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Review: Ajit Kumar Jha
Editorial

The winter 2012 volume of Peace Prints on “Building Peace between India and Pakistan: Opportunities and Challenges” brings together diverse issues and voices with a purpose to generate fresh and innovative ideas to build sustainable peace, security, and coexistence between India and Pakistan. Dedicated to the daily strivings of hundreds of young Indian and Pakistani peacebuilders who work untiringly to bridge the myriad divisions, this edition of Peace Prints calls on the citizens of India and Pakistan to enter into a space of dialogue, to “walk in the shoes of the other”, and to critically engage with their own perceptions about the conflict. A reengagement with perceptions is particularly vital because subjective emotions such as fear, suspicion, anger, and prejudice have played a big part in escalating disagreements between the two countries. As Richard Solomon, a former President of the United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC, puts it,

*Sustainable peace requires that long-time antagonists not merely lay down their arms, but that they achieve profound reconciliation that will endure because it is sustained by a society-wide network of relationships and mechanisms that promote justice and address the root causes of enmity before they regenerate destabilizing tensions.*

The beginnings of such reconciliation were seen in 2004 when the reenergized composite dialogue enabled thousands of Indians and Pakistanis to cross the border for cricket matches, shopping, exchange programs, and just simple conversations. The high point of this coming together of hearts and minds was a particularly poignant banner with the words *Pyaar To Hona Hi Tha* (Love was Inevitable), which was seen on the streets of Lahore in 2004 in response to the Indian cricket team’s maiden victory in Pakistan. Pakistanis celebrated the victory with firecrackers, and later, Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf summarized his own hope with the statement that the peace process was now “irreversible”. Significantly, these initiatives went beyond cultural bonhomie and nostalgia and were based on practical assessments of the reality that peace, prosperity, and economic growth are intertwined. There was also the recognition that the *third and fourth generations*—the under 35-population in Pakistan, Kashmir, and India—have common aspirations and dreams for themselves and their families. And perhaps, the future which unites them could be more powerful than the history that divides them.
While the seeds of reconciliation were sown in the first decade of the 21st century, developments during these years also revealed just how fragile the peace process was. They demonstrated that while a deep, rich, and shared culture bound together the people of the two countries in intimate relationships, there also existed stark differences and a sense of fear and mistrust. Most significantly, the stalemates of the last few years have exhibited the immense power that the spoilers continue to wield and the vested interests that thrive on the perpetuation of the conflict. The most visible example of this was the Mumbai terror attack in November 2008.

Yet, the seeds of peace, sown through the efforts of numerous peacebuilders—in government, politics, business, media, and civil society—over the last decade have begun to grow and flourish. Despite the setbacks and stalemates, the official-level dialogue was resumed in 2011, and the year 2012 witnessed unprecedented bilateral agreements that opened the floodgates of trade and commerce and enabled Indians and Pakistanis to invest in each other’s countries. This was followed by the introduction of a new, liberalized visa regime that made cross-border travel less cumbersome. The two governments have shown a serious interest in making systematic efforts to advance the composite dialogue. Progress in other sectors such as sports and cultural and youth exchanges has also helped to create an atmosphere conducive for government-level talks. In addition, some very significant developments have taken place outside of track one—as part of a back channel process.

The time is perhaps ripe for a genuine and long-lasting engagement between the peoples of the two countries to once and for all transform “rage into reconciliation” and construct identities that are inclusive, cross-cutting, and harmonizing. It was in this context that the Peace Prints journal invited articles from scholars and practitioners in India and Pakistan to share their views on the way forward. The edition includes a wide range of perspectives and cross-cutting themes that have influenced the trajectory of bilateral relations over the last couple of years. The purpose is to foreground peacebuilding strategies in the amalgam of contentious issues as also to point to the interdependent relationship between ostensible “dividers” and “connectors”.

While some of the authors have taken positions that might be considered detrimental to peacebuilding, these views are inculcating the belief that constructive social change requires dialogue between adversarial viewpoints; a courageous engagement between worldviews that collide and represent different ends of the continuum.
The first cluster of papers focuses on the structure, content, and accomplishments of the peace process initiated between the two countries through the vehicle of the government-level composite dialogue. Initiated in 1997 following a commitment by the two governments to hold regular meetings and talk about all outstanding issues simultaneously in different but linked forms, the composite dialogue identified eight issues for discussion. It was hoped that, over the years, the agenda of this government-level dialogue would be lightened through the resolution of some issues. On a couple of occasions, the two countries even came close to agreement on issues such as Siachen and the Tulbul Navigation Project. At the same time, new issues and stalemates emerged. While the composite dialogue has provided an incredibly forward looking framework, where does it stand today? How might this process move forward to achieve real results and expand the constituencies for peace in the two countries?

Addressing these questions, Meenakshi Gopinath, in her paper Processing Peace: To Speak in a Different Voice, is upbeat about the composite dialogue yielding positive outcomes for both India and Pakistan. It reflects “India’s approach of using a problem-solving orientation to work around the ‘Kashmir factor’ to improve its relationship with Pakistan”. Saying that the “biggest gains of the composite dialogue have been on Kashmir”, Gopinath outlines the contours of a proposal—some commentators say agreement—on the resolution of the Kashmir conflict that was discussed between President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh between 2004 and 2007. The paper also traces the ebbs and flows of this government-level dialogue, foregrounding its attempt to increase face-to-face dialogue between ordinary Indians and Pakistanis as well as moments when political leaders on both sides took high-risk “leaps of trust” to reach out to “the other”, even when this meant a conscious exhibition of their own vulnerabilities.

Rizwan Zebis less optimistic in his paper Peace brew-ha-ha all over again: India and the Peace Process. He points to the differences in approaches adopted by Islamabad and New Delhi, with the former wishing to “resolve the conflicts” and the latter wanting to “manage the conflicts”. This, in Zeb’s view, is a key factor in the perpetuation of the stalemate. Elucidating on the spoilers who have the power

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1 These included Jammu and Kashmir, terrorism and drug trafficking, peace and security, conventional and nuclear CBMs, Siachen, Tulbul Navigation Project/Wullar Barrage, Sir Creek, economic cooperation, and people-to-people contacts (which included an effort to liberalize the visa regime and promote friendly exchanges).
to derail the peace process, Zeb postulates that the India-Pakistan peace process suffers from a “classic spoiler problem”—a recent example being the Mumbai terror attacks. In this context, he draws on existing theoretical formulations on the subject of spoilers to articulate the way forward. He states that while considerable emphasis has been placed on what Pakistan must do to advance bilateral peace, little attention has been given to the steps that India should take to participate fully and to contribute to the success of the peace process. In this context, Zeb argues that as long as Indian decision-makers link the timing of a final settlement to Pakistan’s internal security situation post-9/11 and believe that they are “bargaining from a position of strength”, the current phase of the composite dialogue is likely to hit another stalemate.

B.G. Verghese presents the flipside to Zeb’s arguments in the paper titled *The Road to Reconciliation with Pakistan: Sifting Causes from Consequences*. He believes that the current phase of the peace process holds the promise of a durable agreement because the Pakistan Army, which has been averse to better bilateral ties, is now favourably inclined to participate in a dialogue with India. Echoing Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru’s statement that the Kashmir question was not the cause but the consequence of the India-Pakistan stand-off, the roots of which go back to the “Two Nation Theory”, Verghese states that today,

> It is clear to both sides that there is no other solution barring refinement of the concept of a soft border, greater internal autonomy on either side of the LoC, and the evolution of cross-border institutions and relationships over time. The fact of a boundary matters less than the nature of that boundary—barrier or bridge?

Employing the lens of game theory in his study titled *Kashmir: The Prisoner’s Dilemma for India and Pakistan*, Saeed Ahmed Rid states that individual rationality has pushed the two countries to adopt a dominating strategy over Kashmir, leading to several full-fledged and limited wars. Foregrounding collective rationality, he believes that constructivist, conflict transformation, and multi-track diplomacy approaches can help the neighbors to successfully use negotiation to resolve the vexed issue of Kashmir. In this context, he recommends that the composite dialogue place greater emphasis on multi-track diplomacy to build relationships across the vertical and horizontal divisions of the conflict and to expand the constituencies for peace.

While there have been suggestions that the composite dialogue has outlived its purpose, many commentators have opined that this is not so much due to a lack of
resolve; rather, there has been a supersession of interests wherein new issues have gained significance. For example, while the issue of water sharing was not a prime focus of the dialogue (and in fact the Indus Waters Treaty was seen as a successful peace agreement), in recent years, it has emerged as an increasingly vexatious conflict. Manish Vaid and Tridivesh Singh Maini address this conflict over water sharing in their paper *Indo-Pak Water Disputes: Time for Fresh Approaches*. They examine the disagreements over the sharing of the Indus waters and its tributaries, analyzing some of the policy failures which led to the water crises, especially in Pakistan. In conclusion, the authors advocate a non-traditional security and non-technical approach, suggesting innovative ways that focus on greater cooperation between the agricultural universities, joint studies on the region’s glaciers, and frequent interactions between farmers of the two countries.

Shifting focus to an issue—education—that has served as a “divider” between the two countries, but which has recently shown potential to transform into a “connector”, Anam Zakaria’s article titled *Exchange for Change: A Study of Micro-Level Conflict Resolution Initiatives between Pakistani and Indian School Students shares* field experiences from a cross-border initiative that worked with the *fourth generation* in the two countries. Titled Exchange-for-Change, the program reached out to 2400 school children with a purpose to invoke critical thinking, enhance the next generation’s understanding of their shared history, culture, and lifestyles, and introduce an alternative narrative into school curricula which highlighted examples of cross-community friendship and inter-faith harmony that existed for centuries before the partition of 1947. This was done through face-to-face meetings which were sustained via a continuous exchange of letters, postcards, photographs, and a series of oral history interviews (that the students conducted with their grandparents). Here, Zakaria reflects on the program’s accomplishments as also the challenges it faced, often from unexpected quarters, in both Pakistan and India.

Afsheen Naz invites the reader to engage with a potent “connector”—economic cooperation—which reflects the mutuality of economic interest and the recognition, in both countries, that their prosperity and development are interlinked. Titled *Political Dominance or Economic Gains: A Case Study of India-Pakistan Trade and Perceptions of the People of Pakistan*, Naz, in her paper, examines the perceptions of a cross-section of Pakistani society on the pros and cons of enhanced trade and investment between India and Pakistan. While economic cooperation has been touted as having the potential to increase the stakes for peace, she concludes
that, beyond a point, it is difficult to delink trade from the political conflict. And when the political conflict escalates, it does damage progress on the economic front.

This edition of Peace Prints also includes two thought-provoking papers on the partition of British India, which invite the reader into conversations about alternative histories and narratives that challenge “mainstream” understandings of national identity and its relationship with the events of 1947. Saloni Kapur looks at partition through the lens of Jacques Derrida’s elucidation of the concept of forgiveness as a way of facilitating reconciliation between the “partition generation” on either side and thereby improving India-Pakistan relations. Through the testimonies of Indians and Pakistanis who were victims of forced migration in 1947, Kapur offers the narrative of forgiveness as an alternative to the present-day hostility generated by the memories of partition riots. She does, however, note that reconciliation, which requires an empathetic understanding of “the other’s” version of the “truth”, is difficult as long as history textbooks—and history teachers—in Pakistani and Indian schools present differing narratives of the freedom struggle and the partition. The second paper by Bani Gill presents the findings of an ethnographic study on the social and economic rights of communities that live in the district of Barmer (Rajasthan) along the international border between India and Pakistan. Titled Border Dialogues, the study looks at the implications of the statist project of border making on communities that were integrated through socio-cultural linkages, religion, language, trade, and commerce, but which were divided into Rajasthan (in India) and Sindh (in Pakistan) following the partition of the subcontinent. Assessing the impact of a militarized notion of state security on inclusive citizenship, people’s security, and the larger political economy of the border region, Gill concludes that,

border populations face a double marginality—geographically, they are located on the edge of the nation state, and politically, their human rights and human security are frequently compromised for the sake of state security...Their livelihoods are perpetually at stake, their access to education is severely restricted, and they live their life under a framework of extreme militarization, with no recourse to accountability.

The Book Review section features a 2012 edited volume by Ashutosh Misra and Michael Clarke titled Pakistan’s Stability Paradox: Domestic, Regional, and International Concerns. Reviewed by Ajit Kumar Jha, it examines the internal
challenges that the country faces in the form of militancy, jihadi terror, sectarian madrassahs, and the predominance of the military in the country’s political affairs.

Despite the varied analyses and prescriptions that the different papers bring forth in this volume of Peace Prints, the authors concur that the “biggest spoiler” is the deep deficit of trust that exists between the two countries. Whether this is with respect to the negative stereotypes within the trading community that seek to scuttle “trade diplomacy” or the political resistance to withdraw troops from the Siachen heights, or just public perceptions about “the other”, ignorance and prejudice coupled with a deep suspicion of those across the border have undermined genuine efforts for sustainable peace and security.

In this context, the paper on Trust-Building in International Relations by Nicholas Wheeler addresses a crucial but overlooked dimension of relations between states, namely trust. Here, Wheeler engages with the drivers of mistrust to explore the challenges that states—particularly those that possess nuclear weapons—face in the process of building trusting relationships. In this context, he proposes the cultivation of a “security dilemma sensibility” between states which includes the ability to get into the counter fears of others, transcending security competition.

However, in order to actualize this sensibility, Wheeler points to the existence of what Mikhail Gorbachev has called the “human factor” in the context of his trusting relationship with Ronald Reagan in the 1980s or what was also seen in the relationship between Prime Ministers Atal Behari Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharif in late 1998 and early 1999. These are, as Wheeler puts it, “certain forms of interpersonal communicative dynamics (encompassing written, verbal, and face-to-face interactions)” which encourage decision-makers to enter into a “space of trust”, thereby making possible new levels of cooperation. However, what followed at Kargil in the summer of 1999 is a reminder of the reality that “the ‘human factor’ depends crucially on the capacity of leaders to shield these initiatives from spoilers”, domestic or external.

Highlighting a case study of successful trust-building between Indians and Pakistanis, the reflection piece First Steps and Giant Leaps by Anisha Kinra and Seema Sridhar presents a hopeful story of how youth leaders from the two countries have been able to “step into the shoes of the other” to build relationships across the divisions of conflict. Kinra and Sridhar—Indian alumni of the 2005 WISCOMP Conflict Transformation Workshop—describe their experience of reaching out to
“the other”, which resulted in a journey of individual and collective conflict transformation that changed them, forever.

In conclusion, at this current juncture of the India-Pakistan peace process, decision-makers need to be mindful that patience, consistency, and results are the need of the hour. At the same time, they must constructively engage citizens on both sides of the border to support official-level peace efforts. While we laud the recent liberalization of the visa regime and the removal of barriers to bilateral trade and investment, we urge leaders of the two countries to focus on methods that can, in the words of Nicholas Wheeler, “embed trust” wherein the interpersonal chemistry between political elites is expanded to encompass the interaction between whole societies. While it would be naïve to see increased people-to-people contact as a panacea for the myriad bilateral conflicts, we do believe that multi-level and multi-sector dialogues will help Indians and Pakistanis to listen to the other side and to perhaps appreciate that there are no villains and victims—the pain of loss and the suffering generated by violence have no boundaries. They have touched the lives of Pakistanis and Indians, Kashmiris and non-Kashmiris alike. Such a realization could prepare the citizens of the two countries to give concessions to “the other side” and to arrive at agreements that are beneficial to all stakeholders.

It is our hope that increased face-to-face dialogue between the peoples of the two countries will build cross-cutting web-like relationships that will not only ace the test that the next stalemate presents, but will also be able to advance the “public peace process” and make it truly irreversible.

Manjrika Sewak
Seema Kakran
Editors
Processing Peace: To Speak in a Different Voice

Meenakshi Gopinath

Abstract

This paper investigates India’s approach to working around the ‘Kashmir’ factor to improve its relationship with Pakistan. The author argues that the Composite Dialogue (CD) framework marked a decisive shift in India’s approach to negotiations from a short term tactical militarist approach to a problem solving orientation in keeping with its self-image of a rising power seeking a place in the sun, through a normative positioning that simultaneously protected its strategic interests. This in the author’s view is an indication that a “peace process” is underway and is likely to yield positive outcomes for not only India but also Pakistan.

India’s real challenge in balancing its potential ‘big role’ with ‘smart power’ comes from its immediate South Asian neighbourhood. With the locus of extremism and violence and the ‘centre of gravity of international terrorism’ moving towards South Asia, the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, Pakistan’s initial tolerance of extremist activity from its soil and increasing regional instability, the Indian subcontinent has become particularly salient to world politics from 9/11 onwards.1 India’s neighboring states remain troubled and crisis ridden and deeply affect its sense of security, economic growth and development. From Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka to even Myanmar, internal crisis and troubled transitions, have long-term regional and global implications which profoundly impact the future role India crafts for itself in a changing world. This is a world, where after the economic meltdown of 2008, the G8 countries are having to contend with the growing salience of the G20. Here India seems poised to play an influential role.

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Consequently, India is in search for a new idiom of strategic reasoning that moves beyond tactics to a sustained engagement in its neighborhood that deftly skirts unilateralism or interventionism and frees it of charges of ‘interference’ in the internal affairs of its neighbors.

There is a growing recognition, particularly since the 1990s, that the expansion of democratic values in its neighbourhood is crucial to India’s own future as a multi-ethnic, multicultural nation, especially in the face of the threat of rising religious extremism both within and beyond its borders. The shift to actively promote democratization and political pluralism in the neighbourhood, also reflects India’s position that the practice of democracy is not incompatible with Asian values and that India and the South Asian region has, and can contribute to the enrichment of the democratic idea. The practice of democracy need not be circumscribed by the Western liberal model.²

India now seeks a prosperous and peaceful South Asia as integral to its vision of an emerging Asia. To this end, a more proactive effort to build regional ties, and an innovative approach is needed to provide support to smaller and willing neighbors to overcome their internal political crises and focus on development. Support for democratic transitions in the neighbourhood, including facilitating institution building and power sharing among different regions and ethnic groups is seen as integral to this new thrust of expanding circles of ‘non-intrusive’ engagement.³ In this new focus, especially on its Western front—in relation to Afghanistan and Pakistan—India has chosen to play this role in concert with the ‘oldest democracy’, the United States.

The “enduring centrality of the Indo-Pakistan relationship to South Asian security” has remained unchanged, despite the other changes since the 1990s including the nuclear tests of 1998, September 11 and its aftershocks, the decline of the role of the former Soviet Union, and the unprecedentedly manifest role of the United States in the region (which also has remained almost constant and intractable).⁴

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³ This is reflected in India’s active support to bring the Maoist movement in Nepal into the mainstream power sharing and constitution making exercise, post-2007, in a massive reconstruction and development effort after the LTTE’s rout in Sri Lanka, the transitions to democracy in Bangladesh and the Maldives in 2008.

Three possible scenarios are envisaged, contingent on the trajectory of this contentious relationship: a mutually profitable engagement providing the engine for economic integration and growth in a developing South Asia; or both countries becoming prime actors in a nuclear tragedy; or, more plausibly, both countries oscillating precipitously between these two extremes. Such possibilities prompt and fuel much of the Western concern about the Kashmir dispute providing a potential nuclear flash point in South Asia. The likelihood of such an occurrence remains hotly debated. Yet being a region where the largest numbers of nuclear powers are in the closest geographical proximity, the challenges for conflict management in the face of a possible conflagration are compelling.

The tortuous India-Pakistan relationship that encompassed three wars in 1947-48, 1965, 1971, and a series of crises – the Operation Brasstacks crisis of 1986-87, the Kashmir crisis of 1990, the Kargil conflict of 1999, and the prolonged border confrontation of 2001-02, failed to bring either country close to its respective goals. Coming close to the brink in Kargil and again in 2001–02, they purportedly held back on the nuclear option, under intense U.S. and international pressure. It has been urged however, that in both instances they attempted a complex game of compellence involving bilateral coercion as well as trilateral pressure (through the global community and especially the United States) to extract concessions from each other. Pakistan wanted India to yield on Kashmir, while India wanted to force Pakistan to withdraw its support to several terrorist groups active in Kashmir.

The fact that both countries failed in their objectives, and the possibility of recurrent crises still remained open, may have prompted, the ‘leap of trust’ olive branch offer by former Prime Minister Vajpayee in 2003 and President Musharraf’s acceptance to move out of the deadlock, culminating in the much feted Composite Dialogue framework resumed and unveiled in the Indo-Pakistan Joint Statement in Islamabad in 2004.

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5 Ibid, 58-59. The geographical proximity of nuclearized India, Pakistan and China, make South Asia particularly vulnerable. Amid the massive mobilization of India’s and Pakistan’s forces along the LoC (Line of Control) and international border in 2002 evoked deep concern in every major power – from U.S., Europe and East Asia, earning the subcontinent the sobriquet of a ‘nuclear flashpoint’.

**Sustaining Dialogue and Rescripting Security: The Composite Dialogue and Beyond**

The Composite Dialogue (CD) provided the framework within which it became possible for the first time to talk about a ‘peace process’ between India and Pakistan. As a mechanism for conflict management/resolution, it was unprecedented. From India’s perspective it reflected the decision to move from tactics and brinkmanship towards a decisive strategy of productive engagement with Pakistan. This was followed through by the successor UPA government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh when it came to power in May 2004.

While there had been sustained engagement at the official level between India and Pakistan since 1947 taking place at multiple levels,7 the Composite Dialogue implicitly sought to broaden the canvas, beyond the ‘core’ issue of Kashmir, build confidence among the highest level of decision making, seeking simultaneously to widen and engender peace constituencies in their respective countries. The political leadership, clearly in this instance was ahead of their security and foreign policy establishments to grapple with the ‘trust deficit’ between the two countries, stake their reputations, and take on the ire of recalcitrant domestic communities and critics to invest in peace. The subjects put on the table reflected a willingness to address all outstanding and contentious issues for a decisive movement forward. The existing ‘dividers’ and potential ‘connectors’ alike were included in the eight subject menu.8

The CD framework marked a decisive shift in India’s approach to negotiations from a short term tactical militarist approach to a problem solving orientation in keeping with its self-image of a rising power seeking a place in the sun, through a normative positioning that simultaneously protected its strategic interests. India began to envision a stable and democratic Pakistan as consonant to this interest. Shedding once and for all any adventurist hopes of a dismemberment of its troubled and ‘troublesome neighbor’, the possibility of a terrorist spillover of jihadi or Islamist groups in case of a collapse in Pakistan has come home starkly post 9/11.

The CD marked in a fundamental sense a bend in the road and a genuine willingness to invest in the peace dividend. This was reflected in a new openness to move away

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7 These include the Nehru-Liaquat Pact; the Shimla Agreement; the Zia-ul-Haq-Indira Gandhi Joint Commission Agreement, 1982; the Rajiv Gandhi-Benazir Bhutto talks, 1988; the Narasimha Rao-Nawaz Sharif talks, 1991; the engagement between Prime Minister I.K. Gujral and Nawaz Sharif, which paved the way for a Composite Dialogue (CD) and the Lahore Declaration of 1999.

8 The eight subjects include: peace and security including confidence building measures; Jammu & Kashmir; Siachen; Tulbul Navigation project; the Sir Creek marshland; terrorism and drug trafficking; economic and commercial cooperation; and promotion of friendly exchanges.
from the terms of engagement of summit diplomacy,\(^9\) and the ‘core issues’
preoccupations, which for Pakistan had been the resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir
question and for India the end to ‘cross-border’ terrorism indicative of Pakistan’s
‘compulsive hostility’. There was for the first time focus on the structure of the
process and not just on the issues and proposals for resolution. In addition, the
process of mutual assessment and confidence building among leaders at the highest
level of decision making represented the pulse of the dialogue. Sequencing and
prioritization was shed in favor of simultaneous movement on issues of contention.
Both sides could undertake a series of unilateral but reciprocal confidence building
measures (CBMs). It was broadly a dialogue without preconditions set in stone,
with the understanding that India agreed to discuss the Kashmir question purposefully
and Pakistan promised not to allow terrorism from its soil. The agreement to negotiate
Kashmir in an environment free of violence and terrorism was the principle
achievement of the India-Pakistan Joint statement of January 4, 2004, that ushered
in the Composite Dialogue Process.\(^{10}\) The accordion was open to take on board
creative ideas and thinking ‘out of box’ – as President Musharraf put it – on the
vexatious question of Jammu & Kashmir. The emphasis was on a bilateral approach
without any direct third party involvement, although the U.S. presence in the region
proved a facilitating factor. The investment was clearly in breaching the walls of
suspicion and negative stereotyping that had pervaded earlier summit diplomacy.
A comprehensive trust-building initiative, which was mutually beneficial, had been
flagged.

Despite Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee’s deep disappointment at the turn of events
following his bold attempts at building bridges – “I had gone to Lahore with a
message of goodwill, but in return we got Kargil” – and former Pakistan President
Musharraf’s statement in an interview in 2009 describing the Kargil War as a
watershed that drastically altered the Indian attitude and response and to be open to
negotiation on Kashmir,\(^{11}\) the CD reflected and engendered the overwhelming public
sentiment for peace in civil society in both countries. The floodgates opened and

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\(^{9}\) It is significant that three important summits: Tashkent (1966), Shimla (1972) and Agra (2001)
each took place following a war between the two countries. Similarly, the Lahore Talks of 1999
took place in the shadow of a looming threat of a possible (but averted) nuclear conflagration.
Summits alone without civil society support go only so far in the context of peacebuilding between
chronic adversaries.

\(^{10}\) C. Raja Mohan, “India-Pakistan: Ten Questions on the Peace Process,” *Economic and Political

\(^{11}\) Excerpted interview with Pervez Musharraf by Karan Thapar, “Seeing a Watershed in Kargil,”
the mood was, (in retrospect, perhaps deceptively) heady. Kargil had proved to be, for better or worse, a defining moment in Indo-Pak relations. Again, the 2002 confrontation had established beyond doubt that the role of external powers, the United States in particular was set to increase. Despite India’s steadfast opposition to “internationalizing” disputes between India and Pakistan, South Asian security is in reality internationalized especially after the decisions in both countries to go openly nuclear in 1998.12

The period between 2004 and 2007, saw a spurt of multi track processes and an overwhelming grounds well of people to people exchanges.13 Indo-Pak peace became something of a cause celebre for the civil society community in India and Pakistan during this period. There was a spate of people-to-people contact and exchanges – from chambers of commerce, media persons, journalists, religious leaders, parliamentarians, youth groups, Kashmir groups (from both sides of the LOC and diaspora) scholars, academics, educationists, lawyers, jurists, and a host of civil society activists. In particular, women’s groups that had been the precursors of cross border peace initiatives from the early 1980s, played a significant role in the civil society peace initiatives.14 Through the ebbs and flows of Indo-Pakistan official relations and restrictive visa regimes, women’s groups attempted to sustain the dialogue, although their role largely remained under-recognized in official fora.15

Transcending the fixation on borders, lines of control and boundaries, these groups, brought to their tables a whole range of issues that governments did not or could

12 See Christophe Carle, “International Security in a Nuclear South Asia” op. cit., p. 64
13 It is reported that the Indian missions in Pakistan processed only 30 visas in June 2003, which went up to over 30,000, during the highnoon of the Composite Dialogue. In early 2007, an average of 12,000 visas had been issued for Pakistani visits to India.
14 Cross border peace initiatives between women’s groups from Pakistan and India can be traced back to the early 1980s. One of the first contacts between women’s groups was in 1984, when Indian peace activist Kamla Bhasin was invited as a family planning trainer. In 1988 a Pakistani women’s initiative spearheaded by Shirkat Gah studied the Chipko movement in India leading to the first joint Indo-Pakistan conference on environment in Lahore. The Women’s Bus for Peace organized by WIPSA (Women’s Initiative for Peace in South Asia) against the rhetoric of war post-Kargil, attempted to create a space for dialogue, when in 2000, women from both countries representing diverse professional backgrounds, made the 12-hour journey each way, to generate goodwill on both sides. See Smitu Kothari and Zia Mian, eds., Bridging Partition: Peoples’ Initiatives for Peace Between India and Pakistan, (Orient Blackswan, 2010)
15 One such is WISCOMP (Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace) a pathbreaking initiative, that has over a decade, held annual Conflict Transformation workshops for Pakistani and Indian future influentials to develop a growing constituency of peace in South Asia. This network now boasts of over 500 members, who work to stay connected.
not address. The role of the Track III Pakistan-India People’s Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFPD), South Asia Free Media Association (SAFMA) and Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP) has been significant in this context.\textsuperscript{16} The focus of energies was broadly to address the trust-deficit that had plagued Indo-Pak relations, the negative stereotypes, enemy images and threat perceptions\textsuperscript{17} that had prompted former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to proclaim as early as 1975, “Kashmir will be settled only when we are friends. It will not be settled so long as there is hostility between us.”\textsuperscript{18} Equally important was the emphasis to be more appreciative of the internal contradictions within each country, the structural causes of conflict and impediments to peacebuilding, compulsions of national politics and fragmentation, and to desist from essentializing internal compulsions or treat essentially fragmented polities as monoliths. This enabled like minded constituencies to build networks across erstwhile boundaries that could create a critical mass. In addition, there was an attempt to get beyond the ‘security dilemma’ and the inherent bad faith model so reminiscent of Cold War (particularly U.S.-Soviet) interstate relations that fuel hostility. These are now beginning to be addressed by international relations scholars, as important psychological deterrents to trust which is increasingly recognized as a crucial but overlooked dimension of international relations on peace diplomacy theory.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16} These groups, women in particular, have been at the forefront of broadening the terms of engagement by incorporating a range of human security issues concerning public and private violence against women, human rights, militarization of the region, perils of nuclearization through text books and the formal education system, fundamentalism of different kinds and the impact on the lives and livelihoods of ordinary citizens.

\textsuperscript{17} The deep suspicions are based on certain myths about the other country. Myths prevalent in Pakistan are: (a) India has not reconciled itself to the reality of partition. It is determined to inflict damage to the very identity of Pakistan as a nation-state; (b) Its military expenditure and nuclear posture is dictated by an ambition to disable Pakistan’s security; (c) India follows a spurious policy of secularism; (d) It has illegally and with devious motives snatched away Kashmir from Pakistan (to which it did not have a rightful claim). Similarly in India the following myths are prevalent: (a) Pakistan is implacably dedicated to the break-up of India; (b) The Pakistan establishment is not part of the subcontinent, but rather it is part of the Turko-Persian stock; (c) Pakistan is determined to use Islam and jihad as weapons to destroy the basic values of the Indian civilization and democracy.

\textsuperscript{18} Cited by Ambassador Salman Haider, \textit{Dialogic Engagement: Conflict Transformation Workshop Report}, (New Delhi: WISCOMP, September 2004), 71

\textsuperscript{19} A seminal work on the challenges of trust building, Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler, \textit{The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation and Trust in World Politics}, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, takes the debate beyond the rationalist approach of Kydd’s theory of trust building (See Andrew Kydd, \textit{Trust and Mistrust in International Relations}, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) to move it closer towards an alternative more normative framework, where both ‘feeling’ and ‘rational thinking’ are factored in.
Significantly between 2004 and 2007, there were around 10-12 back channel, and Track II processes that were vigorously involved. One of them, the *Neemrana Dialogue*, the longest existing Track II process, is reported to have been largely responsible for formulating a solution for the speedy implementation of the much hailed Srinagar-Muzzafarabad Bus Service connecting people of the divided Kashmir on both sides of the Indo-Pak border. In attempting to catch the wind, India and Pakistan came close to devising a framework for settling their long conflict over Kashmir in secret negotiations,\(^{20}\) but it was put on hold from March 2007 onwards owing to Musharraf’s declining popularity, problems at home, and the chain of events that eventually led to his ouster in August 2008.\(^{21}\) Khurshid Kasuri, Pakistan’s Foreign Minister at that time was quoted as saying that it contained “four big ideas” within which the proposed agreement was discussed. These included demilitarization (the gradual withdrawal of troops from both sides), Kashmiris to be given special rights to move and trade freely on both sides of the line of control, greater autonomy and some form of self governance and a joint mechanism that would link the two Kashmirs, consisting of local Kashmiri leaders, Indians and Pakistanis that would oversee issues affecting people on both sides of the line.\(^{22}\) Such a resolution of the Kashmir dispute was to be the cornerstone of a broad agreement representing a paradigm shift, in changing the basic nature of the problem.\(^{23}\) There had also been substantial understanding on the contested Siachen

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20 Referral to as the ‘back channel’ the talks were held on a several years by special envoys in Bangkok, Dubai and London. The two principal envoys Tariq Aziz for Pakistan, and S.K. Lambah for India, developed a text on Kashmir called a “non paper” because it contained no signatures or names but could serve as a detailed basis for a deal, See “India Pakistan were close to secret deal on Kashmir”; Report, AFP, Washington, February 23, 2009.

21 In March 2007, as New Delhi and Islamabad were planning a historic summit, Musharraf became embroiled in a controversy for invoking near dictatorial powers to fine the Chief Justice of Pakistan’s Supreme Court, triggering unremitting protests by lawyers and activists. With the assassination of Benazir Bhutto in December 2007, a popular leader who was set to win in the elections declared by him, Musharraf’s popularity was at an all time low. The historic General Elections, held after much prevarication and attendant protest on February 18, 2008, was an overwhelming vote against him. In addition, the attacks on the Indian mission in Kabul in July 2008 allegedly by terror groups in Pakistan and the terrorist attack in Mumbai in November 2008, dashed hopes of a grand settlement.

22 Excerpted Interview of Former Foreign Minister of Pakistan Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri with Karan Thapar, The Hindu, New Delhi, February 21, 2009. In an interview Musharraf reiterated and confirmed this adding that the two countries were close to a solution on Kashmir, Siachen and Cir Creek. See The Hindu, New Delhi, July 18, 2009.

23 See “India Pakistan were Close to Kashmir Accord”, Indo-Asian News Service, February 22, 2009 http://in.news.yahoo.com/43/20090222/890
glacier and one of the most significant movements in bilateral diplomacy towards a resolution of the Sir Creek maritime boundary dispute. Both initiatives were frozen in the diplomatic chill that followed the Mumbai terror attacks in 2008.

Musharraf had persuaded the Pakistan Army to fall in line on the “movement forward” in Kashmir, although, beset with political difficulties he was unable to sell it to a larger constituency at home, owing to his declining clout and political fortunes. The pitch for peace broadly, reflected a realization that given the nuclearized environment “war was no longer an option for either side.” It seemed to be additionally propelled by Musharraf’s own imperatives to be seen as a liberal, modern Islamic leader; to control religious extremism in Pakistan; and be the architect of a ‘grand settlement’ with India. Musharraf’s “out of box” articulation in October 2004 for a proposed settlement on Kashmir had underscored a flexible approach, moving away from rigid and hardened positions and even a willingness to “leave behind the UN Resolutions”, a position that was sensitive to the Indian aversion for a proposed plebiscite. His four-point formula, suggested four stages (a) The recognition of Kashmir as a dispute (b) the initiation of a dialogue (c) shedding of unacceptable solution and (d) securing a win-win position.

Musharraf’s proposal was presented as an attempt to generate focused debate. The formula identified seven regions in Kashmir, two of which are in Pakistan and five in India on the basis of a combination of factors like ethnicity, linguistic homogeneity, religious commonalities, geographic proximity or compactness. As has been shown by Indian scholars, on Kashmir, this is not an easy task since commonalities are difficult to establish in Kashmir, where several differentiated faultlines of ethnicity, caste, class religion, and language combine and collide often flying in the face of neat labels of population homogeneity or coherence. ‘Kashmir’ is by no means a

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24 The issue of Sir Creek – an area supposed to be rich in oil and gas reserves as well as varied biodiversity – is one of the least politicized disputes between the two countries, and as a result considered more amenable to an early settlement. The dispute negotiation process since 1969 concerns the demarcation of the India-Pak boundary in a 96 km long estuary in the Rann of Kutch. Sir Creek was one of the issues in the Composite Dialogue Process. Following the 5th round in 2006, the two sides had agreed on a joint survey and exchanged maps.

25 Kasuri Interview, op. cit, February 21, 2009.


The parts of Kashmir that suffered most from the 1949 division, as pointed out by Radha Kumar in terms of cultural discontinuity are the border regions of Jammu and Azad Kashmir, Kargil and Baltistan. The people of most of these regions have cross cutting identities.
monolithic undifferentiated space and defies easy categorization, a fact that has often been overlooked much contemporary writing on the region.\textsuperscript{27}

The formula also suggested the need (a) To identify the region of Kashmir (b) To seek demilitarization of the identified region and (c) finally change the status of the disputed region either under the auspices of the UN or a joint control or condominium type approach.\textsuperscript{28} The idea of ‘soft borders’ gained momentum, even as the Indian Prime Minister elaborated in March 24, 2006 (at the launch of the Amritsar-Nankana Sahib bus service), his earlier stated position on making borders irrelevant without redrawing boundaries and offering a treaty of peace, security and friendship to Pakistan, Manmohan Singh took that further leap of faith saying:

\textit{Both sides (India and Pakistan) should begin a dialogue with the people in their areas of control to improve the quality of governance so as to give the people a greater chance of leading a life of dignity and self respect…….. Borders cannot be redrawn but we can work towards making them irrelevant - towards making them just lines on a map. People on both sides of the LoC should be able to move more freely and trade with one another….. I also envisage a situation where the two parts of Kashmir can, with the active engagement of the governments of India and Pakistan, work out cooperative consultative mechanisms to maximize the gains of cooperation in solving problems of social and economic development of the region.}\textsuperscript{29}

Although Musharraf’s proposals are open to varied interpretations, the fact that he was the first Pakistani leader to (a) opt for self governance in preference to self determination which implies change of borders; (b) keep UN resolutions aside; (c)

\textsuperscript{27} There is a tendency to equate the state of Jammu & Kashmir with the Kashmir valley, and see the Valley as exclusively Kashmiri Muslim. The “Kashmir issue” consequently is framed as a ‘territorial dispute’ between India and Pakistan and also as a struggle for an independent state by the Kashmiris. What or who is a Kashmiri is still mired in confusion. The province of Jammu & Kashmir, on the Indian side, represents a plurality with diverse communities like the Ladakhi Buddhists, the Gujjars, the Bakerwals and the Kashmiri Pandits for whom independence may not be an aspiration at all. Their political choices often foreground, nurturing their socio-cultural identity and my not find resonance, with an overarching homogenous sub nationalism. A lucid elaboration is found in Navanita Chadha Behera, \textit{Demystifying Kashmir}, (New York: Brookings, 2006).


give up plebiscite and independence for Indian Kashmir (d) desist from demanding any territory for Pakistan (c) reject the communal (religious) criteria (if) not demand Kashmir’s secession from India and encourage Kashmiris’ to talk to New Delhi, was not lost on the Indian establishment. There was a recognition that it was important to do business with whoever was in power in Pakistan, especially one who could bring the all powerful army on board. The democratic credentials of the peace brokers were no longer flagged as an important factor for sustaining the dialogue.

The considerable movement forward on a whole range of issues facilitated by the CD, prompted Musharraf’s euphoric description of the peace process as now “irreversible”. This also reflected the popular mood of floodgates being opened. A young Indian scholar commenting on the presence of thousands of Indians in Pakistan, enjoying the overwhelming hospitality, friendship and warmth of their hosts saw it in no uncertain terms as an indicator of the beginning of social change in India and Pakistan.31 Eager to see the possibilities of a “peace dividend” there was a desire that the CD not remain one brief shining moment in Indo-Pak relations.

In what can be called as a first breakthrough attempt after the 2008 Mumbai attacks, premiers Gilani of Pakistan and Manmohan Singh of India met in the Egyptian town of Sharm-el-Shaikh, in July 2009 on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement Summit. The joint statement declared that the neighbors would engage with each other even though it did not mean restarting the CD process. Also, the Indian prime minister, at the cost of much opprobrium back home, strengthened Gilani’s hand to push the peace process by agreeing to include in the joint statement the line that “action on terrorism should not be linked to the CD process and these should not be bracketed”. The two leaders next met at Thimpu in April 2010 during the SAARC summit when the foreign ministers were instructed to meet to bridge the ‘trust deficit’. This led to meetings between the foreign secretaries in June 2010 and foreign ministers in July 2010. Culminating in a meeting between foreign secretaries Salman Bashir and Nirupama Rao in Thimpu in February 2011 where they “agreed on the need for a constructive dialogue between India and Pakistan to resolve all outstanding issues”. They decided to engage on counter-terrorism (including progress on Mumbai trial), humanitarian issues, peace & security, including CBMs, Jammu & Kashmir, Siachen, economic issues, the Wullar

Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project and Sir Creek, and promotion of friendly exchanges. A few days later Indian foreign minister S.M. Krishna, who was visiting the UN in New York, affirmed India’s commitment. He said the resumption of talks was a “conscious decision” on the part of India. The spirit was taken up at the July 2011 meeting of the foreign ministers in New Delhi, now between Hina Rabbani Khar of Pakistan and S.M. Krishna. Among the positives was a renewed focus on easing restrictions along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir, with simplified travel procedures – introducing a six-month multiple entry permit – and increase in frequency of bus services across the LoC. Agreeing that economic engagement would be of mutual benefit, the ministers called for “early establishment of a non-discriminatory trade regime between the two countries, including reduction/removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers”.

It was the environment created by the CD and peace process that opened up the possibility of such significant shifts. Within the paradigm of conflict resolution analysis this could be seen as an attempt to move the engagement away from militarist values and engender constituencies and predispositions to peace. There was an almost open acceptance that people do not always see things the way their governments do.

The idea of a Public Peace Process first articulated by Harold Saunders in the context of the Dartmouth process, and later theoretically elaborated, seems to have entered the consciousness of policy makers for the first time. The five stages involved in this process, namely (1) deciding to engage; (2) mapping and naming problems and relationships; (3) exploring problems and setting the direction for change; (4) forming solutions/scenario building; and (5) acting together – were, for the most part, especially in Musharraf’s proposals, taken on board. The door was open for multi-track engagement, facilitated in many cases, by both governments. There was clearly a concerted pitch to move “beyond intractability”.

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33 Rajya Sabha unstarred question no 536, August 4, 2011, http://www.idsa.in/resources/parliament/ResumptionofpeacetalkswithPakistan04.08.11
37 Ibid, 98-145.
Was the CD the result of a recognition that the conflict was “ripe” for resolution as the Zartman model would suggest? The extent to which it revolved around considered acceptance of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS), Imminent Mutual Catastrophe or Entrapment as incentives to negotiate is difficult to gauge. There is little evidence to suggest that the idea of a MHS based on a cost-benefit analysis, consistent with public choice notions of rationality and studies of war termination and negotiation, were at play in the conceptualizing of the CD. The complexities on the ground, the multiple stakeholder positions on the Kashmir issue, and the manner in which events unfolded between 1999 and 2004, did not lend themselves to a likely consensus on these aspects.

http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/ripeness/

Zartman’s model suggests five major features (1) parties resolve conflicts only when they are ready to do so. At the ‘ripe’ moment they are amenable to proposals that offer a way out. (2) The pain suffered by the parties would push them to a situation where they would be willing to negotiate out of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate. (3) There is a willingness to search for a solution and a shared sense that a negotiated solution is possible, (4) mediation sensitizes and persuades the parties that the conflict is ripe for resolution. (5) Inability to bear the costs of further escalations including material and human costs are indicators of ripeness.


39 The concept of a ‘ripe’ moment centres on the parties’ perception of a mutually hurting stalemate associated with an impending, past or recently avoided catastrophe. The catastrophe provides a deadline or lesson indicating that pain can be sharply increased, if a way out is not found, since they are locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory. The deadline is painful, ever if not to the same degree to all parties. The way out need not be to identify a specific solution, but a clear sense that there is a willingness on all sides to search for a solution.

40 Between 1999 and 2002, while there were two major political initiatives for rapprochement at the Lahore and Agra summits, there were two military engagements in 1999 (Kargil) and 2001-02. There were also concepts like surgical strikes and limited war at play. After Kargil, militancy got revived in the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir. There were also splits within the separatist groups like the divide within the Hizbul Mujahideen. There were also more than two parties to the conflict, making it difficult for MHS to come into play along multiple faultlines. The parties in the Kashmir conflict include (a) India, Pakistan, Kashmiris and non-state actors (b) Kashmiris on the Indian side – Kashmiri Muslims, Kashmiri Pandits, people of Jammu and Ladakh besides the Gujjars and Bakarwals. (c) Kashmiris in the valley including, the mainstream and separatist groups (d) the non-state actors in Indian Kashmir especially the Hizbul Mujahideen, other Jihadi groups and the Ikhvanis (or the militant turned informers.) (e) In addition the various groups in AJK (Azad Jammu & Kashmir), and the Northern Areas in Pakistan.

The desire to explore a ‘way out’ was, however, palpable. Seen through a nuanced lens of ripeness theory, what was at work more than the MHS was the *Mutually Enticing Opportunity (MEO)*, where, as pointed out by Chester Crocker, a ripe moment can occur when leaders see a better way of achieving goals than continuing with the costly struggle. These include factors such as availability and increasing acceptability of some new set of basic ideas, principles and concepts, the gradual disappearance of the parties’ unilateral options and the existence of useful channels through which adversaries can communicate. Is it then the case that while ‘Summit Diplomacy’ between 1998-2004 focused on the content of substantive proposal prompted in the main by perceptions of MHS, the CD reflected significant shifts in the orientation to conflict management?

At the most visible level was the willingness of the political leadership in both countries to engage with an ‘active’ approach to building trust. This foregrounded the position that seeking a military solution to the conflict was neither desirable nor practical, nor in the long term interest of both countries.

Recognizing that ‘trust and uncertainty’ are mutually implicated, there was a willingness to cultivate, what Booth and Wheeler call “security dilemma sensibility, involving an ability to get into the counter fears of others transcending security competition”.

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41 Chester Crocker, conflict resolution theorist and practitioner, making significant contributions to ‘ripeness’ theory avers that while the correct timing is a matter of feel and instinct, the absence of ripeness does not dictate ‘walking away and doing nothing’. The two strategies to be pursued while waiting for the moment to ripen, (for the practitioner) include positioning and ripening as adjuncts to ripeness theory. These could also create compelling opportunities for a negotiation and open up new possibilities.


42 In their willingness to examine the economic cost of the conflict over Siachen and explore their economic relationship and the potential for progress that cross border trade holds, the countries did signal an enticing opportunity moment.

43 I have drawn heavily on the model of trust building developed by Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler in *The Security Dilemma*, 2008, op. cit. The theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of this model, suggest a most apposite perspective for addressing what many believe is the core issue, namely the trust deficit that keeps Pakistan and India locked in adversarial positions.

44 Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler, describe it as an actor’s intention and capacity to perceive the motives behind, and to show responsiveness towards, the potential complexity of the military intentions of others. In particular, it refers to the ability to understand the role that fear might play in their own attitudes and behavior, including, crucially, the role that one’s own actions may play in provoking that fear.

Ibid, 7, 28 and 296.
The willingness to take a political “leap in the dark” and the “costly signaling” that this entailed was also much in evidence. Musharraf faced a great deal of criticism when he was perceived domestically as having given in on Kashmir. Former Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee’s visit to Lahore in 1999 was full of symbolism and can be seen as a “leap in the dark”. After Kargil, it came in for criticism by sections of the strategic community who saw it as a move that made India more vulnerable to the adversary. In attempting to carry forward the spirit of the CD even after the 26/11; Prime Minister Manmohan Singh faced trenchant criticism for the Joint Statement with his Pakistani counterpart Gilani, on the sidelines of the NAM conference at Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt in July 2009.

The reference to Balochistan in the statement was seen domestically as India’s capitulation to the Pakistani allegation of its covert assistance to insurgency in the troubled province. This was touted as a diplomatic failure and “sell out”. A possible attempt by India at fostering trust and to enter into the counter-fear of the other, had to be shelved, as a premature albeit visionary start. The ‘official’ retraction emphasized the suspension of the CD, and resumption, only of ‘limited dialogue’ till Pakistan had brought the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks to justice. India claims to have irrefutable evidence that the people who masterminded these attacks belong to the LeT (Lashkar-e-Tayyeba) and its front the JuD (Jamaat–ud-Dawa) and the JeM (Jaish-e-Mohammed) terrorist groups in Pakistan outlawed by the international community as terrorist organizations. India alleges that they have been provided safe havens in Pakistan and used by the ISI as an instrument of state policy. President Zardari’s now much quoted public acknowledgement in 2009 of Pakistani culpability in “creating” and “nurturing” militants and extremists for short-term tactical objectives, may be seen at one level as attempts to build trust, and

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45 Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler describe ‘costly signaling’ as a move that is aimed at convincing an adversary that one is serious about cooperation and is demonstrated by exposing oneself to some risks by the act of transmitting the signal (Security Dilemma, op cit, 145). These are also signals designed to persuade the other side about the trust worthiness of one’s intentions by virtue of the fact that they are so costly that one would otherwise hesitate to send them.

46 Former Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee’s trip to Lahore in 1999 to inaugurate the Delhi-Lahore bus service was seen as a major confidence and security building measure between the two countries. He made a powerful symbolic statement by visiting the Minar-e-Pakistan, the monument that commemorates the birth of Pakistan, also the site, where in 1940; the Muslim League passed the Lahore Resolution demanding the creation of Pakistan. This was as much to persuade domestic constituencies especially militarist members of his right of centre party the BJP, that India has absolutely no intentions of overrunning Pakistan or reversing the verdict of the partition of the subcontinent or changing the borders. After the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, Pakistan’s fear of India supporting a further dismemberment has dominated the strategic psyche in Pakistan.
send the message of a common threat. It has however given credence to India’s stand, despite the official position to not capitalize on it, or embarrass the Pakistani leadership.47 In addition, the fact that Pakistani courts had been unable or unwilling to prosecute Hafiz Saeed, JuD’s high profile leader who walks free in Pakistan and is allowed to continue with his ‘welfare’ activities, is a major bone of contention between India and its neighbor from the time of the suspension of the CD.

At Sharm-El-Sheikh in July 2009, the Indian Prime Minister had sought consciously to ‘delink’ Pakistan’s action against terrorism, from movement on the CD. Like the text on Balochistan, this too was suitably ambiguous – to be read as either a tough or flexible stand, depending on which constituency was to be addressed. Under mounting domestic pressure, the ‘official’ position moved gradually towards zero tolerance on terrorism and suspension of the CD till visible action against terrorism was taken that India could cite as reason enough to revive the dialogue. And yet, the commitment for the Foreign Secretaries to meet on the sidelines of a Commonwealth meeting in Trinidad in November 2009 was reiterated.

There are many who believe that despite these periodic derailments there is in effect, a bold grand strategy in India, for continuing engagement with Pakistan. This shared vision of both former Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee, and his ideologically different successor Manmohan Singh, marks the significant continuity on the ‘big rewrite’ of India’s Pakistan strategy. This ‘big rewrite’, involving a shift from short-term tactics to ‘grand strategy’, was reflected in Vajpayee’s persisting with dialogue even after Kargil in 1999 and the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001. It is also reflected in his successor, Manmohan Singh’s willingness to risk opprobrium and depart from India’s post-26/11 position that it would not dialogue with Pakistan until it was satisfied with action against those responsible. The decision to engage at Sharm-el-Sheikh marked this shift.48

This can also be read as India’s intention to break away from a Pakistan-centric view of its policy and consciously join a global (U.S.-led) project to stabilize Pakistan, bring it back from the brink and enable it to redefine itself as a modern democratic (Islamic) republic. The threat of the alternative – of Pakistan plunging into chaos is seen as dangerous for the neighbourhood, with its mercurial policy, growing

47 See Omar Farooq Khan, “Pak nurtured terrorism: Zardari,” The Times of India, New Delhi, July 9, 2009


48 Shekhar Gupta, “Two PMs, One Big Idea,” The Indian Express, New Delhi, August 1, 2009.
extremism, the threat of nuclear weapons being appropriated by extremist groups, armed, non-state actors and a conventional army of nearly a million that stand out in the Islamic world for being capable of absorbing modern technology.49

Both India and Pakistan have shown considerable restraint in desisting on scoring brownie points on the Balochistan issue included in the Joint Statement. India seeks broad action against terrorism from Pakistan instead of focusing on isolated incidents or to make the arrest of this or that terrorist the ‘litmus test’ of the seriousness of Pakistan’s intentions.

India continues to flag official frustration at Pakistan’s unwillingness to act against the LeT and the JeM despite it providing “concrete information about these groups reestablishing terrorist training camps”.50 On Balochistan, contra the critics, some strategists in India, see it as a potential separatist nightmare for Pakistan, laying it vulnerable to the kind of criticism it has mounted on India’s Kashmir policy and opening for India the option to internationalize the struggle for self determination of the Baloch people, should it wish to, in several fora.51 Both countries, (India in particular) however demonstrated a sensitivity to the shifting nuances of international relations and bricolaged around the issue. Taking cognizance of the drift in Balochistan and the situation getting bleaker by the day,52 the Joint Statement ensured that India gave away nothing in real terms, but only provided the Pakistan’s Prime Minister, Gilani the opportunity to claim a breakthrough with his own hawks.

India in its decision to delink action against terrorism from forward movement on the dialogue process was engaging on two fronts simultaneously. This, even as the Pakistan agencies were attempting to shroud a political issue in legalese by asking for “real time, actionable, accessible and credible information”. While mounting continual pressure on the issue of terrorism and also keeping bilateral channels of

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49 Shekhar Gupta, “The Big Rewrite,” The Indian Express, New Delhi, July 25, 2009


51 See Arundhati Ghose, “Stop this Menonhunt,” The Outlook, New Delhi, August 31, 2009, 28.

52 A military operation from 2002 has riled the people of Balochistan against the Federation of Pakistan. The alienation intensified after the August 26, 2006 killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti, the venerated face of the Baloch struggle for more provincial autonomy. The largely secular Baloch militants had initially tried to keep the fundamentalist sectors of the clergy at a distance. They have teamed with Sindhis and Pashtun groups against Punjabi domination. Before the current insurgency in 2003 led by the Balochistan Liberation Army, there have been four major insurgencies in the region – in 1948, 1958-59, 1962-63, and 1973-77. No package for Balochistan is likely to be implemented without Army approval.
dialogue and negotiation open, there was the bold attempt to work to strengthen the position of Pakistan’s elected leadership and thereby enable it to grapple with religious fundamentalism and contain the role of the armed forces establishment.\textsuperscript{53}

Pakistan cannot afford to simultaneously deal with so many adversarial situations – one from Islamist elements within, one from the Afghan borderlands, one from India, as well as another in Balochistan where the insurgency is older than Pakistan itself.\textsuperscript{54} India too has its economic agenda, and its own dynamic towards peace, which an ongoing conflict with Pakistan tends to dampen. The key to the emerging rapprochement, as Pakistani author Shuja Nawaz says in his book, \textit{Crossed Swords: Pakistan, Its Army and the Wars Within}, is the realization inside Pakistan that its biggest threat is not India but internal. He exhorts Pakistan’s ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) and India’s RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) to stop playing their spy \textit{versus} spy games.\textsuperscript{55} In this context the United States is engaged in an even handed approach of shadow diplomacy, in balancing India’s concerns and its own dependence on Pakistan in the ‘war on terror’ in its north-western borders and Afghanistan. A ‘gentle nudge’ from the U.S., seems to go a long way, especially in Pakistan, providing both countries with incentive to engage. There is also the recognition that a visible engagement of the U.S. to push the peace process will substantially dilute the leadership in both countries to carry their domestic constituencies.

The ability of the Indian political leadership—despite the massive setback post-Mumbai—to stay the course on the necessity of some form of dialogue with Pakistan, is largely on account of the visible and tacit dividends of the climate generated by the CD. The furore over the reference to Balochistan in the Sharm-el-Sheikh

\textsuperscript{53} Rajiv Kumar, “Whose Side Are We On?” \textit{The Times of India}, New Delhi, September 9, 2009.

\textsuperscript{54} The presence of a larger ethnic Pashtun population (resettled ostensibly by the Pakistani army to tilt the ethnic balance in favor of the Pashtuns, to pursue its own strategic depth in Afghanistan) and the existence of Taliban safe havens in and around the provincial capital of Quetta has compounded the security problem. Baloch nationalists allege official support to the Taliban. Huge displacements of Baloch farmers and fishermen and land takeovers for cantonments have taken place under army supervision. Islamabad alleges an ‘Indian’ hand in the troubles, but is yet to come up with concrete evidence. Baloch leaders and diaspora like Wahid Baloch have lamented that India too, despite having acquired influence and power and a proponent of democracy and human rights, has chosen not to take a ‘proactive role in Balochistan’ (\textit{The Hindu}, July 22, 2009). UN estimates published in December 2006 stated that 84,000, people including 33,000 children had been displaced by the fighting in Balochistan. There have been over 2,000 disappearances of civilians held by armed forces. The Baloch insurgents seek India’s help militarily and in international fora.

statement is indicative of the blind alleys that jettison peace in the ‘democratic space’ in the garb of an inquisitory parliamentary opposition alleging a ‘sell out’, a strategic community guarding ‘national’ interest, a foreign office defending diplomatic leverage and a news hungry ‘sound bite oriented’ fourth estate unwilling to accommodate nuance. The real challenge in the Indo-Pakistan equation is to manage the see-saw of public opinion, often inflamed or manipulated by forces that have a stake in prolonging the conflict.

The CD attempted to move beyond the discourse of belligerence. There was a Lederachian emphasis on developing opportunities for conflict transformation, both personal and systemic, restoring broken relationships, (which resonates deeply with people divided by the partition of the subcontinent) and encourage multiple roles relevant to different tasks in the progression of the conflict and the peacebuilding process. There was also an attempt to situate the process as impacting lives and futures as opposed to application of techniques for specific outcomes and to engender an adaptive, dynamic and responsive change process.56 It took on board the challenge of the process-structure gap and the interdependence gap in peacebuilding.57

The opening up to different constituencies to engage vertically and laterally to expand the constituency of stake holders for the peace process was a significant feature of the CD dividend. The Lederachian three tier pyramid which engages, the top leadership (military, political, religious etc.) the middle range leadership (academics, intellectuals, eminent and respected persons, humanitarian leaders,) and grassroots leadership (local leaders, NGOs, community developers etc.) both within and between societies in conflict across these constituencies approximates what was being attempted.58 It was an engagement with possibilities. As India’s NSA Shiv Shankar Menon stated, it (1) aimed at moving away from a purely state-centric approach; (2) involved steps that have never been taken before like, the opening up

58 See John Paul Lederach, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 39. The “Interdependence” gap suggests that sustainability of peacebuilding requires both horizontal and vertical relationship building and coordination. Horizontal capacity refers to efforts to work with counterparts across the lines of division – focusing on improving relationships by getting counterparts to meet each other, e.g. initiatives that bring women’s groups, NGO workers, political leaders etc. across “enemy lines” vertical capacity is the ability to develop relationships of respect and understanding between higher, levels of leadership, mid-range, grassroots and community levels of peace building. Sustainable peacebuilding requires building synergy between and across levels.
of the Line of Control (LoC) or the traditional trade routes (3) in terms of stakeholders it was both a ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ process – involving, for the first time, the people of India and Pakistan, with an orientation to work at all different levels of state and civil society. (4) It focused on stabilizing the relationship even when threatened by ‘spoilers’ responsible for the earlier blasts in Mumbai in July 2006 and the Samjhauta Express train. It had a three-pronged approach in (a) creating a violence free environment, (b) resolving differences through peaceful negotiations (c) developing cooperative relations by building stakes in the bilateral relationship. This was seen as the only way to make the process ‘irreversible’. The threat posed by potential spoilers was taken on board, including engaging on mutually acceptable options on Kashmir that could be brought into the public domain, once all stakeholders were on board. Efforts were made to broaden the base by involving parties from across the political spectrum. The CD provided a context to examine conventional notions of sovereignty and territory that see borders as walls that hinder connectivity rather than as zones where nations and cultures interact.\(^59\) Connectivity through telecommunications, advancement of technology, rail links enhancement of trade and commerce and gas pipe lines were viewed as integral to the process. The SAARC was seen as a potential avenue to work around bilateral roadblocks.

The Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline project too was flagged as the outline for a paradigm of South-South economic cooperation and regional political solidarity in some optimistic quarters.\(^60\)

The Joint Anti-Terror Mechanism set up in 2006, received with considerable scepticism in India and increasingly seen after Mumbai as ill-conceived, was a novel initiative to institutionalize sharing information with a historical enemy, to curb infiltration, and move closer to selling norms for security cooperation against


\(^{60}\) The now stalled Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline project (approx $7.5 billion) had been flagged with great enthusiasm as one that would bring in enormous economic gains to both countries, as well as initiate a new era of politico economic solidarity. But New Delhi’s fears about an ‘unpredictable’ Tehran and ‘unreliable’ Pakistan, as well as U.S. opposition to the project and its preference for a TAP (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan) pipeline and pricing issues, Pakistan’s lack of institutionalized decision making and strategic capacity for such mega projects, served to put it on the back burner.

India ranks 6\(^6\) globally accounting for 3.5 percent of world commercial energy demand. Its need is primarily oil and gas. 76 percent of India’s oil comes from imports. Pakistan spends U.S. $3 billion on importing petroleum and petroleum products. Its requirement is set to triple in the next 10-15 years. Both countries stand to gain hugely by cooperation on energy.
non-state armed groups.\textsuperscript{61} It also provided a context for a divider namely the issue of terrorism, to become a connector since both countries are, in fact, adversely impacted by terror in different ways.

The CD stands as an innovative model for conflict management in the South Asian region. Two historically bitter adversaries, broke intransigence with the bigger rival (India) recognizing the limits of coercive diplomacy. India focused on what some analysts have described as normative means to make peace with Pakistan: CBMs, arbitration, negotiation, trade and security cooperation.\textsuperscript{62} To this must be added the emphases on public diplomacy and trust building. Equally, an attempt was made to separate the dividers and potential connectors and search for common ground by recognizing differences and acting on commonalities. The CBMs combined both conventional military approaches with those that addressed the aspirations of people on both sides and divided families in particular and the release of POWs (prisoner of war) languishing in each other’s jails for decades. Military CBMs included DGMO (Director General of Military Operations) hotlines and regular meetings of border forces. In October 2007, both sides held the fifth round of expert high level talks on nuclear and missile related CBMs. They agreed to continue with the five year old ceasefire, and signed an agreement on ‘Reducing the Risk from Accidents Relating to Nuclear Weapons’, and committed to notifying each other in the event of nuclear accidents. The prospect of a weak Pakistan, with the possibility of a radical takeover of government and nuclear leakages to terrorists, the insecurities and threat perceptions generated by the A.Q. Khan phenomenon has scripted Indian policy in this regard. This is reflected in the recognition that India’s defense posture must be consistent with its international standing as a ‘responsible nuclear state’ with low key non-deployed minimum deterrence and in the long term downgrading of capabilities for major conventional war and upgrading border control capabilities. India’s ‘No First Strike’ policy and the voluntary moratorium on testing validates this stand.\textsuperscript{63} The launch of India’s first missile capable submarine Arihant in August

\textsuperscript{61} Radha Kumar, \textit{India as a Foreign Policy Actor – Normative Redux}, op. cit., 8

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{63} CBMs between India and Pakistan have had a long history dating back to the Indus Treaty in 1960. DGMO communication links have existed since the late 1980s. An agreement not to attack each other’s nuclear facilities was signed in 1988 and ratified in 1991 and now unilaterally each side has undertaken a moratorium on testing. The missile pre-notification agreement has been scrupulously observed even at times of tension. One point of difference arose since India wanted this confined only to ballistic surface to surface missiles, whereas Pakistan wished to include all types of missiles including cruise missiles. See Christopher Carle, op. cit, 63
2009, had raised concern in Pakistan which sees it as having serious regional implications.64

Nuclear anxieties notwithstanding, the relaxation of visa regimes, the visible transformation of the Wagah-Atari border, increased rail and road links, across the Line of Control, the opening of five transit points across divided Kashmir, the revival of the Munabao-Khokhrapar train service, and above all, the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service and facilitation of people-to-people contact had a major trust building effect.

India and Pakistan used the framework of the one historically successful Indus Waters Treaty of 1960, to arbitrate their long-standing, quarter century dispute over the Baglihar dam through a multilateral forum. A tribunal appointed by the World Bank settled the dispute (in favor of India) which was over the building of a dam on the shared Indus Rivers in Jammu & Kashmir.65 The two countries concentrated on putting in place institutional structures like the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) in both SAARC and at bilateral levels, and although trade between the two countries trebled to around $700 million by 2005, SAFTA could not take off and the costs of non-trading remained high for some years. The official bilateral trade between both countries stood at merely one percent of their respective individual global trade in 2005. But the scenario changed after a somewhat cautious resumption of the dialogue in 2011.

In April 2011, the Wagah-Attari ‘trade gate’ was opened with a passenger terminal and a large cargo facility which in effect connects the two Punjabs and the two countries. The neighbors have agreed to issue multiple-entry business visas.66 The crossing is capable of handling 600 trucks a day and is expected to increase trade. India’s commerce minister, Anand Sharma, also flagged the decision to allow foreign

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64 Tariq Osman Hyder, “Facing the Arihant Challenge,” *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, August 13, 2009.

65 The Indus Water Treaty of 1960, allocated the waters of the three Western rivers of the Indus system – Chenab, Jhelum and Indus to Pakistan, while the Eastern rivers of Ravi, Sutlej and Beas to India allowing for some use by the other country in both cases. The treaty does not deprive Jammu & Kashmir of its water resources. It enjoys an entitlement for irrigation and energy which remains largely unused. The Indus basin lies in one of the most arid parts of the Indian sub continent which is also a water stressed area The fact that *heads* of the rivers allocated to Pakistan, fall on the Indian side of the Line of Control, and in China, posed problems. None of the stakeholders in the conflict has realized the potential that the Indus Water Treaty offers for enhanced cooperation.

direct investment from Pakistan. On its part, Pakistan has agreed to bury the “negative list of 1,209 items” by the end of 2012 in line with WTO rules. Also on board is Pakistan’s granting of the MFN (most favored nation) trade status to India. Pakistan is already on India’s MFN list. This is expected by the end of 2012.

But the biggest gains of the CD have been on Kashmir. National Security is an emotive issue in South Asia, and both India and Pakistan showed willingness, for the first time to rethink the defining role of Kashmir in their respective national self-images. From a strategic perspective the prospect of a settlement of Jammu & Kashmir without territorial change, underlies the enormous distance that official and unofficial discourse on Kashmir and Pakistan borders have travelled since the early 1990s. Making borders ‘irrelevant’ without redrawing boundaries, enabled the reopening of four pre-partition routes, and softening the LoC in divided Jammu & Kashmir and the flow of people and goods by innovations in visa requirements for Kashmir. The historic changes in India’s negotiating position with Pakistan implicit in the Musharraf-Manmohan Singh parleys and pursued in the back channels mentioned earlier was set to significantly alter Indo-Pak ties and the international relations of South Asia. Analysts point to its enormous potential for a post-partition reconciliation between the Hindus and Muslims of the subcontinent which in turn has an impact on political Islam in Asia and beyond.

While Musharraf’s proposals took cognizance of India’s opposition to territorial change and Manmohan Singh’s response for the “cooperative consultative mechanisms between the two Kashmirs fell short of Pakistan’s suggestion for joint management”, the CD allowed for a substantive finessing and revisiting of the tensions between terrorism and the peace process. On the broad elements of the framework on Kashmir, namely, (a) progressive demilitarization, (b) no change in existing boundaries in Jammu & Kashmir, (c) opening borders for the movement of goods and people, (d) substantive ‘autonomy’ to the respective parts of Jammu &

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67 Annie Bannerjee, “India to allow FDI from Pakistan, open border post,” Reuters, April 13, 2012; http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/04/13/india-pakistan-trade-fdi-investment-idINDEE83C04M20120413
68 Binne Sharma, “MFN status to boost trade to $8 billion,” Tehelka, April 12, 2012
69 “Pak to grant MFN status to India by end of 2012,” Hindustan Times, September 22, 2012; http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NorthIndia/Pak-to-grant-MFN-status-to-India-by-end-of-2012/Article1-934137.aspx
71 Ibid, 4.
Kashmir and (e) the ‘consultative mechanism’ between the two Kashmir with a specific mandate to coordinate issues such as trade, water resources, tourism environment and educational exchanges – there was some convergence. In terms of the nuances of actual on the ground implementation, divergences remained.

The nature of ‘autonomy’ that would be offered to the Kashmir territories on both sides remains an open question. India’s reasonably successful parliamentary elections in 2004 and 2009 in Jammu & Kashmir and the mandate for electoral processes in the Provincial Assembly elections of 2002 and 2008 (despite pre-poll violence and threats by the extremists) and an unexpected voter turnout even in 2009, in the aftermath of intra state tensions and massive protests over the Amarnath shrine, is presented as a vindication of the country’s position on the democratic space available in Indian Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). Average Voter turnouts for the Assembly Elections were 44 percent and 60.5 percent in 2002 and 2008 respectively and between 39.66 percent and 45 percent for the General Elections to the national Parliament in 2009 and 2004. Street protests largely mobilized by separatist groups like the Hurriyat, and militant organizations did not translate into votes. This has been flagged as declining support for the violence of militancy, despite Pakistan’s efforts to stoke the embers through ‘cross border’ infiltration and terrorism. India argues that Pakistan has done very little to provide autonomy to Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK) and has kept the Northern Areas (Gilgit-Baltistan) in a constitutional limbo.72

Pakistan announced a reforms package to this effect in 2009. The Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Self Governance) Order, 2009 promises reforms with maximum autonomy to the people of the region. A “province-like status” – not full provincial status – was envisaged with elected and nominated members, an executive Chief Minister and a federally appointed Governor.73 These initiatives were a definitive

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72 The Northern Areas (NA), spread over 72,495 square kilometers has been described as a “colony” of Pakistan. It was severed from PAK in 1949, was not a province of Pakistan and enjoys minimal democratic rights. In May 2004, reflecting, the aspiration for real autonomy or provincial status, the Gilgit-Baltistan Thinkers Forum and All Parties National Alliance (APNA) appealed to the Pakistan Supreme Court to expedite hearings on a 1999 petition, seeking granting of fundamental rights to the people of NA at par with citizens of Pakistan. The territory is under direct rule of the federal government through the Ministry of Kashmir and Northern Areas (KANA). The military had a big role in administering the region.

73 The Northern Areas are an important element in the Kashmir dispute. It is also of geo-strategic importance. To its North, it shares boundaries with Afghanistan and China’s Xinjiang Autonomous Region, to the West is Pakistan’s troubled North West Frontier Province, to its South is Pakistan Administered Kashmir and to the East, India’s Jammu & Kashmir state.
move forward although short of meeting all aspirations, as evidenced in protests in the Northern Areas. Ironically, even India protested against the Order, since New Delhi officially claims this area as part of Jammu & Kashmir and an integral part of India. Although given India’s back channel attempts to convert the LoC into an international border, these protests may be pro forma. Pakistan also links the region to the Kashmir issue but in contrast to ‘Azad Kashmir’ or PAK, this region also has a distinct ‘non-Kashmiri’ identity. The Order took these concerns on board.

Other areas of divergence are over the composition of the intra-Kashmir mechanism and over its mandate. India would like it to remain a Kashmiri body, begin with soft subjects; while Pakistan’s preference largely is for the presence of both countries in the body, with a substantive devolution of powers to this body. Again, while both countries agree on demilitarization of Jammu & Kashmir, but India tying it with the suspension of cross border terrorism and Pakistan insisting that visible troop withdrawal from urban areas, may create difficulties over sequencing.

The CD stands out as a unique example of a bilateral conflict management process in South Asia. This is a region where a multilateral approach for negotiations is seldom the preferred first option. Multilateralism is sought, as the SAARC experience demonstrates, only when bilateral negotiations are blocked. India has till recently flagged bilateral approaches for its own strategic reasons. The new strategic thinking in India and the exigencies of global developments may now move it on a more multilateral trajectory. CD, being a work in progress, allows for resonance in SAARC, to carry forward issues around water, WTO and climate change in its engagement

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74 India’s protest may be prompted by the growing Chinese presence in the region. The Order is seen as Pakistan’s sop to quell local opposition to the construction of dams in the region with Chinese support – like the Bunji Hydroelectric Project which will generate 7,000 megawatts of electricity. It is believed that China’s high profile investment in several projects including the expansion of the Karakoram Highway and the construction of a dry port on the Xingjian border is behind the Pakistan government’s latest moves, to prevent unrest in the region.

75 Identity has been key to the grievances of the Gilgit-Baltistan people estimated at 1.5 million, who do not consider themselves Kashmiri and have little in common with them. Majority are Shia and a significant number are Ismaili. They belong to several non-Kashmiri ethnicities and speak a host of languages. The renaming of Gilgit-Baltistan in the 2009 Order has perhaps been the one welcome feature.

76 There is an alternative perspective among strategic analysts in India who assert that while the newly elected civilian government in Pakistan retains the process of dialogue and there is a realization that the policy of militancy and subversion in its approach to Kashmir has backfired, the temptation to retain Jihadis as the last option will continue to subvert the process of finding a solution to Kashmir. See Ashok K. Behuria, “Pakistan’s Approach to Kashmir since the Lahore Agreement: Is There Any Change?” Strategic Analysis, Vol. 33(. 3), (2009): 433-449.
with Pakistan. The accordion that CD has opened, could strike new notes linked to human security in the context of regional arrangements.

The public diplomacy that accompanied the CD, enabled civil society organizations to have an impact, in terms of helping evolve official view points. It recognized for the first time the value of *incrementalism* (dealing with vexed issues incrementally) *gradualism* (moving from ‘easier’ to ‘harder’ issues) *fractionalism* (breaking hard issues into manageable clusters) and *sealing up* (taking some negotiation details to civil society). CBMs are seen as intrinsic to the problem-solving process.

The complexity of the relationship between India and Pakistan was foregrounded and generated a rethink at several levels, especially among scholars and academics on the short sightedness of engaging with Pakistan as a homogenous monolith. The broader, regional and global content to Indo-Pak relations, issues such as Afghanistan, energy routes, the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal, international terrorism and its cross border ramifications add layers of complexity to bilateral issues.

The suggestions advanced in India on long term positive engagement with Pakistan are based on lessons learnt on the potentialities and limitations of CD in the post-26/11 scenario. One is to reduce the sole emphasis on official negotiations and maintain open contact with all potential partners across Pakistan so that ‘spoiler’ terrorist attacks that cause the suspension of formal negotiations are not able to jettison the process completely. Another is to stop treating Pakistan as a coherent whole. In managing the bilateral segment of India’s emerging strategy, it is argued that India needs to use ‘smart diplomacy’ to engage more than one internal actor in Pakistan and at many levels. It must take imaginative, unilateral steps to empower moderate voices and build real stakeholders with a greater involvement of civil society. A careful application of moral, political and soft power resources, multilayered employment of diplomacy communication and sophisticated coordination of global, regional, bilateral and domestic means, as essential facets of India’s grand strategy to engage Pakistan is advocated. India should be systematically working, in this view, towards a Pakistan that is at peace with itself and in harmony with the region. The possible futures that Pakistan faces given its many challenges are seen as, a ‘fractured Pakistan’, a ‘fascist Islamist Pakistan’ and a ‘failed Pakistan’. A ‘friendly Pakistan’ albeit seen today as unlikely, nevertheless exists as a possibility, in consonance with Jinnah’s original design for the state: Muslim, Moderate and Modern, its realization depending very much on how the inter-state politics in the region and global interests unfold. From a grand

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strategic point of view, consequently it is in India’s national interest to help Pakistan resolve its terrorism puzzle. For this, a greater deployment of Track-II negotiators is suggested, and a nuanced approach that recognizes the faultlines within the Pakistan polity and society. A forward looking grand strategy should desist in this view from ‘pulp patriotism’ and a reactive diplomacy and demonstrate the vision and mettle of a rising power, by steadfastly crafting a Pakistan strategy that does not allow room for spoilers or terrorist groups on either side to derail peace with its embattled neighbor. This perspective reflects the appreciation that Pakistani polity today is faced with competing centres of power, which make it increasingly vulnerable, and out of the control of even its strongest institution – the army. So, in ‘making sense of Pakistan’, the core problem of these ‘multiple’ Pakistans demand special attention. Robust, if differentiated, focused but flexible responses, it is averred, must define India’s policy given Pakistan’s fragmented political and social structure. There is also an exhortation that the security establishment, business groups and peacebuilders must work in concert to shape a Pakistan policy that helps it out of its present quagmire. Three integral strands are seen as essential. First, India builds strong defensive and offensive capabilities to deter “asymmetric” attacks by non-state actors which may have the support of some elements of the Pakistani establishment. Second, India reaches out and builds stakeholders for peace in the region without demanding reciprocity. Third, India uses its “soft” power as well to systematically weaken and delegitimize those who are enemies of a moderate Pakistan, and a stable subcontinent. Equally, it is strongly advocated that Indian policies be carefully distanced from the present American role or the larger Af-Pak policy, given the resentment that America (particularly its drone attacks in the North-West Frontier Province) evokes among large sections of Pakistani society.

Many Pakistanis see the U.S. as having forced the present Afghan war on them and this as the reason for their country’s problems. The U.S. is interested in establishing a bigger “strategic footprint” in Pakistan, but the promise of larger grants has not helped win Pakistani hearts and minds, seen as crucial for the success of the U.S. efforts in neighboring Afghanistan. India too expressed concern over the proposed

79 Happymon Jacob, “26/11 and India’s Pakistan Dilemma,” The Hindu, New Delhi, January 5, 2009
81 Ibid. A Pew Global Attitudes survey in Pakistan in June 2009, found that an overwhelming 64 percent respondents see the U.S. as an enemy. The survey suggests that there is a strong public desire for better relations with India, even among sections that consider India a major threat.
increase in U.S. military aid to Pakistan which it claimed (and confirmed by Musharraf) would be largely diverted for purposes inimical to India. This adds enormous complexity to the India-U.S.-Pakistan dynamic.  

Given that India-Pakistan relations are steeped in deep symbolism, the real prospects for peace lie in how effectively governments can appeal to public opinion. It is argued that while India must do all to help Pakistan fight terrorism, the test of its ‘resolve’ will be when it does not need to claim rhetorical victories to legitimize moving decisively against terrorism that is directed against India.  

Pakistan too needs to move beyond its sense of victimhood and projection of its identity as a nation being perpetually threatened. This negative construction of its identity, it has been suggested, may well be the cause of its lurching from one crisis to the next.  

The complexity of the Indo-Pak relationship needs to be seen as a multifaceted amalgam of layer upon layer of mistrust and a great deal of sentimentality emerging from the many shared elements of culture. The ‘great divide’ of this potent brew could well be redressed by a new generation of citizens coming of age in both countries, who are freed from the memories of partition and its attendant ‘othering’ to explore multiple identities in a larger regional, South Asian context. A move beyond the emotional and argumentative approach of both countries could well lie, in Ashutosh Varshney’s prescription of a U.S.-Canadian relationship model as a long term vision for both countries, with competitive fervor in various spheres of life – cultural, economic, international and social, rather than the zero sum game of military upmanship.  

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82 The Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009 was passed by US Congress in 2010. It authorized the Obama administration to triple non-military aid to Pakistan, translating into $ 1.5 billion over five years. Separately, military aid was also set to increase from the current $ 400 million. A 1 billion dollar U.S. embassy building was also stated with some Pakistanis alleging that it will be turned into a high tech centre for undercover operations. See Nirupama Subramaniam, “Money Can’t Buy You Love,” The Hindu, New Delhi, September 7, 2009.  


84 Pakistani scholar, Farzana Shaikh, in Making Sense of Pakistan (London: Hurst and Company, 2009), argues that Pakistan’s identity crisis, particular over its Islamic/Muslim construction has continued to plague the country – its “obsession” with India spurring it to define itself in terms of what it is “not” rather than what it is. As a state burdened with negative identity it is propelled to seek a compulsive parity with India, a country almost seven times its size. Pakistan’s struggle with India is deeply embedded in a painful awareness of its own lack of history, it is argued.  

Peace in South Asia urgently requires an engagement by both countries to finesse and institutionalize modes of crisis management that could evolve into conflict resolution mechanisms. It also requires for both countries to focus on issues that impact the security of their peoples, in terms of sustainable livelihoods, democratic rights, beliefs, culture and identity and emerging concerns around energy, climate change and water. The CD provides a framework for such a collaborative paradigm shift.

The vitality of people-to-people contacts must continue to fuel the process. As they revisit stereotypes, grapple with issues of identity and politics, ride on nostalgia, curiosity or simple bonhomie they help bring down mental barriers and challenge the sclerosis of security establishments. Multiple tracks of peacebuilding must continue to be at work to ensure the opening up of the sub continental mind, so that the third generation of Indians and Pakistanis exorcize the ghosts of partition that enslaved and imprisoned their forebears.

The need to cultivate the larger constituency for peace in both countries at this juncture is vital. And this in fact has and must remain the essence of the composite dialogue in the coming years. Transferring the entire responsibility on Pakistan to quell terror may prove tactically beneficial but given its current internal political vulnerabilities could prove both costly and strategically counterproductive for India.
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Peace brew-ha-ha all over again?
India and the peace process

Rizwan Zeb

Abstract

This paper elucidates on the concept of a peace process and its spoilers in the context of India-Pakistan relations. The author argues that the peace process which started in 2003 has had its twists and turns, but there has been a renewed energy since 2011. The different approaches to the problems between the two countries, the trust deficit, and the spoilers can derail the process again. The author makes use of existing theoretical formulations on the problem of spoilers. The purpose is not to accuse either side of not doing enough, but to point to issues that will be decisive to the future of the process itself.

This article is an updated and abridged version of “The Makers, Breakers and Spoilers in India-Pakistan Peace Process”, in Spotlight on Regional Affairs, January-February 2011, Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad.

In a recent article, Indian journalist Sushant Sareen has opined that “if Pakistan forsakes the use of Islamist terror and other forms of sabotage and subversion as an instrument of state policy against India and accepts the reality and existence of India, then it will find India a more than willing partner, one that will go the extra mile like it has done in the case of Bangladesh.”

This statement of Sareen is in a number of ways indicative of the theme of this paper; till the time, New Delhi stays

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under the illusion that they are “bargaining from a position of strength”, the current phase of the peace process will sooner or later hit another stalemate. The sooner New Delhi comes out and participates fully, the better it is for the prospect of peace between India and Pakistan.

The developments on diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan in the recent months have been very positive. Both sides have agreed to take several measures to enhance trade and ease visa restrictions for various categories of people. India has formally allowed foreign investment from Pakistan in all sectors barring defense, space and nuclear energy. India halted the construction of the Kishanganga dam on the river Neelum as per the orders of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague. During the recently held three-day talks between Pakistani foreign minister, Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, and her Indian counterpart, Mr. S.M. Krishna, in Islamabad, a number of bilateral issues such as terrorism, economic and commercial cooperation among others were deliberated upon.

Since July 2011, the peace process which started in April 2003 has entered another phase. Despite setbacks and stalemate on some issues, the process has sustained. The views in Pakistan, like those in India, are divided on the peace process. Cynics are of the view that the peace process has its basis in the Indian belief that in the post 9/11 world, Pakistan is under tremendous pressure, internally and externally. Thus, it is perhaps the best time for a final settlement of the Kashmir issue on India’s terms, as the power configuration at the national, regional and international levels favors India. Optimists are of the view that the peace process has a greater chance of success since it increasingly enjoys the support of citizens of both countries and it is not confined to the governmental level alone but also includes people-to-people contact.

However, the biggest hurdle that threatens to stall this peace process is the trust deficit between the two countries, which is perpetually reinforced. Moreover, the peace process is suffering from a classic spoiler problem.²

This paper aims at understanding the dynamics of a peace process and its spoilers. A vast literature is already available on the various aspects of India-Pakistan relations. Recently, a number of newspaper reports have pointed to what Islamabad needs to

do to make the peace process successful. However, missing from this discourse is an articulation of the steps that India might consider taking to contribute to its success. This paper which is part of a larger project on India-Pakistan peace process, makes use of the literature on various aspects of peace processes and spoiler problem and then briefly touches upon the Indo-Pak peace process. The idea is not to accuse either side of being guilty of not doing enough but to point to issues, which will impact the outcome of the ongoing process.

Peace process

Harold Saunders, Founder of the Washington DC-based International Institute for Sustained Dialogue and former US Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, states that a peace process is more than conventional diplomacy and negotiation. It encompasses a full range of political, psychological, economic, diplomatic, and military actions woven together into a comprehensive effort to establish peace. Progress towards peace depends on breaking down the barriers to negotiation and reconciliation. If we ignore the politics of breaking down the barriers, the mediator and negotiator may never have a chance. According to Moonis Ahmar, Chairman, Department of International Relations, University of Karachi and conflict resolution specialist, “a peace process is a mechanism or a set of negotiations where the parties involved attempt to avoid war or a war-like situation and wish to settle conflicts peacefully by using techniques such as diplomacy, bargaining, secret negotiations, open negotiations, trade-offs, and mediation. It is an exercise where groups or countries with conflicting interests seek to avoid further confrontation through a series of negotiations. Stretched over a period of months and years, a peace process requires substantial patience among the parties concerned before the results of the process can be achieved.” A peace process is a time-consuming exercise based on the mutual desire of the parties to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. Reciprocity is the most important element of any peace process. It should largely be indigenous in nature, with possible external assistance if desired by the parties concerned.

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Some of the essential requirements of a peace process are:

- willingness of the parties concerned to initiate the process of negotiations,
- clear intentions of the leaders involved in a peace process,
- application of patience and persistence,
- consideration of the time factor,
- political will to sustain the process of negotiations,
- reduction of mutual mistrust, suspicion and paranoia,
- creating a conducive environment for negotiations,
- identification of critical issues,
- moving from less contentious to critical issues,
- developing points of understanding,
- striving for a win-win situation,
- taking public opinion into confidence during the process of negotiations,
- utilizing the services of a mediator,
- learning lessons from relevant cases,
- highlighting the positive aspects of negotiations and learning from past failures in negotiations,
- engaging the media in building an environment of mutual confidence and trust,
- cessation of propaganda warfare against the adversary,
- controlling border tension, and,
- maintaining better lines of communication between the policymakers of the parties concerned.

Factors affecting the peace process

There are a number of factors which play a very significant role in the success or failure of any peace process. The most important is a strong yearning for peace,
both at the governmental and public level. Time also plays a very vital role. A number of experts have argued that a peace process cannot be initiated unless the time is ripe for it. Time factor is also important because at times one or both parties might think that time is running out and that they have not achieved anything from the process.

External involvement and encouragements also plays a significant role, because at times, the parties involved get stuck in a stalemate and need an external third party intervention to break the deadlock. Moreover, a rigid stand adopted by any party involved in the peace process may block efforts for a breakthrough.7

At times, one party may lose interest in continuing with the peace process owing to a number of reasons, especially when it achieves some positive results. On the other hand, a party might distance itself from the process if it fails to show results to its domestic constituency.

Patience is also a very crucial factor in the success of a peace process. In essence, a peace process is a very long and time-consuming exercise, if patience is missing, then incidents like an accident or a terror attack can derail the whole process.

Contrary to popular belief, the content of a peace process is also very important because the process is simply a mechanism for achieving the content. If the focus is allowed to shift away from the content, it could distort priorities and have a negative impact on the peace process as a whole.8 If a party thinks that it is bargaining from a position of strength and can still achieve its desired outcome, then the process is doomed to fail. A successful peace process should address the concerns of both or all parties involved. If one side – mostly the stronger side – monopolizes the agenda, then the concerns of the weaker party are ignored and this adversely affects the peace process.

Ironically, to ensure that the peace process does not collapse, the weaker party has to maintain the ability to impose a stalemate. Experts point out that “a party which has the ability to mar the interests of its adversary by stalling negotiations acquires greater control over the outcome.”9

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7 Ibid, 28.
9 Ibid, 49.
Peacemaking between enemies

How can peace be maintained between enemies? Or is there any way through which enemies can have peace? To do this they must be willing to cooperate. The element of reciprocity is of utmost importance here. Also, the cost incurred by engaging in the conflict and the benefits of peace, or at least the benefits of absence of conflict, have a vital role to play.

There are certain points, which might stop two adversaries from establishing peace despite pressing reasons or a hurting stalemate. If the peacemaking effort lacks public support, then any attempt to change the situation will be taken as a sign of weakness. A very important element of peacemaking is that neither party should try to impose its preferred outcome unilaterally.

A huge challenge is that in the absence of the institutionalization of peace, the leadership of one or both parties will remain doubtful of the real intentions of the other party; whether or not they will remain consistent in their actions over a period of time.

Another important issue: what are both sides getting out of the conflict and how are the gains being used. If party A is getting more than party B, then the leadership of party B might like to change the situation, since this will make it doubt party A’s intentions and fear that this gain might be used against it in any future conflict. Therefore, the chances of the party which gains less withdrawing cooperation will increase.

In short, making peace between adversaries is very tricky and can only be done if both sides seriously want it. Others can support them but if a party is in this for tactical reasons then this process is doomed to failure, however progressive and result-oriented it might look.

The Spoiler Problem

A person or a group opposed to the peace process and having the capability to derail it is called a spoiler. Stephen Stedman defines a spoiler as “...leaders and

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parties who believe (that) the emerging peace threatens their power, world view, and interests and who use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it.”11

According to Stedman, four issues are important to understand the phenomenon of spoilers in a peace process:

- **Position**
- **Number**
- **Type**
- **Locus**

*Position* implies the location of a spoiler; whether it is a part of the peace process or outside it. The first kind of spoiler is within the peace process. For instance, the Indian information minister during the Agra summit was part of the Indian team, but her statement that the Kashmir question was not even mentioned in the meeting between the leaders of India and Pakistan is one such example. The second type is a spoiler who is outside the process. This type of spoiler relies on the use of force and violence to derail the process. Jihadist elements and Hindu fundamentalists serve as apt examples. *Number* refers to the actual number of spoilers in a peace process.

The third issue is determining the exact type of the spoiler and its goals. The first type is a *limited spoiler* which has very limited objectives. The second type is a *total spoiler*, who would prefer to totally disrupt the peace process and would settle for nothing but what it wants. The third is the *greedy spoiler* who changes its position according to the situation and circumstances. The fourth issue- *locus*- refers to the power base and the following that the spoiler group enjoys.

Spoilers are twin to a peace process. For a peace process to succeed, it is essential that the parties in a peace process should be able to identify the spoilers and then address the issue collectively. Identifying and categorizing various spoilers requires a detailed understanding of a number of related issues such as the type of spoiler, its

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membership, resources, power base, and lifeline. Once this information is available, only then can the problem be effectively addressed.

Final observations

The renewed talks are part of the peace process, which started in April 2003. In 2003, India changed its position and decided to start peace talks due to a number of internal and external compulsions and also due to the mindset which made New Delhi view Islamabad, in the post-9/11 world, under tremendous pressure internally and externally and thus offering India perhaps the best time for a final settlement of all issues.

The biggest problem and a spoiling factor for the peace process from the very beginning has been the trust deficit between the two countries. It was evident from the start that both sides didn’t trust each other. What else can explain the reason for Pranab Mukherjee at one point saying “What if we withdraw from Siachen and they (Pakistani forces) occupy it?” However, nothing illustrates this point more than the Mumbai terrorist attacks. Within hours of the tragic event, New Delhi began implicating Islamabad. It seems that the India and Pakistan peace process is suffering from a classic spoiler problem.

It will not take a rocket scientist to observe that through the Mumbai attack, terrorists aimed at derailing the already faltering India-Pakistan peace process. This could be termed their basic objective. They also wanted the situation to deteriorate to a level where both sides went to war or at least mobilized, as a result of which Islamabad would be compelled to focus on its eastern border. While the terrorists successfully achieved their basic aim, both India and Pakistan abstained from taking extreme measures. Cynics would consider this as an outcome of the back-channel and not-so back channel American diplomacy.

A peace process, as has been elaborated in this paper, requires patience from all parties involved, especially when the road gets rough. It has been pointed out that a peace process is a time-consuming exercise based on a mutual desire of finding a peaceful solution to the conflict. This objective can’t be achieved if either party starts blaming the other or refuses to trust it. Another point is that a party might lose interest in the peace process when it achieves some positive results or might distance itself from the process if it fails to show results to its domestic constituency. This apparently is the case with India: while it can’t achieve much from Pakistan, the Indian public is also angry over the issue of terrorism.
These are the two major dilemmas for any party in a peace process: Not to lose interest in the process and to engage its citizens so that they continue to support the process. To address these dilemmas, results are very important. And results cannot be achieved without showing patience and consistency. Hence, any peace process depends on a number of factors, most important of which is patience.

At times, in a peace process, a party, normally the stronger one, starts thinking that it can bargain from a position of strength and achieve its desired results. This makes the peace process a failure. This is a major issue with the India and Pakistan peace process. India is not willing to give any concessions to Pakistan. Ironically, in such a situation, the weaker party is left with no other option but to maintain the ability to impose a stalemate.

The success of a peace process ensues from efficiently identifying all the spoilers and collectively addressing them. The terrorists are a key spoiler in the India-Pakistan case. Both India and Pakistan need to address this problem jointly if they are serious about establishing peace in South Asia. Take for instance the example of the Mumbai attack. When the tragedy struck, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, was on a visit to India to discuss important issues related to the ongoing dialogue process, including Kashmir, the Chenab River water dispute, and trade ties. Instead of engaging him, India committed the cardinal sin as regard to a peace process and blamed Islamabad for planning the attack within the first few hours of the terror attacks. Next, it put dialogue with Pakistan on hold. While terrorists/Islamists/jihadists are total spoiler in the Pakistan-India peace process (because a successful peace process is a threat to their existence), India, although a party to the peace process, has also been a greedy spoiler.

A closer look at the prevailing strategic thinking in India and its strategic vision clearly indicates that in the post-9/11 world, the Indian foreign policy establishment views Pakistan as under tremendous pressure internally and externally. In New Delhi’s view, the power configuration at the national, regional and international levels, favors India and it is time to do things according to its own terms. Former Indian Prime Minister I.K. Gujral, some time back voiced this view when he said: “His [President Musharraf’s] country faces innumerable problems. He also finds India growing taller and taller. His friends, the Americans, have told him not to rock the boat.”

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According to this strategic vision, New Delhi intends to articulate its own Indian ‘Monroe Doctrine’, by creating a cooperative security web, anchored at the two ends by its allies, with a well-armed South-East Asia and a particularly strong Vietnam. By doing this, New Delhi intends to create problems for China. That is the only understandable reason why Vietnam is considered important in this plan. New Delhi wants to establish a strong military/naval presence in the region. The ultimate objective is to be in a position to be able to provide security to the vital sea lines from Malacca to Hormuz. Eighty percent of the world’s oil passes through these lines.

Where does Pakistan stand in New Delhi’s strategic vision for its emergence as a major global player? A number of Indian strategic thinkers are of the view that Pakistan is a failed state. The country is under a strong military hold and there is no likelihood that it would loosen up any time in the near future. Satish Kumar in his paper, Reassessing Pakistan as a Long Term Security Threat, stated, “...Islamic extremism and militancy have become as important a reality in Pakistan as the army of Pakistan. Both of them are durable. There is a symbiotic relationship between them which cannot be washed away. Both of them are hostile to India and acting in unison their hostility will remain formidable”.13 He further adds, “...Pakistan poses a long-term security threat to India which is inherent in the nature of the Pakistani state, its ideology, its power structure, and the imperatives which determine the behavior of the ruling establishment. These factors are not likely to change in the next 20 to 30 years. India has to cope with this kind of adversary, and its strategic capabilities and thinking, its national will and character must respond to the situation accordingly”.14

Realizing that the military, including the nuclear, approach is not adequate, New Delhi, for quite some time now, has been working on a different line to address its problem with Pakistan. It is using the water weapon against Pakistan, a lower riparian state, by its various hydro projects, especially its projects on the headwaters of the Indus River on the Indian side and by manipulating the Indus Waters Treaty. Recent developments in this regard are a case in point.

What does New Delhi want to achieve when it engages Islamabad in a dialogue? India wants to focus on improving contacts between the two countries. It wants to see easy movement of people across the borders; not just across the established

13 Satish Kumar, “Reassessing Pakistan As Long Term Security Threat”,
Public Lecture No. 7, Center for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi, March 2003, 17.
international boundaries but also across the Line of Control (LoC) that divides the two parts of Kashmir. It would also like to liberalize trade, MFN status and pipelines. It believes that by doing this, Islamabad would eventually move ahead on more contentious issues. What they are willing to offer in return is anybody’s guess.

An important obstacle to the success of the peace process is the different approaches Islamabad and New Delhi are following: Islamabad wants to resolve the conflicts; New Delhi wants to manage the conflicts. New Delhi is not willing to accept any solution that involves major territorial alterations, especially on religious lines, because it believes that it would be detrimental to its secular identity. Islamabad is not willing to accept the current LoC as a solution. While it is engaged in a peace process with Pakistan, India is changing its positions and stances, and while it continues talking, it is not willing to concede anything to Pakistan.

Having said all this, this paper doesn’t argue that the peace process is a meaningless exercise. While it argues that India needs to do more, it also suggests that peace talks are the only viable option for both countries; India cannot emerge as a true global player unless it has a friendly Pakistan, and South Asia and for Islamabad, no peace means the problems with India remain unresolved. Therefore, both India and Pakistan should continue talking. Perhaps the best way is to accept their difference in approach and desired outcomes and follow Coral Bell’s adverse partnership model.15

15 Intiaz H. Bokhari in his book A Paradigm for Indo-Pakistan Détente states, “A consciousness between the dominant powers that they have solid common interests as well as sharp differences. For example, during the Cold War years, one overriding factor dictated the need for superpowers to act as ‘partners’: the mutual fear of nuclear weapons.”
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The Road to Reconciliation with Pakistan: Sifting Causes from Consequences

B. G. Verghese

Abstract

This article attempts to delineate the issues that have served as impediments to trust-building and reconciliation between India and Pakistan. The author opines that the idea of Kashmir as the ‘core problem’ is a misplaced one; the blockades largely ensue from the insecure national consciousness/identity and flourishing infrastructure of radical Islam in Pakistan. The fact that there is growing realization in Pakistan that islamization has negatively impacted its polity provides hope that concerted efforts at paving the path to peace may be undertaken. He makes some suggestions for areas that can be explored for cooperation.

In recent times, Pakistan has been lurching from crisis to crisis, which perhaps explains why even some of the diehards, including those in the Army, are not averse to talk peace with India. Terrorism, inspired by Islamic fundamentalists and nurtured by the State as an instrument of state policy, especially against India, now increasingly menaces Pakistan itself. That it has taken more lives at home than across the border is possibly true. But that cannot extenuate the Pakistan establishment, cutting across all regimes, for having wilfully unleashed and encouraged this evil. Nor does the plea that Pakistan is a greater victim of terror than India hold any water.

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He is associated with several NGOs and educational institutions and is a member of Track-II India-Pakistan Neemrana Initiative and other inter-country dialogues. He is a recipient of the Magsaysay Award for Journalism (1975). Mr. Verghese has authored several books on issues relating to water resources, India’s Northeast, Asian geopolitics and the media. His most recent books include First Draft: Witness to the Making of Modern India (2010); Rage, Reconciliation, Security: Managing India’s Diversities (2008); Tomorrow’s India: Another Tryst with Destiny (2006); A Jammu & Kashmir Primer: From Myth to Reality (2006); and Warrior of the Fourth Estate (2005).
Kashmir in Pakistan’s consciousness

To this day, ‘Kashmir’ is held out as “the core problem”. This is a myth now accepted as reality by very large numbers in Pakistan, the facts be damned. As Nehru had repeatedly argued, the Kashmir question was not the cause but the consequence of the Indo-Pakistan stand-off, the roots of which go back to the so-called ‘ideology of Pakistan’ and the ‘Two-Nation Theory’. At independence, the Muslim League felt that it had been cheated by being given no more than a “moth eaten Pakistan”.

Kashmir, a Muslim majority princely state contiguous to Pakistan, was independent from 15 August to 26 October 1947, when it acceded to India after being brutally invaded by regular Pakistan forces and tribal raiders. That this was planned and supported by the Pakistan government under Liaquat Ali Khan and led by the Pakistan Army is clearly set out in ‘Raiders in Kashmir’ by Major General Akbar Khan who retired some years later as Director, Weapons and Equipment, Army Headquarters, Rawalpindi. Those facts have never been controverted but have been confirmed by other sources.

The governing UN Resolution of 13 August 1948 also politely labelled Pakistan the aggressor, called on its tribal lascars and regular military forces to withdraw, and stated that the administration and security of the entire state shall revert to India, under UN supervision in the areas evacuated by Pakistan, pending a plebiscite. Pakistan’s obdurate refusal to disarm and withdraw put paid to the plebiscite. That proposition is now dead.

Yet, from the start, Pakistan labelled Kashmir as the “unfinished business of Partition”. Despite its insistence on “self-determination” in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), Pakistan has ruled Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), with little autonomy. Power clearly resides in the Islamabad-based Kashmir Affairs Council headed by the Prime Minister as a simple reading of the PAK and GB Constitutions reveals. The Shia-dominated GB area has also suffered anti-Shia pogroms and demographic change with the induction of Sunni personnel.

Two-nation theory, Jinnah’s second thoughts

Linguistic and cultural separatism in Pakistan surfaced as early as 1953 when Jinnah proclaimed Urdu as Pakistan’s national language. This sowed the seeds of East Pakistan separatism. But even prior to that, Jinnah realised that by the logic of his two-nation theory, a Muslim majority Pakistan harboured many mini-Pakistan’s with Sikhs, Hindus and Buddhists indubitably entitled to separate states. Sensing that the two-nation theory could undo Pakistan, Jinnah backtracked. He made a
180-degree turnaround, days before independence in his inaugural address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 11 August 1947.

He spoke substantively and passionately affirming that Pakistan must be a truly secular state with equal citizenship, irrespective of faith, forms of worship, caste or colour. These were principles he had vigorously denied and denounced for years in a united India, only weeks before. And he now saw nemesis for Pakistan if the logic of “two nations” and parity for the minority with the majority community was to be pursued. It would have been a great and moving address in another context, but now his audience was greatly disturbed. The speech was played down and then deliberately relegated to some musty closet so much so that even as late as 1966, an official collection of Jinnah’s speeches published by the Research Society of Pakistan had altogether omitted it.

Isolated and dismayed, Jinnah made another turnaround. Two months later, on 11 October 1947, he addressed a gathering of civil and military officers in Karachi and was reported as having stated that Pakistan’s democracy must be founded on Islamic ideals and principles. He was more categorical speaking to the Sindh Bar Association in Karachi on 23 January 1948, as reported by *Dawn*, when he insisted that Pakistan’s constitution would be based on the Sharia “to make Pakistan a truly great Islamic state”.

**Radical Islam’s shadow**

Sober elements in Pakistan are today seeking to accord a new centrality to Jinnah’s 11 August 1947 speech as reflective of the true spirit of Jinnah’s Pakistan that must be restored. But two caveats are in order. First, the radical Islamisation of Pakistan must be rolled back to allow space for restoration of the inclusive Sufi Islam that essentially prevailed over all of South Asia. Secondly, the gross re-writing of its history, geography and culture as evidenced in its officially-produced school texts must be rid of the high quotient of hate of the “other”, namely India, in terms of which Pakistan has negatively defined itself.

A well-researched, bold and honest analysis of state school texts by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Islamabad in 2003 by a team of 40 scholars, came out with a damning report. To quote from the summary:

...*Our analysis found*...

- **Inaccuracies of fact and omissions that serve to substantially distort the nature and significance of actual events in our history.**

- **Insensitivity to the actual religious diversity of the nation.**
- Incitement to militancy and violence, including encouragement of jihad and shahadat.

- Perspectives that encourage prejudice, bigotry and discrimination towards fellow citizens, especially women and religious minorities, and other nations.

- A glorification of war and the use of force.

and

The books on Social Studies systematically misrepresent events that have happened over the past several decades of Pakistan’s history…This history is narrated with distortions and omissions. The causes, effects and responsibility for key events are presented so as to leave a false understanding of our national experience. A large part of history of this region is also simply omitted, making it difficult to properly interpret events…. Worse, the material is presented in a way that encourages the student to marginalise and be hostile towards other social groups and people in the region.

Following publication of the SDPI report, then President, General Pervez Musharraf promised textbook reform. There has been improvement since, though the bias remains as described in a Jinnah Institute (Islamabad) policy brief, ‘The Continuing Biases in our Textbooks’ which was published in April 2012. The content of official textbooks in the disciplines of History, Pakistan Studies and Islamiyat “stem analytical thinking” and constitute a “curriculum of hatred”, and create a mindset of extremism and religious bigotry and “inculcate prejudice against non-Muslims who are depicted as enemies of Islam… This breeds jihadis. Today’s extremists are yesterday’s children that were raised on a diet of these textbooks”.

“The ubiquitous emphasis on ideology and Nazariya-i-Pakistan (Ideology of Pakistan) continues to dominate the tone of the texts and no words are minced in attributing all the ills that ever befell Pakistan to ‘Hindus’… India and the Hindus still have to bear the brunt of the State’s historical narrative”. The making of Bangladesh is squarely attributed to the villainy of the Hindus of East Pakistan and India.

The teachers themselves are products of hate-the-other tutelage. Bigoted madrassa students “end up managing the pulpits in the mosques”.

These are harsh judgements but they paint a picture of a poisoned national consciousness. One must, in fairness, admit that India too has its Hindutva and
related ideologies that espouse a narrow, chauvinistic, high-caste cultural nationalism and spew hate for other faiths and people. They too seek to glorify some and denigrate the ‘other’ in their rewriting of history. Fortunately these elements, minor and aberrant exceptions apart, have not been part of the State or the mainstream and have been stoutly opposed. However, the potential for mischief remains.

The growth of jihadi-terror

The Islamist bias, introduced into Pakistan with its roots in the retrograde two-nation theory, was followed by the cultivation of jihadi-terror as an instrument of state policy. The Justice Munir Commission, set up after the anti-Ahmadiyya riots in 1953, asked of the ulema of all schools in the country that if the Ahmadiyyas were outcasts then who in Pakistan might be defined as the good Muslim. It is recorded that there were as many answers as there were ulema. In 1978, Zia ul Haq launched his drive to bring Pakistan under a truly Islamic order or Nizam-e-Mustafa that would make it a truly Islamic state. What followed were regulations and ordinances enforcing prohibition, hudood (adultery) laws, blasphemy, Islamic economics including zakat and abolition of interest, and the establishment of Sharia courts.

The ideal of the ‘good Muslim’ was reinforced with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan which marked a further lurch towards wahabi doctrines and the spread of madrassas generously funded by Saudi Arabia. Jihad was propagated. These chickens have come home to roost, causing enormous collateral damage to India through cross-border terror far beyond the bounds of Kashmir; but they have also gnawed at Pakistan’s vitals.

However, the Islamic radicalisation of Pakistan cannot be laid solely at Zia’s door with effect from 1979. Having abandoned or remoulded its history, heritage, geography and culture to differentiate itself from India, and with nothing but slogans in place, Pakistan denied itself a positive identity. Thereafter, every failure in writing a constitution and in coherent nation-building led to a compensatory, indeed mandatory, lurch towards further Islamisation which became the glue to hold Pakistan together. Ayub, Bhutto and others merely paved the way for Zia and the Afghan war, with American assistance, to spread Talibanisation with the inevitability of a Greek tragedy.

Discerning Pakistanis realise that the country is on a path of self-destruction and that permanent denial offers no antidote. The problem lies within and Kashmir has become an albatross.
Pakistan army for peacemaking

Obsession with a wholly unreal ‘threat’ from India has made the Pakistan Army and its intelligence wing, the ISI, larger than life, omnipresent and omnipotent as the shield and defender of the ‘ideology of Pakistan’, and virtually unaccountable—a state within a state. All critical decisions are vetted by the Army—key foreign relations, national and internal security, nuclear policy. A disproportionate percentage of the budget goes towards maintaining a bloated military establishment which now controls a good part of the national economy, as well through various Milbus (military-business) foundations, as Ayesha Siddiqa describes them.

The economy remains feudal and fragile and has been sustained by US military and civil aid, whose flow is only now being controlled by Washington with reference to promise and performance. But for substantial remittance flows, mostly from the Gulf, Pakistan would be in dire straits. The assumption that China, whose “friendship is deeper than the ocean and higher than the mountains” would bail out Pakistan has been belied. The Chinese too are deeply worried about jihadi activities in Xinjiang and attacks on their construction workers along the K K Highway and Gwadar. With jihadi pressures again mounting in North Waziristan, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani declared that India and Pakistan must live in peaceful coexistence as defence without development is neither viable nor acceptable. The turnaround statement from Pakistan Army Chief, Kayani, came on 7 April 2012 “while on Siachen”, after 168 Pakistani armed personnel were buried under an avalanche.

This was obviously a long time back. But if current ground realities have caused a rethink, it is all to the good. The sceptic may say that this is merely a tactical retreat. But the benefits that could flow from a peace dividend, especially trade and investment, with their implications for employment and lower prices, could conceivably transform it into smart strategic policy. This would strengthen the peace and business lobby, win international support and give a fillip to Pakistan’s embryonic democratic forces.

Talks with Pakistan would also be desirable, even while simultaneously pressing it to do more expeditious work on dealing with the guilty of 26/11 and cross-border terrorism. While formal visits are in order, they entail a measure of grandstanding and so it might be more advisable to resume quiet back channel diplomacy. Track-II deliberations are also useful as it is possible to speak quite frankly, float bold ideas and build a climate of trust. Military to military exchanges and discussions on security-related issues would also be most desirable where threat perceptions and security-related responses to alleged provocations from the other side could be addressed.
A soft border

Whatever the history and background, a resolution on Kashmir is essential. However, the facts must be made known as any compromise on the Indian position will only pass muster with political and public opinion in India if we hold the moral high ground and are not seen as bowing to pressure from any quarter. There are three aspects of the Kashmir problem: the external/Pakistan element; a restructuring of internal Centre-State relations, and grievance redressal on a number of human, social and regional counts within the Indian part of J&K. Pakistan can have nothing to do with the latter two issues and must equally be left to mend its own internal relations within PAK and the GB area without interference. The Government of India appointed three-person Team of Interlocutors has sketched a pragmatic road map to follow.

India claims, and the Parliament has resolved, that all of the erstwhile Maharaja’s J&K domain, including PAK and GB, are legally and constitutionally part of India. This position has and will be reiterated until a final settlement is reached. Pakistan’s position is the exact opposite, though it is willing to give up the Leh tehsil of Ladakh and the part of Jammu east of the Chenab. Pakistan has done everything it can to wrest Kashmir from India but knows that it can never succeed. Likewise, whatever the rights and wrongs, India knows that it cannot wrest back PAK and GB without a war that will not be fought, for fear of nuclear Armageddon. Therefore, a solution must lie in restructuring relations across the line of control (LOC). This is what Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah had proposed in 1964 and something that Dr. Manmohan Singh and Musharraf brought back to the table.

It is clear to both sides that there is no other solution barring refinement of the concept of a soft border, greater internal autonomy on either side and the evolution of cross-border institutions and relationships over time. Dr. Manmohan Singh has made it clear that boundaries cannot be changed but can be made “irrelevant” though trans-boundary exchanges. The fact of a boundary matters less than the nature of that boundary—barrier or bridge? The present government of Pakistan has gone back on the ‘Musharraf formula’ because the ex-president is persona non grata for the Pakistan’s People’s Party (PPP) that is in power today. Be that as it may, the idea need not be wished away. The bus service and trans-LOC trade are encouraging first steps towards that goal.

Agreement on acceptance of the LOC as the boundary will necessitate a Siachen settlement. This will entail more than just mutual redeployment from the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL). This boundary was created in 1984 when India pre-
emptied Pakistan’s eastward cartographic creep from the last named grid reference, ‘NJ 9842, thence (due) north to the glaciers’, under the UN-brokered Cease Fire Karachi Agreement of July 1949, reaffirmed under the Suchetgarh Agreement in 1972. The mischief stemmed with the US Defence Mapping Agency, an international cartographic reference agency, unilaterally hardening a Second World War Air Defence Identification Zone (AIDZ) line between 1964 and 1971 or thereabouts, to depict the LOC as running not north but northeast from NJ 9842 to the Karakoram Pass. All international maps followed suit and Pakistan gleefully adopted this as its LOC line. If the LOC is to be the permanent international boundary then it cannot follow the AGPL, a latter-day military ceasefire line, but the line delineated in 1948 and then converted from a military to a political line in 1972 from ‘NJ 9842 thence (due) north to the glaciers’, specifically disallowing any no-man’s land.

To prevent Pakistan from occupying Siachen, were India to redeploy its forces as part of a proposed Siachen settlement, the inverted triangle from KK Pass-NJ 9842-K2 (a little beyond Indira Col, the terminal point of the AGPL) may be converted into an international peace and climate research park without derogation of the two national sovereignties. If China agreed to include Shaksgam (wrongfully ceded to it by Pakistan in 1963) in such a peace park, that would be so much the better.

**Ultimate peace peg, joint management of water**

Another major issue that Pakistan has used in recent years as an alternative focal point to Kashmir is – water. The charge is that India has been circumventing the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) by building a series of “dams” that have reduced flows to Pakistan. This could be used in India’s favour as an instrument of war, by ponding up water to induce drought downstream or opening the floodgates to mire Pakistani tanks and defences in a marsh. These are utterly fanciful ideas and ignore the fact that either course would first cause great damage to India before any harm comes to Pakistan. Jihadi warriors like the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba’s Hafiz Saeed and others have also been harping on the theme that India is clandestinely “stealing” water.

The fact is that hydrological fluctuations in natural flows cannot be blamed on India. Nor is this country as yet fully using its entitlement to either the western or eastern rivers of the Indus basin. The problem essentially lies in Pakistan’s own poor water management and delays in augmenting storages, so much so that Sindh does not get its share of lean season water below the Kotri barrage for flushing the Lower Indus and delta. Pakistan took its objections to India’s Baghlihar project on the Chenab to the ‘neutral expert’ but got no comfort. It has now referred India’s Kishenganga project to a court of arbitrators and has objected to the just completed
Nimmo-Bazgoo run-of-river project on the Indus. Pakistan has also not allowed the proposed Wullar flood retention barrage to the Jhelum to come up, for decades.

India needs Pakistan’s cooperation to build storage to use its 3.60 million acre feet (MAF) entitlement from the three western rivers in J&K. Pakistan in turn has been allocated the remaining waters of the three western rivers but cannot utilise this optimally for storage in the upper reaches which lie in India. The answer lies in Article VII of the IWT that speaks of ‘Future Cooperation’ to secure optimality on either side. This Article would thereby permit both sides to jointly explore, build and manage engineering works and undertake a variety of joint observations and watershed management programs to mutual benefit. Additional storage and power generation on either side of the LOC with respect to the western rivers, namely, the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab, could be shared with Pakistan on an appropriate cost-benefit basis to mutual advantage. Likewise, India would benefit from drainage outlets through Rajasthan-Sindh to the sea.

Dr. Manmohan Singh has hinted at India’s willingness to explore these ideas as a means of making borders “irrelevant” in J&K. Nothing could so comprehensively bind the people on either side of the LOC than such joint management of a critical natural resource. When the dispute over sharing the waters of the Indus first arose after Partition, David Lilienthal, Chairman of the Tennesse Valley Authority (TVA), and the World Bank President, Eugene Black, pleaded with both sides not to partition the waters but to continue managing the Indus irrigation network as originally conceived as a single integrated system. Politics did not permit that to happen in the charged atmosphere of the times. But, ‘Future Cooperation’ under the IWT, whose time has come, could lead the way to renewed and incrementally more extensive water cooperation, not only in J&K but throughout the entire Indus Basin, confronted as it is by the uncertainties and challenges of unremitting climate change.

**Conclusion**

Each step forward in such a cooperative endeavour, including trade and investment, would soften the need for ideological rigidity and obviate the need to use religion to differentiate itself from the ‘other’. The logic of soft borders in J&K will powerfully influence the softening of the rest of the Indo-Pakistan boundary. The two armies will begin to look outwards and reduced defence expenditure will enable the countries to speed development and give a strong fillip to democratic forces. The SAARC will also come into its own in an arc from Afghanistan to, hopefully, Myanmar—opening out to Central Asia/Iran and to ASEAN to forge a powerful and dynamic geo-strategic and economic entity, able to give muscle to the making of an Asian Century.
Partition was bloody and traumatic. Many believed that once passions had subsided, the estranged brothers would come to embrace one another as two, now three, sovereign entities with a deep, rich, shared culture. The time has come for rage to give way to reconciliation. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh account for some 40 per cent of world Islam; a Muslim people who basically still remain liberal and humanist like their forefathers despite efforts to radicalise them. A sense of victimhood and lost glory has driven much of West Asian Islam to fundamentalism. An Indo-Pakistan-Bangladesh rapprochement in South Asia could be a powerful antidote. It is not beyond imagination that by its example and leadership, South Asia could play a redemptive role in the global regeneration of Islamic élan.

A change in Indo-Pakistan relations may well occur sooner than many imagine. It is therefore important to prepare for that day and build a prior consensus on alternative futures that offer Pakistan a way out. To be taken by surprise and be frustrated by internal wrangles on the appropriate response to a real window of opportunity, that might suddenly open, would be unforgiveable.
Kashmir: the Prisoner’s Dilemma for India and Pakistan

Saeed Ahmed Rid

Abstract

In this paper, game theory is applied to the Kashmir conflict to establish that Pakistan and India are locked in a “prisoner’s dilemma” over Kashmir. Individual rationality has pushed both countries to adopt a dominating strategy over Kashmir, leading to several full-fledged and limited wars. However, collective rationality brings about peace as a Pareto-optimal solution under game theory. An attempt has also been made to show how India and Pakistan can mitigate their dilemma by using the strategies meant for mitigating the prisoner’s dilemma in game theory.

Kashmir has been a bone of contention for India and Pakistan since the partition of the sub-continent in 1947. Despite the stalemate having proven costly, the two countries have failed to cooperate. Managing Kashmir militarily has been a huge burden on the economy of both countries and is also one of the biggest hurdles in their economic and social development.

India and Pakistan are caught in a classic “prisoner’s dilemma” situation over Kashmir. Because of their nuclear capability and competitive military strength, they cannot achieve total victory against each other; therefore, they would be better off resolving the Kashmir dispute by mutual cooperation. Yet, they have regularly fought each other. Since independence in 1947, the policy of “relative gains” has pushed the two into a “security dilemma” based on which they have amassed weapons in the name of self-defense. They see each other in a zero-sum relationship where the loss to one side is considered a gain by the other.

This paper is divided into two sections. The first part focuses on how India and Pakistan are caught in a “prisoner’s dilemma” (henceforth PD) over Kashmir.

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The second part deals with how they can mitigate this. An attempt has been made to show how India and Pakistan have learnt to compromise from their previous defections and used a tit-for-tat strategy successfully to play the PD game. The possible role of a constructivist model in mitigating this dilemma over Kashmir has also been studied. Finally, this paper proposes strategies through which the two South Asian neighbors can overcome the prisoner’s dilemma and build sustainable peace in the region.

**Kashmir conflict as a “prisoner’s dilemma” game**

The PD is a game which involves two players with two choices. It addresses that class of situations in which there is a fundamental conflict between what constitutes a rational choice for an individual member of a group and for the group as a whole. The individual is relatively better off adopting the dominating strategy regardless of what the opponent chooses to do. This often leads to a joint defection in the game which results in the Nash equilibrium (war)\(^1\). There also exists in the matrix a Pareto-optimal solution (peace), if both sides cooperate\(^2\). Both players get relatively better pay-off than the Nash equilibrium when they jointly defect. Therefore, the Nash equilibrium is not Pareto-efficient in the PD game; it is in fact Pareto sub-optimal\(^3\). Hence, individual self-interest proves to be simply a trap rather than a sufficient mechanism for group efficiency.

The Kashmir conflict is not a simple inter-state territorial dispute, which involves two clearly defined parties with two choices. Along with India and Pakistan, it involves intra-state and international actors whose role is also very important in the final outcome. The United States, China, freedom fighters, Kashmiri governments in the two parts of Kashmir, and the people of the state are the other stakeholders. Only for the purpose of making a parsimonious argument, this paper does not take the intra-state and international actors into consideration.

Under the rubric of the PD game, India and Pakistan get two choices over the Kashmir question – either to compromise/cooperate or to confront/defect. No matter


what the other side does, defecting yields a higher pay-off than compromising individually. When both parties defect (Nash equilibrium), both do worse rather than when both compromise (Pareto-optimal solution). Herein lies the dilemma.

Their order of preferences is first, to win the whole of Kashmir, second, to fight over it (war), third, agree to a give-and-take or a compromise option (peace) and fourth, to lose the state. For example, if Pakistan decides to compromise unilaterally, India will get two choices: either to compromise as well and agree on a give-and-take option or to defect and push for the whole territory. Obviously, India will be better off defecting and pushing for the whole territory because it considers the whole of Kashmir to be an integral part of the Indian union.

Both India and Pakistan consider they have legitimate claims over Jammu and Kashmir. India’s claim is based on the accession by Dogra ruler Hari Singh and Pakistan’s claim is based on the fact that majority of the population in Kashmir is Muslim. Therefore, winning the whole of Kashmir would be their first preference. The history of wars, military stand-offs, and failed mediation and negotiation attempts corroborate that the government of India and of Pakistan has so far preferred having all of Kashmir to itself over sharing it peacefully.

In another context, if Pakistan decides to defect and push for Kashmir, India again will have two choices: either to compromise unilaterally and give up the whole territory to Pakistan or to defect and fight over Kashmir. Since losing Kashmir is the last preference for India, the country will defect again. In other words, the two states would prefer to fight over Kashmir rather than give it up entirely. In his PhD thesis, Ron E. Hassner has argued that over the years, the Kashmir dispute has become so entrenched in the polity of India and Pakistan that it is no more plausible to think that either of the two would be willing to give up their claim over Kashmir entirely. He wrote, that by 1962, “It was inconceivable that Indian public opinion would tolerate the voluntary surrender of territory in Kashmir.”

The statements of Pakistani leaders also show that surrendering Kashmir is not an option for them. The former Governor General of Pakistan, Ghulam Mohammad once told Nehru, “I may die, but I will never surrender, and the great idea for which I have lived will live forever. We shall never give up Kashmir.” After the failure of

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5 Ibid, 214.

the Agra Summit in July 2001, General Pervez Musharraf remarked in his interactions with the Indian media, “If India expects that I should ignore Kashmir, I better buy back the Neharwali Haveli.” The Haveli is his ancestral home in New Delhi.7

Under the given order of preferences, it pays to defect if you think the other side will defect; it is also better to defect if you think the other side will cooperate. So as a rational actor, in this PD relationship, no matter what Pakistan does, it pays for India to defect. The same logic holds for Pakistan as well. Therefore, whatever India does, it pays for Pakistan to defect.

India and Pakistan would prefer to get the whole of Kashmir than to make peace by sharing it, and would like to fight a war rather than giving up the state entirely to their adversary. Therefore, it pays to make the choice of defection in all possible scenarios, individually, for both of them. The outcome is a permanent war when both parties agree to be negative (Nash equilibrium), even though the matrix contains the possibility of peace which both agree as a positive solution (Pareto-optimal solution). This resulting dilemma is in accordance with the prediction of game theory. (See Figure 1)

Can India and Pakistan mitigate their “prisoner’s dilemma” over Kashmir?

When we study the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir over the last 60-plus years, we observe that on several occasions the two countries had adopted the dominating strategy and involved themselves in direct armed conflict. At times, the strategy of cooperation was adopted, but it could never last long. The euphoria of the Tashkent Declaration (1966), the Shimla Agreement (1972), and the Lahore Declaration (1999) were short-lived and hopes of peace were shattered soon afterwards. Pakistan, holding on to the lesser portion of Kashmir’s territory, has been guilty of adopting the dominating strategy more often than India. India, on its part, with its intransigent stance of ‘borders cannot be redrawn’ and that ‘Kashmir is an integral part of India’ has pushed Pakistan to adopt the dominating strategy to bring some change in the status quo.

Since independence, India and Pakistan have been playing the iterated PD game like chess where “a chess master can safely use the assumption that the other player will make the most feared move” and, therefore, it is better to always adopt a dominating strategy.8 This explains why they have involved themselves so many

times in an armed conflict. But unlike chess, in a PD situation, it is “not safe to assume that the other player is out to get you” since, in the latter, peace provides better pay-off than war.9

So, is cooperation possible?

Kashmir, an unending conflict

What makes it possible for cooperation to emerge is the fact that the players might meet again. This policy means that the choices made today not only determine the outcome of this move, but can also influence the later choices of the players. The future can therefore cast a shadow back upon the present and thereby affect the current strategic situation.10

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9 Ibid, 15.
10 Ibid, 12.
In an unending conflict, players cannot be sure when the last interaction between them will take place. In such a situation, cooperation is quite probable. Kashmir also appears to be an unending conflict. For over 60 years, both India and Pakistan have mostly adopted the defection strategy, playing the PD game as a chess game. However, the realization has recently dawned upon the leadership of India and Pakistan that if they continue fighting over Kashmir in the same manner, it will lead them nowhere. It appears from the developments in the last decade or so that the leadership in both countries has realized that total victory is not possible, even in a distant future and they cannot run away from the dispute either.

During his visit to New Delhi in 2005, the then Pakistani President, General Pervez Musharraf, had claimed that there was a change of attitude in Pakistan. He said,” Domestically (in Pakistan) there is a realization that the military option is not the option any more. The strategy of a coercive diplomacy is no more an option”.11 A similar tone resonated in India. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was reported as saying, “I have often said we can choose our friends, but we have no choice with neighbors. We have to stay engaged despite the difficulties we may face”.12

Kashmir, a non-negotiable game

An essential aspect of the PD paradigm is that the two prisoners are isolated and therefore unable to negotiate, which makes their cooperation very difficult.13 This is exactly what has made cooperation on Kashmir very difficult for the people of India and Pakistan.

Since independence, people in Pakistan and India have been consistently told that they are each other’s enemies. The enemy image is carefully constructed through biased history teaching, hawkish political statements, and negative media hype. Moreover, the two people have been kept so far apart with the help of an extremely rigid visa regime that despite sharing the same cultural roots, they know very little about each other. Stereotypes and prejudices go so deep that people are not even open to the other side of the story.

Sentiments and rhetoric have always been sharp on both sides of the border. Thus, the stakes for the negotiators at the negotiation table also remain high. In such a situation, it is not easy to work out solutions since population on both sides in its

zero-sum relationship considers any concession as a sell-out. Gen. Ayub Khan, the first military ruler of Pakistan, experienced this when he negotiated peace at Tashkent to end the 1965 war with India. He soon lost all control of power in his home country and was compelled by the opposition to resign. Tashkent was one of the major reasons behind his downfall. Similarly, the late Pakistani Prime Minister, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, is still blamed for affirming the bilateral approach to the Kashmir dispute in the Shimla Agreement, 1972.

**Tit-for-tat strategy on Kashmir**

Since the mid-1990s, it has been observed that the neighbors have been following a policy of getting even—a tit-for-tat strategy. When this strategy is at work, the player following it wants to cooperate but defects after each defection of the other player. According to Robert Axelrod, tit-for-tat is the most successful strategy for the “prisoner’s dilemma” game, and many players use this strategy because it pays the highest dividends.14 Axelrod made this observation after conducting several experiments with the PD game for his book *The Evolution of Cooperation*. It pays off because in such a situation, players do not know how the other side will behave. Adopting the dominating strategy does not always pay as there also exists in the matrix a Pareto-optimal solution (peace) which pays relatively better than the Pareto-sub-optimal or Nash equilibrium (war) solution. The tit-for-tat policy teaches the other side a lesson that every defection on a present move would be met by a defection in the next move.

In 1997, an unprecedented personal relationship was established between then Prime Ministers I. K. Gujral of India and Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan. For the first time, a hotline between the Prime Ministers of the two countries was established after the Male summit in 1997 and the proposal for the bus service between Lahore and New Delhi was approved. But the minority government of Gujral could not survive long and BJP leader Atal Behari Vajpayee replaced him. In May 1998, the Vajpayee government conducted nuclear tests, which had an adverse effect on bilateral relations. In a tit-for-tat reaction, Nawaz Sharif gave the orders for nuclear tests to be conducted a few days later. This was the first defection which was reciprocated with a tit-for-tat action.

A year later in 1999, Vajpayee travelled to Lahore to inaugurate the Delhi-Lahore bus service, the peace effort being termed “bus diplomacy”. In Lahore, he signed

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13 Lumsden, op.cit., 15.
14 Axelrod, op.cit., 27-53.
the historic Lahore Declaration that contained the composite dialogue framework to resolve all outstanding issues between India and Pakistan. He was the first Indian Prime Minister who made a clear statement on the soil of Pakistan that a secure, stable, and prosperous Pakistan was in India’s interest. His visit to the Minar-e-Pakistan served to demonstrate India’s commitment to Pakistan’s legitimacy.

Soon after came another defection—this time from the Pakistani side. Allegedly, Pakistan’s military helped Kashmiri mujahideen (freedom fighters) to occupy the strategic Kargil mountain range on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC). India responded and the war over Kargil started in May 1999, which alarmed the whole world, especially in the backdrop of the two countries possessing nuclear weapons. In a tit-for-tat reaction, India cut all ties with Pakistan. After the military coup in Pakistan on 12 October 1999, India refused to conduct any business with the Musharraf government, blaming him personally for the Kargil episode.

The Musharraf-Vajpayee Agra summit in July 2001 failed to break the ice and the situation worsened after the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament on 13 December 2001. In April-May 2003, there was a thaw in relations followed by a new peace initiative in October 2003 from Vajpayee in the shape of an offer of 12 CBMs. Since then, the peace process has continued, despite being derailed twice for some duration because of the terrorist attacks in 2006 and 2008.

After the rounds of tit-for-tat responses adopted by the leadership of India and Pakistan, there is now a growing realization on both sides that “the other” will respond in kind and that they cannot get away with even a minor defection. This has made both sides extra cautious in their approach. Despite the differences and disagreements in their negotiations, both sides have tried to continue the peace process and keep the doors of communication open—when not possible through track one, then through trade and multi-track diplomacy.

**Modifying the structure of the matrix**

The level of cooperation can also be increased by enhancing the relative value of the joint-cooperative outcome or by decreasing the value of the joint competitive outcome to the extent that it becomes the lowest pay-off.\(^{15}\)

Converting peace into a superordinate goal has sometimes been proposed in the context of international conflicts, usually in the form of a big offer. In the context of the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir, such a modification in the matrix can take place as well. The greater economic integration of SAARC on the European Union model can also increase the value of the joint-cooperative outcome for India
and Pakistan. An increase in trade will not only benefit the two countries immensely, it will also create a stake in a cooperative relationship, which can serve as the basis for long-term friendship between the two countries. Some of the developments in 2012 have even raised such hopes as Pakistan has finally granted India the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status and a series of trade agreements between India and Pakistan have been signed.

Furthermore, Pakistan can connect India to the oil rich Caspian basin through Afghanistan, if the two countries can settle their political differences. The Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline, also known as the peace pipeline, could be the first major peace dividend, if it materializes. The economic integration and popular support behind the peace process could create a stake that would push the leadership of India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute on the basis of a compromise.

Furthermore, the value of the joint competitive outcome is nothing in real monetary terms if India and Pakistan continue using the dominating strategy. They will get no benefit on Kashmir; rather, they would keep paying the heavy price for defense. In 2004, a report prepared by the Mumbai-based Strategic Foresight Group of the International Center for Peace Initiatives showed that Pakistan had incurred an equal amount of expenditure on military and development (3.8 per cent of GDP), while India was spending 2.7 per cent of GDP on the military and 6.2 per cent on development. The same report also claimed that the Siachen conflict alone would cost India Rs. 72 billion and Pakistan Rs. 18 billion in the next five years.16

However, if India and Pakistan could agree on a give-and-take formula – with India retaining the Jammu and Ladakh regions; Pakistan the Northern Areas of Gilgit and Baltistan; and the two jointly managing the Kashmir Valley (the contentious part) — both would benefit. Moreover, the revenue that would be generated from tourism in Kashmir would help in the overall development of the erstwhile princely state.

**Constructivism and multi-track diplomacy can make Kashmir negotiable**

The problem lies at the very root of the idea that Kashmir is a territorial dispute which can be exclusively settled with a binding treaty, either through bilateral talks or through third party intervention. We have a long history of failures of this top-

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15 Lumsden, op.cit.,16-17.
down approach which ignores the intended and unintended entrenchment of a social conflict in the two contending communities. This approach ignores the fact that the very structure of the two parties is embedded in a pattern of conflictual relationships. Until we deconstruct the big hostile picture which paints the “enemy image” for the “other side”, there is little chance of durable peace.

This is why John Paul Lederach, the chief proponent of conflict transformation, does not advocate directly going in for a “quick solution”\textsuperscript{17}. He says that once social conflict occurs, over time it changes (that is, transforms) the events, people, and relationships that created the initial conflict. To achieve sustainable peace, an approach which “seeks to create a framework to address the content, the context and the structure of the relationship” is needed.\textsuperscript{18} This is where constructivism and conflict transformation approaches can work and may help in making the Kashmir conflict negotiable. On the one hand, constructivists challenge the socially constructed stereotypes and prejudices, and on the other, conflict transformation engages with and transforms “the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of the society that supports the continuation of violent conflict.”\textsuperscript{19}

The removal of bias and stereotypes would be the key to improving relations between India and Pakistan. The noted Indian journalist and peace activist, Kuldeep Nayar, wrote in \textit{Dawn} on 18 December 2004, “I see the same fires of prejudice burning in the two countries. Misinformation, misunderstanding or misinterpretation of religion is grist to the hatred mill which is working all the time……Kashmir is a symptom. The disease is bias.” The constructivist approach can be used to deconstruct the enemy images, belligerent identities, and cure the disease of bias. Emanuel Adler explained this concept in these words, “the human capacity for reflection or learning has its greatest impact on the manner in which individuals and social actors attach meaning to the material world and cognitively frame the world they know, experience, and understand.”\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{17} John Paul Lederach, \textit{The Little Book of Conflict Transformation} (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003), 12.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{20} Emanuel Adler, \textit{Communitarian International Relations: The Epistemic Foundations of International Relations} (Oxen: Routledge, 2005), 90.
To make Kashmir negotiable, these community memories, stereotypes, and religious biases have to be challenged through increased interaction and communication between the two communities, and that implied ideology which is responsible for making Kashmir non-negotiable has to be changed for good. The separation of the Kashmir dispute from the nationalist ideologies of India and Pakistan would be key to resolving this “prisoner’s dilemma” situation because compromise on territory can be worked out, but compromise on national identity—Islamic or Secular, is considered sacrosanct.

The constructivist approach in International Relations argues that international reality is socially constructed by cognitive structures that give meaning to the material world. If ideas, images, and identity, are socially constructed and are not a given feature, then they could be changed and re-constructed as well. Track two engagement, multi-track diplomacy, and confidence building measures (CBMs) have a major role to play in this reconstruction process. The term “track two” was coined by Joseph Montville in 1982 to describe non-official contacts between conflicting parties. Former US ambassador John McDonald along with peace scholar Louise Diamond expanded this formulation to include nine tracks—government, conflict-resolution professionals, business, private citizens, learning (research, training, and education), advocacy, religion, funding, and the media.21 Together, they founded the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy (IMTD) in 1992 to support multi-track peacebuilding efforts.

Such unofficial contacts between opposing sides are valuable in de-escalating conflict before any meaningful official negotiations are politically feasible. These contacts can build bridges between people, increase trust, and foster mutual understanding. They can serve to correct misperceptions and unfounded fears, and can reverse the trend towards dehumanization and the entrenchment of enemy images that often occurs in escalated conflicts.

Multi-track diplomacy processes between India and Pakistan, which gained momentum at the turn of the Century need to be made more comprehensive, systematic, and stable. All sections of society in the two countries need to participate more actively. There is also a need to institutionalize this process and make it independent of the whims of the two governments. Civil society and the intelligentsia on both sides of the border have to come forward and create stronger bonds so that a friendly atmosphere can be sustained even at times of tension when the governments are at loggerheads with each other. Trade, research, academia, music, film, art, literature, and media links can play a constructive role in removing stereotypes and prejudices within the two societies. A longer period of normalization with soft visa

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policies accompanied by strong cultural, social, and political exchanges will go a long way.

However, it would be naïve to expect that increased people-to-people contact will make people give up on the Kashmir issue. Rather, it will prepare them to start listening to the other side of the story and start thinking beyond the “integral part” and “jugular vein” rhetoric. It can be hoped that sustained people-to-people contact will prepare public opinion to give concessions to the “other side”, which are necessary to arrive at an amicable solution for the Kashmir conflict.

Conclusion

A theory which involves only two players and two choices cannot provide a comprehensive picture of international conflicts in today’s globalized world where every conflict has its local, national, regional, and international dimensions. The Kashmiri people and their leadership are undoubtedly very important players and cannot be excluded from the matrix of the game. However, this simplification and exclusion strategy provides a helpful mechanism to understand an important angle of the Kashmir conflict, that is, Kashmir as an India-Pakistan territorial dispute. An analysis of the “prisoner’s dilemma” facilitates an understanding of the logic behind the adoption of a dominating strategy by India and Pakistan since independence on the basis of individual rationality. More importantly, it offers ground for peace as a Pareto-optimal solution. For this to work, though, both parties will have to abandon their conservative dominating strategy for good and adopt the more risky cooperative strategy.

Multi-track processes of peacebuilding need to continue for a longer period of time, and without any break, in order to generate an atmosphere of trust and reduce misperceptions between the peoples of India and Pakistan. A greater degree of communication and increased people-to-people contact would be required to help in mitigating the “prisoner’s dilemma” complex. The path of peace may be very risky and cumbersome, but in a situation where total war is no more an option, the Pareto-optimal solution of peace is the only logical option left for India and Pakistan.

Select Bibliography


Indo-Pak Water Disputes: Time for Fresh Approaches

Manish Vaid & Tridivesh Singh Maini

Abstract

This paper aims to examine the extended disagreements between India and Pakistan over sharing of the Indus waters and its tributaries from a fresh perspective. It provides a brief overview of the water dispute between India and Pakistan and some of the policy failures which have led to the water crisis, especially in Pakistan. It suggests innovative ways to deal with this vexed issue through greater cooperation between agricultural universities and frequent interactions between farmers of the two countries. The paper also emphasizes that the dispute should be dealt with using a non-technical approach and a NTS (Non Traditional Security) perspective.

Introduction

The twentieth century British poet WH Auden, once said, ”Thousands have lived without love, not one without water.” His words are especially relevant in the context of South Asia, which is home to more than a fifth of the world’s population and where the economies are largely dependent upon agriculture.

Unfortunately, South Asian countries, particularly India and Pakistan, have both faced challenges in water management and proper river basin management. The consequence of this has been a severe water crisis, which has a bearing on both ground and surface water. A cursory glance at the data on fresh water availability per person, per year reveals this vulnerability. South Asia’s renewable freshwater resources are about 1,200 cubic meters per capita. In comparison, a large number of
countries have between 2,500–15,000 cubic meters per capita. Some like Canada and Norway have over 70,000 cubic meters per capita.¹

The difficulties in managing surface water are especially complex in South Asia. River basins—the ultimate source of all water used in households, agriculture and industry (like hydropower companies), as well as the receptors of most waste water²—often transgress international borders. Since actions upstream can lead to disruption of the natural flow of rivers, water pollution, diversion of the waters with the occasional threat of even blocking the flow of water, water sharing can often lead to political tensions and acrimony, as has happened in the case of India and Pakistan. The lower riparian countries become especially vulnerable. Effective river basin management therefore necessitates that water users take into account the relationships, interaction and impact that their actions have on others, especially those downstream.

**Indo-Pak water dispute: The origins**

The Indo-Pak dispute on the Indus basin has drawn immense attention in South Asia and across the world, largely due to the nature of the tense political relationship between the two countries. This attention has grown more intense in recent years, in the aftermath of the Mumbai attacks on 26 November 2008, which had kindled fears of a nuclear war. Analysts began exploring, not only the sources of the tension between the two nuclear states but also areas which had the potential for increased cooperation and thereby reduce the possibility of a war at any point in the future. Water is one such area, especially the Indus basin.

The system of rivers in the Indus basin comprises 2,000 miles of the river Indus and its five tributaries from the East — Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej, with an aggregate length of 2,800 miles.³ Most of the upper reaches of the Indus basin lie in India. All these rivers combine in Mithankot in Pakistan and flow into the Arabian Sea near Karachi.

The Indus system of rivers has been used for irrigation ever since civilization took root in the area. The water disputes too date back to the pre-partition era, when

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2 Ibid.

there were significant inter-state differences between Punjab, Sind, Bahawalpur and Bikaner. After Pakistan was created in 1947, this inter-state dispute amongst the four states became an international water dispute between the two newly formed nation states. The issues around water sharing were now between West Punjab of Pakistan and East Punjab of India. Lands on the West (which are today part of Pakistan) are fertile and the British, wanting to take advantage of the fact, developed the Indus Basin irrigation system. On the other hand, the land in Haryana and the East Punjab (which is today part of India) was not considered particularly fertile. At the time of Partition, Sir Cyril Radcliffe, who was entrusted with the task of boundary demarcation, drew a line across the Indus, dividing not just the land, but the waters and the integrated Indus canal system. Thus, at Independence, the newly formed states had the onerous responsibility of finding a proper mechanism to share and jointly manage the irrigation system for the future.

Over the years, India built its irrigation system which could serve the needs of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. On the other side, the fact that the source of the rivers of the Indus basin were in India resulted in fear of droughts and famine in Pakistan. In fact, until the signing of the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) in Karachi on 19 September 1960, significant disagreements persisted between the two countries. To quote a defining example, although the Inter-Dominion Conference was held in May 1948, and an agreement between the two countries was signed, wherein India assured Pakistan of not withdrawing water delivery, without allowing time for Pakistan to develop alternate sources, Pakistan communicated its dissatisfaction with the ground situation. On 16 June 1949, Pakistan sent a note to India which called for a conference to resolve the “equitable apportionment of all common water” and suggested giving the World Court jurisdiction on the application of either party. But India categorically objected to third party involvement and instead suggested that judges from each side be allowed to narrow the disputes first.

In August 1951, Eugene Black, President of the World Bank, invited prime ministers of both the countries to Washington and they finally agreed on an outline of essential

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6 Although the development of irrigation system on the Indian side did not cause water scarcity in Pakistan, the Partition created mistrust and suspicion came to determine the perceptions about water security on the Pakistan side.
7 Arora, op. cit., 63.
principles and arrived at a common understanding that neither side will reduce the river water supplies for existing uses.\(^8\)

The World Bank then came out with its own proposal which suggested division of the western tributaries to Pakistan, and the eastern tributaries to India, besides a proposal of continued deliveries to Pakistan during transition period of ten years.\(^9\) India accepted the proposal while Pakistan gave its qualified acceptance on March 25, 1954. Later when the World Bank arranged an international Indus Basin Development Fund and raised $893 million, the Indus Water Treaty was finally signed by both the countries on 19 September 1960.\(^10\) The World Bank effectively brokered a settlement on the dispute arising out of water sharing of Indus River and it continues to play a significant role whenever the two countries are unable to resolve issues bilaterally in this area.

**Factors leading to the Indus Water Treaty**

Under the Treaty, India was given an exclusive right of three eastern rivers – Sutlej, Beas and Ravi, while Pakistan was given the right of three western rivers – Indus, Chenab and Jhelum. The tributaries of these rivers are also considered their part under the treaty.\(^11\) One school of thought believes that the treaty has been a success. B.G. Verghese, senior Indian journalist, and one of the key proponents of this argument states that,

> The Treaty has worked well and withstood wars and tensions, though some on both sides feel it is unfair to them. However, the fact is that the IWT enabled both sides to get on with the responsibility of settling refugees following the Partition and lay the foundations for the Green Revolution that followed. Pakistan built Tarbela and Mangla and India Bhakra-Nangal and Pong.\(^12\)

Pakistan has important reservations on the treaty.

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\(^8\) Ibid, 64.
\(^9\) Ibid. 65
\(^10\) Ibid. 66.
\(^11\) Verghese, op.cit.
\(^12\) Ibid.
Pakistani apprehensions on the IWT

In Pakistan, some political leaders, certain sections of the Pakistani press and militant groups have made water sharing an emotive issue. The argument that IWT is a success has not convinced them and they emphasize that Pakistan is the lower riparian and a predominantly agrarian economy and voice fears that India can block Pakistan’s rightful water share by building dams. An important concern expressed by some analysts in Pakistan in this regard is that while the Treaty includes provisions on a minimum supply of water, it does not address the question of the distribution of water and neither does it foresee demographic developments within each country which change the demand for water. Therefore, while it protected usage at the time, it did not safeguard each country’s interest in the future since it did not take into consideration the increase or decrease in requirements that may occur. However, most of the disputes that have arisen between the two countries whether on Baglihar, Kishanganga or Wullar barrage have involved the issue of flow to the lower riparian.

In 2010, Pakistan lodged a complaint with The Hague’s Permanent Court of Arbitration (CoA) on India’s plans to build a dam on the Kishangangariver (Neelum in Pakistan), as part of a run-of-the-river hydroelectric project, claiming that it was a violation of the Treaty. Pakistan is building the Neelum-Jhelum hydroelectric project downstream. In 2011, after visiting both projects, the CoA put a stay order that prevented India from constructing a permanent structure which could affect the flow of water downstream to Pakistan. Recently on September 1, 2012, CoA concluded a two-week hearing, the verdict of which is expected within a period of six months. Importantly, the Pakistan press reported that India was set to receive $700 million as carbon credits for ten years against seven hydropower projects built on Pakistan’s share of rivers under the IWT – the Indus, Chenab and Jhelum. This raised fears in Pakistan that it might grant legitimacy to projects such as the Kishanganga on the Indian side.

Notably, the earlier disputed projects too were related to the construction of dams. One was the construction of Salal Dam on the Chenab in 1978, the first ever dispute

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after the signing of IWT, the other being the Wullar Barrage / Tulbul Navigation Project which began in 1987. While the resolution of Salal Dam dispute is considered as a case of successful water conflict resolution between India and Pakistan, the Tulbul navigation project on the Jhelum still remains unresolved. Yet another dispute was related to Baglihar Dam on the Chenab River, which was resolved only after a neutral expert from the World Bank was appointed. In his verdict of February 12, 2007, the arbitrator accepted some of the objections raised by Pakistan relating to the design of the dam, diversion of water and power generation scheme. The decision was largely perceived as a balanced one.

The fear of water deprivation has become a major source of bilateral dispute. In the recent past, India’s Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has cited evidence to show that certain sections of Pakistan’s polity have been falsely stating that New Delhi is deliberately depriving Islamabad of its share of water guaranteed under the Indus Water Treaty, and is bent upon destroying Pakistan’s agrarian economy. The militant fringe in Pakistan’s polity took up the Indus waters as a ‘lifeline’ issue in 2009-10, when Lashkar-e-Tayyeba chief Hafiz Saeed, paraded the streets of Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot, Lahore and Faisalabad with placards saying, “Water must flow or else blood will flow”.

Amidst such statements, there were many voices of sanity in Pakistan. Significantly, the same MEA document points out that there are many voices in the Pakistani establishment who have unequivocally stated that India is not violating the IWT in anyway and that water shortages in Pakistan are a result of domestic policy failures and not some sinister Indian strategy. The document, while citing Indus Water Commissioner Sayyed Jamaat Ali Shah, states that many Pakistan officials themselves agree that all hydro-electric projects built by India are in total conformity with the IWT, and have only been initiated after obtaining necessary permissions.

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17 Ibid.


19 Verghese, op.cit.

In a counter to Saeed’s argument, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, a former foreign minister of Pakistan, has clearly stated that India was not stealing water. Rather, Pakistan was wasting thirty-five million acre feet (MAF) of water, and if there were seasonal variations this was only because of the natural hydrological cycle.21 Qureshi’s argument is validated when one examines the real reasons for Pakistan’s water crisis.

**Reasons for the water crisis in Pakistan**

According to Pakistan’s *Economic Survey* (2011-12), the agrarian economy is heavily dependent on river water provided by melting glaciers.22 The survey also highlighted that during the period 2011-12, the availability of water for both *kharif* and *rabi crops* was respectively 10 percent and 19.2 percentless than normal.23 Also water availability for Rabi crop was 15 percentless than 2010-11 (see Table 1).

This *Economic Survey* also highlighted the excessive wastage of water from the irrigation system due to the improper lining of waterways. As a consequence, the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors were adversely affected. According to the World Bank and Needs Assessment Report, 2011, the total damages caused to these sectors were $1,840 million while reconstruction costs were estimated to be about $305.6 million. Damages to agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors accounted for 49.33 percent of total damages of all the sectors during that period.24

Pakistan has one of the world’s largest glacial reserves in the Karakoram-Hindukush-Himalaya ranges supplying fresh water to the Indus River System, the world’s largest irrigation system.25 Fears of this supply getting affected by climate change have been voiced since the 1990s. With global average temperatures rising, it was feared that glaciers would be melting at an alarming rate. However, a separate study found that Karakoram glaciers and ice caps, as a whole, were losing mass less quickly than once feared, offering some respite to the effected region.26 This fact was noted by the National Plan of Pakistan 2012-13.

21 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid, 238.
26 Ibid.
The same National Plan mentioned that the Integrated Irrigation Network of Indus Basin is under serious threat of water logging, hydro-salinity, adverse effects of pollution and contamination of surface and ground water. Consequently, the Plan suggests that an overall environmental management plan and process for approval and implementation be put in place.27 Hence, one can infer that more than anything else, it is inadequate water policies and loopholes in the regulations for management of water systems, that are acknowledged as the causes of the water crisis in Pakistan. Its impacts on various sectors including agriculture and allied activities have also been documented.

### Table 1: Actual surface water availability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Kharif (MAF)</th>
<th>Rabi (MAF)</th>
<th>Total (MAF)</th>
<th>Increase/Decrease (%) Over the average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average System Used</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>103.5</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>-5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>-20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>100.9</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>-8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>-4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>-11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>-10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>-15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>-13.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: MAF – million acre feet
Source: Indus River System Authority, Economic Survey of Pakistan 2011-12

The Pakistan Economic Survey 2010-11, categorically acknowledges that water related issues are a serious threat in Pakistan. It states that, ‘the existing water resources in the country are under threat due to untreated discharge of municipal and industrial wastes to rivers and other surface water bodies. The majority of the

27 Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency, Islamabad, Ministry of Climate Change as stated in Planning Commission of Pakistan’s Annual Plan 2012-13.
population of Pakistan is exposed to the hazard of unsafe and polluted drinking water.’ These issues are testimony to the limitations of existing water management policies and regulations in Pakistan.

**Water Crisis in India**

Like Pakistan, India too faces acute water shortage. This has been stated in various government documents, including the Draft Water Policy of India-2012, which listed several causes of the precarious water situation in India. The policy document states that water stress in large parts of India can be attributed to population growth, urbanization and changing lifestyles, improper addressing of water governance, mismanagement of water resources, and the threat of climate change. Many of these are also leading to salinity of both groundwater and surface water.

Interestingly, it also highlights that while multi-disciplinary water resources projects are planned and implemented, they suffer from problems of fragmentation and ignore optimum utilization, environmental sustainability and holistic benefits to the people. These issues, besides others raised in this draft make many of the earlier National Water Policies inconsequential.

When we move from the broader national scenario and look specifically at water quality of Indus basin on the Indian side, we find that several studies have been conducted to test the quality of water. One such physico-chemical water quality analysis was conducted in Harike Wetland, a site at the confluence of the two rivers—Sutlej and Beas. The study revealed the deterioration in water quality towards Sutlej River resulting from untreated effluents and municipal wastes from townships and industries situated on its banks. A gradual increase in temperature, Electrolytic Conductivity, high proportion of Total Dissolved Solids, Alkalinity, Hardness, High levels of Calcium and Magnesium were observed in Harike waters. Thus, both long-term water security in the region and more immediate local concerns, offer compelling reasons for India and Pakistan to cooperate.

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30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.
Room for cooperation between both countries

As aforementioned, there have been many concerns raised by Pakistan on Indus Water Treaty and there is room for further negotiations. Citing Article XII of IWT, B.G. Verghese, an India based expert on water issues, has proposed Indus II that will be largely based on the foundation of Indus I. Some on the Pakistan side, like F.S. Ajazuddin, have articulated that the conflict is too important to be left to the two commissioners to discuss and refer to an arbitrator (in this case the Word Bank). He proposes the setting up a Joint Commission, whose structure is based on the belief that water resources are a common asset and that neither country owns them. Each country should see itself as a trustee of the resource for future generations. Rather than having two Commissioners from each country sit across the table and negotiate, the Joint Commission will be different in the sense that it would function as one body looking at the interests of both Pakistan and India.

But the crux of the matter is beyond this Treaty and is the water crisis faced by both the countries. The crisis cannot be attributed to any provisions of the IWT but is largely related to the mismanagement of water resources in general by each country and Indus River Basin in particular. Both these countries found themselves in such a crisis due to common factors like population growth, urbanization and ineffective polices dealing with these factors in order to tackle the water crisis. The fear of the melting glaciers of the Himalayas is adding to the woes of the existing water stress.

Therefore, at the first instance what these countries need is, to deal with their current water management problems and then create spaces for cooperation wherever possible, including those that can help deal with climate change. Thinking of Indus II or even abrogation of the same cannot guarantee any solution to the existing water crisis these two countries are trapped in.

The first step by each country should be to recognize the water problems of not only its own people but those of its neighbor, for the simple reason that these issues transcend national territories or borders drawn by states. Action or inaction of either country would impact the situation in the other country and more so in Pakistan, which is a lower riparian country. Even if the existing treaty were to be abrogated, Pakistan will still continue to have normal lower riparian rights over the rivers flowing into its territory under international law.

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32 Article XII proposes that the Treaty can be modified by another treaty. See Verghese, op.cit.
The next step would be for India to allay Pakistan’s fears with regard to the Indus Treaty. In April 2012, India’s Indus Water Commissioner G. Aranganathan, speaking to *Time*, had clarified that “there was no question of interrupting or reducing Pakistan’s water supply”. He had said that India was not preventing the flow of water to Pakistan. After filling the reservoirs in the initial stages—of the Tulbul navigation project on the Jhelum—the waters would only be used for running the turbines. Such clarifications can build confidence and it is important for India to continue to take further steps to address Pakistani concerns.

Pakistan on its part must acknowledge that the Indus Treaty is an example of successful conflict resolution between the two rival countries, which have otherwise fought three wars after independence and have locked horns on various issues over the years. Therefore, it is time that both countries end their shrill and clichéd stances that restrict fresh approaches in dealing with challenges as existential as water scarcity.

Building on the stability of the IWT both nations should go beyond just conflict resolution over Indus water sharing and develop partnerships in the water sector by setting up institutional mechanisms and building joint capacity to tackle the water problem.

The current institutional mechanism in the two countries is similar in many respects and it will not be difficult to bring the relevant levels of administration to partner with their counterparts in the other country. Both Central and State Governments in these countries have been entrusted with the responsibilities of development, conservation and management of water. Like India, it is the Federal Government in Pakistan which is responsible for the overall policy formulation in this area. Besides, it provides technical assistance to the states/provinces on irrigation, multipurpose projects, groundwater exploitation and exploration, flood control, water logging and so on. Furthermore it is the State/provincial Government which has the responsibility of using and controlling this precious resource.

A partnership between the governments of two Punjabs can go a long way in ensuring that the common problems are viewed from a holistic perspective and not from a standpoint of suspicion and uncertainty. While this may seem like a difficult proposal to push, given the history of the bitter and violent partition along this part of the

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35 Ministry of Water Resources, op. cit.
border, the fact also remains that the two Punjabs share common climatic conditions, similar water management practices, non-stringent water policies and water intensive crop cultivation. Once both sides come to an agreement that they could each benefit from the others’ innovations and practices in dealing with water scarcity; and are transparent about developments, this process can become a template for cooperation in other areas of mutual interest.

The improved bilateral relations in recent months provide an opportune moment for this cooperation to take shape. Addressing the water management issues in the Indus river basin on both sides of the border can improve the status of water availability and water quality\(^\text{36}\) in both countries and bring India and Pakistan closer to achieving the MDGs. At a political level, the water issue is important for the politically dominant province of Pakistani Punjab and finding synergies may be a way of reaching out to those sections of the population who have apprehensions with regard to India’s stand on water and are in some senses the driving force behind the continuing hostility. By driving home the point that policy failures and not India is responsible for the water crisis,\(^\text{37}\) Pakistan can begin to concretely address its water security problem.

The purely technical and juridical aspects of the water issue can be augmented by focusing also on greater interaction and enhanced dialogue between important stakeholders on both sides, some of whom include farmers, researchers and students of various water and agricultural universities. Some of the possible areas of cooperation are discussed below.

**Conducting joint studies on receding glaciers by both countries**

Various independent studies have been conducted on receding Himalayan glaciers by agencies worldwide. Appreciating the source of the problem, both the countries could cooperate on conducting research on the specific impacts of the receding glaciers. This would help these countries to come up with solutions on River Basin Management, instead of harping on the provisions in the treaty itself. Once the fundamental problem of water stress is taken care of through joint efforts, the problems in the Treaty will become immaterial.


\(^{37}\) Ibid. Also see T.S.Maini, “Indo-Pak water issues: Room for cooperation,” *The Daily Times*, July 26, 2011
Greater interactions between farmers groups of both countries

On 7-8 May 2012, when a business delegation from India visited Lahore to participate in the second Amanki Asha Indo-Pak Economic Conference, the idea of exporting farm produce to Pakistan was seriously discussed. One of the farmers, Rattan Singh Randhawa, who was part of the Indian delegation, echoed the sentiments of many when he said that: “In a village only those neighbors, who exchange household goods or farm equipment with each other, have good relations. It is the same with nations.” Frequent interactions of a similar nature will thus not only strengthen Indo-Pak trade ties, but also give a fillip to cooperation between the agricultural sectors of both countries. Further, if there are more exchanges for farmers of both countries such as those facilitated by the Two Punjab Centre which is part of the Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID) Chandigarh and Aman Ki Asha, it would contribute towards improved relations in other areas as farmers can more easily arrive at consensus on shared issues and problems.

Finding common ground in combating desertification

India and Pakistan can also join hands for fighting environmental degradation in their shared desert region along the border. Desertification can easily lead to agricultural losses resulting in food shortages. This phenomenon is already visible in both India and Pakistan. With collaboration, both countries can protect agricultural lands vulnerable to desertification through water conservation measures and modern irrigation techniques. Both countries have already shown interest in protecting communities and farming operations that lie on the desert’s fringes. For example in the case of Pakistan, a collaborative project between Pakistan’s Integrated Rural Awareness and Development Organization and the One-UN Joint Program on Environment aims to build check dams, rehabilitate ponds in the area of Nagar

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39 Ibid.


42 Ibid.
Parkar, and construct earthen embankments to help store water and promote conservation. Similarly, in Rajasthan’s Churu district, the Bhoruka Charitable Trust, an Indian NGO, is encouraging villagers to build and renovate water tanks, ponds, and dug-wells to preserve potable water. Efforts of both countries in the Thar Desert can be shared as best practices and this sharing could go a long way as a confidence building measure.

Effectively utilizing the SAARC platform

There should be more emphasis towards greater interaction and cooperation within South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries on issues like water management and agricultural growth. The SAARC, from its very inception has focused on regional cooperation in the spheres of agriculture and rural development. The Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (TC-ARD) conducted a number of meetings on the application of statistics on agricultural research, exchange of scientific and technical information and so on. It has also deliberated on various demand-driven areas such as ‘Water Resources Management’ and ‘Water for Agriculture’ in SAARC countries. More concerted action in these areas using the space provided by the regional body can contribute to improving bilateral relations.

Greater collaboration between the two Punjabs

In this context, a substantial start could be made by accelerating cooperation between the two Punjabs. The two Punjabs share a similar culture and face similar problems. They can be a good starting point for collaboration on the problem of water shortage. The two premier agricultural institutions of the region, the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana and the University of Faisalabad in Punjab province of Pakistan can collaborate. Training can be provided to Pakistani students on understanding the hydrological data, water management techniques, restoration of water bodies, watershed management practices, and improving the quality of groundwater, and restoring the water tables through rainwater harvesting. The two countries can learn from each other in the policy sphere as well. “For example in 2009, India promulgated the Sub-Soil Water Preservation Act and discouraged its farmers from planting a nursery before 10 May and sowing before 10 June each year, thus bringing down

43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
the irrigational requirements of canal water and maximizing the use of monsoon rains. This actually helped in raising water levels in the Indian Punjab”.46 Such knowledge can easily be disseminated between farmers across the border. There is limited awareness in India about the innovative techniques being used by the farmers in Pakistan, however, we believe that similar knowledge can be offered by them to the Indian side as well.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is imperative for the political leadership, civil society and other important stakeholders in the water issue to exhibit confidence, to counter propaganda and ensure that both countries deal with the challenges posed by the water crises in the region jointly. They must refrain from pointing fingers at each other. The challenges posed by water scarcity should unite the two countries and not divide them and cause hostility.

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Exchange for Change:  
A Study of Micro-level Conflict Resolution Initiatives between Pakistani and Indian School Students

Anam Zakaria

Abstract

The past 65 years of Pakistan and India’s history have been plagued with wars, hostile visa policies and minimal people-to-people contact. Sources of information about the ‘other’ for a large section of the population have been limited to Bollywood and news channels, resulting in stereotypical views and misconceptions on both sides. Amidst strained relations, The Citizens Archive of Pakistan (CAP) in collaboration with Routes2Roots (R2R) reached out to thousands of students across the border to engage them in a sustained dialogue through the Exchange-for-Change (EFC) Program. Here, the author shares field experiences of working with schools in Pakistan and India over the past two years, highlighting the challenges faced and the successes achieved by micro-level initiatives.

I was introduced to Exchange-for-Change (EFC) program the very first day I stepped into The Citizens Archive of Pakistan’s (CAP) office for my training. Over the next two years, it was to become one of CAP’s leading projects and one that challenged my own sensibilities, introducing me to an alternate identity and narrative. EFC, as the name suggests, started off as a novel pilot project attempting to initiate cross-border communication channels between the youth of Pakistan and India. As a cultural and educational exchange program, it sought to be the first step towards

*Disclaimer: All statistical data and information cited in this document has been provided as a courtesy of The Citizens Archive of Pakistan and Routes2Roots but the views expressed are those of the author. The author and WISCOMP acknowledge the generosity of the two organizations. The author takes responsibility for any errors and omissions in interpretation.

Anam Zakaria works as Director Lahore & Islamabad at The Citizens Archive of Pakistan, spearheading the Exchange-for-Change program between Pakistan - India and Pakistan - USA. She has a degree in International Development from McGill University, focusing on policies and practices for developing countries. With a keen interest in Pakistan and India relations, she is currently writing a travelogue on the four generations of Pakistanis and Indians, tracing their interactions and ‘crossing over’ experiences with the other side.
bringing change and addressing the inter generational conflict, deeply rooted in these countries’ relations. CAP, an organization which holds its expertise in heritage and culture preservation as well as developing educational tools and programs, collaborated with a Delhi based cultural non-profit organization, Routes2Roots (R2R), for this initiative. Over the years, R2R has focused on connecting people across borders, especially those in Pakistan and India, two countries that share a history and culture, and presently a geography that binds them together. Both organizations, although miles apart, felt strongly about the need to initiate dialogue between the two countries—not through the government, but through the people, especially the young minds, which are rapidly forming opinions informed by biased curriculum, media and the violent partition narrative entrenched in the very fabric of the society.

The project was launched in December 2010 and over the next sixteen months, 2500 students in Karachi, Lahore, Delhi and Mumbai, engaged in a sustained dialogue through exchange of letters, photographs and oral histories. These children belonged to different income groups, schools ranging from low-income, middle-income to high-income on both sides of the border. At the end of the project, CAP and R2R also arranged for a small nineteen member delegation comprising of teachers, students and organization members to cross over the Wagah Border for a week-long visit to Delhi and Lahore. The project was so successful that requests for other such initiatives began to pour in from educational institutions in India and Pakistan before the project was even completed. This led to the launch of Exchange-for-Change 2012-2013 whereby 3500 students are currently being linked through written and visual mediums across six cities: Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Delhi, Mumbai and Chandigarh.

However, the success of this project was by no means guaranteed when we took the first few steps back in 2010. I recall approaching schools in Lahore marred by my own preconceived notions—the low and middle-income would be the hardest to approach, the high-income the easiest. I could not have been more wrong. As I walked into some of the most esteemed educational institutions in Lahore, I instantly sensed an air of hostility; I was unwelcome in these schools. Sitting in the principals’ offices with the senior management in place, I was more than once accused of challenging the Two-Nation Theory by suggesting such a program. India and Pakistan did not share anything in common and the bloody partition of 1947 was a testimony to it. My pleas and cries went unheard. I wanted to explain that the idea behind the project was simply to allow students to communicate with one another, to be able to become Pakistan’s ambassadors and represent their country, to become tolerant enough to appreciate differences and celebrate similarities across nations, and
particularly with a country we held a shared past with. However, for them such ideas amounted to questioning state identity, and by stressing upon any similarities, I was simply misinforming the children. “Haven’t you seen how they have already penetrated our homes and TV lounges? My children don’t watch anything but Star Plus. They have succeeded in infiltrating our minds and you are trying to build upon that.”

As I quietly admitted defeat and picked up my bag to leave, I stifled my urge to ask the Principal how “they” had forced her to have Indian channels playing in her home and why she could simply not turn them off, and show “them” the way out of her TV lounge. As I closed the door behind me, I heard the topic lingering over, “Projects like these should run with other countries. Why not with China? We could learn far more from them!” It was after such negative experiences in the very first month of working with CAP that I realized how potent the image of India as an enemy country was. My personal experience on the other hand had been different. I completed my university education in Canada amongst several Indian friends, giving me a chance to interact with the ‘other’ early on in life. The Pakistanis and Indians clicked automatically; far away from home, we missed the same food, the same Bollywood music and movies. We had differences of course; as they ate their vegetarian meals, I would fill my stomach with chicken and meat. But amidst slight differences, there was a sense of familiarity and belonging. My own father had migrated from Batala near Gurdaspur, India, while many of my friends’ ancestors were from Lahore or nearby cities. We shared a connection that I could not share with students from other cultures. However, during my three years of study, it never once crossed my mind that such a bond could in any way question my national identity or challenge the Two-Nation Theory, two interchangeable terms in Pakistan.

The hostility with which the project was received in some of the elite intellectual circles of the society, brought to light another reality. Pakistan, a state formed 65 years ago, was still struggling to find its identity. Unlike India, which is a much larger state, where Pakistan is almost irrelevant to the masses in the south, partition defines Pakistan and Pakistanis on a day-to-day basis. It is an event that is constantly played and re-played in various realms and mainstream discourse. For the schools I had interacted with, to stress upon any similarity with India was tantamount to questioning whether the creation of Pakistan had been a mistake, a question too frightful to be raised.

Fortunately, after weeks of vigorous field research, we finally found a responsive set of schools that in fact expressed enthusiasm about the program. It is not that they did not have questions or apprehensions but it was refreshing to see them
understand the need for such communication, for allowing students to get to know their neighbours and form their own independent and informed opinions. Like CAP and R2R, they too hoped that such an exchange would enable a clearer understanding of the shared history, culture and lifestyles, in turn leading to a positive change in restructuring cultural misconceptions and inter-generational conflict. However, with the educational institutions now on board, we faced another daunting problem. Bulk mail was not allowed between India and Pakistan and no courier service wanted to help facilitate the program. I remember shrieking in my office, “The whole project will fall apart!” The team visited every leading courier company around Lahore, speaking to the managers and calling up the head offices but to no avail. It was only then that we came across TCS, a prominent courier service. They agreed to come up with an alternative plan for us. After some negotiation, we mutually decided to send the mail via Dubai, a neural point of exchange. It was ironic; despite being neighbouring countries we had to communicate with each other through a third party, located further away.

Consent of partner schools and a concrete logistical plan firmly under our belt, we finally entered the classrooms for our first set of workshops in January 2011. In the chilly winter breeze, we introduced the students and teachers to the project. I asked them to name their neighbouring countries and to say something about each one of them. “Afghanistan has Pathans!” “Iran has oil!” “China makes just about everything!” And India? I probed them. A few students snickered, some front-row one’s answered “A huge population!” “Cars!” “Katrina Kaif!” while others felt that Pakistan’s enemy country either had nothing or all the evils of the world. Later, I asked the class if they felt that Pakistanis and Indians shared anything in common and was taken aback with the number of heads that shook vehemently. Taking inspiration from this, the team decided to play a video that had been created by Indian students. The clip showed various Indian historical monuments from the Taj Mahal to the Red Fort, festivals, brides, mithai (sweetmeats) and weddings, snapshots of school life with students immersed in sports and other extra-curricular activities and a range of food items, from gulab jamuns to masala dosa and biryani. Upon probing the students once more if Pakistanis and Indians shared anything in common, a number of hands shot up, each child desperate to list as many similarities as they could. “Ma’am the henna the bride had on her hands, the clothes she wore, some of the food they eat is just like ours! I love rasmalai too!” And the list went on and on...

It was perhaps in that moment that I saw a flicker of hope. Outside, when I entered an auto rickshaw, the anti-India campaign was in full force. It asked citizens what Pakistan’s relationship with India was and the answer in big bold letters was – hatred and revenge.
Here, inside a hall tightly packed with 500 students, I saw some of that hate sentiment but I also saw the quest to learn, the flexibility of mind, the happiness at sharing similar tastes, clothes, hobbies and lifestyles with those across the border. There was much confusion and misconception in the young minds. It was difficult for them to understand that India did not equate to Hindus. They were shocked to learn that India in fact had more Muslims than Pakistan and had one of the largest number of mosques in the world. They also had trouble understanding that just as their grandparents had tragic memories of partition, those on the other side went through the same pain. They too were uprooted from their homes, snatched away from their friends, and massacred. So together we decided to get answers to some of our questions by talking to the Indians themselves. Slowly the team sensed increased excitement in the room and by the time the first letter writing activity was coming to an end, the students were fighting for more time—they had too many questions, too many things to tell and it was absolutely essential for each one of them to draw either their favorite cartoons, the Pakistani flag or a historical monument. They wanted to show their new friends that they too were talented!

Back at the office as the team sifted through these letters, we found different undertones. Some of the negativity had seeped in, “We like the Muslims in India but not the Hindus.” one of them read. Others had requests, “We want the people of India to accept Islam.” and “Pakistan is friendly with India but India does not help Pakistan. Please help us grow big like you.” Many had also asked questions, “I love mangoes, do you like them too?” “What is your favorite color?” “Can you please come to Pakistan? We are nice people I promise.”

As we received letters from India, we saw the same trend. While hate messages came through in the shape of comments like “You are terrorists, stay away from us,” other students were inquisitive. “Do you wear ghaghras (long Skirt) too?” one child asked. Another expressed her confusion, her questions and her innocence in the form of a poem:

Why are we separated,
And for each other why do have hatred,
What is the reason,
That we don’t meet every season,
Why do people forget,
That each one of us takes a breath,
Why that half an hour way,
Becomes the way to death,
Where is the faith lost,
And to meet each other we pay a great cost,
After all we laugh the same way,
We smile the same way,
We love the same way,
Just that border can’t make us away,
After all we live the same way.

Over the next few months, the students continued to interact with one another, writing letters, sharing photographs and speaking to their grandparents about the early years of India and Pakistan. Just about two months after the project had started, one of the students who at first had shown much reluctance to be a part of the project, came up to me and said, “Ma’am I didn’t know they were just like us. You know they also celebrate Eid and like Atif Aslam!”

The feedback forms we had the students fill out before and after the various phases also showed a marked change in perception and knowledge levels about the ‘other’. For instance, the baseline survey from one of the partnering schools had shown that only 38% students believed that India and Pakistan could be friends while a dismal 5.1% of the students felt that they shared something in common with Indians. By the end of the project however, 62% referred to their Indian counterparts as friends while an overwhelming 67% of the student population said that the program has showed them that Indians and Pakistanis had many similarities.

The connection they had developed was perhaps most evident when a select group of students crossed the Wagah border to meet the friends they had been interacting with over the year. The response was astounding! We were welcomed with garlands, music and dance shows and a grand tea in each school we visited. The students, who just a year ago felt that the ‘other’ was a complete alien, were now performing bhangra with each other, and were inseparable from one another. When the Indian students visited Lahore, the response was no different. CAP arranged an exhibition in Lahore and Karachi where all the letters, photographs and videos from the program were showcased for the public. At the exhibition in Lahore not only did the Indian students immediately click with their Pakistani friends, but were also instantly at ease with students from other schools and colleges as well.

The Indian students on their visit to Lahore were at first petrified that they would find no vegetarian food in Pakistan but they enjoyed sitting by the famous Badshahi Mosque at the renowned Cuckoos Cafe, eating palaak paneer, daal makhni and mixed vegetables. They toured the city, spending hours at Lahore Fort, Jahangir’s Tomb, Government College and Liberty Market. For months afterwards, we got
Facebook requests from not just the students who had visited Lahore or been a part of the project but also from students of other schools. One such message read “Thank you for teaching us about your country. It has changed my views about Pakistan completely. I will never look at it the same way.” I do not think I would look at India the same way again either. Although I was privileged with prior exposure, which had already challenged many of my own stereotypes, EFC was an eye-opener in many regards. I witnessed firsthand the kind of hatred and negative labeling that was breeding in these children. Without knowing the ‘other’ they had already formed rigid opinions. For them to fathom any similarities or a common ground with the ‘other’ was unimaginable. It was also revealing to see that such sentiments cut across age, gender and class.

The visits I made over two years to India sent another burst of knowledge through me. I toured Delhi, Mumbai and Chandigarh with the CAP team, engaging with students and teachers. While we were welcomed warmly in every city, there was a different narrative dominant in each one of them. While Delhi and Chandigarh had the partition narrative deeply etched in the memories of the teachers and in the discourse of the young ones, Mumbai was in a sense removed from it. The thousands of migrants that had poured in from Pakistan had settled in Delhi and surrounding areas. Though Mumbai too housed several refugees, the numbers differed greatly. It was perhaps because of this that the students were so unaware of where Lahore was and what partition had meant for millions of people. Instead, the memories of the Mumbai Attacks of 2008 were vivid in their minds. They threw questions at us regarding terrorism, women’s rights and democracy in Pakistan. There was a sense of hostility amongst the taxi drivers and the population in general. Four years was not sufficient time to overcome the anger and hurt created by the attacks. But the ability to communicate, to be able to ask questions and express feelings was a step towards healing. Giving the Indian students a chance to speak to common Pakistanis became part of the healing process.

As we got ready to leave the school, hundreds of students surrounded us, each wanting to shake our hands and give us a hug. That was the kind of love we brought back to Pakistan. “Please call us to Pakistan,” they yelled after us. “Please come, visit us again in India, we will show you around,” said the others. Presently visa policies and trade barriers are being relaxed. Pakistan has recently granted India the Most Favoured Nation status. These are good steps but no one can guarantee the sustainability of such measures. The common people are helpless in front of government policies, which ease or harden as per their own prerogative. However, through micro-level initiatives such as Exchange-for-Change, room is created to start a dialogue, which is both uninterrupted and uninterruptable.
Political Dominance or Economic Gains: A Case Study of India-Pakistan Trade and Perceptions of the People of Pakistan

Afsheen Naz

Abstract

The South Asian region suffers from a lack of economic integration with political differences between India and Pakistan serving a primary factor. This paper analyzes the perceptions of Pakistani stakeholders on the ways in which political relations have affected the economies of the two countries, and South Asia as a region. The findings are based on a perception survey in which 50 Pakistani professionals were interviewed from four cities—Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, and Rawalpindi. Distrust between the two neighboring states was flagged as a potent factor holding back the trade potential of the region.

Introduction

South Asia has low regional trade in comparison with other such regions in the world. Over a period of time, various accords, for instance the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) and the SAARC Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA), have been signed by the countries in the region to enhance economic integration and boost trade. Despite these regional, multilateral, and bilateral agreements, trade within the region has failed to grow at expected levels, and research has identified the conflict between India and Pakistan as one of the major factors that has adversely affected the process of regional economic integration.¹

Recognizing this reality and other exigencies for better relations with neighbors, various efforts have been made by both states. The Indo-Pak Composite Dialogue process was re-launched in 2004 and, currently, efforts are underway to improve

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¹ A. Sayeed, Gains from Trade and Structural Impediments to India-Pakistan Trade, (Karachi: CSSR, 2011).
trade and other economic ties. While the governments are involved in these dialogues, little effort has been made to understand the perception of various stakeholders on the prospects for regional trade. This paper analyzes the perceptions in Pakistan on the impact of the political conflict with India on regional trade in South Asia.

The findings are based on a survey titled “Cost of Economic Noncooperation to Consumers in South Asia” which was conducted by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) for the Consumer Unity and Trust Society-India (CUTS-India). CUTS-India prepared a report on the effects of economic noncooperation on consumers and their welfare in South Asian countries based on the survey. A subset of questions from the original survey, related to the objectives of this paper, has been used here.

Pakistani stakeholders were queried on:

a) The overall impact of trade agreements—multilateral, regional, and bilateral, signed by Pakistan,

b) The current trade and regional cooperation scenario among South Asian countries,

c) The relative importance given by the government of Pakistan to political priorities and economic logic,

d) The measures that may be taken by the political community of India and Pakistan to enhance trade in South Asia.

Stakeholders representing academia, civil society, the media, the business community, and government were interviewed from four cities of Pakistan—Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi. Twenty-nine of the respondents were from Islamabad; 11 from Lahore; eight from Karachi; and two from Rawalpindi. Ten of the respondents were from the media, 15 from government, seven represented civil society groups, 10 were from academia, and eight were traders or business entrepreneurs. Given the nature of the research, a purposive sampling technique was employed and only those who had relevant experience in India-Pakistan trade were selected. A questionnaire was developed and responses were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative techniques.

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3 The names of all respondents have been changed to maintain anonymity. All the questionnaires were administered between February and March 2012.
Key Developments since 1947 on Trade between India and Pakistan

India and Pakistan granted the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status to each other in 1948, right after signing the GATT agreement. In 1948–49, exports of Pakistan to India were 56 percent of her total exports and her imports from India were 32 percent of total imports. The 1965 and 1971 wars created a major schism between the two countries, after which economic relations could not be brought back on an even keel. Disparities kept increasing and both states erected barriers. In 1973, to restart trade, the two countries adopted the “positive list” approach. However, they did not give MFN status to each other, as was expected under GATT. It was only in 1996 that India again granted the MFN status to Pakistan with the signing of the SAFTA agreement, but Pakistan did not reciprocate. More importantly, despite granting the MFN status, India nurtured a restrictive trade policy in the context of Pakistan and raised many tariff and non-tariff barriers on Pakistani products and services. Some of the non-tariff barriers in India were:

- Visa and travel restrictions
- Restrictions on inter-provincial movement of goods
- Limited number of ports and inland custom posts for imports
- Control by state trading enterprises
- Excessive use of trade defense measures
- Tariff rate quotas
- Technical standards and regulations
- Import regulations

India also raised extremely high tariff barriers on agricultural products from Pakistan. These tariffs, even today, average around 90 percent. Moreover, India maintained the composite duty-Ad Valorem and Specific Duty on textile manufacturers, which in some cases exceeds 100 percent. The “positive list” approach for Indian products and several other non-tariff barriers were kept in place by Pakistan. Nevertheless, it has been noted that, “the Indian trade regime is still more restrictive than its counterpart in Pakistan. According to an IMF study, India’s trade restrictiveness

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measures 8 (on a scale from 1 to 10), while Pakistan’s index stands at 6.”\(^5\) As a result, trade has not reached the desired level between the two neighbors.

**Trends of Trade between India and Pakistan**

Despite awareness of the benefits that come with enhanced bilateral trade, the volume between the two countries remained less than one billion dollars during the period 2000–10. Neither country made it to the top five trading countries’ list of the other, in the magnitude of their global trade volume.\(^6\) A cursory glance at the data reveals this and the imbalance in the trade. (See Table 1)

**Table 1: Growth trends of India’s Export and Import towards Pakistan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPORT</td>
<td>1,350.09</td>
<td>1,950.53</td>
<td>1,439.88</td>
<td>1,573.32</td>
<td>2,333.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Growth</td>
<td>44.47</td>
<td>-26.18</td>
<td>9.27</td>
<td>48.32</td>
<td>48.32</td>
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<td>India’s Total Export</td>
<td>126,414.05</td>
<td>163,132.18</td>
<td>185,295.36</td>
<td>178,751.43</td>
<td>251,135.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Growth</td>
<td>29.05</td>
<td>13.59</td>
<td>-3.53</td>
<td>40.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Share</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMPORT</td>
<td>323.62</td>
<td>287.97</td>
<td>370.17</td>
<td>275.94</td>
<td>332.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Growth</td>
<td>-11.02</td>
<td>28.54</td>
<td>-25.45</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India’s Total Import</td>
<td>185,735.24</td>
<td>251,654.01</td>
<td>303,696.31</td>
<td>288,372.88</td>
<td>369,769.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Growth</td>
<td>35.49</td>
<td>20.68</td>
<td>-5.05</td>
<td>28.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Share</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL TRADE</td>
<td>1,673.71</td>
<td>2,238.50</td>
<td>1,810.05</td>
<td>1,849.26</td>
<td>2,666.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Growth</td>
<td>33.75</td>
<td>-19.14</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>44.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India’s Total Trade</td>
<td>312,149.29</td>
<td>414,786.19</td>
<td>488,991.67</td>
<td>467,124.31</td>
<td>620,905.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Growth</td>
<td>32.88</td>
<td>17.89</td>
<td>-4.47</td>
<td>32.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Share</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRADE BALANCE</td>
<td>1,026.47</td>
<td>1,662.56</td>
<td>1,069.72</td>
<td>1,297.38</td>
<td>2,001.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Government of India, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Department of Commerce (Dated: 16/05/2012)


\(^6\) A. Sayeed, *Gains from Trade and Structural Impediments to India-Pakistan Trade* (Karachi: CSSR, 2011).
The trade balance is clearly in favor of India. In all five years, India’s exports to Pakistan are higher than her imports from Pakistan. Despite not granting the MFN status to India and encountering high tariff and non-tariff barriers, Pakistan is importing more goods and services from India. The data also draws attention to the negative trend in both exports and imports from India towards Pakistan in the year 2009-2010. This is the period when the two countries came very close to war due to the Mumbai attacks. This situation is reflective of how the political conflict has impacted trade between the two countries.

In order to address some of the longstanding differences, India and Pakistan started the composite dialogue process in 2004 which included: peace and security including confidence building measures (CBMs), Jammu and Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek, Wullar Barrage, terrorism and drug trafficking, economic and commercial cooperation, and promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields. Six rounds of dialogues have been held up until 2011 (see Figure 1). The most recent dialogue of the series was held in November 2011 in New Delhi. A number of major decisions were taken during this dialogue regarding trade:

- Pakistan will transition from the current “positive list” approach to the “negative list” approach by February 2012;
- Thereafter, all other items except those in the “negative list” shall be freely exportable from India to Pakistan; and
- The schedule for phasing out of the “negative list” would be announced when the list would be notified in February 2012.

**Figure 1**

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8 Since the writing of this paper, the Foreign Ministers of the two countries have met again in Islamabad and Foreign Secretary level Talks have been held.
The gap between the fourth and fifth dialogues is noteworthy as the Mumbai attacks in 2008 stalled the process for a considerable period of time. India blamed Pakistan for this attack. However, the composite dialogue process restarted in 2011 and two successful rounds were held in the same year. The declaration that MFN will be granted to India by Pakistan was one of the most successful results of this dialogue.

However, the announcement of granting of MFN status to India was met with an expression of fear by the business community of Pakistan, particularly, with respect to agricultural products. They stated that the trade balance has been in favor of India and this is not likely to change with the granting of MFN status. The market capture by Indian products is another major concern for the business community of Pakistan. Nonetheless, during the sixth composite dialogue, certain measures were adopted to overcome or at least to reduce such apprehensions of Pakistani businessmen. It was proposed that the following agreements to address tariff and non-tariff barriers between the two countries be signed:

- Customs Cooperation Agreement
- Mutual Recognition Agreement
- Redressal of Grievance Agreement
- Preferential Tariff under SAFTA Agreement

To protect the local industry, effective use of trade defense laws was also proposed during the dialogue:

- National Tariff Commission Act, 1990
- Anti-Dumping Duties Ordinance, 2000
- Countervailing Duties Ordinance, 2001
- Safeguard Measures Ordinance, 2002

The fears of Pakistani businessmen are not unfounded. Even after the partition of British India into India and Pakistan, India is still the largest and dominant state in the region.9 Pakistan is the second largest country in the region after India; hence, it can be considered important for setting the growth trends in the region. However, the differences between the two states have held peace and prosperity in the entire region hostage. At the base of this conflict lie several issues, but the memory of the

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traumatic and bloody partition, the continuing dispute over Kashmir, and the alleged sponsoring of jihadi groups have played a decisive part in determining their relationship. Since both countries tested nuclear weapons in 1998, this rivalry acquired a different strategic dimension. Major conflicts erupted: the Kargil War in 1999, the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001 with Pakistan being blamed and the incident leading to unprecedented troop mobilization along the border, and most recently, the Mumbai attacks in 2008.

Due to these conflicts, the neighbors remained reluctant to invest in strengthening bilateral trade ties. While several studies have pointed to the economic benefits to both countries of enhancing bilateral trade\textsuperscript{10}, many have also alluded to the gains that would accrue to the entire South Asian region. It is estimated that intra-regional trade is at five percent, which accounts for just over one percent of the region’s GDP.\textsuperscript{11} This is due to the fact that India and Pakistan jointly account for more than 90 percent of South Asia’s GDP. Adversarial relations between the two states, therefore, impact the development potential of the entire region, preventing technical efficiencies, better resource allocation, and specialization in production.

Trade not only contributes directly to the prosperity of the consumers as goods become cheaper, but producers also gain from specialization and revenue sources for the governments increase. This indirectly benefits the population as it leads to interdependence among states, which in turn furthers political stability in the region.\textsuperscript{12} The benefits of enhanced regional trade have been documented in a number of studies.\textsuperscript{13}


\textsuperscript{11} I. Tabish and M. Khan, op. cit.

\textsuperscript{12} For a discussion on PTAs see C. Parr Rosson, C. Ford Runge, Kirby S. Moulton, “Preferential Trading Arrangements: Gainers and Losers from Regional Trading Blocs,” <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/agecon/trade/eight.html>

Attempts at minimizing confrontations and enhancing regional cooperation have been made over the years through the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), SAPTA, and SAFTA. In fact, the fundamental objective of SAARC was to bring stability in South Asia by enhancing regional cooperation and drawing attention away from bilateral hostilities between the different countries of the subcontinent.\(^{14}\) The SAARC Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA) was signed on 11 April 1993. The fundamental motive of this Agreement was not only to sustain economic cooperation within the region but to promote trade as well.\(^{15}\)

SAFTA came into being in 1996. However, it started functioning on 1 January 2006. The intent here was to gradually reduce and ultimately eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers and customs duties on products and services. The creation of a “free trade bloc” in the region was the ultimate objective of the Agreement. Under this Agreement, the reduction and abolition of the tariff rates was to be carried out in two phases. India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka were obliged under the Agreement to reduce their trade duties and bring them down to 20 percent in the first phase, which was to be completed by 2008. In the second phase, it was envisioned that these duties would be cut to zero by 2016. However, the least developed countries of the region, including Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Maldives were granted an additional time of three years, that is, up until 2019, to cut the duty rate to zero.\(^{16}\)

Unfortunately, SAFTA almost failed to narrow down the regional economic distances. On the contrary, countries in the region started bilateral agreements that proved quite successful. Some of the regional bilateral agreements include the India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Agreement and the Pakistan-Sri Lanka Bilateral Agreement.\(^{17}\)

It was only in 2012 that positive developments resulted from the composite dialogue and Pakistan decided to grant MFN status to India. However, the arrangement that finally emerges from the process is yet to fully reveal itself and it still remains a question if Pakistan and India will be able to achieve the full potential of bilateral trade. One of the important factors in the ultimate success of trade will be the role

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\(^{14}\) Khan et al., op.cit.


\(^{17}\) Khan et al., op.cit.
played by the businessmen, traders and those involved in the decision making within and outside the government. It is therefore important to understand how they perceive the potential and what they suggest as the way forward. The survey sought to measure these perceptions. The following section provides a summary of the findings.

**Overall impact of Trade Agreements: Multilateral, Regional, and Bilateral**

**Multilateral Trade Agreements**

As multi-trade agreements enable the developing economies to tap affluent markets of the world, they also help the developing economies to shift to higher levels of productivity and general efficiencies through the transfer of technologies and managerial expertise. As one government official stated, “Behind all these agreements, the objective was to adopt the global village approach in trade via availability of cheap products, best utilization of expertise, and transmit to other countries so that consumers get benefited. Moreover, quality along with availability may be enhanced.”

Almost half of the respondents in the survey expressed their concerns regarding the expediency of WTO. The respondents were of the view that GATT was ineffective, particularly for developing countries. A producer from Lahore, for instance, said that he was “not really sure about its impact on developing countries and particularly on Pakistan.” Another from the government candidly admitted that,

> It is a firm reality that to date WTO has not been successful in promoting trade liberalization around the world. It seems to be biased towards developed countries by safeguarding their interests, thus providing limited benefits to the developing and poor countries. A flourishing phenomenon of PTAs (Preferential Trade Agreements) in recent years indicates that WTO has not emerged as a successful process.

The remaining 50 percent of the respondents felt that the WTO process was admirable but expressed concerns regarding the nature of rules being framed. The respondents perceived these rules as more beneficial to developed countries. One respondent stated that

> The overall impact of the WTO-multilateral trade agreement (as signed in the Uruguay round) has been positive, since it has raised awareness about

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18 Saleem, Islamabad.
19 Zia, Islamabad.
businesses subscribing to ‘quality and standards’ to capture the markets. As a result efficiency, productivity, and competition have increased and resources are being utilized in a more optimal fashion—even using waste to earn money. This is true for the export-oriented industry.”  

Likewise, one of the traders compared the importance of multilateral trade agreements in these words:  

“WTO has resulted in a more liberalized and open trade regime in Pakistan. However, Pakistani traders fear the onslaught of cheap products from competing countries such as India and China. This fear is not one-sided. For instance, Pakistan faced opposition from Bangladesh and India when it was given a special concession package for access to the EU after the 2010 floods. So basically, all developing countries are somewhat wary, when we talk about liberalized trade and WTO in particular.”

A media person was of the view that “Regional trade agreements [in general] provide a broader list for trade than is the case with WTO. With reference to Pakistan, it seems that regional agreements damaged the domestic industry while some countries enjoyed the win-win situation [at the regional level and at the level of WTO].”

The respondents were, in general, not very optimistic about multilateral trade and its prospects for Pakistan. This difference became stark when compared with their perceptions about regional trade. The respondents showed a greater degree of optimism. However, regional trade, they said, would be conditional upon one very significant factor—India-Pakistan relations. This is analyzed in the next subsection.

**Regional Agreements**

SAFTA calls for the gradual reduction of tariffs, custom duties, and other trade barriers, and overall reciprocity and mutuality of advantages so as to benefit all the member states. Regional economic cooperation has the advantage that it shrinks the distances and reduces transportation cost as well as encourages trade based on similarity in culture and tastes. In addition, it not only consolidates the comprehensive relations among the countries, but also helps in achieving common aspirations for development, peace, and stability in the region.

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20 Shakeel, Islamabad.

21 Shafaqat, Karachi

22 Nazim, Islamabad.
SAFTA, proposes to build on the SAPTA by increasing the scope of the South Asian regional trade dialogue to include issues of competition; trade and transport facilitation through progressive harmonization of legislation; banking procedures; macroeconomic consultations; communications; foreign exchange regulations; and immigration (currently SAFTA is only concerned with the facilitation of business visas). SAFTA also introduces a specific Trade Liberalization Program that phases out tariffs and eliminates quantitative restrictions in consonance with the obligations imposed by the WTO.

Despite being such an important trade agreement, SAFTA was perceived as a failure in achieving its targets by more than half of the respondents. A government official from Karachi, for instance said, “No concrete/major benefit has been gained so far by Pakistan by signing SAFTA.”23 Another respondent from academia was of the view that, “No substantial progress has been made in terms of market access for Pakistani products in the member countries.”24

Interestingly, many of the respondents were aware of the importance of the political conflict between India and Pakistan and its significance to regional trade. The respondents not only considered these two economies as influential but also linked the ineffectiveness of SAFTA with the political conflict between the two. For instance, one respondent from civil society was of the view that, “SAFTA would be a great initiative if it were to be implemented, but progress has unfortunately been slow due to political differences between the two biggest South Asian countries, Pakistan and India.”25 A second respondent from civil society said, “SAFTA remains a disappointment, given the foreign policy deadlock between India and Pakistan. So far, it has no impact because of the political situation in the region.”26

Bilateral Agreements

Bilateral trade agreements enhance closer economic ties between the two countries. While there are pros and cons to every trade agreement, it is said that it can boost business for both partners and benefit both economies. Pakistan has signed bilateral trade agreements with Afghanistan, Malaysia, China, Sri Lanka, Iran, and Mauritius. Of these, the most significant is the Foreign Trade Agreement (FTA) with China covering goods as well as investments, which became effective from July 1 2007.

23 Shehzad, Karachi.
24 Raihan, Islamabad.
25 Ahmad, Lahore.
26 Jahanzib, Karachi.
Many of Pakistan’s exportable products such as textiles, fruits, vegetables, gems, jewelry, engineering goods, leather products, sports goods, surgical goods, marble products, and industrial alcohol can enter the Chinese markets at zero duty or concessionary duties. However, the FTA with Iran is not as effective due to political reasons. Trade agreements with Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius are expected to be beneficial for Pakistan’s economy. However, their overall impact rests on the implementation and execution of the Agreement.

Many of the respondents, while perceiving the effectiveness of various bilateral agreements, cautioned that actual impact cannot be gauged unless proper research is conducted. They felt that the absence of systematic research on the benefits of these agreements was a major lacuna in deciding future policies. A respondent working for the government was of the view that, “A professional analysis post-FTA has not come out, but it has a positive political dimension.”27 Another noted that, it “will help improve business and technology, but proper research is not conducted on the impact—short-term and long-term—on all stake holders.”28

**Regional Cooperation Scenario among South Asian Countries**

An overwhelming majority (over 80 percent) felt that trade and regional cooperation was below expectations. Only 10 percent perceived regional cooperation to be up to expectation and eight percent thought it was above expectation.

Those who were disappointed with the level of regional trade cooperation shared their views on the reasons for the appalling state of regional integration. Many of them linked such low cooperation to political conflicts amongst South Asian countries. But it was unclear which way the causal connection ran for them. Was it because of the conflicts that trade was low or was it because they were not economically well-connected that all conflicts became more intense and intractable?

A statement by a government representative from Lahore, for example, was reflective of this confusion: “Due to the persistence of conflict in South Asia and the inability of SAARC members to come up with solutions to the problems, trade among SAARC nations is very limited which make this region least integrated in the world.”29

While the respondents considered economic integration as beneficial and particularly pertinent to relieve the region from the poverty trap, they highlighted political

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27 Shehzad, Islamabad
28 Gulbaz, Lahore.
29 Sumera, Lahore.
differences and weak implementation of existing agreements as the key causes for not fulfilling the expectations.

Furthermore, the respondents placed particular emphasis on the conflict between India and Pakistan and their manipulation of other countries in the region. The respondents categorized these conflicts into economic and political. One government representative, for instance, while highlighting the importance of economic conflicts on one of the trade agreements (SAFTA) said, “There are two major countries in the region, Pakistan and India. Until trade is normalized in these two countries, until Pakistan grants the MFN status to India, SAFTA cannot be successful. SAFTA is like ASEAN, where China is a major player, like India in SAFTA. Until one major economy integrates, other markets cannot reach that trade potential.”  

A similar sentiment was expressed by another respondent who stated that,

SAFTA was signed to offer each country tariff concessions for the promotion of regional as well as bilateral trade. However, effective trade liberalization could not be achieved due to tariff, non-tariff barriers, political hurdles, and lack of political will on the part of Pakistan and India, two main signatories of the Agreement.  

A civil society representative from Karachi not only recognized the political conflict between India and Pakistan as a major hurdle in enhancing regional trade, but suggested alternatives.

I feel that there is very intense political tension between the two large economies of the region, India and Pakistan. India’s attitude has always been very hostile towards Pakistan and they both do not trust each other. The two countries have to realize the fact that in order to have sustainable and comprehensive regional economic cooperation, they need to show some flexibility in their way of behaving.

**Political priorities or economic logic?**

An overwhelming majority of the respondents, 77.1 percent, highlighted the political conflict between India and Pakistan. Most of the respondents were of the view that

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30 Alam, Islamabad
31 Imran, Islamabad
32 Naila, Karachi
the two countries are the most influential in the region and always prioritize their political conflicts over the economic gains. Nevertheless, the respondents also perceived the many trade barriers of India and Pakistan, along with the political conflicts which were adding to the woes of slow integration. Visa restriction, non-tariff barriers, and religious barriers were some of the factors highlighted by the respondents. Even so, when asked to rank the hurdles to integration, they noted that political conflicts were most influential. Respondents considered such political conflicts between the two countries as the greatest hurdle which was preventing the whole region from integrating, progressing, and prospering.

Some respondents stated that political priorities overpower economic logic in trade negotiations. A government official not only considered this as a factor but also termed the politics between India and Pakistan as a tool that was being used to enhance or reduce trade. She was of the view, ‘It is a wholly political game; it is especially true for India-Pakistan trade. The non-tariff barriers (NTBs) are very high between these two countries and this is all about the political negativism. If the country–India or Pakistan–does not want to trade in some goods, the NTBs on those products will be increased. The NTBs are so strong that even if there is a signed contract between importers and exporters, the political conflicts highlight these NTBs and trading of those products will be stopped.’

Many of the respondents highlighted, what in their view were the major issues that caused the political conflict and have led to its perpetuation. In this context, the Kashmir issue was highlighted by a number of respondents. A government official, for instance, was of the view that, ‘the Indo-Pak political dispute is the major constraint which limits trade integration among nations. For example, the Kashmir issue and the war on terror affect economic collaboration between Pakistan and India.’ One media representative said:

*The South Asian region is facing conflicts like the Kashmir issue. Thus trade cannot [be] enhanced until such issues are solved. Pakistan is interested in solving Kashmir before any trade can take place. Though some trade is taking place between India and Pakistan, but it is not going beyond onions and potatoes. India is not ready to give Pakistan access to its markets.*

33 Amina, Rawalpindi
34 Ambar, Lahore.
35 Numan, Lahore.
A media representative from Islamabad commented on the prioritization of the political conflict over economic gains thus:

*The current issue of granting MFN status to India by Pakistan is an excellent example of how the governments in South Asia clubbed trade with politics. Pakistan denied expansion of trade with India for many years and always linked it with the resolution of the Kashmir conflict. On the same pattern, India denied trade rights to Sri Lanka due to the Sri Lankan government’s tilt towards Pakistan. The reason is again the lack of awareness among the citizens in this region. The common person in South Asia doesn’t know how he has been denied the right of choice, quality, and price while purchasing a good, due to restrictions on regional trade. How it [trade] can benefit consumers in terms of prices and availability of a variety of products. Hence, the politicians in the whole region are benefiting from low levels of [citizen] awareness and do politics on trade.*

Another media person from Islamabad added, “There has been a mix of considerations. It is difficult to separate politics and trade relations among the members.”

When respondents were asked about their perceptions on the steps required for the political leadership to enhance economic integration, most of them foregrounded the need to combat distrust. “Distrust is the major factor that is due to the long-awaited dispute between India and Pakistan...disputes like Kashmir and Siachen,” said one respondent. A representative of the business community said: “Core political issues are needed to be solved by the two countries to stop mistrusting each other.” Such perceptions of the business community highlight that distrust is seen as a creation of the political conflicts. A media representative from Lahore, while highlighting the results of distrust, was of the view, “Distrust is really a poisonous thing when it comes to mutual relations. States should work to dilute distrust. This would eventually develop amicable relations between the nations. Especially, the people of India and Pakistan consider any favor to the other country as surrender or disloyalty to their respective lands.”

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36 Jawad, Islamabad
37 Shafqat, Islamabad
38 Zulqrnain, Karachi
39 Kamran, Lahore
40 Tahir, Lahore
There was consensus on working towards peace. Bilateral trade to ease the relationship was accorded the second highest priority by the respondents of the survey in Pakistan. In general, the stakeholders felt that steps needed to be taken by the political leadership “to highlight peace dividends from enhanced regional economic cooperation in their actions”. One respondent, for example, from civil society said, “Highlighting peace dividends in the form of economic and trade benefits will help in regional economic integration.”\textsuperscript{41} An academic among the respondents suggested that furtherance of the peace dialogue was one of the most important steps that the political leadership should take to enhance regional trade and economic cooperation. He was of the view that: “Peace is the key to any understanding of ‘the future’.”\textsuperscript{42}

**Conclusion**

The analysis of the perceptions of the stakeholders in the Pakistan about the current level of trade reveals that they are not particularly satisfied with either multilateral or regional arrangements that are in place. Even on bilateral trade, the stakeholders do not see the results as being very positive. They are especially dissatisfied with the current level of bilateral trade with India and feel that there is an urgent need to address both tariff and non-tariff barriers that India has imposed on Pakistani goods. However, there is a realistic understanding of the challenges that economic integration or even normalization of trade ties between the two hostile state, entails. While the stakeholders are critical of Indian policies, they do not absolve the Pakistani policymakers of all responsibility. They acknowledge that only when both states take the necessary steps towards resolving political difference and simultaneously improve trade ties, can the vision of regional integration of South Asia be realized, which will ultimately be decisive in bringing prosperity to the region. Therefore, peace is not one of the options in their view, but the only one if trade has to achieve its full potential in South Asia, especially for India and Pakistan.

\textsuperscript{41} Umar, Islamabad.

\textsuperscript{42} Wajahat, Islamabad.
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Border Dialogues

Bani Gill

Abstract

The western land border of India—running from Gujarat to Kashmir—is one of the most heavily militarized international borders in the world. This paper focuses on the Barmer stretch of the border between India and Pakistan, to understand the implications of the statist project of border making on an erstwhile integrated socio-economic milieu. Taking a rights-based perspective, this paper assesses the impact of this militarized notion of state security on people’s security, and on the larger political economy of the border region. How do the insecurities and uncertainties attendant on a ‘hostile’ border, affect development and people’s investment in their future in the borderland?

Introduction

International border making is a politico-bureaucratic and securitized exercise, marking the limits of a state’s territory and authority. The Western land border of India, running from Gujarat to Kashmir, is one of the most heavily militarized international borders in the world. However, while the borders of Punjab and Kashmir dominate mainstream discourse, the borders of Rajasthan and Gujarat find little mention, except during military exercises or war, showing the indifference exhibited towards residents of these borderlands. This paper focuses on the Barmer stretch of

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1 For a detailed study of the Gujarat border see Farhana Ibrahim, *Settlers, Saints and Sovereigns: An Ethnography of State Formation in Western India* (Routledge: India, 2008)
the border between India and Pakistan, to understand the implications of the statist project of border making on an erstwhile integrated socio-economic milieu. The dates that loom large in the memory of the Indian nation state—1947, 1965, 1971, 1999, 2001, 2008—represent a chronology of militarization and violence that has shrouded the lives of these borderlanders. Taking a rights-based perspective, this paper seeks to assess the impact of this militarized notion of state security on people’s security, and on the larger political economy of the border region. How has the border affected people’s rights? This paper considers the right to livelihood, to mobility, and to access lands (in ‘no man’s land’ or fenced out areas). What has been the impact of the border on socio-cultural rights of people? The harsh geographical terrain of this region, compounded by the insecurities and uncertainties attendant on this ‘hostile’ border’, is a major factor in its underdevelopment. How do people living in these areas negotiate their position as being on the very edge of the nation state—both politically and geographically?

The research for this paper was facilitated by the ‘Rajasthan Border Dialogues’, organized by the South Asia Forum for Human Rights (SAFHR), New Delhi in April 2011. In collaboration with local partner Society for Upliftment of Rural Economy (SURE), a human rights audit of the Barmer stretch of the Rajasthan border was attempted to highlight policy recommendations for humanizing the control and management of the border. Along with intensive field visits to border settlements, a two day meeting was held in Barmer in April 2011 which brought together about 30 participants—members of local elected bodies, party leaders, lawyers, doctors, educationists, human rights and development activists, NGOs and journalists from the border districts. The curious effect of National Highway 15, which acts as a ‘border within border’ in Barmer—dividing the better developed eastern part from its poorer western counterpart—was one of the primary reasons why Barmer in particular was chosen as the site for these dialogues.2

Four districts of Rajasthan—Sriganganagar, Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Barmer—share international borders with Pakistan, stretching across a distance of 1,037 kilometers. Along the entire length of this border, a tall wall of barbed-wire fencing stands erect. High voltage electric flood-lights illuminate it at night. Alert jawans (soldiers) patrol the border using vehicles and camels, day in and day out. High observation posts are manned by armed Border Security Force (BSF) soldiers watching in all directions.

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2 This paper concentrates on the border areas of Rajasthan. As such, it only speaks about the experiences of people living along the Barmer border, and does not claim to be representative of those living on the ‘other’ side i.e. Sindh.
However, this wasn’t always the case. The militarized nature of this particular border is a relatively recent event, fuelled by the concerns of modern nation state building. Borders, particularly in the discipline of international relations, are most commonly understood as the lines that demarcate nation states from each other on political maps; fixed at states’ outer edges. The territory of a nation is a constitutive element of nationhood and thus constitutes its geo-body. Nation states project this geo-body as having a long history, almost as if it were natural, independent from technological or any cultural or social construction. However, the sacralization of homelands is a nineteenth century phenomena wherein emerged the idea of exclusive and uncontested territorial state power. The drawing and creation of borderlands is an outcome of the modern nation state so much so that their creation can often be pinpointed in time, such as in the case of the Partition of India, in 1947. Rajasthan shares a long history of trade and communication with Sindh. Before partition, this entire region was an integrated area through its socio-cultural linkages, religion, language, trade and commerce. This nostalgia remains firm in the memories of people, and is also expressed through poetry and legends, as well as in the shared appropriation of the ajrakh, a block-printed fabric, which is shared by both regions.

According to Claude Markovits, trade networks between the two regions had been firmly established in the nineteenth century itself when opium trade was carried out from Rajasthan through Sindh on its way to China. Sindh was thus a commercial and political gateway to Central Asia. It was this combination of commercial and military interest that led the British to make several attempts to capture Sindh, resulting in its annexation from the Talpur Mirs in 1843. The formal merger of Sindh with the Bombay Presidency shattered its former geographical, cultural and political isolation from India. The Sindh area was also a major mandi (wholesale grain market), and tradesmen from the regions of Barmer, Jaisalmer and Bikaner would often migrate temporarily to sell their handicrafts like wood, pan (betel leaf)

and supari (betel nut) there. An older generation of inhabitants, those who remember an integrated area before partition, remember it as a land of abundance and plenty. The region is home to migrant pastoralists and as Farhana Ibrahim explains, “Before the creation of a modern political boundary between India and Pakistan, there were custom regulated rules on the grazing of animals and access to pasture lands, but for the most part anyone could use the grazing lands in the Rann as long as the grazing tax was paid to the appropriate authority—either Kachchh or Sindh (Gupta 1969). These lands were held in the manner of common property resources, controlled by the local ruler rather than as village owned greens.”

The close ties of marriages and trade between Sindh and Rajasthan survived the partition and continued till 1965 when the border dispute between India and Pakistan flared into an armed conflict. After the war of 1965, formal access was officially cordoned off and a series of militarization measures were taken that continue up to this day. The adverse effects of this militarization on everyday life were a recurrent theme voiced by many of the participants, compounding their feeling of double marginality—both geographical and political.

**Securitization/Militarization of the Border**

The December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament, and the subsequent military standoff with Pakistan, provided the immediate impetus for a restructuring of India’s defense, particularly in relation to Pakistan. The limited war Cold Start doctrine, introduced in 2004, marked a break from the fundamentally defensive orientation that the Indian military had employed since independence in 1947. The new posture was termed ‘active deterrence’ as against the ‘dissuasive deterrence’ that was practiced earlier.9

Under this system of ‘active deterrence’, every year two sets of military exercises are conducted in the border villages of Barmer. The first set commences in the summer months, usually between April-May, and the second set is held in the winter months. These military exercises cause routine disruption in the lives of the people living in the border regions. Coming in with heavy machinery and artillery, little attention is paid to what is being destroyed by these exercises—farms with standing

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8 Ibrahim, op.cit.,1623-1625.
crop get stampeded upon, wells, pumps and other important infrastructure is
carelessly run over, animals and cattle become collateral damage. A number of
complaints were voiced against the high handed behavior of the army – it was
alleged that the security forces pay no heed to the concerns and complaints of the
local population, take no responsibility for damage caused, and are opaque
on questions of compensation, reparation and remuneration for the days of work
lost.¹⁰

Operation Parakram¹¹ was one of the largest military exercise carried out by any
Asian country. After a military standoff lasting about a year, the Indian Army went
back to their barracks in October-November 2002. This display of military machismo
caused large-scale displacement; all along the border villages people were evacuated
and packed off to areas further inside. People lost their homes, fields and standing
crop to the army occupation. Alongside, more than 8 lakh land mines were laid
along the 1,040 km stretch of the India-Pakistan border in Rajasthan, the longest
land boundary between the two countries.

The minefields extended as far as six to eight kilometers from the border and were
planted in cultivated and uncultivated land, on farming and grazing land, around
infrastructure and around villages in defensive positions. The large number of civilian
casualties as a result thereof, called into question whether India has met the
requirement to protect civilians from entering areas containing antipersonnel mines.¹²
Though India maintains that “Minefields were laid, recorded and marked in
consonance with well-established Standard Operating Procedures and in conformity
with Amended Protocol II”, and that “all village headmen were personally informed
about the location of the minefields in order to ensure that local inhabitants were
adequately sensitized”,¹³ the respondents of SAFHR study claimed that no such
effort had been made.

The Indian Army started major mine clearance operations in October 2002 and
reported that as of 30 September 2003, over 90 percent of the mines had been

¹⁰ Study participants’ meeting held on April 9, 2011.
¹¹ Operation Parakram refers to the 2001-2002 military standoff between India and Pakistan, along
the western border of India.
¹² The Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor reports that “In 2003, there were at least 99
new civilian landmine casualties in the border districts of Rajasthan, Punjab and Jammu.”
http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?url=lm/2004/india.html#fn7358,
(accessed May 20, 2012).
recovered. However, mine clearing operations are painstakingly slow and dangerous as mines often shift from their original locations, becoming difficult to detect. Some mines become unstable due to exposure and are prone to exploding. Accidental deaths by landmines continue to occur in the region and even today, the one-off incident is reported. Though the government of India claims to have paid adequate compensation for loss of life and loss of land, the participants at the meeting contested those figures, stating that the actual figures were far lower.

The military standoff of 2002, a war that was never actually fought, had a devastating impact on the border villages. The memory of the fear that this period evoked is what stood out in the narratives of the participants. The events were not necessarily placed in chronological order, the dates were frequently mixed up, the Kargil war being confused with Operation Parakaram, but the larger issue of militarization and its impact is part of the lived history of the border. The Indian state has unwittingly accepted the assumption that a desert, given its harsh geographical environment, is necessarily ‘useless’ and thus a wasteland. Desert areas are thereby favored for army exercises, nuclear tests, firing ranges. There are a number of military ranges in Rajasthan— in Khetolai, Pokhran and Ramgarh—causing dispossession, displacement and loss of control of the indigenous population over their lands.

The figure of the army— and of the army man in particular— is mired in fear. People talk of bhay or fear of the army, specially the women, who ‘refuse’ to venture out whenever the army has its biannual exercises. At first no one at the meeting reported any incident of harassment of women by the army or BSF. Gradually, stories started to emerge. These ‘instances’ may be part of the urban legend surrounding the border, as no one could give us, or rather no one wanted to give us, exact dates or references, but perhaps the veracity of these claims is not even a question. The fear that has been instilled by the ‘man in uniform’ is entrenched amongst local populations. During the army exercises particularly, we were told, women try to stay indoors as much as possible. Lodging a complaint or FIR against such incidents is not a viable option for many. The question of shame and dishonor looms large. Education levels remain very low amongst border populations as a whole but especially amongst the girls and women. And even in instances where

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15 As of October 2003, the government reported that the minimum compensation being paid to civilian landmine casualties is a sum of Rs 100,000. However, this figure has been hotly contested. For further discussion of compensation figures please see http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?url=lm/2004/india.html#fn7358, (accessed May 30, 2011).
rape is reported, identification and the ensuing trial is a painstaking process, further victimizing the victim herself. As one of the participants informed us *fauji ke khilaaf complaint karna bahut difficult hotahai* (it is very difficult to complain against an army man).

**Lack of Development and Infrastructure**

Resources are usually to be invested where the nation state feels the most ‘vulnerable’. It is important for the state to be visible in border areas which while territorially being at the edge of a country, assume central importance when it comes to policy centered around the concerns of state security. Given the strategic importance of the western border of Rajasthan, it would seem plausible that the Government of India would be interested in having a greater stake in these areas, to build a relationship of trust. On the contrary, these border areas seem to be the forgotten lands of the Indian nation, only remembered in times of war. Lack of basic facilities and access to resources such as water, education, health care are issues that affect large parts of the country. But these issues take on a different dimension along the Rajasthan border.

The lack of development is clearly reflected in the literacy and health indicators of Barmer district, where one can see the divide existing between the border regions and the main town. Literacy in Barmer district, according to the 2011 census, was 57.49 percent where male literacy was 72.32 percent compared to the much lower female literacy level of 41.03 percent. According to a UNDP report of 2009, the highest literacy rate was recorded in Barmer and the lowest in the border village of Ramsar. Again, the lowest male literacy rate was recorded in the border village of Chohtan at 65.2 percent and the highest rate in Barmer at 79.8 percent. While the desert state of Rajasthan as a whole ranks quite low on the development scale, in the border districts of Barmer, Jaisalmer and Bikaner the situation is even worse. For instance, in 2004–05, there were 3 hospitals, 3 dispensaries, 3 mother and child welfare centers, 66 rural primary health centers and 443 sub centers in all of Barmer, and one can only imagine the skewed distribution of these resources from the main city to the far off border districts.18


The Border Area Development Program (BADP) was started during the 7th Five-Year Plan in 1987, with the express purpose of meeting the developmental needs of people living in remote and inaccessible areas situated near international borders.¹⁹ But it must be pointed out that the planning and implementation of the BADP suffers from serious oversights. The priority zone for the BADP is about 0-40 kilometers from the fence. While this works in regions like Barmer and Bikaner, which have village districts located very close to the border, in areas like Jaisalmer where villages are located slightly farther away, this categorization of the priority zone becomes a problem. Again, the BADP is only to be implemented in areas deemed to be revenue villages i.e. having a population of 2000 or more. But revenue villages often comprise of several hamlets, or dhannis, which may be far-flung from each other, whereby it becomes difficult to access education and other facilities. Very often population living in these smaller hamlets is not registered, and as a consequence no developmental project takes place due to ‘lack of population’.

The implementation of the BADP is monitored in the Department of Border Management and by state governments which take crucial decisions regarding the scope of the program, its execution, prescription of geographical limits, allocation of funds etc. But, ask the people, how can policy makers at the Centre, having no real knowledge of border conditions, decide which areas should be deemed as priority? There is a complete lack of democratic debate and discussion in the scope and implementation of the BADP, leading border populations to lament the gross neglect of border areas. As one of the participants at the meeting voiced, “Pakistan will attack when it will, but with India, it is like dying a slow death… there is simply no access to facilities. When the Indian government spends so much on defense, can we not ask for even our basic rights?”²⁰

¹⁹ It is implemented under the guidelines framed by the Planning Commission, where funds are allocated taking into consideration (i) length of International Border (km); (ii) Population of the border block and (iii) Area of the border block (sq km). Weightage of 15 percent over and above the total allocation is also given to states having hilly/desert/kuchchh areas. These funds are in addition to what the Centre usually provides in the form of financial assistance, and are to be used in the identified border blocks only. Various schemes like construction/maintenance of roads, water supply, education, filling gaps in infrastructure, security, etc. are being undertaken under the BADP, mostly centered on border villages. http://www.mha.nic.in/pdfs/BADP.pdf., (accessed April 15, 2011).

²⁰ Meeting held on April 10, 2011.
Impact on Economy

The territorial etching of the border has had considerable impact on the economy and livelihoods of border landers. The erstwhile interdependence of the Sindh and Rajasthan region has been severely disrupted, particularly since an official fencing procedure commenced in the 1990s. The physical construction of the fence effectively put a check to cross border trading and the migratory patterns of before. Fencing has had a considerable impact on agriculture also, since many people found their land to be on the wrong side of the fence, where entry is restricted. It may also be stated that till date, no realistic estimate has been made on the amount of land lost to fencing in Rajasthan, or which areas have been the most affected.

There are all sorts of restrictions on sale and purchase of land in these border areas. For instance in the nehrielakas, or areas fed by the Indira Gandhi Canal, outsiders are not allowed to buy or sell land. Similarly, in the areas under the Desert National Park such transfers are prohibited and in Restricted Areas near the border, special permission is needed. Though big multinational companies like Cairn Energy have invested on the Eastern side of the NH15, investment on the Western side remains typically low. The lack of industries is due to a number of factors – lack of raw material like water, electricity, markets, lack of basic education and health facilities, insufficient irrigation and drinking water facilities, poor road connectivity, lack of skilled manpower etc.

State support in the form of investment remains limited, moreover, the state has not invested in systematic schemes for livestock rearing. Large livestock offers opportunities for development of livestock based agro processing industries, like sheep wool carpet making, using animal waste products like hides, skins, bones etc. This industrial base should be strengthened. However, livestock is largely migrating for want of drinking water and fodder.21

Borders within Borders

National Highway 15, connecting Samakhiali in Gujarat with Pathankot in Punjab, acts as a sort of border within the border region of Barmer, creating a division between the more developed Eastern part and its poorer Western counterpart. The Western side – bordering Sindh – is visibly poorer in terms of development, infrastructure, access to resources such as water, education, health care etc.

\[21\] Government of Rajasthan and Planning Commission of India, op.cit.
The Western side of NH 15 – running from Sriganganagar to Sanchore via Sriganganagar, Suratgarh, Lunkaransar, Bikaner, Gajner, Kolayat, Phalodi, Khera, Ramdevra, Pokaran, Lathi, Jaisalmer, Sangad, Fatehgarh, Sheo, Bhadewa, Kapoordi, Barmer, Hathitala, Sanwara, Lookho, Gandhwa and Dhamuna—also falls under the partially protected areas of India. Under the Foreigner (Protected Areas) Act, foreigners are required to obtain a Protected Area Permit (PAP) to visit these areas, along with acquiring an Indian visa. In addition, by a 1996 notification of the Ministry of Home Affairs, certain border areas of Barmer (Gadra Road, Ramsar, Binjrad, Sedwa, Bakhusar, Girab, Chohtan), Jaisalmer (Nachna, Mohangarh, Ramgarh, Shahgarh, Jhinjhinyali, Nokh, Khusi, Sum), Bikaner (Bajju, Pugal, Chattargarh, Khajuwal) and Jellore (Sanchore, Chitalwana, Sarwana) were declared to be notified areas where access was prohibited unless a special permission was received from the District Magistrate or the Sub District Magistrate.

As a result of the restrictions, investment in these border areas has remained quite low. Even Indian citizens who are not residents of these specified areas require an Inner Line Permit (ILP) to enter these places, thereby restricting mobility. Residents of the border areas complain of differential treatment meted out against them—while tourists and foreign professionals with big oil corporations are able to obtain a PAP with relative ease—it is them and their relatives from Pakistan, who are discriminated against.

British oil major Cairn Energy made one of its most significant oil finds in the Mangala fields of Barmer in 2004, marking the beginning of a major shift in the economy. This was followed by the 1,080 MW power plant by the Barmer Lignite Mining Company Limited (BLMCL)—a joint venture of the Rajasthan Government and Jindal Energy – which was set up in February 2009. Overnight, the town of Barmer saw something of a face lift, land on the Eastern side of NH15 was now being sold for millions of rupees. But while the discovery of oil has meant immense prosperity for some, it has had no trickle down effects to other areas, especially those on the Western side of NH15. The Western front still remains largely rural with a complete lack of even basic facilities.

Local population in the border areas recognize themselves as being ‘outside’ the mainstream, and demand that the state also recognizes them as such. One of their key demands is that border areas, and especially those along harsh terrain like deserts, be given special economic concessions which would make this area more attractive to outsiders for the sake of investment. They compare themselves to adivasis (tribals), and demand that they too be given special privileges to ensure social justice. For instance one of their demands is that, given the educational backwardness of these
areas and of Rajasthan as a whole, the minimum educational qualification to join the army be reduced from class X to class IX. The irony of the situation is that instead of asking for an overall improvement in the education system, the demand is for the general pass rate to be decreased.

**Fundamental Rights**

Through the course of the dialogues, the abysmally low levels of awareness amongst border peoples regarding laws and relevant legal frameworks, and of their own fundamental rights, was striking. The demands thus made by the participants were simple—the right to information, to know in advance when military exercises are to be held, to be given ample warning before village evacuations, to have a right to voice their grievances and expect redressal of the same.

The institution of the *gram panchayat* is a hallmark of Indian democracy. Particularly in context of border areas, which are geographically so far away from the centre’s vision, there is a need to make these local bodies more efficient and accountable so that border people feel that they have a stake in the system, and are active participants in the same. Even from a state security perspective, it is important to ensure that population at the borders are invested in the system, failing which it becomes difficult to ensure territorial loyalty. Right to family, right to culture, right to freedom of religion, right to education, right to health, and the overall civil and political rights of people in the borderlands must be acknowledged and respected. Given the strategic importance of border areas, there is always the fear that civil administration will play second fiddle to the dictates of security or military organizations. This needs to be checked, and the full importance of the *gram sabhas has* to be realized, in order to experience citizenship as democratic inclusion rather than exclusion. For instance, border people have a right to demand that the army pay for damages caused during the military exercises. Guidelines regarding remuneration—whether due to mining, accidental death or during military/war operations, must be made accessible to the local population.

In our meetings with the BSF, we were told that Community Liaison Group meetings are called by the SHO in Barmer every couple of months, but we found that the level of awareness about the very occurrence of these meetings was extremely low. Even in times of evacuation or mine laying there is allegedly no direct interaction with locals. The locals are just ‘asked’ to cooperate. The army and the BSF are recognized as the most powerful bodies operating in the border areas, but there is no system by which a local popular representative can talk to the BSF directly. The BSF interacts once in a while as part of its welfare programmes, but not as interface
between government and people. What is witnessed is a kind of ‘security raj’, where as one of the women respondents at the meeting stated “woh apni bandook ki nok se kuch bhi kar sake hain” (They can do anything with their gun).

To access land on the other side of the fence, permission is needed from the BSF in the form of parchis (permits), which have to be deposited by 6 pm, failing which one has to pay a hefty default sum. The curfew of 6 pm imposed by the army is another severe restriction on the mobility of the people as special permission is required for any negotiation with the curfew timings. As one of the participants in the dialogue put it, “Our fields went in defense of the nation but we have got nothing in return”. In addition, no remuneration has been given for land which was lost to the construction of the fence.

Fencing was also initiated to curtail smuggling and other ‘illegal’ activities rampant on the Rajasthan border in the 1980s. With the construction of a physical fence, smuggling figures went down drastically. In fact, this is the only real benefit that has accrued to the border people because earlier, smugglers would be able to trespass the border easily, and it would be they—the local civilian population—that would be caught and hauled up for questioning. Restriction on smuggling has at least meant some temporary respite for the villagers who now don’t have the fear of being randomly picked up on suspicion of being a smuggler, or on the allegation of helping smugglers from across the border.

However, the political economy of the border works in strange ways. It is not as if smuggling has stopped completely; it continues in myriad forms, through innovative mechanisms. Different government agencies, in fact, have a complicit hand in this.

**Role of Intelligence Agencies of the State**

From the reports we heard, it seems like a number of security agencies stationed in border areas are involved in recruiting people as spies to be sent to the bordering districts of Pakistan. Those recruited are often the uneducated, the poor and the landless, dalits and religious minorities who are pitted at the very bottom of the social ladder.

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22 Meeting on April 10, 2011.

23 It is interesting to note the forms of resistance employed by the local population. One of our respondents informed us that now people have started putting the land on the other side of the fence as girvi or mortgage for loans. This essentially spells problems for the government because there will be no way to recover the money in case the borrower defaults.
Khoja Khan is one such person, who was caught in Pakistan and languished in a jail for ten years. He was approached by Indian security agencies in 1996, and regularly made illegal forays into Pakistan till 2000, when he was picked up the Pakistan intelligence agencies and sentenced to jail. Though his sentence was supposed to be for a period of 3 months, on the relatively minor charge of unknowingly trespassing the border, he ended up spending 10 years in jail, as India-Pakistan prisoners are released only after joint consultations with both sides. Given the strained diplomatic relations between the two countries, this process is far from smooth.

During his time in jail, he alleges that the agencies that trained and sent him washed their hands off him. He had been lured by promises of wealth, with the agencies promising that at least his family would be taken care of in case something happened to him. However, his family received no support during the period of his incarceration and became hapless victims of this ‘illegal’ network. When asked why he agreed to do this work in the first place his reply was simple—”main majboortha” (I had no choice)—since the security agency in question was constantly pressurizing him and reminding him of his ‘duties’ towards the motherland. With no alternate source of livelihood, Khoja Khan had not much choice in the matter.

When we say ‘no alternate source of livelihood’, perhaps we should replace the term ‘alternate’ with ‘legal’. Khoja Khan had been a smuggler back in the days when smuggling was still rampant. It was perhaps his identity as a former smuggler, as a man who knew his way in and around Pakistan, as a Muslim man with relatives there, which probably sealed his fate. There is thus a curious negotiation with legality at play here. Khoja Khan is comfortable playing both, the role of ‘actor’ as well as ‘victim’. His decision to go to Pakistan as a spy was no doubt based on his former connections as a smuggler, putting him outside the boundaries of state sanctioned legality. The fact that he was caught and treated so poorly marks him as a ‘victim’. He thus finds no contradiction in saying that he did it ‘for the sake of the country, to be a good Indian’, while stating in the same breath that he was forced to do it because ‘he had no other option’. His status as a former smuggler, as a ‘criminal’ seemed to make no difference to the way he was greeted by other locals present in the dialogue. His actions or his involvement with semi legal structures was not deemed reprehensible. If anything, he was propped up as one of the key figures in their quest for justice.

**Citizenship and Refugee Concerns**

The Partition of India in 1947 saw the largest ever transfer of population, creating newly constructed categories of ‘minority’ and ‘majority’ populations in both India
and Pakistan. The Partition created a massive refugee situation, continuing up to this very day. Yet, neither India nor Pakistan is signatory to the United Nations Convention on Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees of 1967.

Forming less than 2 percent of Pakistan’s population currently, the country’s largest minority, roughly about three million, Hindus are concentrated in the southern Sindh province. Among them are some prosperous bania merchants and powerful Rajput landlords, but the majority of Pakistan’s Hindus are dalits, mainly impoverished landless laborers. The first wave of massive migration to India from Thar Parkar occurred in the wake of the India-Pakistan war of 1965. Some 10,000 people from the area crossed over to India. Then, in the course of the 1971 war, India occupied a large part of Thar Parkar, as a result of which about 90,000 Hindus of the area shifted to India and decided not to return. Under the 1972 Shimla agreement, India agreed to give back this territory with Pakistan promising to receive 90,000 of its nationals, mainly Hindus from Thar Parkar, who had taken shelter in India during the war. Though India returned the land, Pakistan showed little interest in accepting these people, most of whom had sought shelter in western Rajasthan and few of whom wanted to return.24

In 1978, by an order of the Government of India, the District Magistrates in Gujarat and Rajasthan were authorized to grant Indian citizenship to refugees who had come in 1965 and 1971. The refugees who arrived in 1965 were allocated villages inhabited by Muslims who left for Pakistan during the same time. The rehabilitation package for those who arrived in 1971 included an allocation of either 25 bighas of land in the canal area or 75 bighas of barren land in the desert. However, people complain that only a part of this total allocated land was given to them, the rest was included in the Desert National Park or occupied by local people.

The attack on Muslims in India and the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 was reciprocated by massive waves of attacks against Hindus in Pakistan, because of which cross border migration increased. Most of these refugees are from Thar Parkar district in Sindh. Others are from other neighboring districts of Sindh, such as Umarkot, Mirpur Khas and Hyderabad, as well as from Rahimyar Khan and Bahwalpur in southern Punjab. While the earlier migration had been mostly from the feudal and upper caste Hindus from Thar Parker, migration in recent years has been of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Prior to the fencing that commenced

in 1990s, cross border movement was relatively easier, even though the border was regulated. However, the institution of the fence spelt stricter checks and controls and necessitated state sanctioned passports and other documents. Negotiation with this bureaucratic juggernaut is a complex process for many of these refugees who are poor and illiterate and with hardly enough money to pay for valid legal documents.

Most of the migrants and refugees who come to India from southern Sindh have settled in Rajasthan. Most of them have relatives in the state, particularly in the border districts of Barmer, Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Sriganganagar. They have to regularly apply for the renewal of their visas, and this is very often denied. Migrants have to be residents of India for at least 7 years in order to acquire citizenship. A Long Term Visa (LTV) is usually issued in the interim, but there are many restrictions within it. For instance, migrants are not allowed to travel to the border districts, which is where most of them have relatives. The Indian High Commission in Islamabad refuses to give visas to Pakistani nationals to travel to these districts, because of the Protected Areas Acts.25

For the Sodha Rajputs of Pakistan these difficulties in acquiring visa interfere with their right to religious and cultural freedom. Over ten lakh Sodha Rajputs live in Umarkot, just across the international border from Barmer. Since intra-gotra marriage is said to be prohibited, Sodha Rajputs look beyond the borders to wed their sons and daughters among the Rajputs of Rajasthan. In October 2009, they won a major battle as the Ministry of External Affairs, in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs, agreed to grant members of this community a six month visa to visit India, instead of the erstwhile limit of thirty days. But though this is a victory of sorts, there is still the problem of actually travelling to the restricted border areas in search of a potential bride or groom.

These laws must also be analyzed from a gendered lens. The border imposes additional boundaries on the lives of women, by dividing their natal home from their matrimonial home. Pakistani citizenship can be acquired if one spends a

25 Through the efforts of local organizations like the Pak VishtapitSamiti (PVS) and the SeemantLokSangathan, in February 2004, the Government of India declared that all eligible Pakistani refugees in Rajasthan and Gujarat could apply for Indian citizenship, with the power of granting citizenship delegated to the District Magistrates of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Following this, ‘citizenship camps’ were organized by the government between January 4 and February 28, 2005 in all the districts of Rajasthan where the migrants reside. By February 28 more than 13,000 Pakistani migrants received Indian citizenship through the citizenship camps. On March 3, 2005, the extension period of the order was further renewed by another year, but even this was wholly inadequate since the migration of Hindus from Pakistan continued post 2006.
minimum of two years in the country. Thus, for women from India while it is relatively easy to get Pakistani citizenship once they are married and settled in Pakistan, re-acquiring Indian citizenship, should the need arise, is a difficult process. Moreover, even short term visits to her maternal house, particularly if it is located in the border area, will not be permitted.

The Thar Express link, which was destroyed during the course of the 1965 war, was restored on 18 February 2006 after a period of 41 years. It connects Karachi to Jodhpur in India; Munabao and Khokhrapar being the last two railway stations on the India-Pakistan border. These two stations are about six kilometers apart. On the Indian side, after customs and security at Munabao, the Thar Express goes straight to Jodhpur without any stops in the middle. While the physical distance may only be that of a couple of hours, due to security reasons and under the guise of the protected areas act, people are forced to go all the way to Jodhpur, spend long hours at customs and camp there for the entire duration of the time they are visiting. Referring to the initial euphoria over the train which has now been marred by the many bureaucratic obstacles involved, participants likened the opening of the Thar Express to the situation in which “pyase ko paani dikhaya jai, par pilayana jaye” (Showing water to the thirsty but not allowing him to drink).

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to illustrate the many impediments to ‘inclusive citizenship’ facing the borderlanders of Barmer district. The event of the partition may have erected a formal boundary dividing the two countries, but the border between Rajasthan and Sindh remains socially fluid even years after its territorial demarcation. It is this very fluidity which threatens and undermines the supposed homogeneity of national territories, and which the state tries to regulate through securitization and militarization. The desert state of Rajasthan has many developmental concerns given its arid geography. The border villages of this region thus face a double marginality—geographically, they are located on the edge of the nation state, and politically their human security is frequently compromised for the sake of state security. Their formal citizenship and loyalties are constantly questioned, their livelihoods are perpetually at stake, and moreover, they live their life under a framework of extreme militarization with no recourse to accountability.

This marginality must be immediately addressed, by prioritizing human rights over militarization. Army exercises must be conducted with the active knowledge and cooperation of borderlanders. Exercises should occur far away from residential places, and should be held in the same place each year. Due notification should be given to both the district collector as well as the village panchayats, and it should be mandatory
for the army to procure a ‘No Objection’ certificate before it leaves the area. Compensation measures for any damage caused must be put in place, so that borderlanders have institutional support when it comes to redressal of their grievances.

Access to education and other basic facilities remains severely restricted in border areas. The Indian state must be attendant to these concerns, and invest in the socio-economic growth of the region. At the same time, these facilities should be made accessible to even the most marginalized of social groups, particularly women. Programs like the NREGA should be used for construction of school buildings, hospitals and medical facilities to create rural infrastructure that will better the livelihoods of people.

Lack of accurate and suitable data was cited as one of the biggest obstacles to development by both the participants at the dialogue, as well as by the BSF. It is thus imperative to have a national level detailed survey of all border villages of Rajasthan to get extensive qualitative and quantitative data on the issues affecting these areas as a whole, and for future planning of funds and resources. The benefits of the oil discovery have not percolated to those most in need. It thus stands to reason that at least a certain percentage of the profits reaped as a result of the oil discovery be used for the benefit of the district as a whole. Rajasthan is a state rich in minerals, the benefits of which seldom accrue to local populations. The state needs to step in to ensure that local resources are used optimally for employment and income generation.

The refugee issues attendant upon this border must also be addressed. Three key demands were voiced: 1) the hike in the fee for applying for Indian citizenship be rescinded; 2) the criteria of seven year period of residency in India for citizenship purposes be reconsidered and reduced to the earlier period of five years; and 3) the power to grant citizenship be vested with the District Magistrates.

The acceptance of demands and recommendations by the border population would go a long way in addressing the feeling of alienation and marginalization experienced by border populations. The ‘vibrant borderland society with dynamic socio-cultural practices straddling the border is at odds with the state’s agenda of using the border as a tool of statecraft; for realizing its territorial sovereignty’26. However, the imperatives of militarization and national security are severely at odds with human security, and are a constant threat to the stability of the region and, by extension, that of the nation state.

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Select Bibliography


Trust-Building in International Relations*

Nicholas J. Wheeler

Abstract

The challenge of building trust between states that have a history of conflict and acrimony has attracted the attention of scholars in the field of International Relations for several decades. While several models have been offered, constant changes in the international environment reveal their gaps. In this paper, the author explores the challenges that states face in the process of building trusting relationships, given the complexity nuclearization offers. It presents a critique of the existing models and some preliminary ideas for understanding the process of trust building using a concept he terms as “interpersonal communicative dynamics”.

This paper offers a toolkit and vocabulary for thinking about the challenge of trust-building in conflict situations. While the ideas and approaches elucidated here can be applied to both interstate and intrastate conflicts, the focus is on interstate relations (particularly in the context of nuclearization). The purpose of this paper is five-fold. First, to distinguish trusting relationships from trust; second, to identify four key drivers of mistrust (or barriers to trust) in interstate relations; third, to elaborate

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the weaknesses of two models of trust-building in International Relations and to
discuss the importance of interpersonal communicative dynamics in the building of
trusting relationships, drawing on empirical cases such as the ending of the Cold
War and ASEAN. Finally, the focus is on the challenge of sustaining and embedding
trusting relationships.

Definitions of trust and trusting relationships

The conventional wisdom among trust researchers is to define trust as a psychological
state in which positive expectations are held regarding the motives and intentions
of another actor. Yet whilst an actor might hold the belief that another can be trusted,
one may argue that what matters for the existence of a trusting relationship is that
one or both parties predicate their actions on this assumption. A distinction must be
made between trust and trusting relationships. The most important action, and the
one that defines the emergence of a trusting relationship, is a decision by one or
both parties to make themselves vulnerable – or at least not seek to eliminate existing
vulnerabilities – as a way of communicating their trustworthiness. In other words,
we make ourselves vulnerable because we want to communicate our trustworthiness.
This is what may be termed as the decision to trust, a concept borrowed from Robert
Solomon and Fernando Flores.

The centrality of an acceptance of vulnerability to the development of a trusting
relationship is recognized by trust researchers across the social sciences and
humanities. This is because, as James Notter argued, “if you risk and you are not
exploited, this builds your confidence in the trustworthiness of the other. Second,
by exposing yourself to exploitation, you are likely to make yourself more trusting
in the eyes of the other”.

This leads to the following definition of a trusting relationship as “one into which
actors enter in order to realize benefits which would otherwise not be available to
them. They do so in the knowledge that this increases their vulnerability to other
actors whose behavior they do not control, with potentially negative consequences

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1 This can be defined as a cognitive attitude which includes reason and emotion.
for themselves. In doing so, they make a judgment about how to relate to the other party in which there is a strong expectation that they will not face the negative consequences of the *decision to trust*.5

Building trusting relationships in both interstate and intrastate conflicts requires overcoming some key drivers of mistrust (or barriers to trust).

**The drivers of mistrust**6

There are four drivers of mistrust that can be applied to both intrastate and interstate conflicts. These are (1) the security dilemma; (2) the challenge of peaceful/defensive self-images; (3) ambiguous symbolism; and (4)”ideological fundamentalism”.

**Security dilemma**

A central challenge facing actors in conflict situations is how to cope with the security dilemma created by the inescapable condition of international anarchy – understood as a political system where there is no central global authority to regulate the agents within the system. Security dilemma may be defined as the inescapable uncertainty that confronts governments about the intentions of those with the capability to do them harm.7 According to Robert Jervis, security dilemma arises when states take actions to make themselves secure, but end up making other people insecure.8 The security dilemma gives rise to what has been called the ‘dilemma of interpretation’ and the ‘dilemma of response’. With regard to the former, those responsible for security policy have to decide whether another actor’s actions—especially its military behavior—signal that it is acting defensively only (to enhance its security in an uncertain world) or whether it has offensive purposes (seeking to change the status quo to its advantage). Decision-makers then need to determine how to respond. If the dilemma of response is based on misplaced suspicion regarding

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6 A distinction can be made between mistrust and distrust. In distrust, an actor actively believes that the other cannot be trusted. A decision has already been taken that the other is insincere. In mistrust, an actor is suspicious of the other, but he/she does not know whether the other can be trusted. However, the operationalization of the difference is difficult.


the motives and intentions of other actors, and decision-makers react in a militarily confrontational manner, then they risk creating a significant level of mutual hostility when none was originally intended by either party. If the response is based on misplaced trust, there is a risk they will be exposed to coercion by those with hostile intentions.

Moreover, even if governments are confident about the current intentions of others, what guarantee can they have that another state or actor will not develop aggressive intentions in the future? This “future uncertainty” argument was first discussed by John Herz⁹ in the literature on security dilemma theorizing. He questioned how could governments “trust in the continuance of good intentions in the case of collective entities with leaders and policies forever changing?” His answer, that leaders had to maximize their power against potential enemies, and be prepared for the worst, was echoed by contemporary offensive realists.

**Peaceful/defensive self-images**

A key factor in leading governments to pessimistically resolve the dilemma of interpretation is the problem of peaceful/defensive self-images. Herbert Butterfield, a British historian, was the first to capture how these psychological dynamics can work to exacerbate conflict. Diplomats, he wrote, “may vividly feel the terrible fear that [they] have of the other party, but [they] cannot enter into the [others’] counter-fear, or even understand why [they] should be particularly nervous…[and it is] never possible for you to realize or remember properly that since [the other] cannot see the inside of your mind, [they] can never have the same assurance of your intentions that you have”¹⁰. In other words, while we may think that other people see us as peaceful and defensive, they might think differently and instead see us as having aggressive intent. Butterfield was very doubtful that state leaders were capable of entering into the counter-fear of their enemies. He was of the view that historians, at a later stage, might be able to understand these patterns. However, empathy of this kind is a crucial precondition (though not a guarantee) for the building of trust.

Developing and elaborating Butterfield’s work, Robert Jervis in the 1970s had described these dynamics as the “spiral model”. Jervis explained this as a situation where two states (mis) perceive each other as having aggressive intent when each is

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only acting defensively; the result is a spiral of mutual hostility that could have been avoided through a better understanding of these dynamics (of the spiral). One key factor that inhibits actors from understanding that they might be in a spiral situation is their powerfully ingrained peaceful/defensive self-images. As Jervis wrote, what drives the spiral is the inability of policy-makers to “recognize that one’s own actions could be seen as menacing and the concomitant belief that the other’s hostility can only be explained by its aggressiveness”\(^{11}\).

Butterfield’s and Jervis’s elucidation of the psychological dynamics that can fuel mistrust and/or distrust between states raises the question whether a better understanding of the spiral model on the part of policy-makers might lead to less pessimistic resolutions of the dilemma of interpretation in the nuclear sphere. The difficulty in answering this question is that it depends upon the response to a deeper question which is: on what epistemological and methodological grounds should policy-makers and analysts privilege a spiral explanation over one that posits aggressive intent—either now or in the future—on the part of governments? The problem is that there is no Olympian viewpoint from which observers or policy-makers can make a definitive claim that a particular case fits the spiral model or security dilemma dynamics. Despite Butterfield’s claim that only historians, in retrospect, would be able to make reliable assessments as to whether a situation was explainable in spiral terms, the fact is that history offers no final resting point for resolving these issues. For example, historians continue to disagree about the motives and intentions that led to war in 1914 and 1939. This is because the security dilemma—the existential condition of uncertainty regarding the intentions of others—can never be escaped in world politics.

**Ambiguous symbolism**

The above psychological dynamics are compounded by the problem of ambiguous symbolism\(^{12}\). The term refers to the difficulty (many would say the impossibility) of safely distinguishing between “offensive” and “defensive” weapons. Even if states profess that their weaponry is only to be used in self-defense after an attack, others will worry that such capabilities might be used for offensive purposes.

For example, such arguments were invoked in the context of India-Pakistan relations to foreground the risks of instability during crises. Did the crises during the period 1999–2002 reflect the difficulty of distinguishing precautionary “defensive” moves

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\(^{11}\) Robert Jervis, *op.cit.*, 75.

\(^{12}\) Ken Booth and Nicholas Wheeler, *op.cit.*, 154.
from preparations for attack? Did Indian and Pakistani decision-makers face nuclear dilemmas of interpretation and response?

The problem of ambiguous symbolism arises in relation to deployed weapons, but it also arises in relation to the dual-use character of civil nuclear technology. For example, civilian nuclear power-plants, which generate electricity, also possess the technology to build a weapon. The boundary between “peaceful” and “military” uses of nuclear technology throws up a particularly vexing dilemma for policymakers because the boundary itself is blurred, yet once crossed it gives the transgressor immense weapons potential. All states, for example, that have mastered the technologies of uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing possess the capacity to produce the fissile materials that are needed for developing a nuclear weapon. A 2004 UN report estimated that at least 40 governments are in a position to move quickly to nuclear weapons status should a political decision be taken.13

**Ideological fundamentalism**

Ideological convictions have often been decisive in how policy-makers have resolved uncertainties about the motives and intentions of others. Ideological fundamentalism is a mindset which assigns enemy status because of what the other is—its political identity—rather than how it actually behaves. Ideological fundamentalism gives rise to what Ole Holsti called “an inherent bad faith model”14 of one’s adversary. In a landmark study, Holsti showed how John Foster Dulles, U.S. President Eisenhower’s Secretary of State, adopted an ‘inherent bad faith model’ of Soviet behavior in the 1950s. Holsti’s verdict was that for Dulles the Soviet Union must behave in the negative way it did solely as a result of the ideological nature of the state. The implication of bad faith thinking for trust-building is that governments operating with this outlook will always treat cooperative moves as either a trick to lull them into a false sense of security, or as a sign of weakness.

Recently, there have been claims that such a mindset has afflicted India-Pakistan relations as also the relationship between Iran and the US.

Highlighting this source of inter-state mistrust does not, however, mean that ideological fundamentalism is always a bad thing, since governments might find

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themselves facing an implacable foe, or foes, motivated by an ideological creed that commits them to aggressive actions. The problem is that because of the security dilemma, there can be no final certainty as to whether others are behaving in a hostile way because they are fearful or because they have aggressive intent.

**Building trust between adversaries**

In order to examine how far existing approaches to trust-building in International Relations provide the resources for overcoming mistrust between states and other actors, the focus will be on two key models. The first is Charles Osgood’s conception of Graduated Reciprocation in Tension Reduction (GRIT) and the second is Andrew Kydd’s model of costly signaling.

**GRIT**

Writing nine months before the superpowers came to the brink of nuclear war over the Soviet deployment of nuclear weapons to Cuba, the social psychologist Charles Osgood had proposed that the United States could break the Cold War cycle of suspicion and fear by making a series of limited conciliatory moves. He argued that this might trigger reciprocation by the Soviet Union, leading to what Osgood called a “spiral of trust”15. He encapsulated the essence of a unilateral graduated approach to trust-building in his proposal that it should “satisfy reasonable requirements of national security” and only involve taking “limited risks”. If reciprocity was forthcoming, Osgood argued that the initiating state should follow up with bolder initiatives. If there was no positive response, he argued that the state pursuing GRIT should carry on making limited moves in the hope of triggering reciprocation.

There is clearly room for debate and political disagreement as to what counts as satisfying “reasonable requirements of national security”. Nevertheless, the potential merit of GRIT is that it allows governments in relationships of varying degrees of rivalry to signal their peaceful/defensive intentions without exposing themselves to a high level of risk if it turns out that the state which one is seeking to build trust with has aggressive intentions.

However, GRIT suffers from four key limitations. The first is the difficulty of justifying unilateral initiatives given particular forms of domestic opposition. If positive reciprocity was not forthcoming after a GRIT move, Osgood argued that

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it was important to keep making small moves in the hope that these would elicit the desired response. But the problem with applying this prescription is that it overlooks the political damage that could be done to a leader who makes a series of concessions which are seen to have been pocketed by the other side.

Secondly, it can be difficult to determine which moves will be sufficient in terms of their trust-building potential to appear credible to the other state, and there is the related difficulty of ensuring that signals which the sender believes communicate trustworthiness will be perceived this way by the receiver. Cultural, historical, and psychological biases might serve to distort trust signals from that intended by the sender.

The third limitation of GRIT is that decision-makers in the state with whom an actor is trying to build trust may discount the trusting signal as either a trick or a sign of weakness because their ideological fundamentalist mind-sets lead them to apply a “bad faith model” to the other side’s actions. The concern here is that the government which believes it has made a trusting move will become disillusioned by such a negative response and shift to a more confrontational strategy in the belief that the other side cannot be trusted. We can see the consequences of such disillusionment in President Obama’s shift to a more confrontational policy towards Iran’s nuclear program after what he viewed as a series of conciliatory overtures.

The final weakness in Osgood’s theory is that he does not provide a convincing account of how decision-makers in relationships of mistrust can overcome the dynamics of distrust in the absence of credible evidence that a conciliatory move would be reciprocated.

**Costly signaling**

A graduated, incremental approach to building trust like GRIT suffers from the general problem that small steps might be insufficient to communicate trustworthiness to suspicious adversaries. This leads Andrew Kydd to argue that if actors are to decisively signal their trustworthiness, they have to send what he calls a “costly signal”. He defined this as “signals designed to persuade the other side that one is trustworthy by virtue of the fact that they are so costly that one would hesitate to send them if one were untrustworthy”\textsuperscript{16}. It is no good sending a signal, he argued, that could be dismissed as “cheap talk”, and so will fail to reassure the

other side about one’s intentions. Consequently, a state wanting to be seen as trustworthy should be prepared to take some risks. But it is a weakness of Kydd’s theory, just like Osgood’s theory, that he gives little guidance as to what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable risks.

The failure of Kydd to specify what his theory requires in terms of risk-taking is compounded by three further limitations. The first is that he assumes that decision-makers always interpret a costly signal correctly. However, as with GRIT, what the sending state perceives as a costly signal might not be interpreted in the same way by the receiving state. The second limitation is that Kydd assumes that costly signals clearly differentiate trustworthy from untrustworthy types and that the latter would never send a costly signal. But this ignores the possibility that a state with aggressive intent might be able to mimic costly signals as a way of lulling an adversary into a false sense of security. The third criticism that can be leveled at Kydd’s model is an even stronger version of the one leveled at Osgood’s GRIT, namely, he does not supply us with an account of how decision-makers who are sincerely committed to building trust reach the point where they make a decision to trust a potential adversary.

The key question that Kydd’s theory opens up—though lacks the theoretical resources to adequately answer—concerns the processes, domestic and international, that lead policy-makers to seek to signal their trustworthiness in ways that break down previously held negative images of an adversary.

**Building trusting relationships through interpersonal communicative dynamics**

The first step in developing a trusting relationship is for decision-makers on one, or preferably both sides, to appreciate that their adversary might be acting out of fear and not malevolence. Moreover, it is crucial that each actor recognizes the role that their own behavior has played in provoking that fear. Building on the pioneering work of John Herz, Herbert Butterfield, and Robert Jervis, Ken Booth and I have called such empathetic responsiveness on the part of leaders to the security concerns of others as “security dilemma sensibility”. In our 2008 book *The Security Dilemma*, we defined this as an “actor’s intention and capacity to perceive the motives behind, and to show responsiveness towards, the potential complexity of the military intentions of others. In particular, it refers to the ability to understand the role that fear might play in their attitudes and behavior, including, crucially, the role that one’s own actions may play in provoking that fear”.

Yet even if leaders are aware that others might be acting out of fear and insecurity, it does not automatically follow such a reframing of a conflict that actors will initiate
trusting moves. Decision-makers might consider that a *spiral interpretation* of a conflict is a persuasive one, but still feel compelled to act on the basis of mistrust because of the perceived costs of adopting policies that turn out to be based on misplaced trust. Individual-level empathy can be translated into policies aimed at building trust. But for this to happen, decision-makers have to make a conscious *decision to trust* and, such a decision entails an acceptance of vulnerability (or at a minimum doing nothing to reduce existing vulnerabilities). Vulnerability is inescapable because there is always the risk that one’s assessment of the other side’s motives and intentions as peaceful/defensive is wrong. There is no escape from uncertainty because trust and uncertainty are mutually implicated; after all, if we had certainty, we would not need trust.

Even if decision-makers make a conscious decision to trust (and it is only a decision to trust if actors could have done otherwise), the question is what kinds of polices will signal their trustworthiness to others? Crucially, what risks are policy-makers prepared to take to transform an adversary’s threat perceptions? Despite recognizing the potential for states to make unilateral conciliatory moves that might unwind spiral situations, Robert Jervis warned that governments with peaceful/defensive intentions should minimize the risks they take in order to build trust. He emphasized the importance of hedging strategies when he wrote that governments should “design policies that will provide safety”\(^{17}\) if their trust in others proves mistaken, and that as a result ‘even if both sides believe that the other desires only protection, they may find that there is no policy and level of arms that is mutually satisfactory’.

The trouble in following Jervis’s advice for a state that wants to signal its trustworthiness is that the kind of policies that maintain ‘safety’ are often insufficient to communicate this to others who are mistrustful or even distrustful. This is because governments, as Evan Braden Montgomery has argued, “are often confronted with a difficult trade-off: the same actions necessary to reassure their adversaries will also endanger their own security if those adversaries are in reality aggressive”\(^{18}\). How these trade-offs play out in particular cases is a matter for empirical research, but they emphasize the importance that decision-makers will attach to having a safety net when they seek to build trust. The problem is that what one actor perceives as a safety net which facilitates the building of trust might be viewed by others as too flimsy to take risks with the security of the collective.

A key question concerns the role that certain forms of “interpersonal communicative dynamics” (encompassing written, verbal, and face-to-face interactions) play in

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\(^{17}\) Robert Jervis, *op.cit.*
both promoting security dilemma sensibility and encouraging decision-makers to take a decision to trust by taking on some risks. One is not arguing that all interpersonal communicative dynamics promote a trusting relationship. A textbook case where interpersonal communicative dynamics promoted mistrust, with nearly disastrous consequences given that it emboldened Nikita Khrushchev’s nuclear brinkmanship a year later over Cuba, was his disastrous meeting with President Kennedy at their summit in 1961. The key question, then, becomes understanding which forms of interpersonal communication build trust by enabling leaders and officials to enter into a “space of trust”\textsuperscript{19} and secondly, what are the conditions – material and ideational – under which such forms of interpersonal communicative dynamics become operative in conflict situations. Such a communicative approach is missing from existing trust research in International Relations.

In his \textit{Memoirs}, Mikhail Gorbachev reflected that the personal relationship he had developed with President Reagan had been fundamental to the ending of the Cold War. Gorbachev called it “the human factor”\textsuperscript{20}. Echoing this theme, the former US diplomat Jack Matlock, who attended the summits between Reagan and Gorbachev in Geneva, Reykjavik, Washington and Moscow argued in his book that ‘face-to-face meetings between the Soviet and American leaders and their policy makers were essential to move the U.S.–Soviet dialogue in a constructive direction. Under these conditions, the overwhelming suspicion characteristic of the Cold War was gradually replaced by trust’\textsuperscript{21}. The level of mutual trust that Reagan and Gorbachev established was so remarkable that they came very close to agreeing to the elimination of all US-Soviet nuclear weapons at their summit in Reykjavik in October 1986.

This focus on “interpersonal communicative dynamics” has considerable potential as a way of building trust. I have argued that this communicative approach sheds important light on how a trusting relationship developed between Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif in late 1998 and early 1999. The high-water mark of the trusting relationship that emerged between the two leaders was their decision to meet in Lahore in February 1999 and sign the ‘Lahore Declaration’ and a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’. These agreements would not have been possible without the trusting relationship that had


\textsuperscript{19} I owe this idea to MeenakshiGopinath.

\textsuperscript{20} Mikhail S. Gorbachev, \textit{Memoirs} (New York: Doubleday, 1996).

developed between the two leaders prior to the summit, and which was strengthened by their meeting at Lahore, thereby making possible new levels of cooperation over Kashmir and the nuclear issue, which held out the promise of transforming relations between the two nuclear foes. Nevertheless, the subsequent collapse of the Lahore peace process in the Kargil war (which threatened to escalate to the nuclear level) showed, the ‘human factor’ depends crucially on the capacity of leaders who are seeking to build trust being able to shield these initiatives from domestic spoilers. In the case of the Lahore peace process, the trust-building process between India and Pakistan collapsed because the civilian leadership was insufficiently in control of Pakistan’s national security policy and the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif failed to appreciate that what the Pakistani military was planning at Kargil was incompatible with the diplomatic process that he had begun at Lahore. Even if trust-building initiatives can be protected from domestic opponents, there is the further challenge of ensuring that they are carried on by future leaders. This is the problem of future uncertainty and leads offensive realism to argue that states must choose to maximize their power at the expense of potential rivals because as Mearsheimer puts it, “a state’s intentions can be benign one day and hostile the next”. Sustaining trust-building initiatives under successive leaders and governments is the challenge of embedding trust.

**Embedding trust**

In an earlier work, Booth and I distinguished between trust that develops between particular leaders, and which can be traced to the interpersonal chemistry between them, and trust which has extended beyond the elite level to encompass the interaction between societies – a condition of what we called “embedded trust”.

A key theoretical approach in thinking about the possibilities for achieving embedded trust is the theory and practice of security communities. The concept of a security community was developed by Karl Deutsch and his co-researchers in the mid-1950s. Their normative project was the eradication of war and the promotion of peaceful change, and the litmus test of a security community is that the participants do not target each other militarily.23

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Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett in their pioneering work on security communities identified a pivotal role for trust by arguing that a security community was “the deepest expression of trust possible in the international arena”\textsuperscript{24}. Despite recognizing the centrality of trust to building security communities, Adler and Barnett – like Deutsch before them – did not directly address how states can overcome their fear and distrust of others in order to start this process of trust-building. Yet if security community theory is to provide a model for building trust in regions where distrust is high, it needs supplementing with a conceptual framework that explains how trust might be built between adversaries.

In a forthcoming work with Vincent Keating\textsuperscript{25}, we show by comparing the cases of the West-European security community and ASEAN how the growth of a new inter-societal collective identity in the European context was crucial to assuring those “dependable expectations of peaceful change”, to use Karl Deutsch’s language, which are the \textit{sine qua non} of a security community. In such a context, even if new leaders came to power intent upon restarting hostile power competition, a security community that has been ‘embedded’ in the societies of its members would pose a powerful obstacle to such revisionism.

The ASEAN case, by contrast, shows that whilst a measure of trust has been achieved between diplomats and leaders over the last four decades, this has not reached the point where it has countered the tendency of military planners in the region to plan for future military contingencies with other members of ASEAN. Whatever confidence each member of ASEAN has in the current motives and intentions of the others does not prevent it from hedging against the uncertainty that today’s ally might become tomorrow’s enemy. Put differently, ASEAN has developed a level of trust that goes beyond the “weak” form associated with rational egoism, but it has not acquired the ‘thick’ character that is necessary for a Deutschian security community.

The comparison between the cases of Western Europe and ASEAN leads to the conclusion that it is only when both elites and societies develop trusting relationships across borders that war becomes ‘unthinkable’ among them. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, an important future exploration can be how far this finding


can be applied to the cooperation and trust that developed in the nuclear field between Argentina and Brazil in the 1980s, and which seems to have been a key motor for the development of what Andrew Hurrell has called a ‘loosely knit security community’.

Democratization, Hurrell argues, was an important motor in leading both countries to redefine their interests in ways that promoted this integration, and that this changing conception of interests sprung from a redefinition of identity. The need to nurture their fledgling democracies and promote joint economic development became the shared values of Argentine and Brazilian policymakers. Nevertheless, a good case can be made that democratic transition is not a sufficient explanation by itself for the levels of cooperation and nuclear transparency achieved between the two South American powers. Instead, we need to combine explanations of the democratic transition with recognition of the positive interpersonal dynamics that developed between Alfonsin and Sarney. Certainly, in the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, it would be unwise to assume that any set of democratic leaders in both countries would necessarily have taken the series of trust-building steps that Alfonsin and Sarney took during the 1980s.

**Conclusion**

There are no risk-free futures available to us. When decision-makers weigh the risks of making moves that might build trust but which, might also prove costly and dangerous, they need to remember that misplaced suspicion brings its own risks and costs. To give way to the impulse to mistrust risks (if hostility is fear based) trapping states in spiraling hostility that could have been avoided.

The litmus test of the beginnings of a trusting relationship is a decision by one or both parties in a conflict to make themselves vulnerable to the other. I have argued that this depends crucially upon key decision-makers on both sides coming to a realization that their adversary’s hostile actions might stem from fear and insecurity and not aggressive intent.

The existing literature identifies two key models of trust development—GRIT and costly signaling—but neither of these provides a convincing explanation of how actors come to make a decision to trust. I have argued that a fuller explanation of

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how trusting relationships develop would focus on the conditions under which interpersonal communicative dynamics lead decision-makers to enter into a “space of trust”. I am not arguing that communication is a panacea because clearly some forms of communication can increase mistrust. But the key question is to understand the conditions under which some forms of interpersonal communication which are empathetic can lead actors to take a decision to trust by making themselves vulnerable. Having done this, the challenge is to shield such moves from domestic spoilers, and ensure that such relationships can be continued and deepened under future leaders.
Select Bibliography


First Steps & Giant Leaps

Anisha Kinra and Seema Sridhar

Abstract

Over the last twelve years, youth leaders from across South Asia have been meeting, learning and training together at the Annual Conflict Transformation Workshops of Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP) in New Delhi. One of the few sustained initiatives of trust-building between the young people of India and Pakistan, these Workshops led to the publication of Closer to Ourselves: Stories from the Journey towards Peace in South Asia in 2008 which documents the experiences of the participants. This reflection piece is part of that collection. Through their story, the authors share the experience of reaching out to “the other” and embarking on a journey of individual and collective conflict transformation.

“If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear as it is – infinite.”

– William Blake (1757 - 1827)

English engraver, illustrator & poet

The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. As we walked down the hallway to attend the first session of the WISCOMP Conflict Transformation Workshop, we knew we had taken that first step in our quest to discover peace.

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Problematizing peace

We started the first session with a simple question: *What is peace?* What came forth was the idea that peace was beyond definitions. It was something amorphous that could, perhaps, only be perceived by each through her own distinctive lens.

Each expression of peace at that session was different; yet, they struck the same chord. Like different notes blending to create harmony. It was with this gentle knock on the doors of perception that we began our journey to the *other* side.

With little steps, we tread the beautiful and adventurous path of discovery towards that common underlying chord which bound all our definitions of peace; that which gave our definitions the strength of the collective and the space of the individual.

Our pursuit for peace began by *problematizing* the very notion of it. Was peace the mere absence of violence between two countries? Or did it mean something else, something more? What motivates groups of people to mutilate and slaughter one another? Why are more and more people – and not just in our two countries – taking to violence to make their voices heard? These critical questions of contemporary times marked the start of the journey we began.

Understanding peace and turmoil at the individual level and relating to one another at the human level were instrumental in our larger quest to understand conflict and envision a future bereft of it. The medium of the Conflict Transformation Workshops were aptly suited for this endeavor. We began to comprehend the complexities of our individual pursuits for peace.

We realized that we often forget the fact that nations are a collection of individuals. To create a lasting impact on the behavior of nation-states, we have to first go through transformative experiences as individuals. These individual journeys would then reflect at a higher level in the behavior of the collective.

Learning & unlearning

For us, “the other” did not just mean those from across the border or from a conflict-ridden state. “The other” was more of the all-encompassing sort, including every individual present at the Workshop: a few closer to home, a few with whom we had a lot in common and a few we had no idea what to expect from.

Each passing day had something new to offer. And this was not limited to the academic sessions alone. In fact, much learning and unlearning happened outside the Workshop classroom. When we entered the Workshop session every morning,
the socializing from the previous evening would have prepared us for the next day’s re-learning!

**The semantics of difference**

A part of that re-learning was exploring and discovering interfaces between the personal, the spiritual and the political. It was impossible to keep our personal experiences, our growing friendships and deepening bonds outside the conference halls. Our detachment from and indifference to the violence across the border – often conveniently shielded behind the façade of political ideologies and pseudo patriotic beliefs – was shattered. People across the border were no more anonymous identities. They now had faces, names and a place in our hearts. As boundaries blurred, “the other” not merely seemed closer, but also similar. Difference became a matter only of semantics.

The politics of ideology is simultaneously a politics of *otherization*, for our identity is defined *vis-à-vis* the other. But as we lived through the Workshop experience together – debating, talking, laughing, crying – all identities merged into one. Under that roof, in that shared space, we were not Indian or Pakistani; Hindu or Muslim; only peacemakers seeking a new struggle, a new challenge, a new journey.

Some memorable instances and interactions left a powerful impact on us and helped shape our perceptions.

**Sharing stories**

The Workshop session on *Sustained Dialogue: A Public Peace Process* was most rejuvenating for it made us relate to one another’s stories.

Participants were divided into groups in which all individuals were given a chance to narrate powerful personal experiences. This exercise enabled the simplest, most direct and remarkable means of communication! As one human being to another. Interchanging what we had learnt in our respective groups with the rest of the Workshop participants palpably broke the ice between us. As we returned to the Workshop hall after the session, the air was filled with a positive aura. With a sense of belonging and togetherness that was perceived by the organizers as well.

**The spirit of Navratri**

One truly transformative experience was watching the musical ballet, *Ramayan* at Delhi’s Sri Ram Centre. The performance was part of the *Navratri* (a nine day
religious festival in the autumn) festivities, which had set the city abuzz with cultural programs and colorful Durgabidis.

The WISCOMP regulars were playing the part of perfect hostesses by helping with the interpretation of the musical ballet. A Pakistani participant seated further away from us was being told the story by a Kashmiri Muslim. The lucidity in the flow of his narrative diverted our attention from the beautiful musical on stage!

The story of Ram – which has become a gruesome war cry in recent years – had so much more to offer with its message of peace, temperance and sacrifice. What better way of learning this than from a Kashmiri whose perceptions of identity and conflict had evolved in a milieu very different from ours! We witnessed the bonds of culture surpassing the manacles of politics around us. We witnessed the values of seemliness and grace in the face of hardship. Of warriors treating enemies with dignity and respect even in the face of defeat. All depicted in an enthralling performance on stage. There was perfect synergy between the Ramayana’s on-stage story of peace and tolerance and that of the human faces among us who had surmounted great conflicts.

**In each other’s shoes**

Barriers crumbled in the Workshop session, *Theater as a Methodology for Dialogue and Conflict Transformation* as we literally stepped into each other’s shoes. Small groups of participants exchanged personal experiences for a few minutes before moving on to form other, newer groups and repeat the exercise. At the end of the session, most of us knew a lot more about most others. And in a way that regular conversations would not have permitted us to know. Some revelations were stunning and some others very moving.

Before we could analyze, judge or attach value – something our social conditioning has trained us to do – we would have moved to the next set of people and their worlds. The exercise was all about discovering the common streak of humanity in all of us. Yes, we all wanted different things. Yet, that which we did not want were the same – violence; oppression; injustice; bad relationships; being told what to do; and so on. We seemed then to be made from the same clay, only cast in different forms.

As participants narrated personal stories, others enacted them; this effectively made us live through the experience of “the other”. Participating in these theatre exercises opened a world of new experiences. We shed our inhibitions, reached out to traces of ourselves in others as also to the unknown in ourselves, blending the common shades and differing hues all in one creative collage.
What was most wondrous about this experience was that we also got to know our fellow Indians, some of whom we had not made the effort to know. One had found peace in embracing Buddhism, another in working long hours at the office. Yet others by choosing to work with street children or writing poetry. Discovering people proved to be a fascinating journey. We had never before encountered such diversity in the pursuit of one thing universal.

**Imagining futures**

We finally understood what our favorite musical icon meant when he sang *Imagine*. The Conflict Transformation Workshop indeed helped us create that world in our minds. It has set us on a quest to discover peace within and without and to redefine it as a state of mind rather than the state of affairs, for it is only the former which enables the latter.

The greatest challenge in this journey will be sustaining the enthusiasm, commitment and sense of purpose beyond the safe spaces that WISCOMP accorded us. There will be moments when we will want to walk away, let go, give up. What alone will sustain us in this journey is the vision of a future beyond violence, beyond boundaries.
Violence, Theory and the Subject of International Politics: A Derridian Analysis of the Partition of India

Saloni Kapur

Abstract

The aim of this essay is to conduct a Derridian analysis of the Indian Partition. Using Jacques Derrida’s concepts of ‘undecidability’, the justice of a decision, responsibility, and forgiveness the author analyses the Partition. It is argued here, firstly, that the decision to divide India was an ‘undecidable’ one. Secondly, it was neither a fully just decision nor was it just at any particular moment. Thirdly, it is argued that the various decision-makers had to sacrifice certain responsibilities in order to fulfil others. And lastly, that the hostile relations between India and Pakistan that emerged in the aftermath of the bloody Partition may not be permanent since forgiveness by the victims of the Partition is possible. The aim is to demonstrate that Derrida’s ideas may be usefully applied to conduct an analysis of the Partition that is fresh in its approach.

Introduction

This essay purports to analyse, in Derridian terms, the Partition of India in 1947 into India and Pakistan. The research questions being addressed are: (1) was the decision to partition India a just decision, (2) did the decision-makers act in a responsible manner, and (3) is forgiveness a possibility for the victims of the Partition riots?

The questions of the justice of the Partition of India and the responsibility of the decision-makers arise because, according to Alavi, Indians consistently pose the question of whether the Partition could have been avoided.1 The Partition is seen by

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many ‘nationalist Indian historians’ as unfortunate and tragic. On the other hand, according to Page, most Pakistanis view the creation of Pakistan ‘as a religious or ideological phenomenon’. The establishment of a separate Muslim state is celebrated by many Pakistani historians, although ‘the actual partition of the subcontinent often has about it an air of betrayal’. It should not however be supposed that all Indians fall into the first category or that all Pakistanis fall into the second. There do exist exceptions, such as the Pakistani Khan, who envisages a reunification of the Indian subcontinent. Pandey describes the divide as one between two schools of Partition academics—one which sees the Partition as avoidable and undesirable and the other which views it as inevitable. The questions of justice and responsibility posed by this essay are relevant in the context of this debate, since they deal with the ethics of the decision to partition.

The third question of forgiveness arises because, as Ahmed points out, the terrible violence caused by the Partition has resulted in a profound trauma which has prevented the normalization of relations between India and Pakistan, even after more than five decades. According to Ahmed, ‘Perhaps a process of forgiveness for the crimes committed during Partition initiated by intellectuals from both sides can miraculously lead to reconciliation and mutual acceptance.’ This essay explores Derrida’s concept of forgiveness and attempts to apply it to the Indo-Pakistani situation.

Furthermore, as Page points out, understanding the Partition of India is important to international relations not only for providing a better understanding of relations

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5 Ibid, 1069.


9 Ibid, 28.
between India and Pakistan but also for understanding communal problems in other parts of the world, such as Northern Ireland, Malaysia, Nigeria, and Cyprus.\textsuperscript{10} Understanding the Indian Partition could also prove useful for evaluating suggestions such as Hilmyyy’s for a ‘re-partition’ of Israel.\textsuperscript{11}

The arguments being put forth in this essay are, firstly, that the decision to partition India was an ‘undecidable’ decision and by virtue of being such an ‘undecidable’ decision its justice cannot be assessed. Although it involved the reinvention of a rule and in this sense was just, it was not just at any point of time and was not completely just. Secondly, all the main players in the decision to partition India—the British rulers, the leaders of the Indian National Congress, and the leaders of the All India Muslim League—sacrificed certain responsibilities in order to fulfil others. And thirdly, it is possible for victims of the Partition violence to forgive the perpetrators of violence and thereby for relations between present-day India and Pakistan to improve. These arguments shall be presented by employing Derrida’s concepts of ‘undecidability’, justice, responsibility, and forgiveness.

The essay begins with a brief discussion on the causes of the Partition. It then goes on to analyse the various aspects of the Partition using a Derridian analytical framework. This analysis leads it to its conclusions.

**Background to the Partition**

The main areas being analysed in this essay are the causes that led up to the Partition, the actual event of the Partition, and the consequent riots and migrations.

Several causes have been attributed to the Partition of India—the divide and rule policy of the British government, the Arya Samaj which encouraged Hindu communalism in Punjab, the partition of Bengal on communal lines which caused dissatisfaction among Hindus and increased Muslim separatism, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan’s introduction of Muslim separatism into Indian politics, Mahatma Gandhi’s introduction of communalism into Indian politics, the Hindu perception of British favouritism towards Muslims and of the Muslim League as anti-Hindu which resulted in the establishment of the Hindu Mahasabha to represent Hindu interests, and the interests of the Muslim landlords in Punjab, Sindh, and the United Provinces (UP)

\textsuperscript{10} Page, op.cit., 1.

who were wary of the Congress’s plans for land reform. This essay, however, focuses on the more immediate events that caused Mohammad Ali Jinnah to part ways with the Indian National Congress and lead the Muslim League’s movement for a separate Muslim nation.

Jinnah was a member of stature in the Indian National Congress and was persuaded in 1913 by members of the Muslim League to join the League since the new radical generation of Leaguers was keen to co-operate with the Congress. Jinnah joined the League on the condition that his loyalty to the Congress would remain. For the next few years he worked to bring about unity between the Congress and the League.

In March 1927, at a conference of Muslims in Delhi, Jinnah convinced the Muslim leaders to give up their demand for separate electorates for Muslims and accept joint electorates in the interests of unity with the Congress. This was to be on the condition that four proposals of the Muslims were accepted by the Congress: (1) Sindh, which had a Muslim majority, should be separated from Bombay and form a separate province; (2) there should be reforms in the Muslim-majority provinces of Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) so that they were on equal footing with other provinces; (3) there should be representation according to population in Punjab and Bengal which had Muslim majorities; and (4) thirty-three percent of the seats in the central legislature should be reserved for Muslims. The Nehru Committee, which was appointed by the Delhi All Parties Committee in February 1928 to draft a constitution for India, rejected the Muslim League’s demands for reservation of seats for majorities in Punjab and Bengal and for a reservation of thirty-three percent of the seats at the central legislature for Muslims. However, what it did recommend was ‘joint electorates with adult franchise’, which would allow Muslims to be elected in Punjab and Bengal because of the removal of franchise based on property ownership. It allowed for reservations for minorities as well. It also accepted the Muslim League’s demands for the separation of Sindh from Bombay and for the granting of equal status to the NWFP and Baluchistan.

14 Alavi, “Misreading Partition Road Signs,” 4522.
At the All-Parties Conference which was held in Lucknow in August 1928 to review the report of the Nehru Committee, Jinnah and the Muslim League were not represented. It was agreed that Sindh should be separated from Bombay but only if this was found to be financially feasible or alternatively if a majority of the population of Sindh voted for this, that there should be joint electorates with universal adult suffrage without any reservations for minorities, and that Baluchistan should be treated on equal footing with the NWFP. Thus the Nehru Committee’s original recommendations of reservation of seats for minorities, of unconditionally separating Sindh from Bombay, and of treating the NWFP and Baluchistan as equal to the other provinces were rejected at the Lucknow Conference, which was dominated by members of the Hindu Mahasabha.16

At the subsequent All-Parties Conference in Calcutta that December, although the Muslim League was present, its demands were shot down by the Hindu Mahasabha members. The Congress members did not intervene and thus did not honour the commitments made in Nehru report.17

The Calcutta Conference left Jinnah disillusioned.18 He found himself ‘faced with a situation in which the Hindu Mahasabha could wield a veto over the Congress decisions’.19 According to Alavi, Jinnah saw the events of the Calcutta convention as a betrayal by the Congress.20 He parted ways with the Congress after the Calcutta convention. In 1932, he left politics and went to London. When he returned to India and Indian politics in 1935, it was no longer as a national politician but as a Muslim politician. He brought about a revival of the Muslim League. In 1940, the Muslim League passed the ‘Pakistan Resolution’ which demanded the establishment of ‘independent states’ for the Muslims of British India.21

Following several negotiations over many years, the Menon-Mountbatten Plan for Indian independence was accepted by the Congress, the Sikh leader Baldev Singh, and the Muslim League on 2 June 1947. The plan was based on the principle of allowing the people of the Muslim-majority provinces—Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan, NWFP, Bengal, and Sylhet—to decide on whether the country ought to be partitioned. In Sindh and Baluchistan, the elected members of the provincial legislative

16 Alavi, “Misreading Partition Road Signs,” 4522; Page, op. cit., 175-76.
17 Alavi, loc.cit.
18 Alavi, loc. cit.; Pandey, op. cit., 126.
19 Alavi, loc. cit.
20 Alavi, loc.cit.
21 Alavi, loc. cit.; Pandey, op. cit., 126, 137, 143-50, 155.
assemblies were to vote on whether to join India or Pakistan. In the NWFP, there was to be a referendum. In Punjab and Bengal, the elected members of the legislative assemblies who represented Muslim-majority districts were to vote separately from the rest of the elected members. Each part of the assemblies was to vote on whether they wished to join India or Pakistan and also on whether or not they wished their province to be partitioned so that the Hindu-majority areas joined India and the Muslim-majority areas Pakistan. In Sylhet, which was a Muslim-majority district, the people could vote for whether they wished to join East Bengal (a Muslim-majority area which was likely to join Pakistan) or remain part of Assam. The Indian princely states were free to remain independent or join either India or Pakistan.22

The verdict which was secured in July 1947 was that both Punjab and Bengal decided to be partitioned and West Punjab, East Bengal, Sylhet, NWFP, Baluchistan, and Sindh elected to join Pakistan whereas East Punjab and West Bengal chose to remain with India.23

The Indian Partition, according to Ahmed, ‘was followed by one of the cruellest and bloodiest migrations and ethnic cleansings in history.’24 Around two million people were killed, approximately twelve to fifteen million people were forced to migrate, and an estimated eighty-eight thousand women were abducted in the violence caused by the Partition.25

A Derridian Analysis
‘Undecidability’ and the Justice of the Decision

For a decision to be either just or unjust, according to Derrida, it must follow a rule.26 In the case of the decision to divide India into two states, it may be said that the rule of democracy was followed when it was decided to allow the majority of the people (or, in the cases of Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, and Bengal, their elected representatives) in the ‘Pakistan provinces’ to decide on whether or not the country ought to be partitioned. Derrida further states that for a decision to be a just decision,

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22 Pandey, op. cit., 202-3.
23 Ibid, 204.
it must involve the reinvention of a rule. In the case of the Indian Partition, the rule of democracy was applied in a ‘fresh judgement’. It was not simply followed, since there did not already exist a rule that stated that the method for partitioning a country is through democratic means. The rule of democracy was applied in the specific context of British India where representatives to the central and provincial legislatures were already being democratically elected. Thus the rule of democracy was reinvented and the decision to partition India was in this sense a just decision.

For Derrida, an ‘undecidable’ decision involves not only choosing between two options but also a duty towards each. The decision of the Partition was an ‘undecidable’ decision—if India was partitioned, the duty of the decision-makers towards a secular, united Indian nation would be sacrificed; if it was not partitioned, their duty towards the Muslim League’s dream of a separate Muslim homeland which was not dominated by a Hindu majority would not be fulfilled.

In the Derridian sense, no decision can ever ‘be presently and fully just’, for a decision has either ‘not yet been made according to a rule... or it has already followed a rule’. So, the decision of the Partition was not just at any particular moment. Before the rule of democracy was applied, the decision to partition India could not have been just since it did not follow a rule. After the rule of democracy was applied in the Menon-Mountbatten Plan, ‘the test and ordeal of the undecidable’ had passed, and the decision had simply followed a rule which was not an absolute guarantee of justice.

Derrida describes the moment of decision as a moment of madness. According to him, a just decision is always a decision of urgency since it needs to be taken immediately and hence it is not possible for full knowledge of the consequences of the decision to be available. ‘Even if time and prudence, the patience of knowledge and the mastery of conditions were hypothetically unlimited,’ Derrida says, ‘the decision would be structurally finite, no matter how late it came.’ Although great deliberation on the question of Partition took place in Indian politics from 1940 when the Pakistan Resolution was passed by the Muslim League to 1947 when the

27 Ibid, 251.
28 Pandey, op. cit., 139.
31 Loc.cit.
32 Ibid, 255.
Menon-Mountbatten Plan was accepted, in February 1947 the British government announced that it was to withdraw from India no later than June 1948. Hence the decision of whether India should be partitioned had to be taken before this date and it became a decision of urgency which was taken in a moment of madness. It could not be justified by any definite knowledge of the consequences of the Partition.

The moment of decision is a moment of madness because the decision-maker is affected by the decision ‘as if it came to him from the other’. Jinnah’s sense of the Partition decision having been made by another is apparent in his speech to Pakistan’s constituent assembly in 1947, wherein he stated, ‘You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State.... [I]n course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims.’ Mohammad Ali Jinnah (speech, meeting of the Pakistani constituent assembly, Karachi, August 9, 1947), quoted by Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 339-40.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah (speech, meeting of the Pakistani constituent assembly, Here, despite having argued for a separate Muslim homeland before Partition, he rejects the notion of religion as a basis for national identity.

**Responsibility**

In *The Gift of Death*, Derrida analyses the story of Abraham who sacrifices his responsibility towards his family in order to fulfil his absolute duty towards God, who asks him to kill his son Isaac. Derrida describes Abraham’s ‘gift of death’ to God and notes that Abraham is forced to keep his decision to sacrifice his son a secret from his family in order to maintain his ‘right to decide’.

When Jinnah decided to part ways with the Congress and lead the Muslim League in a struggle for a separate Muslim nation, he sacrificed his responsibility towards the Congress, to which he had earlier been committed, in order to fulfil his absolute duty towards the Muslim League, which he felt to have been let down by the Congress

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33 Pandey, op. cit., 187.
38 Ibid, 60.
at the Calcutta Convention. Jinnah’s decision to lead the Pakistan movement remained a secret while he was in London from 1932 to 1935 and was thought to have left politics. In fulfilling his duty to the Muslim League, Jinnah gave it the ‘gift of death’—the ‘direct action day’ that he called for on 16 August 1946 with the realisation of the Pakistan ideal as its objective caused severe communal riots and resulted in around half a million deaths. The actual Partition of the country was bought at the cost of some two million lives.

On the other hand, the Congress’s betrayal of Jinnah and the League at the 1928 Calcutta Convention also involved the sacrifice of its responsibility to the League in fulfilling its absolute duty to the Hindu Mahasabha. The Congress members allowed the Hindu Mahasabha members who were present to veto the League’s demands for residuary powers to remain with the provinces under the new constitution (although Congress members Sapru and Chintamani were willing to reconsider the distribution of subjects), for thirty-three percent reservation of seats for Muslims at the Centre (which was supported by the Congress’s Gandhi and Sapru but shot down by the Mahasabha and the Sikh representatives), for population-based reservation in Punjab and Bengal in the eventuality that adult suffrage did not come into effect, and for the unconditional separation of Sindh from Bombay. Thus the Congress went back on its commitment in the Nehru report to separate Sindh. It also allowed the Mahasabha to overrule the opinions of Congress members. This sacrifice of responsibility by the Congress has remained a secret till today as the textbooks read by young Indians keep it as such. According to one state-board-prescribed textbook, “Barrister Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, had demanded reserved seats for Muslims in those provinces where the Muslims were in majority. As the Nehru Report did not concede these demands, the Muslim League opposed the Nehru Report.”

Another reads:

*In order to oppose the Government a section of the Muslim League even accepted the principle of joint electorates on condition that seats were*

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39 Alavi, “Misreading Partition Road Signs”, 4522.
40 Pandey, op. cit., 143-44, 183-84.
42 Alavi, loc. cit.
43 Alavi, “Misreading Partition Road Signs,” 4522; Page, Prelude to Partition, 190.
reserved for Muslims. In 1928, the All-Party Conference met and appointed a Sub-Committee with Pundit Motilal Nehru as its chairman to draw up a scheme of government in response to the challenge by Lord Birkenhead. The Nehru Report laid down Dominion Status as India’s political objective. The All Parties Convention held at Calcutta in December 1928, however, failed to pass the Report. Jawaharlal Nehru and his friends disagreed with it. M. A. Jinnah presented his Fourteen Points. The Muslim League demanded separate electorates and a federal constitution. The politics of the Communalists impaired the prospects of national unity.45

The standard ten history textbook of the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations gives no reason for the League’s rejection of the Nehru report:

*The All-Party Convention held again at Calcutta in December, 1928 considered the Nehru Report. Jinnah opposed some of its provisions on behalf of the Muslim League. However, the League provisionally approved the Nehru Report, after certain safeguards for minorities, as proposed by Jinnah, were incorporated in it. In March, 1929, the League totally rejected the report.*46

According to Kumar, *A Textbook of History and Civics*, which is the only Indian textbook to describe the Nehru report in detail, makes it seem as though all the issues that Jinnah raised were communal issues and had no national significance.47

Thus, the Congress, which has been in power in India for most of the fifty-nine years since the Partition,48 has kept its sacrifice of its responsibility to the Muslim League at the Calcutta convention a secret through its selective narration of history. This has been done so as to avoid any questioning of its right to decide which duty ought to have been fulfilled and which one ought to have been sacrificed.

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The parties to the Menon-Mountbatten Plan, which was presented by Viceroy Mountbatten on behalf of the British government and accepted by Nehru, Patel, and Kripalani on behalf of the Congress, Baldev Singh on behalf of the Sikhs, and Jinnah on behalf of the League on 3 June 1947, sacrificed their responsibility towards the minorities in the ‘Pakistan provinces’ by agreeing to allow the question of Partition be decided by voting in these provinces. In this way the majority of voters could decide on whether they wished their province to join India or Pakistan, but the minorities were denied this right. The parties to the Menon-Mountbatten Plan sacrificed their responsibility to the minorities in order to fulfil their absolute duty to the majorities in these provinces.

The Menon-Mountbatten Plan also sacrificed its responsibility to the followers of Khan Abdul Ghaffer Khan in the NWFP who boycotted the referendum because they were not given the third option of voting for an independent state. Only fifty percent of the people of the NWFP voted. The Menon-Mountbatten Plan sacrificed its responsibility towards Khan Abdul Ghaffer Khan’s followers in order to fulfil its duty towards Jawaharlal Nehru of the Congress who feared a ‘Balkanisation of India’. Hence it did not give the provinces the option of becoming independent.

Forgiveness

For Derrida, only the unforgivable crime warrants forgiveness. According to Kamra, narratives of the Partition of India are filled with ‘[i]mages of raped women, orphaned children, refugee camps, blood-thirsty mobs of men, women throwing themselves into wells, miles and miles of refugee columns—the kafilas—and burning villages’. She describes the genital mutilation of men and the rape and breast-slashing of women. Thus the Partition was witness to innumerable crimes of the unforgivable sort.

According to Derrida, forgiveness does not require repentance on the part of the perpetrator of the crime, for in that case the perpetrator is no longer the same person who committed the crime and the one being forgiven is not in fact the perpetrator of

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50 Pandey, op. cit., 199-200, 204.
53 Ibid, 2.
the crime. Forgiveness which is not conditional upon repentance is unconditional forgiveness. Furthermore, for forgiveness to take place, it is necessary that both sides understand who is guilty of what, but that each side be unable to understand the other; that they speak metaphorically different languages.54

Derrida draws a distinction between pure forgiveness and reconciliation. Forgiveness must be by the victim of the crime. If it is initiated by a third party, it is not forgiveness but reconciliation, amnesty, or reparation. Furthermore, when the victim and the perpetrator are able to understand one another, pure forgiveness has ended and reconciliation has begun.55

Derrida considers a situation wherein people share proximity, familiarity, language, neighbourhood, and family and between whom an ‘absolute hatred’ emerges at the moment of maximum intimacy.56 This is an apt description of what happened in the Indian subcontinent. As Hasan explains, prior to the Hindu and Muslim revivalism that occurred during the course of the Indian freedom struggle, Hindus and Muslims shared symbols of a joint culture. According to him, ‘[t]here had... been, common traditions and common reference points in the pre-colonial past.... [P]rior to 1860 there was perhaps no identifiable “Muslim”, “Sikh” or “Hindu” identity that could be abstracted from the particular circumstances of the individual events or specific societies’.57 In South India, there existed between Hindus, Muslims, and Christians ‘a borrowing of symbols and ideas, a frequently shared vocabulary, and an interweaving of motifs within a common sacred landscape’.58 Derrida wonders whether, in such a situation, the wound inflicted by the crime may be healed by forgiveness or reconciliation. While he does not object to reconciliation, he thinks it unjust to use the word ‘forgiveness’ to describe a process of reconciliation initiated by the state. For Derrida, ‘no head of state has the right to forgive in’ place of ‘the victims of atrocious crimes’.59 For this reason, in exploring the possibilities for forgiveness for the crimes of the Partition, this essay considers the testimonies of five victims of forced migration.

The reason behind choosing to interview victims of forced migration and not of murder or rape is a practical one. It is impossible to interview a dead person and it

55 Ibid, 41-42, 49.
56 Ibid, 49.
58 Ibid, 9.
59 Derrida, op. cit., 50.
is only the dead person and not his or her family who have the right to consider forgiveness. As for the question of interviewing rape victims, it is imperative to keep in mind ‘the absolute place of pride/shame in Indian society, which makes women’s virginity a priceless commodity’, and the perception of a raped woman as impure. It is therefore unlikely that many raped women would be willing to admit to or recount their experiences.

The first refugee interviewed is Rita Shahani, a present-day Sindhi novelist and poet who was thirteen years old when her family moved from Hyderabad, Sindh to Lucknow, UP. Her family went to Lucknow before the Partition, on 23 July 1947, because her father was unwell and needed to undergo treatment in Lucknow. She and her family did not realise that they would never return home. They had simply locked their house and left for Lucknow, taking with them only one month’s clothes. When the Partition took place, they received news of the riots and her brother Hiru, who was still in Sindh, was told to come to India. They thought that the Partition was temporary and once the riots stopped, they would be able to go home. All of their ‘material goods’ were left behind.

Shahani says that she loves Pakistanis and that she feels no bitterness and does not blame them. In Derrida’s terms, her forgiveness may not be of the unconditional, pure variety, because she mentions that her Pakistani writer friends have told her that they want Sindhi Hindus to go back to Sindh. So, in a Derridian sense, they have repented. However, it does not seem that she needed to be asked for forgiveness in order to forgive. She claims that her ‘weakness’ for Muslims is due to the fact that she went to a Muslim college in Lucknow. Thus she does not seem to have been angry with Muslims even in the years immediately following the Partition when she was in Lucknow. Furthermore, the fact that she made friends with Pakistani writers without being asked for forgiveness shows her forgiveness to have been unconditional. Nevertheless, now that she has developed an understanding with her Pakistani friends, she has begun a process of reconciliation and her forgiveness is no longer pure forgiveness.

Geeta Dembla is Shahani’s sister and was sixteen years old when the Partition took place. While her family was in Lucknow, Dembla was staying with her uncle in Karachi, Sindh. She says that there were ‘too many riots’ and she wanted to come

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60 Ibid, 44.
62 Interview with Rita Shahani, Coventry and Pune, February 17, 2006.
63 Ibid.
to India with her brother who was in Hyderabad, but she could not go to Hyderabad because Hindus were being murdered. She remembers crying the whole time. She flew to Bombay with her uncle. Her family lost their ice candy shop, their house, and all of their belongings. In Lucknow they had to start from scratch. Their father was sick and they had no income with a family of six children. At seventeen Dembla was studying and working to support the family.64

Dembla does not blame Muslims; she says ‘there is no question of blaming’. Her family had many Muslim friends in Lucknow and in Sindh. For her the Partition was politics and ‘everyone lost’.65 Thus she too has forgiven the other without ever being asked for forgiveness and without understanding the other’s reasons for forcing her family to migrate.

Arshad Aziz was six years old in 1947 and remembers the train ride that his family took from Delhi to Sialkot in western Punjab. His was a family of nawabs and landlords and they suffered an immense loss of property as a result of the Partition. His paternal grandfather was ‘mentally affected by the shock’. His maternal grandfather was on a bus from India to Pakistan which was entered by Sikhs who massacred everyone on the bus. His grandfather was murdered as well. His four children were left fatherless.66

Aziz has ‘mixed feelings’ about Indians but is aware that tragedies occurred on both sides and ‘Hindus and Sikhs also suffered’. He thinks the Partition riots were ‘very tragic’.67 Thus Aziz has reconciled himself with the other rather than forgiven, since he understands that the other suffered as well.

Zulaikha Agha’s family moved from Bombay to Dhaka in East Bengal in 1950, when she was one and a half years old, leaving behind their house and toy shop. She says, ‘We had a lot of problems; we had nothing.’68

Agha is ‘not at all angry’. She is ‘very comfortable with Indians’ and has ‘a lot of Hindu friends’. According to her, there is no problem between Hindus and Muslims—‘only governments have problems’.69 Thus, like Dembla, Agha has forgiven the

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64 Interview with Geeta Dembla, Coventry and London, February 17, 2006.
65 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
other without understanding why her family was forced to leave Bombay and without any sort of repentance on the part of the other.

Rajinder Mohini Malhotra was fifteen and a half years old when, in the prelude to the Partition, riots erupted in Punjab, and her mother sent her sister Shanti and her to stay with their uncle in Delhi for fear that they would be abducted if they remained in Punjab. On 15 August, the day of Indian independence (and one day after the Partition), communal riots began in Delhi as well. Malhotra and her sister did not know if their family would survive the riots and reach Delhi safely from their home in Rawalpindi in western Punjab. Their family ultimately did reach Delhi but had to leave behind their confectionery business.70

Malhotra says that she used to feel angry in the beginning, but does not anymore because her family has been much more prosperous in India than they were in Rawalpindi.71 Of the five interviewees, Malhotra is the only one to have felt anger and then gotten past it through an unconditional forgiveness.

For Derrida, pure unconditional forgiveness is for now only a dream, but the above analysis shows that at least Dembla, Agha, and Malhotra seem to have unconditionally forgiven and that all five interviewees have achieved something in between the two poles of unconditional and conditional forgiveness, which Derrida views as the practical expression of forgiveness.72

On the other hand, reconciliation, which requires understanding one another’s reasons, is difficult as long as Indian and Pakistani history textbooks present differing narratives of the freedom struggle and the Partition which are meant to forward certain agendas, as reported by Kumar.73

**Conclusions**

From the analysis of the justice of the decision of Partition and the responsibility of the decision-makers conducted above, it is clear that judging the justice of the decision is impossible, since it was an ‘undecidable’ decision and any choice that was made would come with its consequences, foreseeable and unforeseeable. In trying to fulfil their responsibilities to one group, the decision-makers were bound

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70 Interview with Rajinder Mohini Malhotra, Pune, March 14, 2006.
71 Ibid.
73 Kumar, *Prejudice and Pride*, 86.
to sacrifice their responsibilities to the other. The problem with this conclusion is, as Derrida points out, that ‘incalculable justice commands calculation’. Hence, to hazard a calculation, the decision of Partition, despite not being just at any particular instant, was nevertheless just because it involved the reinvention of the rule of democracy. However, it was not a fully just decision since it was taken in an instant of madness and because it forced the decision-makers to sacrifice their responsibilities to one in order to fulfil their duties to another.

It is again difficult to calculate unconditional forgiveness. The analysis of the interviews of five Partition victims conducted above is not an attempt to prove that all Partition victims have or have not forgiven the perpetrators of violence against them. These five victims cannot by any means be representative of the twelve to fifteen million people that were displaced, let alone all the victims of the Partition violence. This essay has attempted rather to explore whether forgiveness is a possible alternative to the hostility created between India and Pakistan which is fuelled by memories of the Partition riots. The five refugees interviewed prove that forgiveness is possible for victims of the unforgivable crimes of the Partition.

There are other aspects of the Partition that could be subjected to a Derridian analysis but which have not been considered in this essay. Derrida’s concept of hospitality could be applied to the reception of Partition refugees in India and Pakistan. His ideas about democracy and identity may be applied to the democratic process that led to the Partition and to the emergence of religious identity as a basis for nationality, respectively. Furthermore, his idea of the ‘mystical foundation of authority’—that ‘all Nation-States are born and found themselves in violence’—may be used to understand the foundation of Pakistan.

77 Hasan, Inventing Boundaries, 8-9.
79 Derrida, On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness, 57.
Select Bibliography


Pakistan’s Stability Paradox: Domestic, Regional and International Dimensions

Ashutosh Misra And Michael E. Clarke, Eds.
New York, Oxon: Routledge, 2012, 224 Pp, Usd 140 (Hard Cover)

Reviewed by: Ajit Kumar Jha

Pakistan, etymologically speaking, signifies a land of cleanliness and purity. Ironically today it is associated with political instability, virulent militancy and economic fragility. With a paltry 2.5 per cent economic growth rate, rampant sectarianism and political violence, the country stands on the brink of a disaster. Given possession of nuclear weapons, such a state of crisis makes Pakistan a serious threat to international security. Such pessimism and doomsday scenario building characterizes most of the essays in the book *Pakistan’s Stability Paradox: Domestic, regional and international dimensions*. In the end, the book becomes yet another addition to the already voluminous literature on clichéd treatments to Pakistani problems of terrorism and instability.

A more balanced perspective would have asked the meaningful question, how has Pakistan, which averaged annual GDP growth as high as 7 to 9 percent between 2004 to 2006, and 6.8 percent in the 1960s and 1980s, has slipped down to as low as 2.5 percent today? Why has a country envisioned by someone as dedicated to democracy as Quaid-i-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah, has today been wracked by militancy and periodic bouts of military rule? How has the political sociology of the ruling elite—the dominance in politics by the narrow landed feudal potentates largely from Punjab—caused the instability? Why have the few democratic

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experiments in the past—for instance, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and his daughter Benazir Bhutto—been defeated by hanging and political murder. But none of the 12 essays in the book address Pakistan’s economy or, say the historic role of a political party, like Pakistan Peoples’ Party.

Half the essays are on militancy and others on the impact of such extremism on the regional and global world. The main concerns are then jihadi terror, sectarian madrasahs, military rule and what causes political instability in Pakistan? How does it affect the South Asian neighbourhood? What is the fate of the India-Pakistan peace process given the threat of cross-border terrorism? Which way is Pakistan’s rollercoaster relationship with the US headed? What is the trajectory of Pakistan’s links with its neighbours: India, China and Afghanistan?

Since the volume is a product of a seminar held at Australia’s Griffith University, each of the authors raises a specific set of problems. Lacking a general introduction there is no attempt at an overarching thesis, which could have linked some of these unrelated essays and helped come to a firm conclusion. On their own merit, however, some of the essays raise interesting issues, most of which are deeply disturbing. Yet, a why and how of Pakistan’s problems and what, if any, are the solutions that could have added an original perspective to the book, is totally missing.

The first chapter *Pakistan’s triadic politics and chronic political instability: Is democracy the panacea?* reveals how Pakistan’s politics alternates among three forms of government: dictatorship, Islamism and democracy. The essayist argues that in the process of competing with one another each of these three forms of government are compelled to poach each other leading to constant instability.

To ensure political longevity, Misra claims, each regime must possess power, authority and legitimacy. Since none of the forms of government possess all three preconditions, each of the three forms an alliance with another form of government. Therefore the military, for example, which lacks popular legitimacy, ends up co-opting the Islamists who have ideological legitimacy, thus acquiring a military fist in an Islamic glove. The best examples are the overdependence of Zia-ul-Haq’s military regime on Islamism, and General Pervez Musharraf’s alliance with the Islamist Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA).

The 2008 elections, which brought the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) to power, provided Pakistan with a historic opportunity to consolidate democracy. However, under President Asif Ali Zardari the country has lurched from one constitutional crisis to another, leading to the recent ouster of Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani and the conflict with the Supreme Court. Misra accepts that with a “supportive
Washington, an apolitical army chief and demoralized Islamists, democracy now possesses its best chance.” However, as the main editor of the book, Misra fails to provide a novel approach to the study of Pakistan that attempts to break out of the stereotypical approaches employed in the past.

Tasneem Kausar’s *Judicialization of politics and governance in Pakistan: Constitutional and political challenges and the role of the Chaudhry Court*, is a welcome respite from the clichés. It deals with the Constitutional conflict between the judiciary and the executive under the last two regimes, both military and democratic. Kausar claims that the Supreme Court in Pakistan has always played a political role. Prior to 2005, the Supreme Court invariably favored the ruling regime. Ever since Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry took over, the Supreme Court has strongly challenged the executive: first, the authoritarian regime of General Pervez Musharraf; and later, the democratic regime of Zardari. Musharraf suspended Chief Justice Chaudhry, which led to his own downfall. The Zardari regime, although reluctant, was forced to reinstate the Chief Justice.

Agreed that the executive’s conflict with the judiciary resulted in a constitutional crisis, yet such a discord has had a positive consequence for democracy in Pakistan: first, it has ended up empowering the judiciary; second, it activated public interest litigations; and third, it inspired the lawyers’ movement which continued for two years from 2007 to 2009. It was the lawyers’ movement that succeeded in forcing the Zardari government to reinstate Chief Justice Chaudhry. This positive side of the constitutional crisis could have been further explored to build a totally new perspective on Pakistan’s democracy, something that would challenge the typical doomsday approach. But unfortunately, the editors of the book have overlooked this.

Tasneem Ahmar’s *Women, media, equity and equality: The Pakistan context* reveals the suffocating levels of patriarchy in the Pakistani media organizations. Ahmar argues that although women students often outnumber male students in mass communication departments, yet women’s representation in the mainstream media is paltry. Some amount of comparative data would have strengthened the argument. Ahmar relies more on individual cases. With the exception of Dr Maleeha Lodi and Dr Shirin Mazari, who are editors of the *The Muslim* and *The Nation*, there are no other women who have been editors of news dailies in Pakistan, observes Ahmar. The Associated Press of Pakistan has never had a woman director. To conclude, there is tight glass ceiling that prevents women from reaching the top in media organizations. It would have been useful had Ahmar related the study of patriarchy in the media to the prevailing political culture in Pakistan.
Two of the chapters in the first section deal with two different aspects of the phenomena of militancy, the most vital problem affecting Pakistan since 2001. While Aneela Babar’s *What are they teaching them at school nowadays? Understanding hybrid seminaries and Pakistan’s social revolution*, reveals the dangerous training curricula and culture at different madrassas (seminaries), Muhammad Amir Rana’s *The militant’s landscape: Pakistan’s Islamist organizations and their impact on the body politic* narrates the consequences of such training: 246 religious based political parties and militant groups operate in Pakistan, the number of terrorist attacks in the country since 2005 has increased by an alarming 746 per cent. Rana identifies 13 banned organizations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad and 11 others as major terrorist outfits. Such fierce jihadi politics has resulted in 2,148 terrorist attacks reported from all across the country in 2008, killing 2,267 people and injuring and maiming 4,558. By 2009 the casualties doubled and it has gotten worse in recent years.

Ashok K Behuria’s *The state of Jihadi organizations in Pakistan and their regional and international links* traces the origins of Pakistani militancy two decades prior to 9/11 to the Afghan jihad against Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and official Pakistani attempts to foment trouble in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) in India. Such extremism mushroomed with official connivance especially during Zia-ul-Haq regime. Further, Behuria analyses the twists and turns of Pakistan militancy, how it got progressively Arabized by linking itself to a fundamentalist Salafist and Wahabi ideology, championed by the Al Qaeda after 9/11 and later built international links leading to the murder of Daniel Pearl, the attacks against General Musharraf and the deadly Mumbai attack of 2008.

How has such militancy in Pakistan affected its neighbours? What are its regional dimensions? Part II of the book is largely concerned with Pakistan’s links with India and Afghanistan. Happymon Jacob’s article *The India-Pakistan peace process* examines the attempted détente between the two neighbours that began in 2004 and ended by 2008. Prior to the peace process, the two neighbours were on a confrontationist path with nuclear competition during 1998 and the Kargil conflict in 1999. The December 2001 terrorist attack on the Indian parliament led to a 10-month long military mobilization on the borders when it appeared to most observers that the two countries were on the brink of a war. This coincided with the low intensity war and cross-border terrorism unleashed by Pakistan in J&K.

The Islamabad Summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in January 2004 and later the declaration of a composite dialogue between the two belligerent neighbours began the peace process. India’s Prime Minister Dr.
Manmohan Singh and President Musharraf of Pakistan met first in New York by September 2004 and later in New Delhi in April 2005 during an India-Pakistan cricket match. This helped to thaw the frozen relationship and built up hopes on both sides. However, increasing militancy and Talibanization dashed all hopes of a lasting solution.

What led to the derailment of the peace process in 2008? According to Jacob, the waning of Musharraf’s popularity within Pakistan given the constitutional crisis with the judiciary and the sacking of Chief Justice Chaudhry led ironically to the failure of the peace process. Musharraf’s exit might have ended the peace process in the short run but in the long run, the last nail in the coffin was hammered by the Mumbai attack, according to Jacob. With the return of the second peace process since 2011 and Pakistan’s attempts at dealing with some of the alleged perpetrators of the Mumbai attack, there seems to be a ray of hope in the future of Pakistan-India friendship.

The last section traces the international dimensions of the Pakistani crisis: the country’s links with US, China and the predicament of a nuclear state wracked by terrorism. Moeed Yusuf in *Pakistan-US relations: An inconvenient partnership of convenience*, describes the rollercoaster nature of the relationship since 9/11. While the US coerces Pakistan to target Al Qaeda and Taliban, a reluctant Pakistan drags its foot given its support to Jihadi elements that fought Soviet intervention in Afghanistan prior to 9/11. Ironically, Yusuf points out that Pakistan’s support to the Jihadi Taliban was also dictated by US strategic interests during the Cold war era. Former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage’s infamous threat of “bombing Pakistan back to the stone age,” best describes this coercion that Pakistan faces from the US. Yusuf further reveals the infirmities of the buy-out options, including aid that the US resorted to both under George Bush Jr and Obama administrations.

The asymmetrical nature of its relationship with the US has pushed Pakistan into the arms of an assertive China. Srikanth Kondapalli examines China-Pakistan relations in *Testing China’s rise*. Michael E. Clarke’s *Pakistan and the four faces of nuclear terrorism* raises the uncomfortable question of how Pakistan is a threat to international security given that its entire nuclear complex is susceptible to acts of nuclear terrorism.

*Can Pakistan Survive?* Tariq Ali wrote this work in 1983, which argued that Pakistan’s genesis lacks reason in history. Yet almost three decades since the book was published Pakistan has managed to survive and grow. At the time when India was growing at the sluggish rate of 3.5 percent (1947–77), Pakistan with a more liberalized economy was surging at almost double that rate, except in 1951 when
the country faced a recession. In the early part of this century (2003 to 2007), Pakistan again surged at almost 7 to 8 percent. It is only since 2008–9 that the economic growth rate has nosedived. A chapter on Pakistan’s trajectory of economic development and decline would have enriched the volume greatly.

Moreover, democratic forces in Pakistan’s recent history, especially the judges, the lawyers and the media have struggled together to fight army style authoritarianism. Tasneem Kausar’s article, which deals with such a movement, is the most insightful piece in the book. The editors should have let Kausar’s piece become the lead introduction to the book. It moves away from the stereotypical doomsday scenario building and sets a totally fresh tone of looking at Pakistan’s myriad problems. The story of how during the recent years democratic forces have attempted to bring about a revolution from below, arrayed against an alliance of the army and the growing tribe of Islamists, would surely have added the much needed new perspective to the book.

Since February-March 2011 a second peace process has begun between Pakistan and India. Former Pakistan Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani’s trip to India in March 2011 to watch a Pakistan India cricket match in Mohali, along with his counterpart Dr. Manmohan Singh, was the major event that kick-started the peace process. The successful visit to India by Pakistani Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar in July 2011 did much to thaw the frozen relations at the symbolic level. The pilgrimmage by Pakistani president Asif Ali Zardari in April 2012 to the Sufi shrine of Khwaza Moinuddin Chisti in Ajmer in Rajasthan took the peace process forward. The liberalisation of visas and the recent attempts to bolster bilateral trade by inking three major agreements between both the countries are encouraging signs underscoring this new phase of détente.

In August 2012, New Delhi unilaterally decided to allow direct foreign investment from Pakistan to India. This has been hailed on both sides as a massive psychological blow to extreme elements hostile to improved ties between Islamabad and New Delhi. There is more than a glimmer of hope on both sides with more travel restrictions being removed. The red carpet rolled out for Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar by the Pakistani authorities during his week long November trip to Pakistan is bound to encourage more back channel routes to diplomacy. Ajmal Kasab’s recent hanging for the crimes of Mumbai terror bombings of 2008 may prove to be a mere blip if the two sides decide to rebuild a bridge of friendship. To top it all, the plan to renew cricket diplomacy by staging a new cricket series from December 25 to January 7, 2013 in India, after nearly five years of no India-Pakistan cricket ties, will go a long way in reuniting what terrorism broke apart—a subcontinent of peace and prosperity.