

## **Politics of Mediation and Regulation in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Pakistani News Media**

**Abstract:** The proposed dissertation project aims to study the contemporary ‘media system’ in Pakistan in terms of technological change, the regulatory impetus it has driven, and the discursive and practical impact these have had on contemporary politics. Shortly after General Pervaiz Musharraf wrested power from democratic government in Pakistan, starting yet another chapter of military rule, he also opened up channels of political discussions and news on the electronic broadcast media in Pakistan—in a manner uncharacteristic of military governments—ending the four decade monopoly of Pakistan state television on broadcast of policy and politics. The previously unregulated technological changes in satellite communication and broadcast technologies, hence became regulated by the state to enable a new sphere of televisual politics that have since then transformed political practices and discursive techniques of power in the country. While the media initially thrived under Musharraf, it was the same news channels that heralded the cry that led to his downfall through the lawyers’ protests of 2007. Since then while the media has become animated in its own way, it has also come to be regulated by the post-Musharraf 'deep state' in various legal and extra-legal ways that are political in their own right, while at the same time, producing a new kind of politics conducted through media institutions and audiences. This project aims to study the current system of media technologies, regulations and the politics they produce through original archival and ethnographic research to write a history of the present by tracing genealogies of technological and political change from their colonial forms in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to the living present of the twenty-first century.