be helpful to locate state failure as portrayed by Fatima Bhutto in her 2013 novel *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* in the context of hybrid regimes of Pakistan. The concept of hybrid regimes has been employed to ascertain the possible cause(s) of state failure, as the former is an overarching and major factor leading to the latter.

The Shadow of the Crescent Moon is a highly explicit portrayal of the extremes a state can stretch its authority in order to suppress the people's rights and liberties in the name of ideology, religion, and security. The novel is full of eerie uncertainty and a looming expectancy of something evil to strike anyone anywhere and anytime. The source of this fearful and unhinged atmosphere is the crescent moon, which serves as the symbol of the state of Pakistan. "But the shadow of that moon never faded over Mir Ali. It hung over its sky night after night, condemning the town to life under its cold shadow" (Bhutto, 2013, p. 19). The novel is set in "Mir Ali" a small town in restive tribal area of Pakistan. It is the story of three brothers, Aman Erum, Sikandar and Hayat, the sons of Inayat Mehsud, a freedom fighter who had been fighting the state all his life for a free Mir Ali. The Pakistani state itself is an important character in the novel, as Fatima Bhutto says in an interview, "Pakistan certainly impacts my writing, in many ways it's a character in a lot of my work. Sometimes it's been a loud and present character and sometimes it's just a shadow" (Chandana, 2015). In *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*, it is a loud and present character which seems to be the only real antagonist.

As the novel begins, on one Friday morning all brothers leave for three different mosques to offer Eid prayer because of the fear of a bomb blast annihilating the entire family. "No one prays together, travels in pairs, or

eats out in groups” (21). Aman Erum has recently returned from America where he was studying on a student visa that he got with the help of intelligence agencies, for whom he had been spying in return. Sikandar is a doctor and married to Mina, a woman deranged because of their son Zalan’s death in a bomb blast. Hayat is the torch bearer of his father’s legacy and carries on his dream of freeing Mir Ali from the shadow of the crescent moon. He is involved romantically and ideologically with Sammara, a rebel and an erstwhile beloved of his brother Aman Erum. The novel begins at 9 in the morning and ends at noon. The three brothers do not intend to go to any mosque as they have other plans. Aman Erum is suspicious of Hayat and Samarra and leaves for a local restaurant to make a call. Sikandar leaves for his hospital and gets a call to attend to a woman in labour across the town, where he goes with Mina. Hayat and Samarra leave to coordinate an attack on the chief Minister. The novel’s ending is ambiguous as it is not clear at the end if the Chief Minister is killed or not. Hayat leaves Samarra alone disappearing in the alleys of Mir Ali, and Aman Erum makes the call to Colonel Tarik and gives him the “key” (228). Sikandar and Mina are the only characters who get some sort of clear resolution as they are intercepted by the Taliban, and Mina confronts them with a cathartic rant about their violent actions and the murder of Zalan, before the couple is allowed to drive on.

Cilano (2011) refers to the concepts of “state system” and “state idea”. State system refers to the state institutions, the military, the bureaucracy etc. “State idea refers to the process of legitimation through representation (discursive not electoral)” (5). This legitimation can be achieved by using language and culture. In this context Pakistani Fiction in English “specifies its interest in the state through an exploration of the everyday state” (6). Cilano’s focus on the everyday state is about concretizing the abstractions of idea and the nation “as sites of collective belonging” (6). Our purpose in this research is to move away from the questions of idea, nation and state, as Cilano does, and to focus on the everyday functioning of state. Similarly, unlike Cilano who talks about the way Pakistani English Fiction portrays Pakistan as a state in constant turmoil and locates this turmoil in the broader political history of the country and its role in global politics. Our focus, however, is totally on internal affairs, confined within the realities of everyday governance of the state. Instead of dwelling on the failures of the Pakistani state to create a national identity, we like to draw attention to the failure of the state in the fulfilment of its obligatory duties in the service of its citizens. For this purpose, we shall

use Fatima Bhutto's novel *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* to prove this viewpoint.

2. Literature Review

Theoretically speaking, there are two systems of governance in the world, democracy and authoritarianism. But in real world there are many systems that are hybrid. In the real world, different states create systems in their own social, economic, political and cultural context. "Specifically the potential need for a hybrid type arises when real world cases unify elements belonging to different established types, for example the simultaneous existence of pluralist elections (a feature of democracies) and media repression (a feature of autocracies)" (Stewart, Klein, Schmitz, Schroder, 2012, p. 15). Most of the developing countries in the world today have some sort of hybrid system. The regimes in Pakistan, whether military or democratic, have always been hybrid in spirit. Ayub Khan abrogated the first constitution of 1956 and replaced it with a martial law but soon after, he introduced another constitution in 1962 and got himself elected as president (Siddiq, 2019). General Ziaul Haq and Musharraf also tampered with the constitution of 1973 but did hold elections and gave a role to political parties in the governance. Similarly the so called democratic governments in the intervals were always restrained in one or another way by military, and other state institutions like judiciary and bureaucracy. As Jaffrelot (2016) says that military and civilians were both responsible for failure of democracy in Pakistan. Military dictators cultivated political patronage and politicians always helped them establish their rule. Jaffrelot further says that military regimes always had to constitutionalize their rule. Similarly, Almond and Coleman (1960) say that Pakistan does not have a proper two or multiparty system and politicians do not adhere to a policy or program but control money and legislature. Governments formed by such politicians are always under the influence of military and other state institutions, hence not liberal democracies but hybrids. As Cohen (2011) says that military has been the dominant force in Pakistan throughout its history, despite its experiments with democracy. He further says that though democracy has been unable to take root, authoritarian rule has also been unable to gain legitimacy because authoritarianism does not enjoy support of the people. Ahmed (2010) says something similar when he talks about military/parliament divide throughout Pakistani history. He says that Pakistan's transition to democracy is always impeded by military, taking control covertly or overtly. According to Hasan (2007) Pakistani constitution provides for

democratic principle, to hold elections to form a sovereign elected parliament, but elections seldom result in the formation of such a parliament. Establishment is always more powerful than the elected representatives. Hasan gives the example of 2002 elections, when a parliament was elected and the prime minister was the chief executive of the country, yet the same parliament passed laws to give powers to President Musharaf and allowed him to keep the office of military chief as well. So, this dispensation was not a democratic one but it was neither pure authoritarian rule because, after all, there was an elected government in place.

Stern (2001) also finds military's constant involvement in politics as main impediment in the development of democracy in Pakistan. He says that parliaments in Pakistan are not responsible to the electorate, rather the military and its agencies hold the real power. May and Selochon (2004) term Pakistan a praetorian state where military dominates political institutions and processes. According to them different governments in Pakistan failed to implement democratic norms and ideals. Ayub Khan 'civilianized' his military rule by holding elections and making political elite a partner. Bhutto concentrated power in his own hands rather than strengthening the democratic institutions. Zia ul Haq also tried to civilianize his military rule by holding party-less elections. Kapur (2006) says that the fear of majority rule compelled the elite and the military in Pakistan to avoid modern democracy. He alludes to the incidents of 1958 and 1970 in this context. To create parity with the Eastern province of Pakistan, West was made one unit. Similarly in 1970, Yahya Kan held elections in which Sheikh Mujib's Awami Muslim League gained majority but power was not transferred to it. Majority rule is one of the main principles of democracy but Pakistani regimes compromised this principle at the altar of national security. This description of Pakistani states' experiments with different regimes proves that they were all hybrid and therefore prone to cause state failure. This state failure has its consequences as the citizens ultimately bear the brunt of the inability of regimes to uphold the law and guarantee the enforcement of constitution.

3. Hybrid Regimes and State Failure

Hybrid regimes by their nature are prone to fail. A close look at the ingredients that create such regimes makes it quite apparent that such

regimes are more likely to fail. Regimes that are formed by predetermined elections, have no regard for constitutional liberties, and are subject to the control of military and clerics, are very likely to face failure. “States lying in the middle of the democracy-autocracy continuum, for example, are significantly more prone than either democracies or autocracies to state failure and political instability more generally” (Brown, 2011, p. 31). For example, when a state does not hold free and fair elections, ensuing government is always going to be under internal and external pressure. Opposition will always be raising questions about government’s legitimacy and impeding its ability to govern, whereas international organizations will also be putting pressure for reforms. Similarly if elected government is constantly guided and controlled by military, its ability to perform on domestic and foreign fronts gets limited. And if a regime shows utter disregard for individual liberties and rule of law, it is bound to take the state towards failure. Huntington (1968) opined that the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union have different political systems, but all of these systems work efficiently because, “the governments govern” (1).

The government’s ability to govern is an important measure of its success or failure. Hybrid regimes are a mash up of varying features of democracy, e.g. electoral competition, strong media, and civilian rule with authoritarian practices, e.g. military control, censorship, and use of state institutions to oppress opponents. This hotchpotch creates hurdles in the way of governance. Hence, an authoritarian regime like the USSR, and a liberal democracy like the USA can deliver good governance, whereas a hybrid regime fails to do so. Simply speaking, hybrid regimes are politically less stable than both autocracies and democracies, hence more likely to fail. According to Diamond (2016), much of the developing world has absolute poverty. He points out that hurdles to eliminate this poverty are chiefly political, as these countries proclaim to be democratic, but in reality they have pseudo democracies, and competitive authoritarian regimes. Such regimes are ill-equipped to make and implement proper policy to empower the poor. So, hybrid regimes have dire consequences for the masses. In the absence of rule of law, good governance, a reliable and transparent justice system, state fails. “A failed state is characterized by the ‘collapse of central government to impose order, resulting in loss of physical control of territory, and/or the monopoly over the legitimate use of force” (Taylor, 2013, p. 1). Thus, a state fails when it loses its writ and

its institutions fail to function properly. It becomes a jungle where survival of the fittest becomes the only law applicable.

4.Procedure of Analysis

This study has been undertaken by applying concepts of Hybrid Regimes as propounded by, Fareed Zakaria, and Ayesha Saddiqa. The design of the study has been analytical and descriptive, based on qualitative content analysis technique. Content analysis was used because it is most suitable method to identify the themes and patterns in the novel and because it, “focuses more on description” (Drisko&Maschi, 2016, p.83). This method is, “a set of techniques for the systematic analysis of texts of many kinds, addressing not only manifest content but also the themes and core ideas found in texts as primary content” (p.82). Furthermore, this study used unobtrusive method of content analysis which does not rely on interactive data (Hesse-Biber& Leavy, 2011). Purposive sampling was used to generate sample for the study. Purposive sampling also referred to as subjective sampling technique provided the liberty to use my judgment as a researcher to select sample which was most suitable to the study. The focus, however, was to analyse the negative results of the failure of a state and its impact on various individuals with reference to the novel in question in order to find out the effects of ‘hybrid regime’ with all its implications and aspects.

5.Conceptual Framework

Fareed Zakaria uses the term illiberal democracy for hybrid regimes that claim to be democracies (Zakaria, 1997). He regards liberalism as the key aspect of true democracy and he points out that democracy does not always lead to liberalism. He gives several examples from the world where the process of democratization has produced varied results. In Western Europe we have seen the rise of constitutional liberalism first and growth of democracy later in the 20th century. Whereas in post-cold war developing world the process of democratization has mostly lead to the creation of some sort of hybrid regimes or illiberal democracies. “From Peru to the Palestinian Authority, from Sierra Leone to Slovakia, from Pakistan to the Philippines, we see the rise of a disturbing phenomenon in international life—illiberal democracy” (22). He points out that constitutional liberalism is different from the term democracy and in the West the two have coincided for the past one century and given rise to the concept of democracy being liberal democracy. When democracy spread in the post-cold war world, liberalism was not necessarily part of it.

Multiparty elections were taking place but what was happening after the elections was alarming as elected presidents were ignoring the parliaments and ruling through presidential decrees. By giving examples of Russia, Romania, and Bangladesh as illiberal democracies, Zakaria highlights that half of the democratizing countries in 1997 were illiberal democracies. He further differentiates between democracy and constitutional liberalism. Democracy in its minimalist sense is about procedures of selecting a government whereas constitutional liberalism is about governments' goals. Constitutional liberalism is about protecting individual's autonomy against any kind of coercive force, i.e. state, society or church. The essence of constitutional liberalism is that state limits its own powers in order to protect individual liberties. This according to Fareed is expressed by the Magna Carta, the American Constitution and Helsinki Final Act. So, according to him democracy does not necessitate constitutional liberalism. Most of Western Europe was not truly democratic until 1940s, but most of it had constitutional liberalism by 1840s. It is only since 1945, the West has combined both democracy and constitutional liberalism and thus has presented a model of good governance for the world to follow. He draws a comparison between the growth of liberal democracy in the West and East Asia. Most of East Asia has regimes that can be called semi democracies but they have granted civil liberties to their citizens and have seen economic liberalism grow with the passage of time. Capitalism, economic liberalism and high per capita GNP have been important factors historically for the growth of liberal democracy. So, East Asian regimes seem quite similar to Western European regimes of around 1900. Fareed's point is that constitutional liberalism might lead to democracy as it did in Western Europe and is happening in East Asia but democracy does not necessarily lead to constitutional liberalism. In Latin America, Africa, Central Asia and much of Muslim world elections have not necessarily lead to liberal democracies. Fareed says that, "In the Islamic world, from the Palestinian authority to Iran to Pakistan, democratization has led to an increasing role for theocratic politics, eroding long-standing traditions of secularism and tolerance." So, civil liberties and rule of law or constitutional liberalism, as Fareed terms it, is the foundation stone of liberal democracy.

Siddiq (2019), looks at Pakistan's present regime in the backdrop of political history of the country and argues that there is hybrid martial law in place at the moment. According to her, even though elections have been held in 2018, and power has been transferred from one civilian

government to another, still, real power rests with the military. Pakistan might have electoral democracy, but it is not a consolidated democracy. She says that Pakistani military over the years has gained not just the political, but economic and societal power. She discusses in detail the evolution of military might in Pakistan. She elaborates the causes of military interventions and their consequences for the state. From Ayub Khan to Zia-ul-Haq army moved towards a civil-military fusionist model of governance. General Ayub Khan got himself elected as president, whereas General Zia-ul-Haq, got a handpicked prime minister elected from a party less elections and kept for himself the role of military chief and the president. He introduced the 8th amendment to the 1973 constitution and got absolute powers. Siddiqa further argues that post Zia period was an era of constant struggle between the military and civilian players for supremacy which finally came to a head in 1999, when General Musharraf removed the civilian government and became the chief executive. This time the army introduced a new fusionist model, in which parliament was allowed to complete its term but not the prime ministers. According to Siddiqa, judiciary replaced the role earlier played by the article 58(2) (b) of the constitution during this period. The post-2018 regime is a perfect fusionist model in which the civilian government will not interfere with the military on strategic issues. Siddiqa's historical analysis of different regimes in Pakistan clearly highlights the hegemonic presence of military in politics.

A close look at the concepts of Fareed Zakaria, and Ayesha Siddiqabring to fore two key ingredients of hybridity in the context of Pakistan, "illiberalism and hegemony". Regimes of Pakistan have been illiberal and hegemonic systems of governance, hence hybrid. Currently I shall analyse the text of *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* in the light of these two key ingredients to prove regime hybridity in the novel.

6. Hybrid Regime in *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*

Hybrid regime, as discussed above, is a system of governance that is autocratic in essence but displays a democratic façade. The degree to which a hybrid regime behaves like a democracy or an autocracy varies across states. But the conceptual framework provides us with two distinct characteristics of hybrid regimes, illiberalism and hegemony. These will be used as descriptive codes currently to analyse the text and to prove regime hybridity therein.

6.1 Illiberalism

The Shadow of the Crescent Moon centres the relationship of individuals with state and how the state becomes a usurper of individual liberties. Pakistan portrayed in the novel is not a liberal democracy but an overarching hegemonic illiberal democracy. People of Mir Ali have been fighting for freedom because they have been fed up with government's empty promises of more autonomy without delivering on any of those promises. As the taxi driver refers to the lies that state tells when he says that, "that crook of a minister is coming here and using words like "democracy", "reconciliation", "devolution" (Bhutto, 2013, p. 22). His dream of decentralization and autonomy is just a dream that does not seem to translate into reality. Political participation leads to liberal democracy, and strong centre erodes it. References to Bangladesh in the text of the novel are very pertinent in this regard. Pakistan tried to control the Eastern half of its territory with same audacity, more coercive central government instead of more provincial autonomy, and the rest is history as the Bangladeshi, "traitors fought their way out of the body and somehow made it on their own without the glory of the crescent moon and star shining overhead" (19). Then there is the complicated story of terrorism to boot, which has infected the tribal regions of Pakistan for many decades now. When Aman Erum, is in American Embassy, he watches the news of a US drone strike in the northern region of Pakistan that has killed fourteen people (36). These people are just hinted at as a number, and the text makes it quite clear that the government of Pakistan is just going to leave these people as irrelevant things, things it was supposed to protect and nurture. Instead the president of Pakistan approves the action and confirms that alliance with US will remain strong. Pakistan being an illiberal democracy, is not worried about fulfilling its responsibilities, rather is more focused on keeping an ally happy.

Mir Ali is directly controlled by the centre and laws are made and enforced by the federal government which is a clear evidence of illiberalism. As people are not allowed to gather in groups of more than three by federal order, the resistance has found a way around it. Islamic republic cannot stop people from gathering for funerals and this provides the rebels with opportunities to have meetings and plan for future activities. "Even the dead were enlisted in the battle against the state" (50). The laws of the Islamic Republic can go against the liberty of its own citizens, but they cannot go against Islam, and the irony is painful as, the dead can call humongous meetings to send them off, but the living cannot

gather in numbers to protest and to demand their rights. They cannot do this because the government is not ready to listen to the traitors who do not toe the line. Mina's recitation from the famous poet Rahman Baba points to this state of affairs, as she washes the body of a child killed in a bomb blast planted by the rebels for a government car, instead destroyed a van full of children. "I thought I could wake up this sleeping country with my cries, but still they sleep as if in a dream" (77). Mina's haunting plea for the country to wake up is a hopeless lament on the death of a system that is brutally cold and absolutely inert to the plight of people it is supposed to serve. The result of this inertia is that many in Mir Ali are marginalized physically, as they are compelled to live in the outskirts of the city in utter squalor. These slum dwellers are used as a shield by the Taliban, who find safe heavens amongst these discarded, and hapless souls. When the novelist is referring to the men living on the margins of Mir Ali, the thieves, the woodsmen, the families living in squalor, and "the throwaways, the stowaways, the forgotten refugees" Mir Ali paints a picture of Pakistan itself (117). A country which has regions that it considers its integral part but at the same time keeps them outside its constitutional reach. These alienated and marginalized regions remain underdeveloped and become a hot bed for insurgencies. A liberal regime would ensure peace and prosperity across its territory instead of dividing it into zones with varying laws and preferences. Illiberal regimes cause resentment and this can lead to insurrection and rebellions, as is the case in Mir Ali of the novel.

6.2 Hegemony

The prologue of the novel sets the hegemonic tone, where the novelist describes how the religion has crept into life of Mir Ali like wild flowers. Religion is being used as a tool of hegemony as different mosques are manned by prayer leaders of different sects, who claim to be the flag bearers of religion and consider their interpretation of religious texts to be the ultimate truth. Jumma Namaz mosques are used to deliver "foreign-policy-based diatribes – lashings of rhetoric against great satans and the little men who did their bidding" (2). Ethnic violence emanating from the Saudi funded groups trained to exterminate the Shias is one of the reasons that the three brothers cannot pray at a single mosque. Military however is the main source of hegemony and coercion that stifles the freedom of the people of Mir Ali. Inayat's joke about "Askari Carpets" is no laughing matter, rather a scathing pronouncement on the overwhelming encroachment of the private space by the military (16). Inayat brings home

the sombre reality of this life under the perpetual shadow when he laments about the overreach of army, “They will have put their fingers everywhere, even on the ground on which we stand and the fibres through which we weave our stories” (17).

Mir Ali is ruled by a hegemonic regime which has a democratic facade, and characters of Chief Minister and colonel Tarik represent this aspect of hybridity in the novel. The Chief Minister of the frontier state is visiting Mir Ali “to preside over the induction of four hundred of Mir Ali’s finest into the national army” (147). The rebels are planning to kill him as he arrives for the ceremony to create a big impact and compel the state to change its policy towards the city. This elected representative however gets little mention in the novel and is mostly referred to in the context of imminent attack on his life by the rebels. He is a ceremonial figure head who only provides a democratic façade to the real powers in the country, represented by colonel Tariq. Chief Minister is an executive position in a parliamentary democracy with maximum powers, but the Chief Minister of this novel does not even have a name, and this lack of detail seems to hint at his insignificance in the environs of power. Colonel Tarik on the other hand represents the deep state, and looms large in the narrative from the beginning to the end. He is on the forefront of the defence against the rebels and calls all the shots in Mir Ali. Colonel Tarik recruits Aman Erum as a spy, who just wants, “milky tea and still-warm patties” but ends up becoming a tool for the state (104). Aman Erum feels liberated once he reaches the US, and adjusts well because he is free from the oppressive reach of the deep state, but he is not completely free even here because of the Faustian bargain he had made with the colonel. The Chief Minister on the other hand was making plans to visit Mir Ali on a quest of reconciliation with “a bright and bold new step” (151). Four hundred young men from Mir Ali were to be recruited in the army, and the Chief Minister had promised that this bold move will end militancy forever. But the promises of this Chief Minister were shallow. Besides he had never visited Mir Ali before and therefore was just playing the puppet with strings in the hands of the likes of colonel Tariq. While the minister is busy selling his message of peace and reconciliation, colonel Tariq continues with the clandestine coercive actions, thus belying the conciliatory efforts of the civilian face of the regime. The ironic words of the Chief Minister that the terrorists are targeting people who strive to protect “their rights and democratic freedom” foreground hybrid regime’s disconnect with the reality of Mir Ali (217). While the Chief

Minister might be right in pointing out the atrocities of the terrorists, he forgets to mention the usurpation of the democratic freedoms of the same people by those who have appointed the political appointee, “the Chief Minister” in the first place. In the end things are left uncertain and unresolved as the colonel gets a message from Aman Erum that leaves him scrambling to save the Chief Minister from the imminent attack by the rebels of Mir Ali, headed by Samarra. The novel’s end leaves it unclear whether the attack was successful or not. This lack of detail has one particular significance that the Chief Minister’s assassination really was never meant to be such a big thing after all. The rebels were naïve to think that by killing the Chief Minister they will be able to change the policy, because the policy was never made by the civilians in the first place. Colonel Tariq and his forces will go on as before whether the minister lives or dies.

All these instances prove that *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon* displays regime hybridity which results in state failure, as illiberalism and hegemony negatively affect the capacity of state institutions. One simple example is the institution of military in the novel, which, as has been discussed above, interferes in the politics of Mir Ali and consequently weakens the writ of the state and hampers proper functioning of state institutions.

7.State Failure in*The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*

As has been discussed before in this research that state failure is reflected by two main elements, weak writ of the state and failure of state institutions. Following is an analysis of the novel in the light of these two elements.

7.1 Weak Writ of the State

There are a number of instances in the novel where the writ of the state is shown to be weak. Every entity, the military, the Taliban, the rebels, seems to control pockets of Mir Ali, but nobody controls this place completely. This obviously results in chaos and a general lack of order. Then there are international powers who further encroach upon the writ of the state, as “US Predator drones strike North West Frontier Province” (36). US president’s declaration that his country will attack terrorists no matter where they are, clearly shows that the state has lost its writ inside its own territory. Similarly, the rebels of Mir Ali kill at will as the taxi driver proudly informs Aman Erum about the killing of three people by

their “legions” (42). So, the writ of the state is challenged again and again from inside and outside with impunity, and the response of the state itself aggravates the already fragile situation as it is often heavy handed and extreme. The philosophy student, Azmaray is murdered by the government forces simply because he was protesting the disappearance of his brother and the university is later put under siege and then raided because the students dared to protest the murder of Azmary (62). “Askari disappearances” do not strengthen the writ of the state rather they are an example of its weakness as the law does not legitimize such disappearances (63). Chaos that ensued at the march for Azmaray and Balach, where seven soldiers were killed and university was set ablaze also points to the failure of the state to impose its writ (67).

The novel also hints at the excesses of the fundamentalist Taliban militias (139). These militants recruit people who have been dislodged from their homes in Waziristan due to drone attacks, and find refuge in the suburbs of Mir Ali. The very presence of illegitimate armed militia is evidence of the fact that the state is not able to enforce its writ across its entire territory. “They received money wherever it presented itself” (139). They took pennies from mosques and millions from “bright green countries” (139). These militants had carved out a state within a state where their rule was unchallenged. The entire episode in the novel where Sikandar and Mina are stopped by the Taliban on their way to attend to a mother in labour is evidence of state’s failure to stop illegitimate use of force and establish its writ.

7.2 Failure of state institutions

People of Mir Ali never even look for any respite from state institutions as these seem to have abandoned them to their predicament. “They had endured a lifetime of this abuse in Mir Ali – from government school teachers, the national media, policemen, soldiers” (28). People of Mir Ali like Aman Erum, had learnt to remain silent. State institutions were not there to facilitate them but to make them more miserable. But things were not so good in the capital either as Aman Erum arrives in Islamabad to get his visa from the American embassy, he witnesses poverty stricken Hindu women cleaning the streets with their bodies bent “to meet the grime and soot of the streets’ gutters” (29). The most important city itself is ill managed and misgoverned. If state institutions cannot take care of the capital city and people working in it, how is it going to take care of people living and serving in far flung regions like Mir Ali? Hasan Faraz

Government Hospital in Mir Ali for example is being run like a dispensary (48). The way expired medicine, syrups and antibiotics are sold also highlights corrupt practices in the government hospital as, “the medicines are older than most doctors” (48). The shoddy government hospital stinks with a festering odour that no disinfectant can vanquish (92). It sounds less like a hospital and more like the gutters of the capital discussed earlier.

Lives of the people of Mir Ali as narrated in the novel are also proof of state’s apathy. As Hayat and Samarra drive across the city, they see the wretched children, loitering between ramshackle homes (98). The children have shaved heads to keep the lice out, and clothed in filthy clothes. They carry sticks in their small hands, perfect for collecting garbage. Certainly, no government agency has time or resources to take care of the future generation. State institutions have more important assignments to attend to, like crushing rebellions, and subjugating the natives. Health, education, sanitation and child rearing can wait for a more opportune time, and health and education ministries can work without appropriate financial resources. The “miserly amount” given to the federal health and education ministry divulges the state’s priorities (148). Meanwhile, children can “submerge themselves beneath the mounds of rot that collect on Mir Ali’s streets” (98).

Failure of state institutions responsible for security and justice for the people is also evident in the text. Mir Ali is a city where one barely survives. The judiciary is one of the most important pillars of any state structure, and without it functioning properly failure is inevitable. The text is absolutely silent about this pillar of the state, and this absence implies the nonexistence of any justice system that people can look up to for protection. The only direct reference to the justice system can be found in the text where it shines light on the incident in Baluchistan where women doctors and secretaries were raped and tortured. A consultant who was raped and left for dead in her official bungalow survived and accused one of her superiors of the crime. “Her rapists never made it to court” (165). People do not even think about going to the courts which is a stark indication of their mistrust of state’s system of justice. Mir Ali is not a safe place as Samarra reminds Malalai, “you never knew how safe you were in Mir Ali” (168). But so is the case in bigger cities as the text mentions Peshawar, Karachi, Quetta and Multan where target killing, ethnic violence and murder are not uncommon (187). No place is safe as

parks, hospitals and even mosques are bombed. No person is safe as doctors are murdered, and children's throats are slit on road sides. People cannot practice their profession or faith in peace. Hayat's words are enough to expose failure of state institutions to protect the people, "How hard it is not to die here" (127).

8. Consequences of State Failure in *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*

State failure has dire consequences for the people living in such a state, as it is they who suffer physical and psychological trauma when their lives are rendered hopeless. Aman Erum, the eldest of the three brothers, is an ambitious young man who wants to excel in life. Mir Ali does not offer any opportunities. His family's carpet business was not doing so well either, and Aman Erum was not the one to haggle over the price of carpets for the rest of his life anyway. He wanted to study commerce and build a business empire or migrate to Canada to achieve his dreams. When all his dreams remain unfulfilled, he chooses to leave for USA on a study visa. His father's words, "You will have to pay for your choices, Aman Erum, much more than you realize", prove to be true as the story progresses (16). He is offered a visa by the US embassy but with strings attached. Aman Erum accepts the offer and leaves. All he wanted was prosperity, and freedom to thrive, but his efforts were halted by the inability of state to tap into his ambitious spirit, rather it exploited it to fulfil its own goals. He like other young people of Mir Ali wanted scholarship, and travel for business degree, a chance of a different life, one not ruled by checkpoints and national identity cards and suspicion (194). But what he got from state was a life of eternal bondage, in which he not only lost all his dreams but also everything he already had and most important of all, his beloved Samarra.

Sikandar, the middle of the three brothers, also "wanted to make something of himself" (24). His path to "regulated and secure life" is the most normal of the three (24). He becomes a doctor, secures a job at the Hasan Faraz Government hospital, marries Mina and plans to live in peace with their son Zalan. The least a state could have done for him was to protect him and his family. The most basic of all fundamental rights is right to life, but state fails to ensure it for him as his only son is killed in a bomb attack on the hospital. Sikandar and Mina's life is devastated and as Sikandar tries to find refuge in his work at the hospital, Mina loses her mind, "and she journeys from funeral to funeral in the hope that she might come to terms with what happened to her son" (90).

Hayat, the youngest of the three brothers, is fed on stories of the wars of freedom fought by the earlier generations. Inayat, “the sentinel of Mir Ali’s history” chooses him to share his nostalgia with (18). While, his brothers try to make something of themselves, he chooses to make something of Mir Ali. He sacrifices his own future very early in his life for the future of his homeland, but his own words are enough to understand the dilemma he faces, “We keep fighting for the idea that there is another way, Morey, but there isn’t” (45). His words are poignant, as he sees no real choice, neither a future. He seems like a reluctant rebel who wants to carry the baton given to him by his father but cannot see past the mist of Mir Ali to run the full distance. Other characters, apart from the main ones, also suffer from the grave consequences of state failure. For example, Balach, a university professor, goes missing because he printed a pamphlet, “detailing Pakistan’s crimes against its people” (64). His brother Azmaray, who dares to join a protest for the missing persons, holding a picture of Balach, is found murdered (62). Zalan, and Habib are the young boys who are killed in bomb attacks by the Taliban. In short, all the characters of the novel suffer because of state failure.

9. Conclusion

In this article, we have tried to highlight state failure in the novel *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*. We have tried to prove that regime hybridity is one of the most important causes of state failure. We have provided enough evidence from the text of the novel to prove that the state represented fails to function properly because it is neither an autocracy nor a democracy but a hybrid of both. This regime hybridity results in the failure of state, represented by its weak writ and dysfunctional institutions. As discussed in the paper, state failure does not mean in any way that the state collapses completely. It exists as a political entity but fails to perform its obligatory functions to the optimum level resulting in serious negative consequences for the citizens. Characters in the novel suffer because state institutions related to justice, security and health are dysfunctional, which in turn is the consequence of a system where there is no clear division between civilian and military control of the state. Civilian administrative authority exists, represented by the Chief Minister, but military apparatus seems to override it. This hotchpotch leaves the state ill equipped to fulfil its responsibilities. We thus find through this paper that the novel, *The Shadow of the Crescent Moon*, depicts Pakistan, first as a state which has hybrid regime in place, second, hybrid regime results in state failure, and

third, as a consequence of state failure the citizens of this state suffer physical and psychological trauma as their dreams are shattered.

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