

South Asia and Afghanistan: The Robust India-Pakistan Rivalry

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Paper 2 of the PRIO Project 'Afghanistan in a
Neighbourhood Perspective'

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Is Afghanistan a playground for the India-Pakistan conflict? Or, are the countries in South Asia – Pakistan in particular – the recipients of unrest that spills over from Afghanistan? Alternatively, is the larger neighbourhood, South Asia and Afghanistan included, a mere victim of rivalry between global powers? Views on the relationship between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries vary widely, with fundamental consequences for how one understands the conflict, and what policies one finds constructive. Cognizant of the roles of actors in Central Asia and the Persian Gulf region, and excluding neither the importance of Afghan domestic factors nor global forces, this paper focuses on the way that the India-Pakistan conflict – the primary security dynamic in the South Asian region – informs the two countries' engagement in Afghanistan.

The paper argues that because the problem of Afghanistan is at the periphery, rather than at the core, of the security problems of the South Asian Security Complex, any ambitions for influence in the future of Afghanistan that Pakistan and India, as the key players of South Asia, may have are related to resolving their own internal insecurities, their own security dilemmas within the South Asia region and their own global ambitions rather than in 'entering' Afghanistan and replacing the US and NATO troops after they depart. If both want influence there, it is primarily because they seek solutions to their own insecurities, as well as guarantees from the US against each other. This means that as long as the core insecurities within the South Asia RSC are not resolved, negative influences may continue to hamper stabilization efforts in Afghanistan.

The South Asian Security Complex

Using the Regional Security Complex (RSC) approach as its conceptual framework, this second paper of the PRIO project 'Afghanistan in a Neighbourhood Perspective' makes three broad arguments about the South Asia Security Complex: 1) South Asia continues to be a distinct Regional Security Complex with, at its core, the persistent and durable conflict between India and Pakistan, 2) The Complex draws in global powers along its own lines of division, which, in turn, are reinforced by rivalries between global powers; and 3) Afghanistan plays the role of a buffer zone: its problems are at the periphery and not at the core of the security problems of the South Asian region.

The durability of the conflict between India and Pakistan, which is at the core of the South Asia Security Complex, is attributed to historical legacies over territory (namely the unresolved status of Kashmir), as well as to irreconcilable differences over national identity ever since Pakistan, the homeland for the Muslims on the subcontinent, separated itself from a secular, multicultural, multi-religious India based on a two-nation theory during the 1947 partition. The tensions intensify through the absence of economic cooperation despite new opportunities, as well as by new factors such as a potential dispute over water sharing of the Indus River.

In principle, the growth and emergence of India, and its superiority in terms of indicators of power (territory, population, economy, forces), on the one hand, and Pakistan's weakening from internal challenges, induced by rising militancy, social fragmentation and economic woes, on the other, could have transformed this rivalry, the unevenness of the two parties making the conflict irrelevant. The conflict has indeed become progressively more asymmetric with the two countries increasingly differentiated through characteristics of strength/weakness, unity/fragmentation and security/insecurity. Yet, this asymmetric power relationship and rivalry endure because, although India's aggregate power capability is considerably greater than Pakistan's and the latter has

become downgraded as a credible challenger to India, a number of factors mitigate and reduce this disparity, among them:

- the non-resolution of a territorial dispute in Kashmir where insurgency style operations and tactics prevail;
- the opening up of new fronts, strategies and tactics of warfare by terrorism (including that outsourced to foreign lands);
- the nuclear capabilities of both states;
- Pakistan's blockage of transport routes for India's supply to Afghanistan;
- The US 'double game' of seeking common ground both in Pakistan and Afghanistan through its AfPak strategy, as a result, increasing both countries' vulnerability to back door deals, rivalry and mistrust.

These factors mean that while India may have global superiority, and has more possibilities to 'divorce the region' and become a key global power or at least compete with China in the Asian Super Complex, at the local level, it is still bogged down by a defining relationship of rivalry with a much weaker Pakistan within the South Asia RSC.

Domestic Dimensions

The paper further examines how the India-Pakistan relationship is shaped by the nature of domestic politics and identity. Objectively, the Indian and Pakistani states share the same types of threats from non-traditional sources: trans-border crime threatening the stability of state institutions, energy deficit, environmental decay, pandemics, terrorism, and both external and internal insurgency (Talibanism and Naxalism). Yet, differences emerge in the extent to which domestic insecurities shape priorities.

Pakistan's insecurity not only stems from geographic proximity with an unstable Afghanistan, which, coupled with the inability of the state to control militancy in the border tribal areas, add to vulnerabilities in terms of trafficking of arms, narcotics and militancy. It also remains insecure because of rising extremism from within as a result of the fallout from the fighting between the army and Jihadi groups. The opening of the Pandora box of extremism in Pakistan is related to two factors. First, the decision by the Pakistani government to join the US War on Terror after 2001 fuelled passion within, not only among Jihadi groups who opposed what they considered the invasion of a Muslim country by US and NATO troops, especially after a number of militant groups were banned around the 2002 elections, but also by Pakistani opposition politicians and parties who warned against involvement in another country's war. The second element has to do with the decision, by Musharraf, to respond to unrest in the FATA, in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and in the Swat by sending troops, bringing the army into the tribal areas and breaking a pact with tribal leaders.

India is similarly impacted by sources of destabilization from within, in addition to what it considers as foreign backed terrorism: violent secessionism in Jammu and Kashmir, secessionist groups in the Northeast, and localized conflicts instigated by Maoist-influenced Naxalist groups. Yet, whereas the Pakistani state is less able to gain control because of the unclear historical relationship between the army, the state, and Islamic groups, India may be in better position to contain internal insecurities through a more effective law and order strategy combined with development policy. Because India presents itself as a secular democracy, it can also better avoid backlashes around ideology or religion.

In the meantime, the role of domestic actors in shaping security and foreign policy also differs substantially. In Pakistan, the dominance of the security establishment in policymaking, bent on

maintaining the conventional balance of power, reduces possibilities for rapprochement between the two countries, or for partnerships on Afghanistan. Within the Indian parliament, hawkish elements led by the opposition BJP have also not allowed the Congress-led government to initiate any meaningful dialogue with Pakistan. Yet, the lack of domination of one group in security and foreign policy discourse and practice makes decisions contested more virulently between political parties, and the power of the government is more tested by discords that involve advocates for classes, castes and ideologies, both left and right, while the military remains subordinate to the political authority.

National identity, or, at least, external projections of it, also contribute to shaping of security and foreign policy: To stay true to its very *raison d'être*, Pakistan has had to sustain an identity on the basis of Islam, as the guardian of the Umma where all Muslims could live freely. An Islamic identity was also supposed to act as a unifying factor against nationalism and overcome the ethnic divide between Pashtuns and Panjabis. However, with the rise of intolerance toward other sects and religions, sectarian violence within Muslim groups, and internal dissent against the country joining the global war against other Muslim nations in the post 9/11 era, Pakistan's role as a leader of the Islamic world is increasingly undermined and tensions between Islamic and ethnic identity have come to the foreground

India, on the other hand, with its myriad of castes, tribes, linguistic and ethnic groups, could only unite on the basis of secularism. While secularism has also become increasingly challenged in India by nationalist Hindutva parties, the multi-religious and multi-ethnic identity of India has been preserved for two reasons. One is by sheer number, with ethnicity or religious fundamentalism as a factor of identity being lost in the multiplicity of other categories of identities, such as castes and class, which compete for political attention. Second, because the open contestation of democratic politics in India allows not only for representation and debates but also encourages the softening of fundamentalist tendencies among Hindutva parties looking for constituencies.

These differences between the domestic politics of the two countries contribute to the asymmetry in terms of the position of strength and security from which the two key countries of the South Asian RSC engage with each other. The nature of the increasingly uneven relationship between India and Pakistan in terms of characteristic of security/insecurity, strength/weakness, unity/fragmentation not only shapes their interactions, but also their behaviour within the South Asia RSC, vis-à-vis other regional and global units, and with Afghanistan. The Indian state, more secure internally although more politically contested, is led to pursue a relatively more offensive and hegemonic position in regional and international relations with its sheer economic power. Pakistan, on the other hand, coming from a more vulnerable position because of internal fragmentation, tends to adopt a regional and international outlook that is relatively more *defensive*. It projects the image of a threat, a state in vacuum that can undermine the stability of others by failing to prevent the bleeding-out of destructive forces that are based within its own country. And yet, India is also not able to uphold its aspirations for moral leadership in their immediate region. Its offensive hegemonic ambitions are curbed by its inability to display leadership in its own backyard, pacifying conflicts and leading the region toward modernization through increasing intra-regional economic trade and investments. Both countries therefore cannot 'divorce' their region without having showed progress, especially while the external environment beyond the South Asia RSC presents formidable new challenges and uncertainties.

Relations with Major Global Powers

The entry of US/NATO forces in Afghanistan and the rise of China could have acted as external catalysts for transformation of the India-Pakistan conflict, but uncertainties have kept them both

insecure and in persistent rivalry. Security dynamics within the South Asian RSC are reinforced by the rivalries between global powers. Pakistan and India both aspire to recognition by the United States, as both a global economic and military leader and as a real and present 'regional' actor after its entry into Afghanistan. At best, rapprochement with the US gives each country an added advantage over the other. At worst, it prevents the formation of a tight alliance between the US with the other. Yet, the lack of clarity about long term US intentions in the region, coupled with an ambiguous policy of engaging with both partners at the same time, contributes to their insecurities and in fact exacerbates their conflictual relationship. The US maintains the balance of power between Pakistan and India by cultivating both good and cautious relations with both.

In the meantime, the extra-regional alliances formed with China and the US are a reflection of their own rivalries. Pakistan's interest in keeping good relations with China is as much for security guarantees against the common challenger of India as it is for economic reasons. India's continued good relations with Russia as the successor state to the Soviet Union, as well as with Iran, with which it has common interests in supporting non-Pashtun groups against Sunni fundamentalist Taliban take over, signals an alliance that stands against the US-Pakistan and China-Pakistan nexus in the region. In the meantime, both country's interests in joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) – which has China and Russia at the lead – show that they are cognizant of a changing global dynamic where the centre of economic and military power is gradually gravitating toward the East.

Afghanistan: Zone of Contestation or Cooperation?

Afghanistan, at the periphery of the South Asian security dynamics, simultaneously bordering on the Persian Gulf and Central Asian regions, continues to play the role of an insulator. The problem of Afghanistan is not at the core of the security dynamic of South Asia. India and Pakistan's interests in Afghanistan are primarily a reflection of their own security aspirations and insecurity concerns. On the one hand, they are driven by the rationale of checking on the influence of each other, continuing their proxy war on the soil of Afghanistan, albeit indirectly and through unconventional tactics. For Pakistan, influence over Afghanistan is seen as a prerequisite to security, maintaining strategic depth against India, preventing the opening up of the Durand line, quashing Pashtun aspirations for a united Pashtunistan, but also as an opportunity to foster economic and military cooperation with the US. For India, economic influence in Afghanistan allows it to be recognized as a major donor in the region, while turning public opinion in the country against Pakistan and insulating itself against the dangers of drugs and fundamentalist Islam in the region.

In the final analysis, the paper shows how Afghanistan remains a zone of chaos into which the main security dynamic within the South Asia RSC, the Indo-Pakistan conflict is projected. More than Afghanistan drawing in the neighbouring states along the lines of its domestic rivalries, it is the external rivalry that defines how the two states view Afghanistan, as well as how they act within it. External powers are drawn into the conflict along the dividing line, but the ambiguity of US policies keep both countries insecure and in enduring conflict. The emerging geopolitical rivalry between the US and China ultimately may decide how these relationships play out in the future.

But what could tilt this balance and shift the South Asia security complex into a security community based on cooperation? A number of factors that could enhance cooperation are mentioned in the paper: Increased interaction in the economic field; joint efforts by the states in combating insurgency and terrorism; and positive changes in the global order, including cooperation between China and the US, which would cease their proxy rivalries within South Asia.

Introduction

The importance of a concerted regional effort toward peace and stability in Afghanistan is increasingly recognized among analysts and policy makers alike. With the announcement of the beginning of the gradual US troops withdrawal from July 2011 and plans to hand over security responsibility completely to Afghan forces in 2014, attention has moved to the role of neighbouring countries in filling in the expected political vacuum. From this perspective, the question is whether regional neighbouring states and actors would revert to behaviour witnessed in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, where their influence on different warring ethnic groups sowed further discord for national unity and contributed to the civil war of 1992-1996. Or, on the other hand, whether they will be able to exert positive influence over the surviving Afghan state and contribute to regional stability. Optimism prevails in policy studies that examine the possibility of stabilization in Afghanistan as an opportunity for recreating the 'silk road', a bridge which would link trade and gas routes east and west, and landlocked Central Asia to the Indian Ocean. Evidence for this is sought in institutional strategies of regional organizations trying to foster alliances and regional projects for reconstruction. The more cautious policy literature, however, relies on a more realist analysis of the interest of states in the bilateral and tri-lateral relationships with Afghanistan.¹ Neighbours preparing themselves to 'get in' when the US 'gets out' are seen as stepping up efforts to protect their security and economic interests.²

Discussions on the future of Afghanistan seem to be informed by two different, fundamental conceptions of regional cooperation. The more conventional perspective sees Afghanistan as the 'core' of a larger conflict formation tied together by various trans-national networks with the potential to mobilize across borders.³ From this viewpoint, the 'region', of which Afghanistan is part, has acquired a permanent identity as a Regional Conflict Formation, instigated mainly by a nexus between criminal, Islamic and ethnic networks. Evidence is found in the linkages between the wars in Afghanistan, the civil war in Tajikistan (1992-1997) and the Islamist rebellion in Uzbekistan and the dominant role of non-state actors in these conflicts.⁴ The role of neighbours and their relationship with Afghanistan, viewed through this analytical framework, depends therefore on the extent to which states' decisions to cooperate is shaped by their perception of threats coming from non-state actors, especially trans-boundary ones. This framework puts trans-border social networks in the agency seat, deciding as they do on the outcomes of escalation of conflicts. The weaker the states are, the more potential these networks have to destabilize the region as a whole. From this logic, it would therefore be a natural outcome that states would cooperate in order to jointly combat the so-called evils of criminality, extremism and terrorism. Afghanistan, from where both conflict potentials can start and from where cooperation is expanded, becomes the core of insecurities in each of the surrounding regions. Given that

1 See for example, Tom Gregg, 2010. *Is a Regional Pact to Stabilize Afghanistan Possible?*, New York University: Center on International Cooperation, 2010; Heidi Kjærnet and Stina Torjesen, *Afghanistan and regional instability: A risk assessment*, Oslo: NUPI Report, 2008; Ashley J. Tellis & Aroop Mukharji, Editors, *Is a Regional Strategy Viable in Afghanistan?*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010.

2 Karen DeYoung, "If U.S. gets out, who gets in, neighbours ask", *Washington Post*, Friday, November 5, 2010.

3 Barnett R. Rubin, "Central Asia and Central Africa: Transnational Wars and Ethnic Conflicts", *Journal of Human Development*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2006, pp. 6-21; Barnett R. Rubin, 'Russian Hegemony and State Breakdown in the Periphery', In Rubin, R, B & Snyder, J. (Eds.). *Post-Soviet Political Order, Conflict and State Building*. London: Routledge, 1998, p. 144; Barnett R Rubin and Andrea Armstrong, Conference summary: Policy approaches to regional conflict formations, New York: Center on International Cooperation, November, 2002, p.5

4 Rubin 2006:1-9

stabilization of this unstable 'core' is a shared concern, the patterns that govern the region would naturally lead more toward amity and cooperation than enmity between states.

This approach, however, fails to consider the potential for non-cooperation among states, even if they share a common concern for dangers emanating from non-state actors. It neglects factors that shape relations between states, be they durable and tangible such as geography and history or intangible, such as national interest, ambitions for power, economic rivalry, etc. Thus, a second conceptual framework for analysing regional cooperation puts focus on a state-based perspective where patterns of amity and enmity or cooperation and conflict are the results of interests of states and their security dynamics. This perspective, which forms the basis of the PRIO project 'Afghanistan in a Neighbourhood Perspective', is informed by the analytical framework of the Regional Security Complex (RSC) approach, developed by Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, which takes as its point of departure the argument that geographical proximity defines patterns of security interdependence, with most states fearing their neighbours more than distance powers and proximity defining intense security interdependence.⁵ The original definition of a Security Complex is 'a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.'⁶ A revised definition, brought up in a later work by Buzan and Wæver, explains security complexes as 'a set of units whose major processes of securitisation, desecuritisation, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analysed or resolved apart from one another.'⁷ As such, the classical version was updated to a more constructivist view that takes into account the widening of the security agenda to non-traditional threats.⁸

Taking the Regional Security Complex approach as point of departure, the PRIO project examines the distinctness of the three RSCs surrounding Afghanistan with security dynamics of their own, and the role of the latter as an 'insulator' caught in between. The research thus examines the extent to which the engagement of neighbouring states in Afghanistan is primarily a reflection of existential security concerns within their own region.⁹ Following a first paper produced by Kristian B. Harpviken to set the conceptual scene for the three regions under scrutiny, this paper concentrates on the South Asia Regional Security Complex by focusing specifically on the core security problem of this distinct region: the conflictual relationship between India and Pakistan.

Setting the Scene: The South Asia Security Complex

To qualify as a RSC, a group of states need to have a certain level of security interdependence, both sufficient in form to establish them as a linked set, and to differentiate them from surrounding security regions. Within this cosmology, the dynamics within and between three units define what consists as a regional approach.¹⁰

- 1) Mutually exclusive Regional Security Complexes, which consist of states with historical relations and patterns of amity and enmity which are durable.
- 2) Global powers which are interlinked to the regional dynamics of RSCs through the mechanisms of penetration and overlay either in the RSC or in the insulator.

5 Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Power, the structure of International Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 45-49

6 Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf. 1991, chapter 5, p. 190.

7 Buzan and Wæver, 2003, p. 44

8 Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Japp de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998.

9 See Kristian B. Harpviken, 'Afghanistan in a Neighbourhood Perspective: General Overview and Conceptualization', Oslo: PRIO, 2010.

10 Buzan and Wæver, 2003, pp. 40-45

- 3) Insulators, or buffer zones, occupied by one or more units where larger regional security dynamics stands back-to-back.

This paper poses three questions: 1) To what extent can South Asia be considered a distinct Regional Security Complex? 2) Do global powers play a crucial role in forming and transforming the South Asia RSC and/or the insulator? 3) Does Afghanistan play the role of an insulator, a buffer zone, where larger regional security dynamics stand back-to-back? As such, is the engagement of the countries of the South Asia RSC a reflection of their own security dynamics?

Argument 1: South Asia continues to be a distinct Regional Security Complex with persistent and durable rivalry between India and Pakistan at its core.

South Asia is a distinct RSC with the following characteristics:

- Geographically, the South Asia RSC is insulated from those around it, with Burma providing insulation from South East Asia and Afghanistan from the Gulf regional complexes.
- The main security dynamic of the region is defined by rivalry and traditional patterns of hostility and consequently mutual securitization between India and Pakistan. The India-Pakistan conflict emerged originally out of a communal conflict between the Muslim League and the Congress Party which led to the 1947 partition of India. As a result, the conflict metamorphosed into a durable inter-state, military-political one between a Pakistan as home for the Muslims of the subcontinent and a secular, multicultural, multi-religious India, which acquired a nuclear dimension from the mid-1970s. The rivalry led to three wars between India and Pakistan (1947-1948, 1965 and 1971), as well as a series of serious crisis that made war into a possibility (1984, 1987, 1990 and 1999 Kargil conflicts and 2001). The conflict persists around Kashmir, communal tensions and the military, consolidated by missile rivalry since both countries conducted nuclear tests in 1998.
- The essential structure continues to be bipolar, given that nuclear parity has allowed Pakistan to compete on equal terms with India. Yet, as Buzan predicated,¹¹ the regional structure of the South Asia Security Complex is moving toward contested hegemony, in which the amity and enmity between India and its neighbours stay the same, but India has become more powerful. The rising strength of India, coupled with the intensification of fragmentation and weakness within Pakistan, has shifted power within the South Asia RSC toward contested hegemony.
- At the domestic level, norms and national identities contribute to the process of securitization: Violent domestic politics are fuelled by ethnic and religious differences, a pattern which has spillover effects from the domestic level to the regional, inter-state level, manifested in the rising violence in Kashmir and claims and counterclaims on terrorism. India's secular, federal constitution clashes with the principle of Pakistan's ideology as a homeland for the Muslims. Domestic insecurities also define security dynamics between countries, evident, for example, in the prominence of the question of borders, insurgency fears, water disputes and trade wars between India and Nepal.

11 Barry Buzan, "South Asia Moving Towards Transformation : Emergence of India as a Great Power", *International Studies*, vol. 39, 2002, pp. 1-

- The low level of economic relations and inter-dependence among the South Asian states is both a cause and a consequence of the region's military-political antagonism. Conflicts over economic projects and environmental goods such as water have intensified patterns of conflict instead of cooperation between the countries.

The South Asia Regional Security Complex is therefore likely to endure as such. In principle however, its internal structure could transform from a bipolar to a unipolar hegemony, or at the very least, a contested hegemony. Buzan attributes this possibility to two factors:¹² One is the inability of Pakistan to sustain bipolarity because of its own disintegration which would transform the weak state into a failed one. This would mean that, for Pakistan, the external threat from India would become less severe than the one coming from its own internal political, ethnic, social and economic turmoil. A second and related possibility for the transformation of the South Asia Complex into a unipolar structure is the emergence of India. While Pakistan may be 'fading away as a credible rival to, or balancer, of India',¹³ it is 'sliding toward being more of a nuisance than a challenger', making more apparent India's advantages (such as population, GDP, growth rate, military manpower and expenditures). The prominence of India in the South Asia RSC, and the increasing vulnerability and weakness of Pakistan, as this paper argues, may be transforming the rivalry between the two countries and affecting relations vis-à-vis global powers and Afghanistan. It is however not disintegrating the core security dynamic of the South Asia RSC.

Argument 2: Security dynamics within the South Asia RSC are reinforced by the rivalries between global powers. As such the global does not transform but intensifies the durability of conflict within the South Asia RSC.

The RSC model envisages that 'where there is rivalry among the global powers, a regional security complex in conflict formation mode draws in outside interventions along the lines of its own internal split.'¹⁴ This explains the patterns of alliance between the countries of the RSC with global powers as a reflection of the power relationship within. During the Cold War, Pakistan sought to associate itself with the United States and become part of the US network of containment alliances through membership in CENTO. After the Cold War, it continued the alliance by cooperating in the War Against Terror. India, on the other hand, developed close relations with the Soviet Union from the early 1960s, and continued its relations with the successor states to the Soviet Union after the 1990s. Their alliances with global rivals clearly reflected their own rivalry. The similar pattern is found in relations with China: The Pakistani alliance with China from the early 1960s, and the Sino-Indian security dynamics both reflect the dynamics of Indo-Pakistan relationship: China's support for Pakistan maintains the bipolar conflict formation within the region by putting restraints on a possible superpower status for India, which could, in turn, threaten Chinese interests.

The overlay of the global influence within the South Asia RSC intensifies the durability of conflict between India and Pakistan and does not radically reconfigure the security dynamics within the region. The rivalry in South Asia is tied into and reinforced by the patterns of the US-Chinese rivalry at the global level, much as it had by US-Soviet and Chinese-Soviet rivalries during the Cold War.¹⁵

¹² Buzan and Wæver, 2003.

¹³ Ibid, p. 15

¹⁴ Buzan, 2001, p.4

¹⁵ Buzan and Wæver, 2003.

Yet, a number of scenarios could in principle transform such a pattern, two of which are related to the intensification of power in India and weakness in Pakistan. On the one hand, India could transcend the South Asia RSC by rising to the status of the third Asian great power, rivalling China, and achieving great power status within the Asian Super Complex. This would, as Buzan & Wæver predict, transform the South Asia RSC.¹⁶ It would depend, however, on a number of factors: Whether India no longer feels strategically threatened from within South Asia; whether an escalation of its rivalry with China as competitor in the Asia Super Complex becomes more important than the India-Pakistan one, and whether India has the sufficient resources and the will to carve out a great power role for itself in Asia.

A second possibility of transformation of the South Asia RSC could, in principle, stem from efforts of Pakistan to seek allies against India in the Islamic world, with Iran, Turkey, Gulf states and especially with Saudi Arabia. In this scenario, however, although the South Asian and West Asian security dynamics would be increasingly linked, it would not disintegrate the boundaries and distinction between them. As this paper will argue, attempts by Pakistan to reach out to the Umma have structural weaknesses, and are, in any case, a reflection of the desire to gain more power vis-à-vis India as the primary rival.

Argument 3: Afghanistan plays the role of an insulator, a buffer zone where larger regional security dynamics stands back-to-back.

Afghanistan, within the RSC approach, is defined as a 'Zone of Chaos' that is likely to endure and continue to fulfil its function as an insulator between multiple regional complexes (the Persian Gulf, South Asia and Central Asia). The civil war after the Soviet intervention created a mini-complex in Afghanistan of its own, characterized by durable features of political fragmentation, political turbulence and internal divisions. Domestic dynamics drive the conflict within Afghanistan, while the insulation is robust and durable. It 'draws in the neighbouring states along the lines of the internal rivalries, but its internal dynamics are strong enough to keep the larger dynamics separated.'¹⁷ Afghanistan's status as a failed state with a lack of necessary power makes it incapable to generate wider security dynamics or become the centre of new large regional formations.

As such, the problem of Afghanistan is periphery to, and not the core of, the security problems of the South Asia. Countries play out issues from their own security complexes within the context of Afghanistan but the source is not within. The importance of Afghanistan to the security dynamic within each region fluctuates over time and between various domains and issue, but is not static or durable. As Buzan and Wæver note, none of the states surrounding Afghanistan is capable in establishing its hegemony over or occupying Afghanistan and surrounding states have more immense security concerns in other directions. Pakistan may have a desire to exert influence over Afghanistan but is prevented from doing so by its own lack of capacity and Afghan resistance. India and Iran are more interested in keeping separate the security dynamics in South Asia and the Gulf RSCs than expanding into Afghanistan. By implication, following the withdrawal of US and NATO troops by 2014, the countries of the region will not attempt to replace them and 'enter' Afghanistan.

The counter-argument for this line of argumentation, in the meantime, can also spring from two possible scenarios: One possibility is the absorption of Pakistan into the zone of chaos of Afghanistan in case the country becomes a failed or fragmented state taken over by insurgents,

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 118-122

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 111

such as, for example, in the event of Talibanization of Pakistan. Yet, in this scenario, the weakening of Pakistan does not change the contours of the South Asia RSC, but absorbs one of its key players into a zone of chaos which neighbouring states would seek to contain.¹⁸ In a second and related scenario, internal dynamics within Afghanistan could threaten the three surrounding RSCs in a way that they become engulfed in it. But unlike the Talibanization scenario, it would be the presence of permanent US and NATO troops in Afghanistan, despite departure plans, that could pose a security threat to the neighbouring countries. In the case of an attack on Iran for example, or a strategic alliance with some Central Asian countries, security dynamics coming out of Afghanistan could become more important than the internal dynamics within the surrounding RSCs. In this scenario, the external threat to the South Asia Complex, however, is less than the one for the other two complexes. The presence of the US in Afghanistan in fact plays into the hostile dynamics between India and Pakistan more than it presents a direct threat to the states. However, continued drone attacks against Pakistani militants by the US could be seen as a threat to the sovereignty of the Pakistani state, and could in fact weaken Pakistan more by enraging its militants as well as its populations which can question the effectiveness of the leadership of the state. With its heavy dependence on the US for financial support and military capabilities, the response of Pakistan would not likely to be a war with the US on Afghan soil, however.

Main Argument and Organization

Framing the evidence for the various arguments above, this paper finds an entry point in the analysis of the extent to which the *nature* of the relationship between India and Pakistan shapes interactions with external powers and with Afghanistan. As a main argument, it stipulates that the relationship between the two key countries within the South Asian RSC is highly asymmetrical and unequal, locking them into an ‘asymmetrical security complex’. India, as the second fastest-growing economy in the world and a major diplomatic power, is facing the world and the region in a manner that is united within. With its aspirations for big power status and with its sheer capabilities, it is also increasingly taking an *offensive*, hegemonic position in regional and international relations. Pakistan, on the other hand, is in a vulnerable position because of its internal fragmentation, a characteristic that then translates into a regional and international outlook that is *defensive*.

The relationship is asymmetrical because the two countries are increasingly differentiated through dichotomist characteristics of strength/weakness, united/fragmented, secure/insecure. At the same time, however, this asymmetric relationship is ‘truncated’, in the sense that, although India’s aggregate power capability is considerably greater than Pakistan’s in terms of gross national indicators of power (territory, population, economy, and overall military forces), a number of factors mitigate and reduce that disparity. Rivalry therefore persists because even though India may have global superiority, there is parity in power capabilities with Pakistan at the local level. While India has many more possibilities to ‘divorce the region’ and become a key global power or at least compete with China in the Asian Super Complex, it is still bogged down and locked in a defining relationship of conflict/rivalry/enmity with a much weaker Pakistan within the South Asia RSC.

In the meantime, we further stipulate that the nature of the dichotomized relationship between India and Pakistan in terms of characteristic of secure/insecure, strength/weakness, united/fragmented not only shapes their interaction, but also their behaviour within the South Asia RSC, vis-à-vis other regional and global units and with Afghanistan.

¹⁸ Ibid.; pp. 109-113

The paper analyses factors that go into the foundation of the dichotomized and asymmetrical relationship between India and Pakistan in four parts: Part I examines factors that go into the durability of the conflict between India and Pakistan within the RSC. Part II focuses on how this relationship is shaped by the nature of domestic politics and identity. It analyses the extent to which a) domestic security imperatives shape the security discourse and practice, b) actors shape foreign policy, and c) national identity informs policy. Part III focuses on how the dichotomized relationship is reflected in dealings and relations with other regional and global powers. Part IV analyses how it shapes the way they interact with Afghanistan before presenting some conclusions.

Part I) Durability of the India-Pakistan Conflict

The rivalry between India and Pakistan, shaped by common borders, geography and legacy of a conflictual relationship ever since the 1947 partition, continues to be at the core of the South Asia RSC. Its durability is attributed to both historical legacies over territory and differences over national identity¹⁹, as well as new factors such as conflicts over environmental resources:

Legacy of Territorial Dispute

The territorial or geographic base of the conflict can be traced to the process of state formation and nation building in India and Pakistan that began after the partition of the subcontinent in 1947. The unsettled territorial dispute over Kashmir continues to be the centrepiece of India-Pakistan relations, with Pakistan calling Kashmir its ‘jugular vein’ and India having dubbed it as its ‘inseparable’ and ‘integral part’. Pakistan’s traditional position has been primarily legal, citing UN Security Council Resolutions and the partition of India plan, whereas the Indians have tried to maintain the status quo control over most of Kashmir and Jammu. Kashmir, according to the writer Arundhati Roy, caught between the influence of militant Islam from Pakistan and Afghanistan, America’s interests in the region and Indian nationalism, is patrolled by more than half a million soldiers and has become the most highly militarized zone in the world.²⁰ After three wars over the territory for the past two decades, and renewed uprising, the conflict has left 70,000 dead and the migration of more than 200,000 Kashmiri Hindus from the valley.

Liberal elements within both countries have nonetheless advocated for ushering a new era in their relationships and bypassing the question of Kashmir. President Musharraf became the first Pakistani leader to openly talk of flexibility on the issue, even suggesting that the status quo could be turned into a permanent settlement. However, despite the government’s policy shifts, Pakistani religious institutions, traditionalists within the establishment, as well as large segments within Pakistan remain opposed to any settlement. In India, opposition parties continue to put forth a ceasefire in Kashmir the precondition for any direct talks with Pakistan.

While Kashmir remains an unsettled agenda and a frozen conflict, the question is how much its settlement is important for moving ahead in the region. One indication is the non-position of the American administration on the issue. A week before he was elected in 2008, President Obama had raised the possibility of solving the Kashmir dispute as among his ‘critical tasks’. Yet, after his election, he said almost nothing about Kashmir until his visit to Delhi in November 2010 when he mentioned that the United States would not intervene in Kashmir while announcing his support for India’s seat on the United Nations Security Council.²¹ Kashmir was supposed to be an important part of Obama’s regional strategy on Afghanistan, but it is estimated that under pressure from India, it did not make it to the AfPak package. The Kashmir issue also never figured in US-Pakistan negotiations over aid and support for the war against terror. Although both India and Pakistan do not seek a third party in their territorial dispute, from the US administration point of view, the road to Kabul is not necessarily seen to be through Kashmir.

19 For a comprehensive assessment of the causes of this enduring rivalry, see chapters in T. V. Paul (Ed), *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

20 Arundhati Roy, Op-Ed Contributor, “Kashmir’s Fruits of Discord”, *New York Times*, November 8, 2010

21 Ibid.

National Identities

Another legacy of the painful partition contributing to the durability of conflict is the irreconcilable positions on national identity, when Pakistan, as the home of the Muslims in the continent, separated itself from the secular, multicultural, multi-religious India, based on the two-nation theory. Potential elements of transformation exist, however, with Pakistan becoming increasingly unable to claim its leadership position of the Umma, further analysed below. India's secularism is also increasingly challenged by the ascent in politics of its own Hindu parties, led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which confront the secular, modernist Congress Party. These shifts, although transforming the nature of domestic politics, do not however diminish from the continuation of identity-based conflicts between the two states.

Water Resources

While contestation over Kashmir and irreconcilable national identities are not likely to abate despite elements of change, new factors have increased the potential for conflict among the two countries. A potential dispute over water sharing of the Indus River system is a growing scenario used by militants and politicians alike. Trans-boundary water sharing, regulated by the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) signed between India and Pakistan in 1960,²² was to guarantee that Pakistan would receive water from the Indus River independent of upstream control by India. The Treaty also gave each country access to three rivers and limited rights to the other nation's rivers.²³ The original idea was to treat water development as a common project that was functional, and not political, in nature, and to forge an example for Indo-Pakistani cooperation. However, political impediments have often preceded technical debates.

Pakistan regularly accuses India, the upper riparian state in the Indus River system, of suppressing the flow of water downstream to Pakistan. Indian plans of construction of hydroelectric projects on the river Indus Kishanganga, an Indus tributary, and the completion of the Baglihar dam on the Chenab river in 2008, are seen by Pakistan as threats to the irrigation and electricity plans of Pakistan and a violation of the IWT. President Asif Ali Zardari, in a January 2009 article in *Washington Post* warned: "The water crisis in Pakistan is directly linked to relations with India. Its resolution could prevent an environmental catastrophe in South Asia, but failure to do so could fuel the fires of discontent that may lead to extremism and terrorism."²⁴ These grievances were echoed in Pakistan both by farmers associations of Punjab and Sindh who feared they would be severely affected by Indian plan of construction of dams, as well as militant organizations who adopted water as a new rallying cry against India. In the Spring of 2010, Hafiz Sayeed, the founder of the Punjab-based militant group Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT) blamed by India for the Mumbai attacks and head of the Islamic charity Jamaat-ud-Dawa, accused India of 'water terrorism'.

Mounting rhetoric can be analysed from a number of angles. From the Indian point of view, the Pakistani security establishment's failure to clamp down on the LeT and allowing for organizations to 'inflame public passions'²⁵ is a manifestation of the establishment's desire to shift the Kashmir liberation struggle, waning in Pakistan's public consciousness, away from a Jihadist element to an existential issue by inciting passions.²⁶ The use of water as a latent cause for conflict also points to the increased vulnerability of Pakistan, where water supply has been

22 The World Bank, *The Indus Water Treaty 1960. Between The Government of India and The Government Pakistan*. Karachi, Pakistan, 1960..

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTSOUTHASIA/Resources/223497-1105737253588/IndusWatersTreaty1960.pdf>

23 The Henry L Stimson Center, *The Indus Waters Treaty*, Washington DC, Henry L Stimson Center, 2007-2009.

24 Asif Ali Zardari, "Partnering With Pakistan", *The Washington Post*, Wednesday, January 28, 2009

25 Karin Brulliard, "Rhetoric grows heated in water dispute between India, Pakistan", *The Washington Post*, Friday, May 28, 2010

26 Ibid.

dwindling because of climate change, outdated farming techniques that use 90% of the available water, and an exploding population for whom water insecurity is a mounting concern. India, on the other hand, with its ability to influence river flows into Pakistan, has taken a more proactive position to answer its own demands of economic growth by stepping up on hydroelectric projects. This puts water sharing, a technical matter, into the realm of politics where Pakistan's position can be described as defensive and India's as offensive and proactive. Yet, cooperation around water is not only a necessity because of the tangible needs of Pakistan but also because it can be a shared dividend for peaceful cooperation on non-political matters. The existence of an actual Treaty and the involvement of international organizations such as the World Bank in regulating compliance is an area to be explored.

Economic Relations

The absence of significant economic and trade relations between India and Pakistan is both caused by and a consequence of the prolonged conflict. This lack of cooperation has a number of negative by-products exacerbated with recent transformations of domestic economies: The rising debt and economic problems of Pakistan could in principle find a solution in more trade with an immediate neighbour, especially as economic growth in India ushers in new possibilities for investment into the sub-continent. India's economic growth, for example, could be a pull factor for economic migrants, including Pakistani ones, who contribute to the GDP through considerable remittances. International reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan also have provided new impetus for economic cooperation, with the possibility for engagement of Pakistani manpower in the infrastructure projects funded by India, or of Pakistani companies for procurement. Yet, political conflict and mistrust between the two countries continue to thwart economic opportunities: Not only do the two countries trade more with others than with each other, but Pakistan had also, until 2010, blocked access of India to the Afghan Transit Agreement (ATA) under the pressure of the religious and traditional security sectors of its establishment. In the economic sphere, India's proactive position stands against Pakistan's defensive and conservative one, despite the objective opportunities that increased trade could specifically bring to Pakistan.

Asymmetric but Durable Rivalry

While historical legacy and new factors for competition continue to provide fuel to the India-Pakistan conflict, it is also apparent that the capacity of both countries is increasingly differentiated. India's growth and emergence has clearly given it superiority in terms of gross national indicators of power (territory, population, economy, forces). Internal weakness and fragmentation of Pakistan, as will be analysed below, is downgrading the country as a credible challenger to India. What can explain the durability of the conflict in these circumstances?

T. V. Paul associates this with the formation of 'truncated power asymmetry' that has prevailed between the two antagonists for over half a century.²⁷ This power asymmetry comes from the fact that rivalry persists between a status quo power and a challenger state that are relatively equal in their capabilities at the local level, but unequal in terms of their global capabilities. The asymmetry is however 'truncated', as he puts it, because although India's aggregate power capability is considerably greater than Pakistan's in terms of gross national indicators of power (territory, population, economy, and overall military forces), a number of factors mitigate and reduce that disparity. These include a) the non-resolution of a territorial dispute in Kashmir where insurgency style operations and tactics prevail; b) the opening up of new fronts, strategies and tactics of warfare by terrorism, including outsourced to foreign lands, with the 2008 terrorist

27 T. V. Paul, "Why has the India-Pakistan Rivalry Been so Enduring? Power Asymmetry and an Intractable Conflict", *Security Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 4, October–December 2006, pp. 600–630

attacks in Mumbai and the bombing of the Indian embassy in Kabul – both of which India accused the Pakistani establishment of backing; c) the nuclear capabilities of both states; d) Pakistan's blockage of transport routes for India's supply to Afghanistan; and, finally, e) the US 'double game' of seeking common grounds both in Pakistan and Afghanistan for its AfPak strategy, and, as a result, increasing both countries' vulnerability to back door deals, rivalry and mistrust.

These factors make it plausible, using Paul's argument, that when two states in an asymmetric dyad with global power discrepancy (in terms of overall strength) versus local parity engage in conflict, the rivalry can endure for a long period of time without resolution. They continue to explain the enduring nature of the India-Pakistan rivalry, even though it may be increasingly asymmetric given Pakistan's insecurity on the one hand, and India's emerging confidence on the other, and the rivalry has transformed in recent years to include new security issues such as water and at the expense of new opportunities that could be exploited in the political economy of the region.

Part II) Transformations from Within: Domestic Dimensions

What has led to the differentiation of the characteristics (strength/weakness, united/fragmented, secure/insecure) between the two countries from sources within the state? According to the RSC approach, patterns of rivalry across states mirror domestic politics. Both countries continue to be impacted by turbulent and violent domestic politics fuelled by ethnic and religious differences from within, with consequences not only on the patterns of their rivalries but also on the identities of the two states that characterize their respective positions. Domestic security imperatives, actors and normative factors such as religious and ethnic identities contribute to shaping foreign and security policy in India and Pakistan in various degrees.

Domestic Security Imperatives

Objectively, the Indian and Pakistani states share the same types of threats from traditional and non-traditional sources: trans-border crime threatening the stability of state institutions, energy deficit, environmental decay, pandemics and terrorism, both external and internal insurgency (Talibanism and Naxalism). Yet, differences emerge in the extent to which domestic insecurities shape priorities within each country, related to vulnerabilities, perceptions and even geography.

Pakistan's Increasing Insecurity

In Pakistan, as the more vulnerable state with a defensive outlook, the discourse tends to blame non-traditional insecurities on external causes. Besides issues related to water sharing disputes and accusations that India is strangling upstream rivers to desiccate downstream farms in Pakistan's dry agricultural heartland, the sources of insecurities are sought in the geographical proximity of an unstable Afghanistan. The porous border with Afghanistan, coupled with the inability of the state to control militancy in the border tribal areas, add to vulnerabilities in terms of trafficking of arms, narcotics and militancy. As an extension to the problem of extremism, the nexus between the related problems of narcotics, arms and criminality are a serious challenge facing Pakistan. While some argue that most of the drugs produced in Afghanistan are transported through Pakistan,²⁸ others point to the balloon effect, that the poppy production centre could shift easily into Pakistan following any serious crackdown in Afghanistan. In the meantime, money laundering, and linkages between insurgents, illegal good smugglers and drug barons, combine to allow the Taliban on both sides of the border to sustain their activities.²⁹ From the Pakistani establishment's point of view, the rise of extremism within Pakistan is often explained by the coalition of convenience between criminal elements in FATA with the Taliban to serve the purposes of both parties. Financial benefit, instead of ideological motives, unites militants in the different Agencies of KP. According to Acharya *et al.*³⁰, for example, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) offers criminals an ever-ready and powerful client that helps them boost their activities. In return for promises of TTP sanctuary when under threat, these groups then share a portion of their earnings with FATA-based militants. While the government continues to

28 Ehsan Ahrari, Vanda Felbab-Brown, Louise I. Shelley and Nazia Hussain, *Narco-Jihad: Drug Trafficking and Security in Afghanistan*, National Bureau of Asian Research Report, December 2009

29 Ibid.

30 Arabinda Acharya, Syed Adnan Ali Shah Bukhari and Sadia Sulaiman, 'Making Money in the Mayhem: Funding Taliban Insurrection in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 32: No. 2, 2009, pp. 95-108.

believe that external ‘forces’ are funding the TTP, it is in fact this criminality which may be sustaining war effort financially.

Yet, Pakistan also remains insecure because of its internal challenges of rising extremism from within as a result of the fallout and backlash between the army and Jihadi groups, and not only due to trans-border criminal activities. With both India and Afghanistan accusing Pakistan of allowing its in-grown militancy to bleed out into their territories, the Pakistani internal challenge of containing militancy leaves the state in a more vulnerable, defensive position externally. The establishment’s view, developed by Pervez Musharraf’s government and advocated today by the Pakistan’s People Party (PPP)-led coalition, is that the entire post-911 militant problem in Pakistan has its origins in Afghanistan, with the real culprits being those remnants of Al Qaeda and Taliban that fled into Pakistan following the US-invasion. From this position, all militants operating against the Pakistani state are being armed, trained and funded by players working from Afghanistan, whose activities ISAF NATO forces have failed to curb. While there is some substance to these arguments, they appear to conveniently ignore the existence of a very serious domestic extremism problem, one that has grown in its severity and scope.

According to the Pakistani defence analyst, journalist and politician Shirin Mazari, known for her ‘hawkish nationalism’,³¹ three types of militant groups are operating in Pakistan: (i) sub-nationalists in Balochistan working for the rights of the Baloch people; (ii) post-911 Taliban extremists who came to Pakistan during the US invasion; and (iii) poverty-struck youth who are merely supporting the militants out of sheer frustration.³² This categorization excludes any Pakistani (whether state or non-state) leadership in bringing about these groups, however. It also fails to take into account some of the nuances of Pakistan’s militant problem. The Taliban movement of Pakistan now includes a diverse range of militants for example, which may or not be ideologically linked with each other. Another type of typology of the political purposes and ideologies of militants and insurgents could be proposed as followed, with the caveat that categorization exercises are getting more challenging as there is an increasing ‘hybridization’ of groups and their political programs:

- 1) *Sub-nationalism*, as a political motivation, unites the Balochistan Liberation Army, whose objective is separation and have grievances against the Pakistani usurpation of Baloch rights, and the Panjabi Taliban. This category can also include the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), operating from South Waziristan and FATA, which launches terrorist attacks throughout Pakistan, mainly targeting security and intelligence services. They can be considered in this category because their objective is not necessarily the victory of Islamic ideology as it is for an ethno-nationalist affinity with the Pashtuns, leading them to object to Pakistan’s pro-US involvement in the war on terror and the US drone strikes on the frontier provinces.
- 2) *Nationalism*, as the motivation behind groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, with their grievance of Indian rule of Jammu and Kashmir. They remain pro-Pakistan and focus on disruptive Indian interests, although their activities have been source of intense diplomatic tension between the two countries, especially since the Mumbai attacks of 2008.
- 3) *International Islamism (or, Ideological Jihad)*, is the ideological motivation behind groups such as the North Waziristan and FATA-based Taliban such as the Haqqani Network, who

31 Shirin Mazari, known for her “hawkish nationalism and deep suspicions of India and the United States” (Nicholas Schmidle, “Meet the Ann Coulter of Pakistan”, *The New Republic*, January 8, 2010,) is the Spokesperson on Foreign Affairs of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf political party. She previously served as the Editor of the daily *The Nation* and as Director General of The Institute of Strategic Studies.

32 Shirin Mazari, (n.d.). “A Pakistani-centric understanding of militancy”, *The News International*, 1 April 2009

are tied to foreign causes of Jihad and especially the US occupation of Afghanistan. Because of their particularly strong affinity with Islam, Sunni extremist groups such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan are also objecting to the US-Pakistani alliance following 9/11, which they see as having forced Pakistan to collaborate on the invasion of a Muslim state.³³ These groups, mostly operating out of Jhang and Punjab, whose aims are to turn Pakistan into a Sunni State and curb Iranian support of Shiite groups in Pakistan consequently also fall in this category, as do JeM (who were blamed for 2010 attacks on the Ahmadi community), the Sufis and the Shias in Lahore. Religious ideological motivation is also behind Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi operating in the Swat Valley and adjoining districts, whose objective is the establishment of Sharia throughout Pakistan.

While underlying all these has been a clash of ethnic, nationalist and religious interests, the onset of the most recent of militancy in Pakistan and the opening of the Pandora box of extremism in Pakistan no doubt can be traced to the support that Pakistan gave during the General Zia ul Haq presidency, and governments that followed him, to the Mujahedin fighting the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan. The December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was seen both as a threat to the strategic interests of Pakistan and an opportunity to prove allegiance with the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) allies in defeating communism. Then President Zia ul Haq offered the country's intelligence services, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in support of the Afghan Mujahedin. Ahmad Rashid and others claim that as many as 35,000 Muslims from 43 Islamic countries were trained, hosted and armed by the ISI, with the financial support of the CIA and Saudi Arabia. Following the withdrawal of Soviet troops and the start of the civil war within Afghanistan between Mujahedin groups, Pakistan initially provided support to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Abdul Rahman Sayyaf, generally considered to be the more fundamentalist Afghan Mujahedin groups, as well as the Pashtun groups because of the significant Pashtun population within Pakistan. But as the different Mujahedin factions could not settle their differences and Afghanistan became more deeply engulfed in a civil war in the early 1990s, Pakistan supported the rise of the Taliban, a group of students emanating from Pakistani Madrasahs. From their base in Southern Kandahar, the group took control of Kabul in 1996, and by 1997, over 90% of the rest of Afghanistan.

Before 9/11, Pakistan supported the Taliban in Afghanistan to achieve its strategic objectives in Afghanistan, especially to curb the potential influence of India. Militant groups, including Arab mercenaries, were encouraged to operate in Pakistan and set up training camps to train young people for the struggle not only in Afghanistan but also in Kashmir. The Pakistani military establishment thus tolerated the presence of Al Qaeda during this period. After 9/11, as a result of intensive pressure from the United States, then president Musharraf banned the operation of some of the more militant groups that started appearing on global terrorism lists. These gestures were not always sincerely pursued, however. The Lashkar-e Taiba, fighting against the Indian control in Kashmir was, for example, banned by Musharraf in January 2002, but the government did not try to break up the movement and resolved instead to imposing restrictions on the movement of its leaders. Until then, they had been able to operate openly inside Pakistan, raising funds and recruiting members because they were fighting a common enemy with the Pakistani state, India in Kashmir. Following pressure from the international community, Pakistan finally banned sectarian parties such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Muhammed, Sipah-e-Sahaba and Tehreek-e-Jaafriya, which had been accused of involvement in the killings of hundreds of Sunnis and Shias over the years.

³³ For the compilation of this information, the author would like to thank her research assistant, Ammar Malik, then- student of Master's of Public Affairs (Sciences Po), Paris.

In the meantime, sectarian violence between the Shias and the Sunnis, which led to violent sectarianism in Karachi and South Punjab, had started with the process of Islamization of the Pakistani judicial system under the rule of Zia ul Haq which marginalized secular democratic forces.³⁴ Subsequent support from Iran for Shia groups and from Saudi Arabia for Sunni ones contributed to radicalization process. Although extremist Sunni religious groups have consistently fared poorly in elections, they represent a powerful lobby greatly feared by the government and the public. During the Afghan Jihad, Pakistan deliberately promoted the sects of Islam which were more strict, rigid and pro-Jihad. Despite bans on sectarian groups, however, a number of these organizations continue to operate within Pakistan. The official policy is to continue strengthening ISI and army support for organizations fighting for the liberation of Kashmir. In hindsight, however, a dual policy of differentiation toward militant groups fighting for a national cause, such as in Kashmir in India, and pressure on groups involved in Afghanistan, backfired. As Pakistan became further entrenched in support of the US after 9/11, militant groups splintered and joined hands under a general anti-US banner, and militancy and terrorism became a general problem for Pakistan itself. The militant groups that converged on Afghanistan to fight the United States and NATO turned within, especially as US drone attacks caused civilian deaths along border regions.

Yet, as to how and why the problem became domesticated can be traced to two specific and related events: First, the decision by the Pakistani government to join the US war on Terror in 2003 fuelled passion within, not only among Jihadi groups who opposed what they considered the invasion of a Muslim country by US and NATO troops, but also by Pakistani opposition politicians and parties such as the Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N), Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) and Tehreek-Insaaf (PTI) – who warned against involvement in another country's war under the slogan of 'This is not our war'. The second element that can be considered a deciding factor that turned the tide of extremism in Pakistan is Musharraf's decision to send troops into the FATA in the summer of 2004. The Musharraf government had continuously resisted US pressure to take on the militants, preferring to use a combination of peace deals and aggressive military action. The rationale for this approach was that while foreign fighters would be dealt with severely, local militants are essentially Pakistani citizens and they ought to be treated differently.

Yet, the unrest in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and in the Swat by the Tehrik-e-Taliban (TTP) and the Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohamma (TNSM) in 2007 was met by a military response, bringing the army into the tribal areas. By 2009, in a stated attempt at bringing peace to this region, the Pakistani Government signed a peace accord with the Taliban and agreed to the imposition of Sharia law in Swat and to the suspension of military offensives against the Taliban. Yet, the numerous efforts by the federal and provincial government to appease militants through peace deals ultimately failed as public opinion changed in support of the immediate and decisive military operation to halt the progress of the Taliban following the release of a video from Swat that showed Taliban 'court' awarding and then executing caning onto a girl for allegedly meeting a non-related male. Ever since that day, the government remained committed to rooting out militants from all settled areas and refrained from talks of appeasement or negotiated settlements with the insurgents. Since then, the militant problem in Pakistan became more severe and complex, with a fluctuating splintering and 'coalitioning' that have made tracing the various groups, their ideologies, their grievances and their areas of operation difficult to grasp. The encroaching Talibanization of Pakistan had started, and had raised the spectre of violence from other militant groups, sometimes labelled under the loose banner of 'Taliban', as for example in

34 International Crisis Group, "The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan," *International Crisis Group, Asia Report*, No. 95, April 18, 2005 .

the case of the so-called 'Punjabi Taliban'. The ongoing conflict in Balochistan, with its different cause, further intensified after the emergence of Talibanization in the country.

External linkages of Pakistani based militant groups are only part of the story. The lack of development, employment and education opportunities in the frontier zones of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) contributed to the influence of extremism.³⁵ A look at the current state of terrorism and Talibanization in Pakistan shows that the threat of militancy is higher in areas with marked social, economic and political disparities, such as FATA, Balochistan, interior Sindh and Southern Punjab.³⁶ In FATA, the most impoverished region of Pakistan with high poverty and unemployment, most of the underdeveloped infrastructure has indeed not been built or updated since 1947, and the region has not been accorded the same status in development as other regions of the country. Development initiatives and programmes were concentrated in the hands of Malik and benefited few people, mostly political and influential ones, and the economy of FATA depends on smuggling, drugs and weapons trafficking. The Pakistani Constitution of 1973 explicitly excludes FATA from most or all of the legal, judicial and parliamentary systems of Pakistan. Instead, FATA is placed under the direct executive control of the President of Pakistan and governed by the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) of 1901, which limits the Pakistani state's responsibility to FATA citizens while allowing for outdated methods of coercion. Under the FCR, the President appoints a political agent who has immense administrative, judicial and executive powers to each of the agencies in FATA. Overall neglect of and discrimination against FATA has led to increased lawlessness in the region and allowed insurgent groups linked to the Taliban to strengthen their hold over the area. In 2008, per capita income of the region was only US\$250, and only 34% of the households were managing to rise above the poverty line.³⁷ Similarly, in the resource-rich province of Balochistan, the number of people living under poverty and deprivation is among the highest in the country, due to continuous conflict in the province as well as neglect of federal government. Poverty, underdevelopment and poor employment opportunities also persist in Southern Punjab and in the Sindh province apart from a few areas of the province, like Karachi. Such disparities have resulted in ethnic conflicts in Sindh and Balochistan and religious conflicts in Punjab, Balochistan, KP, Sindh and FATA.

What is clear, in the meantime, is that the Pakistani military and intelligence setup was ill-prepared for undertaking classic anti-guerrilla operations within, and failed to draw out a well thought-out COIN strategy which would necessitate adequate civil-military cooperation, what has been lacking in Pakistan's history.³⁸ From the point of view of the Indian analyst M.K. Bhadrakumar, a former diplomat and current staunch anti-Pakistani commentator with a regular column in *Asia Times*, Pakistan lacks the will to eliminate militant groups because they are regarded as 'assets' by the Pakistani military in a future covert war against India or Afghanistan. From this position, Pakistan's variegated approach to the terrorist groups and the lack of a national strategy to counter Talibanization specifically because of the military's ambivalence about using force against groups that were its allies, is the heart of the matter today.³⁹

35 Joshua White, "Pakistan's Islamist Frontier", *Religion & Security Monograph Series*, no. 1, Arlington, VA: Center on Faith & International Affairs, 2008; Hassan Abbas, *Inside Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province: The Political Landscape of the Insurgency*. *Counterterrorism Strategy Initiative Policy Paper*, New America Foundation, No. 11, April 2010, pp. 1-10.

36 For the analysis of these sections, findings of the draft report on human security in Pakistan, in preparation by the Mahub Ul Haq Human Development Centre, for which the author was the editor in the summer of 2010, have been used.

37 GOP 2009.

38 Shuja Nawaz, *FATA: The Most Dangerous Place*, Washington: Center for Strategic International Studies, 2009.

39 M. K. Bhadrakumar, *Afghanistan and the 'Age of Obama'*, *Rediff.com*, December 1, 2009

India's Insurgencies

India's position within the South Asia RSC is similarly impacted by the degree of insecurities the state feels from non-traditional sources and sources of destabilization from within. It too has adopted a defensive attitude, blaming terrorist incidents within the country, such as the Mumbai attack, and against its embassy in Afghanistan on foreign – namely Pakistani-state – backed sources. But in addition to what India considers to be foreign backed terrorism, violent secessionism in Jammu and Kashmir, secessionist groups in the Northeast, such as the United Liberation Front of Assam, and Maoist-influenced Naxalist groups in India have become what the government considers as its most significant security challenge.⁴⁰ The Indian government has also accused Nepalese and Filipino Maoist groups as well as those remnants of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), of possible arms transfer and rhetorical and material support to the Naxalites or to their political wing, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) CPI(M).⁴¹

As seen above, Pakistan, as an Islamic state that was created to lead the Umma, suffers from the paradox of being run by the army, and accused by its internal insurgencies for taking up anti-Muslim positions in international relations. India suffers from a different kind of paradox: The country with the second highest economic growth rate, as one analyst puts it, 'finds itself in the throes of a largely agrarian rebellion inspired by an ideology that has lost its lustre in much of the world.'⁴² While economic growth is concentrated in the cities, rural areas have been prone to influence by Naxalit promises of attention and resources. The Naxalites, left-wing guerrilla groups, sometimes labelled as the 'Red Taliban', whose name comes from the 1967 peasant revolt in the West Bengal village of Naxalbari, operate from West Bengal in the northeast to Andhra Pradesh in the south.⁴³ They represent today a number of local groups with commonality of political purpose, but very little in terms of a central command, and limited interaction between groups. Starting from socio-economic grievances of inequalities, they have increasingly taken on board an agenda to launch an attack on the government to cave in to their nationalist secessionist demands. The targets of the Naxal Maoist-inspired 'class struggle' are the regions' upper castes, 'feudal' landlords, commercial interests, as well as the security forces. They build their support among the lower castes, tribal groups, and other sectors of the peasantry by establishing insurgent strongholds ('liberated zones') in districts where government authority is weak.⁴⁴ They are supposedly backed by the Communist Party of India (Maoist), formed in 2004 out of a merger, which unlike the other communist parties that engage in electoral politics, has waged a class struggle, commitment to the classical Maoist strategy of 'protracted armed struggle'⁴⁵ and was declared a terrorist organization by the government in June 2009. By some estimates, 40% of the country's land area and 35% of India's population has been affected, to varying degrees, by the insurgency.⁴⁶ The Maoist insurgency thus represents another obstacle in the way of India's emergence as a world power.

40 In 2006 India's Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, pronounced Naxalism to be "the single biggest internal security challenge" India has ever faced

41 "Naxals get arms from abroad: Chidambaram", *The Hindu*, October 24, 2009; "Nepali Maoists confirm support to Indian Naxals", *Deccan Herald*, November 3, 2009; Caesar Mandal, "Filipino insurgents in league with Maoists", *Times of India*, April 12, 2010; Siddarth Srivastava, "India probes Maoists' foreign links.", *Asia Times Online*, November 11, 2009.

42 Kristian A. Kennedy The Naxalite Insurgency in India, *Geopoliticalmonitor.com*
May 17, 2010 <http://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/the-naxalite-insurgency-in-india-3823>

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid

45 South Asian terrorism portal, Left-wing Extremist group : Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist)
http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/terroristoutfits/CPI_M.htm

46 Prem Mahadevan, *Rising India: Challenges and Constraints*, Zurich, Switzerland: Center for Security Studies, 2010.

The answer of the Indian federal state was initially localized, with individual states lending support to people's movements of resistance against the Naxalits, such as for example the pact between the Chhattisgarh government to allow the operation of the so-called spontaneous people's movement Salwa Judum ('Peace March') which started in 2005 and by some accounts providing police and military support. By 2008, however, clashes between the Naxalites and the Salwa Judum had led to large scale displacement of the civilian population caught in the conflict and both sides were accused of human rights violations.⁴⁷ Although the Government of Chhattisgarh denied providing state support to the Salwa Judum, a fact finding commission of National Human Rights Commission of India alleged that security forces collaborated with Salwa Judum in their fight against the Maoists, and the issue was taken to the Supreme Court in 2008.⁴⁸

By 2009, the Federal State had taken on the issue of counter-insurgency with the Indian government's announcement of a plan that combined national counter-insurgency strategy to hold and clear Naxal strongholds with development projects. As such, it relied on a two-pronged approach: On the one hand, it adopted a law and order strategy, with the redeployment of security forces from Kashmir to Central and Eastern India and refusal to engage in talks with the Naxalites. On the other hand, prompted by a 2008 Report of the India's Planning Commission which had cited that poverty amongst scheduled tribes and Dalits, land alienation and lack of access to forest resources were reasons for the growth of Naxalism,⁴⁹ the government accelerated development projects in the most underdeveloped states where insurgencies had been operating and where a major proportion of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) lived, namely, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. In 2010, the Planning Commission drafted a 3 year US\$ 2.8 billion integrated action plan for infrastructure development like roads, power and drinking water and empowering tribes to make better use of forest rights in 34 districts where Naxalite rebels were active. The Federal Government also intensified its National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2005), The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act (Recognition of Forest Rights, 2006) and amendments to the 2007 Land Acquisition Bill to secure the rights of people to their land and to employment opportunities. Although a rights-based development approach to the problem of security has not been fully implemented, what with the overall planning challenges in India as a whole, the recognition of the root causes in terms of deficit in socio-economic planning, inequalities alienation and marginalization has widened options present to the government, although the issue of growing criminalisation of ideological movements has not been sufficiently dealt with.

Although India has been more proactive in its dealings with internal insurgencies through development approaches than Pakistan, here too there has been a discrepancy between the position of the Ministry of Home Affairs which advocates no talks until the Naxals lay down their arms, and that of the Planning Commission. The latter recommends opening up to the idea of talking to the groups and taking into account their grievances concerning tribal rights and giving the Naxals a stake in the mineral-rich area they occupy as a measure to provide security of their lands. Critics of this approach in India, however, claim that given the causes for uprising are different in each state, a blanket approach cannot be adequate. If in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and

47 See for example Human Rights Watch, *"Being Neutral is Our Biggest Crime" Government, Vigilante, and Naxalite Abuses in India's Chhattisgarh State*, New York, 2008

48 *Hindustan Times*, "Govt disapproves of 'non-state' law enforcers like Salwa Judum," December 17, 2008.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/News-Feed/newdelhi/Govt-disapproves-of-non-state-law-enforcers/Article1-358723.aspx>

49 Planning Commission, *Development challenges in extremist affected areas : report of an expert group to Planning Commission*, New Delhi, India: Government of India, 2008

Tamil Nadu, land alienation and caste discrimination form the basis for discontent. states like Orissa have had to suffer from large-scale tribal displacement and forest degradation due to large-scale industrialisation projects.⁵⁰

In the final analysis, both the Indian and Pakistani states suffer from internal insecurities. One can argue that India's internal problems have less immediate impacts on its external policy, however, except of course for the pressure by opposition groups to withhold talks with Pakistan until the latter can reign in anti-India militants. First, because of the geographical separation with Afghanistan, Pakistan is more vulnerable to cross border dangers. Second, India may be better able to contain internal insecurities through a more effective strategy on law and order combined with development policy, whereas the Pakistani state is less able to gain control because of the unclear historical relationship between the army, the state, and Islamic groups. Additionally, what saves India is that because it presents itself as a secular democracy, there are fewer tendencies for backlash about ideology. The problem of insurgency in Pakistan is more diverse, and renders the state more insecure, partly because of its own contradictions over unified ideology (Islam over ethnicity). Furthermore, because of its federal system, the problem of insurgency in India can be more effectively localized, preventing it from taking a national character. Yet, the challenge for India is precisely also its vast geography and federal system. The Central government has to work in conjunction with the governments of affected states to tackle a national security problem in geographically isolated and economically dislocated regions of the country.

In the meantime, both states have taken up a defensive posture as to what concerns the external support for their internal insurgencies. While India accuses the Pakistani establishment for supporting the terrorists responsible for the Mumbai operation in 2008, Pakistan accuses India for supporting Baloch and Islamist militants within Pakistan through its various consulates in Afghanistan. Accusations of state backing for insurgencies brings to the forth two implications: One is that the problem of non-state actors, militants, terrorists and criminal networks have been elevated to inter-state relations instead of the two countries joining hands to collaborate state-to-state against non-state actors. Second, it points to the enduring atmosphere of mutual distrust over not only old disputes such as Kashmir but new challenges of causes of domestic insecurity that casts high doubts over potential cooperation for the future of Afghanistan, to which we shall return below.

Internal Actors' Role

A second and related factor from within the state that has contributed to the security of the states and its position of strength or weakness has to do with differences in terms of who shapes policies and the consequences of the actors-driven agenda. Even if the governments of India and Pakistan may be wishing to make peace deals, dominant actors within both states continue to lobby against any rapprochement. In Pakistan, the dominance of the security establishment in policymaking means that they would overshadow any elements that support India-Pakistan partnerships on Afghanistan. Over on the Indian side, hawkish elements within the parliament, led by the opposition BJP, have also not allowed the Congress-led government to wholeheartedly initiate any meaningful dialogue with Pakistan. Yet, the degree to which both states are influenced by internal actors and the strength of these differ substantially.

Pakistan: 'The Establishment'

50 Neha Sakhuja and Savvy Soumya Misra, "Poverty breeding left-wing extremism in India", *South Asia One World.Net*, 03 June 2008

<http://southasia.oneworld.net/Article/poverty-breeding-left-wing-extremism-in-india>

In Pakistan, policy decisions on both domestic and foreign policy are centralized and in the hands of the so-called 'establishment', a term widely used amongst Pakistani journalists and scholars to capture the essence of civil-military relations in Pakistan. In its usage, the term refers to a group of elite individuals, including top military commanders, intelligence agency heads and top bureaucrats, who control the security policy. Stephen Cohen describes the establishment as 'a moderate oligarchy' and defines it as 'an informal political system that [ties] together the senior ranks of the military, the civil service, key members of the judiciary, and other elites.'⁵¹ Mushahid Hussain, a journalist turned politician associated with the pro-Musharraf PML-Q, believes that 'the establishment comprises anywhere between 500 and 1000 individuals, some related to each other through marriage or family, from amongst the military brass, the top bureaucracy, superior judiciary, intelligence outfits. Its wings are flanked by feudal lords, industrial magnates and media barons.'⁵²

Yet, when it comes to relations with India, it is the military that has been the most vocal proponent of the 'Kashmir cause' since independence, helping it maintain the conventional balance of power, and dictating the country's regional security policy with its India-centric worldview.⁵³ Being the smaller rival in the rivalry in South Asia, Pakistan's army remains immensely insecure vis-à-vis India to the extent that they do not even fully trust the political parties in power. The 1999 Kargil Conflict example adequately demonstrates how the military is at times beyond the control of the civilian governments. With a heavy two-thirds majority political mandate behind him, former PM Nawaz Sharif undertook a series of moves aimed at normalizing relations with India. In February 1999, the then Indian PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan by crossing the Wagah border. This landmark moment was filled with promises of a peaceful future based on mutual trust and understanding, keeping in mind that both countries' priority should be the development of their impoverished populations. Yet it was in the summer of the same year that the Pakistani Army, backed by Kashmiri militants, launched a covert offensive in the Kargil sector of the Line of Control (LoC) dividing Kashmir between the two countries. Nawaz Sharif till date maintains that the Army, under the command of General Musharraf, never took him into confidence before launching the offensive. The conflict soon escalated into a limited scale war, with India threatening to take it to full scale. It was only after US President Clinton summoned Nawaz Sharif to Washington that Pakistan announced a complete withdrawal of forces from the Indian side of the LoC. Not only was this a diplomatic disaster for the civilian government, but the civilian-military cracks created during the time later became the basis for the October 1999 military coup.⁵⁴

There are a number of implications of the domination of the army in domestic and foreign policy of Pakistan:

1) First, with the army and air force remaining committed to keeping India under check by maintaining conventional balance of power as well as a parity in nuclear and missiles technology, policy making becomes focused on external factors in order to keep parity at all costs, despite the country's vulnerable economic situation. Consequently, budget allocations become skewed toward defence spending, compromising on essential areas such as health and education. In 2008-09, the

51 Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2004.

52 Mushahid Hussain, *Media Barons*. Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Pakistan. Retrieved July 25, 2010, from <http://www.foreignaffairscommittee.org/articles.php?ContentID=424>

53 Husain Haqqani, Pakistan's Endgame in Kashmir, *India Review*, Volume 2, No. 3, July 2003, pp. 34-54.

54 Sources of Background Information on Kargil: <http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/sam12.pdf>,
http://www.satribune.antisystemic.org/www.satribune.com/archives/august04/P1_rauf.htm,
<http://web.archive.org/web/20071012085214/http://www.saag.org/papers13/paper1231.html>

military and internal security budgets rose sharply while the development budget started shrinking. For the 2009-10 budget, the defence line was revised upward from PKR343 billion to PKR378 billion and projected to increase to PKR442 billion in 2011, an increase of 17%, while the amount allocated for Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) was revised downward from PKR763 billion to PKR568 billion. In 2009, the government had spent Rs 34 billion more than the budgeted amount on defence.⁵⁵

2) Second, over-focus on the military trained to face the Indians in ordinary battle is at the expense of the development of a coherent COIN strategy and capacity. The absence of a coherent, coordinated and comprehensive COIN strategy jeopardizes possibilities for coordination between the military, the civilian government and its opposition around a common strategy toward all militancy. For some Pakistani analysts, allowing the military to virtually run the entire show in this manner is counterproductive. While military commanders are in the best position to make tactical level decisions vis-à-vis military operations, strategic decisions ought to be taken by political-civilian authorities in consideration of wide-ranging ground realities. Otherwise, a misguided and incoherent counterinsurgency would threaten the very unity of the nation state.⁵⁶

3) A third implication of military supremacy is the bypassing and weakening of local and federal administrative governance and growing mistrust between political parties and the army. KP and Swat present an adequate case. Immediately after coming to power, the PPP government declared that it wanted to enter into peace negotiations with militants. In support of the provincial government in KP, the government signed a peace deal with Sufi Muhammad (the head of Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi) that imposed Sharia law in the Swat Valley in exchange for a complete halt of militant activities by TTP. Despite this capitulation, the military remained firmly loyal to the government's decision. Yet when the militants refused to abide by the terms of the contract and took over the Buner District, the government abrogated the deal and sent in the military for a three-month long operation which finally ousted militants from the entire area. Once the final go-ahead was given for the operation, however, it was a complete military-run show, including the control of all relevant information about the operation. The army's strategy was to set up blocks on entry and exit points throughout the valley followed by a well-timed mass exodus before the final assault. During the weeks-long implementation of this policy, even prior to the military action, the civilian government had no role to play. Some would argue that months of virtual Taliban rule had incapacitated the local government, but the provincial or federal government agencies were never even involved in the process.

All this only confirms that military-civilian relations in Pakistan remain uneasy and civilian control over military institutions is lacking. However, public opinion polls show that Pakistanis widely believe that their Army is the only stable institution in the country, which protects the rights of Pakistan from external and internal threats. Most Pakistani opinion makers, despite their disagreements on the decision, accept that the Army's continued stability remains at the heart of Pakistan's national interests. Christine Fair, basing her assessment on Shuja Nawaz and Ayesha Siddiqi's books on the civilian-military saga on Pakistan, argues that even with fully independent democratic governments in Islamabad, security policies would be no different from the current ones.⁵⁷

55 Government of Pakistan, Budget in Brief 2010-11. http://www.finance.gov.pk/budget/Budget_in_Brief_2010_11.pdf. See also Pakistan Economic Survey 2009-10. Islamabad: Ministry of Finance.

56 Imtiaz Gul, US strategy in Afghanistan Tough times for Pakistan, *ImtiazGul.Com*, December 11, 2009.

57 Christine Fair, "Pakistan's Democracy: The Army's Quarry?", *Asian Security*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2009, pp. 73-85.

Despite the prominence of the military in dictating security policy on the basis of keeping a national unity of identity – that of an ‘endangered’ state threatened from the outside – the decision to take in domestic insurgencies, starting in the Swat, led to a backlash or blowback against the military establishment control, the fragmentation of society and a challenge to the army and establishment rule from within. Once united against external enemies (India, Soviet Union), the army has, since President Musharraf joined the war against terror, come increasingly head to head against the Islamists. This may be less because of the weakening of the army within Pakistan, which continues to dominate over policy making even during a civilian administration of President Zardari, but most likely because of the growing support for Jihadists trans-nationally and increasing discontent with the joining of the war against terror by society.

The dominant discourse of insecurity and the leading role of the army in decision making may be the result of the very formation of the Pakistani state. The military establishment dictates the security policy, while society is further fragmented along religious and ethnic divides.

India: Multiple Voices

The paradox of decision making in Pakistan is the unified and durable realist approach to power at the top, and a fragmentation of society from below which is threatening the very national unity and identity of Pakistan. In India, by contrast, nationalism remains strong despite the multiple discourses at the policy level, led by a democratic structure that sees more discords between political parties and the power of the government more contested at the top. There is no domination of one group in security and foreign policy discourse and practice, making decisions contested more virulently. The military remains subordinate to the political authority and democracy has deep roots.

At the societal level, the growing middle class is united in the very idea of a secular, pluralistic democracy, on the one hand, and by the idea of a patriotism vis-à-vis global aspirations considered legitimate from within on the other, ‘commensurate with the growing size of its economy, its population and its overall standing in the world community.’⁵⁸ The growing middle class is also, as the research of Fernandes and Heller shows, increasingly united in its class interests, which is hegemonic in terms of unity marked by liberalism and a distancing from lower classes.⁵⁹

The fragmentation at the top concerning foreign policy decisions within the ‘New India’ is polarized by partisan debates and politics along the liberal/left position. The liberals back the Congress Party’s opening up to the West and the pursuit of economic liberalization in the very person of the Prime Minister. The left, ranging from the political parties to vocal intellectuals, decry such alignment, preferring India to rely on Nehru’s non-alignment, a policy which gave India self-confidence and allowed it to pursue its national interest while providing moral-political leadership for the global South.⁶⁰ A case in point is the opening up of the very idea of the non-alignment policy. Shashi Tharoor, a former UN civil servant and Indian politician, opened up the Pandora box by judging non-alignment a ‘rhetorical device at best, an irrelevance at worst’⁶¹ and ‘as a moralistic running commentary on other people’s behaviour’.⁶² His remark was largely

58 Bhadrakumar, 2009

59 Leela Fernandes and Patrick Heller, “Hegemonic Aspirations: New Middle Class Politics and India’s Democracy In Comparative Perspective”, *Critical Asian Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 4, 2006, pp. 495–522.

60 See Praful Bidwai, “Questioning India’s non-aligned policy”, *rediff news*, January 15, 2010
<http://news.rediff.com/column/2010/jan/15/guest-questioning-indias-non-aligned-policy.htm>

61 Shashi Tharoor, *Nehru: The Invention of India*, New York: Archade Publishing, 2003, p. 247

62 Shashi Tharoor at seminar presented by Lord Bhikhu Parekh at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) in New Delhi in January 8 2010

criticized by the left, although it was also seen as an example of public debate and discussions in the democracy. On the questioning of non-alignment, liberals like Tharoor are joined by the BJP in its rhetorical and ideological challenge to the foreign policy of Congress governments guided by the Nehruvian world outlook.⁶³

When it comes to the question of whether or not to talk to Pakistan, the debate in India is similarly split. Amitabh Mattoo draws a useful characterization of three distinct positions, which he calls the *Sudebars*, the *Saudagars* and the *Sufis*, in a debate that combines anger and nostalgia, hatred and sympathy, contempt and fear and characterizes democratic politics par excellence.⁶⁴ 1) What he calls Sudebars (referring to a historical rank in the Indian Army) take up a realist position of aggressively countering Pakistan. They reject constructive engagement with a Pakistan that is led by an army traditionally hostile to the Indian state. The BJP-led opposition, for example, can be put in this category as it puts talks on the conditionality that Pakistan forcefully takes out anti-India terrorists. 2) A second category, the Saudagars (merchants), consists of liberals who argue either for ignoring Pakistan, or engaging through the economic route: building common institutions, opening up trade and strengthening constituencies, particularly in business. 3) The third category, a very minority one within public discourses, consists of what Mattoo calls the 'Sufis'. They argue that New Delhi should be pro-active in promoting peace – even to the extent of making unilateral concessions. Their position was echoed by the former Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee who stated that Pakistan's stability was also in India's national interest. This particular group is largely concerned with regional fallout if Pakistan fails: ethnic turmoil could spill over, create refugee problem in India, expand narcotics and weapons trafficking, and an economic breakdown would have ripple effects on India by drawing away investor confidence in the sub-region. The Sufis also caution about the policy of confrontation between two nuclear states. Ultimately, their position comes from self-interest and self-preservation on the one hand, and elevating India as a responsible power that helps its neighbours on the other.

National Identity

The third factor that impacts the security and foreign policy agendas has to do with the irreconcilable question of identities formed historically at the time of the partition and their sustained projection in terms of contemporary national identity that the two states seek to cultivate.

The partition of India was billed first and foremost as a question of identity. Pakistan adopted a two nation approach in order to justify the separation of the Muslims from India. This meant that Pakistan had to build and sustain an identity on the basis of Islam, as the guardian of the Umma where all Muslims could live freely. This objective came at the expense of the creation of an identity of 'otherness' and a mistrust of 'the other', however, starting with the Hindus, and extending to Christians, Ahmadis, and increasingly to Shias. In contemporary Pakistan, blasphemy laws, long identified as anti-minority, continue to be applied to silence divergent beliefs or differing practices. India, on the other hand, with its myriad of castes, linguistic groups, tribes and ethnic groups, could only unite under the basis of secular nationalism. Increasingly, however, secularism has also become challenged in India by the nationalist Hindutva parties. Both countries are, in essence, undergoing crises of identity, but India may be in a better position to mitigate the challenges with its participatory democracy.

63 Sreeram S. Chaulia, "India's Foreign Policy and the "Realist Alternative" to the Nehruvian Tradition", *International Politics*, Vol 39, June 2002, pp. 215-234 at p. 215

64 Amitabh Mattoo, "Inching closer to a great reconciliation", *Times of India*, 21 Jan, 2010

Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity

Ethnicity as the basis of identity is more problematic in Pakistan, where the overarching Islamic identity was also supposed to overcome the ethnic divide between Pashtuns and Panjabis, than in multi-ethnic India, although the latter has caste and class problems as proxy to the question of ethnicity. But whereas in India, identity-based groups are able to use the democratic political system to influence domestic policy, and do not present a challenge to India's foreign policy, in Pakistan, the unresolved ethnic question has evolved to present a security challenge to the state precisely because of the policy of isolation and manipulation that the Pakistani establishment has pursued vis-à-vis its Pashtun population.

Pakistan's Pashtun Problem

From its very creation, the Pakistani establishment, even during its military governments, used Islam as a unifying factor against nationalism, precisely because ethnicity, localized and unresolved, could pose dangers of fragmentation to the nation. In other words, the real problem of ethnicity within Pakistan, i.e. differences between Pashtuns and Panjabis, was subverted through Islam. Yet, as the fundamentals of the Islamic identity have been shaken since Pakistan joined the war against terror, the question of ethnicity has risen to the foreground within Pakistan.

The view that Pashtun nationalism, much like Baloch nationalism, presents existential threats to the Pakistani nation has been at the root of the 60-year history of its interference in Afghanistan's affairs as well as the sidelining of the Pashtuns living in the NWFP. Most positions of power in Pakistan's bureaucracy and military are held by ethnic Punjabis. Ethnic Pashtuns have featured more prominently among the soldier and officer ranks of the army, with the Army ensuring that the Corps Commanders in Quetta and Peshawar are ethnic Pashtuns, but this remains largely a tactical decision related to frontier policies and does not necessarily reflect a widespread Pashtun representation of the Pakistan Army. The sidelining of the Pashtuns from Pakistani polity may be blamed on their low population and development levels, but this can be considered the consequences of at least an indirect policy of discrimination. The provinces where they are concentrated remain among the most underdeveloped in Pakistan, where state investments have been acutely neglected. The Pakistani establishment only began investing in FATA during the 1970s, before which the tribesmen were only used as supporting foot soldiers in the 1948 Kashmir war against India.

The interference of Pakistan in Afghanistan's internal affairs was partly motivated by silencing the thorny issue of Pashtunistan. The Pakistani ISI used Sunni Islamists drawn from the Pashtun community as a deliberate policy with a long-term objective of undercutting Pashtun nationalism.⁶⁵ In exchange the government had explicitly not intervened in the NWFP. The pact between the establishment and the Pashtuns, however, was broken by developments after the US entered the scene in Afghanistan and Pakistan joined the war on terror. The chain of events began after the Afghan Taliban, driven out of Afghanistan in 2001, took shelter in Pakistan's tribal areas where they merged with local Islamist militant groups and began eliminating local officials and tribal leaders. This led to an Islamic-Pashtun reawakening that could no longer serve the interests of the Pakistani state nor be controlled by them as it was a blowback reaction to their own prior policy of radicalization against Soviet forces. When the government decided to intervene in its own Pashtun provinces in the NWFP (now PK) and FATA, Islamic political parties as well as the mainstream PML-N, argued vigorously against sending troops, for it would be

65 M K Bhadrakumar, 2009

detrimental to the long-term interest of Pakistan.⁶⁶ Yet, the decision to send the troops to FATA was not only to appease the Americans and show action, but also to settle the re-emerging Pashtun problem. It did, however, break the pact and opened up the Pandora box of grievances between Pashtuns and Punjabis.⁶⁷

Pashtun grievances in Pakistan are many: The provinces they are concentrated in are not only the most underdeveloped ones in Pakistan, but have also been the most impacted by the war in neighbouring Afghanistan. In an editorial strongly worded as ‘Bombs for Pashtuns, Dollars for Punjabis’, for example, Muhammad Nasir Khan Khattak, a Pakistani commentator from Karak in KP, publishing in the liberal OpEdNews online, paints the Pashtuns as a wronged group, having been conquered and abused by the British, Russians, Americans, Iranians, Arabs and Punjabi Pakistanis, their lands used ‘without their permission’ by Arab fighters and the US during the ‘Holy War’, and now bombarded during the war on terror. They have had to pay the price for the interests of the US, Pakistan and Middle Eastern countries merely because of the geography of their homeland. Punjabis, from this writer’s viewpoint, are ‘trading dead Pashtun bodies’⁶⁸ with the Americans in order to enrich themselves. The writer warns that ‘the frustrated and desperate person can be expected to go to any extreme for survival.’⁶⁹

India: Multi-Ethnicity in its Fabric

By contrast, the multi-ethnic identity of India has been preserved for two simple reasons: One is by sheer number, with ethnicity as a factor of identity being lost in the multiplicity of other categories of identities, such as castes, class and religions. Second, because democratic politics in India allows for representation and debates. While the ethnic question does not challenge the unity of the Indian state, and is not used as a factor for foreign or security policy, other identities compete for attention in politics. Among them is the intensification of caste, class and nationalist identities.

Starting with the 1980s, the Nehruvian secular-nationalist political identity of India became slowly eroded with the ‘re-emergence’ of caste in public discourse and the resurgence of caste politics.⁷⁰ This was prompted by the implementation of the recommendations of the Mandal Commission in 1980, which consolidated the affirmative action practice under Indian law. The implementation of the Commission’s Report, which recommended a 27% reservations in public employment government jobs and slots in public universities for what is referred to as the ‘Other Backward Classes’ or OBCs), in addition to the 23% already reserved for the Dalits and Tribals in 1989, was met with massive protests. It led to heated debates over the question of reservation and quotas, which were supposed to dilute, if not eliminate, merit based appointments in favour of castes. Critics argued that this policy not only discriminated, but also did not question the privileges enjoyed by the upper castes and Brahmans in politics. While the Mandal Commission set the public and parliamentary debate in 1990, the Kaka Kalelkar Commission had made similar recommendations in the mid-1950s. The question then had been settled by Nehru himself when

66 Source: PML-N website archive on Afghan Policy

67 See for example the editorial of Muhammad Nasir Khan Khattak, “Bombs for Pashtoons and Dollars for Punjab”, *opednews.com*, May 11, 2009. <http://www.opednews.com/articles/Bombs-for-Pashtoons-and-Do-by-Muhammad-Nasir-Kha-090511-130.html>

68 Muhammad Nasir Khan Khattak, “Trade on Dead bodies of Pashtoons”, *OpEdNews*, April 29, 2009.

<http://www.opednews.com/articles/Trade-on-Dead-bodies-of-Pa-by-Muhammad-Nasir-Kha-090429-264.html>

69 Muhammad Nasir Khan Khattak, “Bombs for Pashtoons and Dollars for Punjab”, 2009.

70 Aditya Nigam, “Caste Politics in India”, *South Asian Journal*, Issue 3-4, 2004

he proclaimed 'If we go in for reservations on communal and caste basis, we swamp the bright and able people and remain second-rate or third-rate.'⁷¹

If Nehru saw caste politics as a regression into the past, the resurgence of the issue in 1990 brought it back to the forefront of public debate. To the critics of the caste reservations, privilege and reservations (quotas) should be instead based on economic categories of class, with privileges bestowed to the poorer segments of society, rather than that of caste. But as Menon and Nigam argue, caste may have been unspeakable in public discourse, the domain of secular modern institutions, but it had not disappeared from society.⁷² Caste has acted as the 'suppressed/repressed, the 'unconscious' as it were, of the modern moral Self',⁷³ and has been the cultural and symbolic capital that has given access to modern privileges. Dalit politics and discourse opened up possibilities of emancipation in opposition to the dominant, secular-nationalist discourse of modernity in India which it distrusted. The alliances of the OBCs and Dalits were in order to break upper-caste hegemony. However, their distrust for the secularism of the Congress party also brought them to repeated alliances with the BJP, as for example seen during the alliance of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and with BJP in the state of Uttar Pradesh (1993, 1997, 2002). In fact, the unusual alliances between the BJP which traditionally gathered the high caste Brahmin community, the Muslims and the various Dalit and backwards caste political movements, such as the BSP, the Samajwadi Party and the Rashtriya Janata Dal Parties, not only signified a moderation of the BJP, but also an answer to the perpetual conflict in Indian politics between communalism and secularism which gave birth to anti-upper-caste-Hindu alliance as a project of Dalit liberation.

Besides the challenge of caste politics, politics on the basis of class is a significant factor in India. On the one side of the spectrum is the example of Kerala and West Bengal, two states where the Communist Parties have for years stayed in power. The Communist Party in both of these states were not only exceptionally well-run organizations that mimicked the ability of the Congress Party to build coalitions and unite voters along class lines, but their electoral success was also credited for their developmental policies that expanded social welfare programs and created self-sustaining constituencies embodied in the Panchayat systems.⁷⁴ On the other side of the spectrum is the rise of the New Middle Classes (NMC) as powerful political actors in India. Consisting of more than 250 million people and growing rapidly, the NMC was formed as a consequence of India's economic liberalization since the mid-eighties, and is a powerful lobby for the transformation of Indian culture and politics along neo-liberal models. If Nehru's vision of nationhood was based on a socialist vision of industrialization and planned development, today's version of Indian modernity is driven by consumerism, and is increasingly driven by a new social class that represents the 'ideological and cultural shifts associated with neo-liberalism'.⁷⁵ They represent a new type of political agents, associated with driving modernization through competition and efficiency. Yet, they are not using electoral politics and they are far from being a homogenous and politically unified social group, although they shape the nation in ushering in the rational man as political actor, individualized rather than through the collective electoral politics. The hegemonic

71 Christophe Jaffrelot, *India's Silent Revolution: The Rise of the low Castes in North Indian Politics*, Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003. See especially the discussion on pages 222-228.

72 Nivedita Menon and Aditya Nigam, *Power and Contestation: India Since 1989*, New York: Zed Books, 2007, p. 19

73 Aditya Nigam, 2004

74 Ajay Verghese, "The Role of Class Politics in India: Why West Bengal and Kerala?" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Hyatt Regency Chicago and the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, Chicago, IL, Aug 30, 2007

75 Leela Fernandes, *India's New Middle Class: Democratic Politics in an Era of Economic Reform*, University of Minnesota Press, 2006, p. 208.

aspirations of the NMC have taken the form of a politics of reaction, blending market liberalism and political and social liberalism.⁷⁶

Religious Identity and Ideology

More than ethnicity, the question of religious identity impacts the polity of both countries. Both countries are undergoing a challenge to their national religious ideology: Pakistan's role as a leader of the Islamic world is increasingly undermined by the intolerance and sectarianism that has become unleashed. India's secularism is challenged by Hindutva parties. Yet, here again the fragmentation within poses more of a security challenge that weakens the Pakistani state, whereas we shall argue that Indian democratic politics, with its competitive character, softens fundamentalist tendencies of the BJP.

Pakistan and the Umma

Defining the country's reason of existence vis-à-vis its relations with Islam and Muslims, coupled with the question of what type of Islam is best suited for contemporary Pakistan, goes at the heart of today's national identity problem. The two-nation theory, introduced by poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938) in his presidential address to the Muslim League on December 29, 1930, became the basis for the rationale of the foundation of Pakistan as a separate homeland for Muslims in the Indian sub-continent, leading the secular minded Muhammad Ali Jinnah to also emphasize religion as the basis of the new country's identity.

Pakistan's Constitution is not secular as the country is an Islamic state.⁷⁷ Yet as Stephen Cohen put it, Pakistanis have not figured out whether their country is 'An Islamic State or the State of Islam'.⁷⁸ If Musharraf had advocated for 'enlightened moderation' both at the domestic and international levels,⁷⁹ he was being aware of Pakistan's ideological front line status in the Muslim world. Yet, while a vast majority of Pakistanis have moderate views about religion, the minority fundamentalists appear dominant due to them being extremely well organized and proactive in voicing their perspectives. Support for Islamist parties in Pakistan elections has waned in recent years since they won their greatest political victory in the history of the country, 11.3% of votes in the 2002 parliamentary elections. In the 2008 elections, they did not get a single percentage of the votes.⁸⁰ Yet, religious parties and interest groups, while not part of the mainstream, have always been a loud and rather effective pressure group, and were especially emboldened during the Islamization drive under President Zia ul Haq. Pakistan's pre-Constitution Objectives Resolution of 1948, passed by the liberal leadership of the Muslim League, was essentially a secular document that gave direction to the country. While the initial document was not Islamic in its reading or essence, religious parties successfully pressurized the mainstream to add religious clauses. For example, it was only after a long and violent movement against Ahmadis during the 1950s that the government was forced to declare the community as being non-Muslims, stripping them of the right to call themselves Muslim. During General Zia's Islamization policies in the 1980s, the over-emphasis of religion sowed the seeds of instability as it further led to the marginalization of minorities. Among these was the amendment to the Penal Code inherited by

76 Leela Fernandes and Patrick Heller, "Hegemonic Aspirations New Middle Class Politics and India's Democracy in Comparative Perspective," *Critical Asian Studies*, Volume 38, Number 4, December 2006

77 Original text can be accessed at: <http://www.mofa.gov.pk/Publications/constitution.pdf>

78 Cohen, 2004

79 Pervez Musharraf, "A Plea for Enlightened Moderation", *The Washington Post*, May 31, 2004

80 Charles Kurzman and Ijlal Naqvi, "Do Muslims Vote Islamic?", *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 21, Number 2, April 2010, 50-63, see the Appendix, <http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/gratis/KurzmanAppendix-21-2.pdf>

Pakistan from the pre-independence era whereby any individual found guilty of deliberately hurting the feelings of a person from any other religion would be punished through imprisonment or fine. This law was amended to make punishable only derogatory statements or actions against the Holy Quran or the Prophet, thus excluding respect for other religions.⁸¹ A person found guilty of blasphemy faces the death penalty.

In the meantime, the original idea of Pakistan as the holder of the Umma has been increasingly put to challenge by two emerging factors: the joining of the war against other Muslim nations in the post-9/11 era and rising intolerance vis-à-vis other sects and religions. A first challenge comes with the fact that Pakistan's military dominated national ideology, which puts Pakistan's security first, led Pakistan into a war with Islamists both in Afghanistan and within the nation in the post-9/11 periods. For long, the military identity of the regimes was not in contradiction with the country's Islamic ideology. In fact, traditionalists within the Pakistani security establishment always held that Pakistan must play an active role in getting Muslim countries of the Middle East and West Asia together,⁸² and the Afghan Jihad of the 1980s provided the ideal scenario for asserting Pakistan's role as the so-called 'fortress of Islam'.⁸³ Yet, as was analysed above, the change in scenario after 9/11 put the military against the Islamic groups within the country, while Musharraf's support to the US led coalition in the war in Afghanistan created a backlash that broke the comfort of coexistence between an Islamic society and a security obsessed government.

The second factor that discredits Pakistan as the leader of the Umma is the emergence within society of a mono-religious tendency favouring a particular form of Sunni Islam, and increasing tensions and intolerance vis-à-vis other faiths and other sects of Islam, such as the Shias, the Sufis (Naqshbandi, Qadiri, Chishti) and the Ahmadis. The land that was supposed to unite all Muslims of the sub-continent inherited a variety of interpretations and schools of thought of Islam. Whether it is the Sufi traditions emanating from Persia and Turkey or the Salafi hard line views of the Middle East, or the estimated 17-26 million twelve Imam Shias,⁸⁴ religious groups within Pakistan have become, since the past two decades, increasingly divided and intolerant of the 'other'. While a vast majority of Pakistani Muslims adhere to the Hanifi school of thought (Sunni), within Hanifism too there has been an ongoing religious conflict for over a century, symbolized by the divide between the Tablighi Jamaat of the Deobandi School⁸⁵ and the Sunni Tehreek⁸⁶ from the Bareilvi School.⁸⁷ According to Stephen Cohen, over 65% of religious schools in Pakistan are influenced by the Deobandi School,⁸⁸ which allegedly has been providing ideological foundation to militants and sectarian groups such as Sipah-e-Sahaba and LeT. Both these types of groups thrive on their Deobandi Madrasah linkages as well as on anti-US sentiment prevalent in the country.⁸⁹

81 Iftikhar Malik, "Religious minorities in Pakistan", Minorities Rights Group International, 2002.

82 Ahmed M. Quraishi, "Strategic Depth Reviewed", *Newsline Magazine*, 8 March 2002.

83 Shahid Ilyas, "Stop Blaming the West", *Daily Times*, June 2, 2010

84 Pew Research Center, "Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population", October 7, 2009. <http://pewforum.org/Muslim/Mapping-the-Global-Muslim-Population%286%29.aspx>.

85 "Deobandis - Oxford Islamic Studies Online." *Oxford Islamic Studies Online - Oxford Islamic Studies*

<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e522?_hi=20&_pos=1>.

86 "Introduction to the Sunni Tehreek ." *Sunni Tehreek Pakistan*. <<http://www.sunnitehreek.net/>>

87 "Jamaat-e-Ahlesunnat Overview." *Jamaat-e-Ahlesunnat*. <<http://www.ahlesunnat.net/>>

88 Stephen Cohen, "The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 26, N. 3, 2003, pp. 7-25.

89 Winthrop, Rebecca and Corinne Graff, *Beyond Madrasas: Assessing the links between Education and Militancy in Pakistan*, Washington, DC : Center for Universal Education at Brookings, 2, 2010.

Sectarian fighting between Sunnis and Shias has also intensified in the last two decades, costing the lives of as many as 4,000 people. Sectarian violence escalated with the anti-Shia riots of 1986 in Lahore, intensified in 1990 with the murder of the Sipah-e-Sahaba founder, Maulana Jhangvi and the revenge killing of the Iranian Consul General in Lahore,⁹⁰ and continued in the new decade when in 2007, suicide bombers attempted to strike Shiite processions throughout Pakistan's NFWP in three separate incidents.⁹¹ Sectarian violence was fuelled by the Islamization process which began in the Pakistan juridical system under General Zia Ul Haq in 1979 in his commitment to enforce Nizam-e-Mustafa (Islamic System) instead of Pakistan's predominantly Common Law. This led to the Shia protest against 'Sunnification' as the laws and regulations were based on Sunni Fiqh, or Jurisprudence. Yet, most of the sectarian violence within Pakistan is less a reflection of hatred in society than it is of the projection of power politics, further fuelled no doubt by interference from external powers. As such, it appears to be more political than communal. The most deadly clashes have mostly been instigated by political groups, casting the Sipah-e-Sahaba and members of al Qaeda, who are supported by the Arab World, and the Wahabi Tanzeem-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi, against Iranian-backed Shia militant groups such as Tehrik-e-Jafria.⁹² However, they have weakened the foundation of Pakistani society as tolerant, and the state's ability to prevent escalation.

Other minorities have been explicitly discriminated against through state policy. In 1974, the Pakistani National Assembly declared Ahmadis – also called Qadianis – a non-Muslim minority.⁹³ The Ahmadis, with their almost 100% literacy rates,⁹⁴ have held high level positions and have at times been well represented in both the pre- and post-independence administrations in Pakistan.⁹⁵ Yet, they continue to suffer from social, political and economic discrimination and exclusion both at the official and societal levels that make them vulnerable to violence and persecution, and they have been particularly targeted and persecuted with the rise in Islamic fundamentalism. Government forms, including passport applications and voter registration documents, require anyone wishing to be listed as a Muslim to denounce the founder of the Ahmadi faith.⁹⁶ Religious minorities like the Christians and Hindus not only suffer from violence and social exclusion but are also economically marginalized, limiting their access to opportunities in other areas. Post-partition changes in the economy, along with an emphasis on Islam as the only definition of Pakistani identity, led to changes in the structure of the political economy that worsened the condition of minorities. For example, many Christians in Punjab were originally farming communities but after independence a number of them became landless and had to take up low status, low paid jobs that further limited their economic and social space.⁹⁷ Studies show that most Christians are employed as street or domestic sweepers.⁹⁸ Similarly, the Hindu population in the country is mostly rural and employed on farms as tenants vulnerable to oppression by feudal landlords. Among the Hindu population, the worst off are the scheduled castes or Dalits in Pakistan. They are not only excluded as a religious minority but are also discriminated by the superior Hindu castes. Many Christians and Hindus are also kept as bonded labour in the brick kilns in Punjab and in the agriculture sector in rural Sindh. Their

90 Zahid Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle With Militant Islam*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008 .p. 94.

91 David Montero, "Shiite-Sunni conflict rises in Pakistan", *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 2, 2007.

92 Zahid Hussain, 2008, p. 93

93 Iftikhar Malik, 2002.

94 Antonio Gualtieri, *The Ahmadis: Community, Gender, and Politics in a Muslim society*, McGill-Queen's Press, 2004.

95 UNHCR, Minorities at Risk Project, *Assessment for Ahmadis in Pakistan*, 31 December 2003, available at:

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/469f3abbc.html>]

96 See <http://thepersecution-org.blogspot.com/2010/05/pakistan-report-on-human-rights.html>

97 Malik, 2002

98 Ibid.

employment, social status and religion all combine to expose these religious minorities to social exclusion and discrimination at a number of levels.

The Pakistani state is decidedly fragmented from within along religious lines, while rifts based on religion within Pakistan in turn closely impact events as well as reactions to events in neighbouring countries.

India: Sworn Secularism

Unlike Pakistan, the Indian state is decisively secular, although Indian society can be considered even more religiously diverse than the Pakistani one. Secularism, a legacy of Nehru, has been challenged by the Hindutva parties, while communal violence between Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims has been frequent and of extreme violence. Yet, democratic politics has prevented the fundamentalization of society and politics, although the challenge has been formidable.

Indian Muslims have not been incorporated into international terror circles. One reason for this, according to some analysts, is the strong democratic tradition of India that allows Muslims to vent their grievances through political participation and political parties.⁹⁹ When there are major terrorist strikes within India, such as the suicide attacks on the Indian parliament (2001), on the Akshardham temple in Gujarat (2002), on the makeshift Ram temple at Ayodhya (2005) and in Mumbai (2008), the Indian police usually blames Hizb ul Mujaheddin, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammed with bases in Pakistan and backing from the ISI. Yet, sectarian fighting may also be responsible for much of this. The Mumbai attacks in August 2003, for example, were revenge against the Gujarat riots.

Within India, intolerance between Muslims and Hindus is manifested through frequent communal riots, the most extreme of which happened in Gujarat in 2002 in which more than 2,000 Muslims were killed. Communal violence has been, if not instigated, definitely manipulated and taken advantage of by political parties, namely the BJP. Yet, alliances have been fluid: One reason for the rapid rise of the BJP as a political outfit in the 1990s was due to Hindus being disillusioned by the Congress Party's secular politics that appeared soft on Muslims, including floating the idea of reservations for Muslims in educational institutions and jobs. Yet, in the general elections of 2004, the BJP reached out to the Muslims for the first time, and in subsequent elections, it formed an alliance with pro-Muslim parties given that their votes played a critical role in the most populous states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. As was mentioned above, what brought together Hindu nationalists, Muslims and Dalits was their unified agenda against the secular Congress Party. Yet, in order to be able to participate in politics, these parties have moderated their policies and softened their sectarian and religious position in order to strengthen national unity and widen their electoral basis.

The BJP builds its politics on the philosophy and cultural nationalism of Hindutva,¹⁰⁰ which it defines as return of the 'Hindu society' that is supposed to have been built on 'history of tolerance for other faiths and respect for diversity of spiritual experiences'.¹⁰¹ As the BJP website notes, 'Hindutva is a nationalist, and not a religious or theocratic, concept.' While the BJP paints Hindutva as a nationalist and non-religious philosophy, it glorifies an image of 'The Indian nation' with an assertive Hindu consciousness, masculine, material and martial power, in

99 Siddharth Srivastava, "Indian Muslims choose politics, not terror", *Asia Times Online* Aug 5, 2005

100 Sreeram Chaulia, 2002

101 BJP Philosophy : Hindutva (Cultural Nationalism), *website of BJP* <http://www.bjp.org/content/view/2646/473/> Hindutva: The Great Nationalist Ideology, BJP Website <http://www.bjp.org/content/view/2650/376/>

contradistinction with what it considers as 'soft', effeminate, non-violent 'pseudo-secularism' of the Ghandi-Nehru tradition, as argues Chaulia.¹⁰²

The advent of BJP on the domestic scene in India after its rule in alliance with several other parties from 1998 to 2004 promised a break from the Nehruvian model pursued by the Congress party traditionally in its foreign policy. In contrast to the Nehru model of India leading through civilizational and moral greatness, the BJP adopted an aggressive realist position, breaking with the non-proliferation ideals of Nehru, demanding a strong globally recognized India among leading powers, and aggressively defending India's frontiers. It took issue with the continued relevance of the non-alignment movement after the end of the Cold War. In opposition to Indira Gandhi's rapprochement with the Soviet Union, and the pro-Soviet tilt of Congress regimes, BJP adopted a policy of 'alignment with all'. This specifically meant a pro-American stance, no doubt facilitated by the growing political activism of non-resident Indians (NRIs) in the US, Indian white-collar Diaspora who traditionally tend to vote for the BJP. The tilt toward the West was subsequently continued during the Congress Party under the rule of Manmohan Singh, whose rapprochement with the US was a calculated move as part of its economic liberalization program and its nuclear ambitions, much to the detriment of the left parties with which it was in coalition.

The rise of BJP and its positioning showed how political parties are playing an increasingly contributory role in foreign policy making and as foreign policy opinion generators. Yet, as argues Sreeram Chaulia, there is a classic core in Indian foreign policy bequeathed by Nehru, which not even an instinctively anti-Nehruvian political phenomenon like BJP is able to disregard.¹⁰³ While the BJP spouted the rhetoric of 'realpolitik or realist alternative' to Nehru's model, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's foreign policy was essentially grounded in continuities, especially regarding Pakistan.

It was under the BJP government that Vajpayee took the infamous Lahore bus ride in February 1999 for a summit with Pakistan's Nawaz Sharif. Vajpayee did so, argues Chaulia, convinced that the people of the two countries want peace and good neighbourly relations, and in adherence to the Nehru principle that separates governments from people. Yet, on the question of territory, relations with Pakistan remained consistently intractable under the BJP. After all, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS, Indian People's Union), the predecessor of the BJP, was founded in 1951 with the express aim of reversing the Partition and reverting to Akhand Bharat (Undivided India). If during the rule of Vajpayee, Akhand Bharat was subsequently downgraded as a goal, the rise of the ideology of Sangh Parivar (Family of Associations, a movement of Hindu nationalism) in the 1990s and Hindu fundamentalism inspired scarce confidence in Islamic Pakistan. When the BJP was an opposition party, it advocated uncompromising counter-insurgency in Kashmir, and shortly after the 1998 nuclear tests, India announced a policy of 'hot pursuit' of terrorists into Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), a measure favoured by the army but avoided by previous governments for fear of provoking all-out war. More than for its fundamentalist views or its assault on secularism, it was the BJP focus on territorialism and a reputation as patriotic defender of India's territory that proved popular when the party was voted back to power in the 1999 elections.

Although the battle in Indian politics is over constituencies and nationalism more than differences over ethnicity or religion, issues such as Kashmir are marred by confusion between the problem as a territorial dispute or as an Islamic threat to the secular Indian state.

102 Chaulia, 2002

103 Ibid, at p. 217

PART III) Relations Vis-à-Vis Major Global Powers

Part II of the paper proposed a number of factors that contribute to the strength or weakness of the Indian and Pakistani states as unified, effective entities. Having established that Pakistan is increasingly vulnerable to fragmentation from within, and India remains relatively stronger, albeit with a number of new challenges to its national identity, this section moves to analyse how the asymmetry of power between India and Pakistan is consequently reflected in their relations with other countries of neighbouring security complexes and with global powers.

Extra-Regional Aspirations

Because of their own security problems, both countries are unable to uphold their aspirations for moral leadership in their immediate region: On the one hand, Pakistan projects the image of a threat, a state in vacuum that can threaten the stability of others by failing to prevent the bleeding-out of destructive forces that are based within its territory. As analysed above, if it had aspirations to lead the Islamic Umma as a country whose reason for existence was to carve a homeland for Muslims, it has been unable to fulfil its responsibility. The decision of the Musharraf government to join the US in the war against terror set it at odds not only with its own population but also with the Muslim world. That the government is unable to control sectarian violence against Shias, Ahmadis and Sufis jeopardizes relations with non-Sunnis, namely the Islamic Republic of Iran, relations that have also been tainted by the spate of attacks in Iran, allegedly conducted by the Baloch Sunni insurgent group Jundullah, accused by Iran of finding refuge in the Pakistan province of Balochistan. Fragmentation from within and the militancy problem in Pakistan have not only created insecurities for other countries, but it has also downgraded its ability to lead the moral community within the Umma. In other words, Pakistan's own insecurity creates security fears for others.

In the global context, India is pursuing the path to super power recognition, based on a combination of the soft power of economic strength and the hard power capabilities of conventional and nuclear deterrence. India considers its aspiration as an extra-regional power to be legitimate, commensurate with the growing size of its economy, now believed to be the second fastest growing economy in the world, its population and its overall standing in the world community. It has aspirations to project its power outside the region, in other words, to 'divorce the region', and play big leagues. This explains the ongoing obsession that India has had in recent decades with China's growth, especially since the annexation of Tibet brought China closer to the South Asia security complex. Yet, in order to be crowned as a powerful actor on the international scene, India needs recognition as such by others and the ability to fulfil certain rights and duties toward its own neighbours, in addition to having military or economic capabilities. Through alliance with other economic powers through the G20 and the BRIC, it has gained its weight in being recognized for its economic potential to change international reactions. However, if it inspires to carve out a wider role for itself as a great Asian power, it has been unsuccessful in displaying leadership in its own backyard.

India's neighbourhood policy has been shaped since the early 1990s by the Gujral Doctrine, a set of five principles that outline the need to pacify its smaller neighbours, make accommodation agreements with them and increase interregional trade. Guided by the doctrine's five principles –

bilateralism, non-reciprocity, non-interference, economic integration and irrelevance of borders – India has in recent years offered increased political and economic cooperation to its neighbours. This has included building and strengthening structures of functional cooperation, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC); Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the Indian Ocean Rim initiative. Yet India has only been able to implement the first principle by sheer economic power. That the other principles are repeatedly violated shows the powerlessness of India to control, to shape relations in its neighbourhood, to police, and to build trust with its weight and size while pursuing its national interest. It has not been able to shape and influence the principal countries in South Asia, one may say even less today through economic incentives and military power than through the moral leadership of the non-alignment movement under Nehru. Not only has it been unable to appease Nepal and Sri Lanka, but India is also faced with increased hostility and anti-India sentiments, not to mention the failure to get security guarantees from Pakistan.

India's ability to be taken serious at the global level depends on it settling its own neighbourhood, that is acts as a responsible guardian of its own doctrine, and leads the region toward modernization as a global economic power. Yet, its inability to securitize its own neighbourhood contributes to India's insecurity. In fact, India cannot 'divorce' its region without having showed progress. While neighbours and some super powers see the 'rise' of India both with appreciation and suspicion, the unsettled neighbourhood and the durability of the conflict with Pakistan limits the potential of India.

Insecurity therefore defines relations of both countries with their immediate neighbourhoods. Despite their wishes, both countries cannot therefore 'divorce' their own Regional Security Complex, given that the countries with which they share immediate borders present more threats to their security, and given that the external environment beyond the South Asia RSC presents formidable new challenges and uncertainties. Beyond the immediate neighbourhood, India and Pakistan have interests in strategic engagement with major global heavyweights. But two major powers, an increasingly aggressive China and a cautious and ambivalent Obama-led United States of America, both create uncertainties for the key players of the South Asia RSC.

The US Entry and the Pak/India/Af Triangle

Pakistan and India both aspire for recognition by the United States, which is both a symbolic global leader after the end of the Cold War with its economic and military capabilities, and a real and present 'regional' actor after its entry into Afghanistan. At best, rapprochement with the US gives each country an added advantage over the other. At worse, it prevents the formation of a formidable coalition – between US and the other – that can be detrimental to their powers and aspirations. Yet, the lack of clarity about long term US intentions in the region, on the one hand, coupled with an ambiguous policy of engaging with both partners on the other, contributes to India and Pakistan's insecurities and in fact exacerbates their conflictual relationship.

The US sees India as a vibrant democracy, economic potential and utility as a counterweight to China, and has made overtures in terms of signing a nuclear deal and supporting India's bid for joining the UN Security Council. During President Obama's visit to India in November 2010, the US offered a strategic partnership in terms of selling \$11 billion in US fighter aircraft and signing defence agreements permitting US military aircraft to refuel at Indian airfields and for US naval vessels to dock in Indian ports, in addition to more concessions on cooperation in trade, investment and high technology. The offer was met with suspicion, however, for India also sees the military cooperation between the US and Pakistan as boosting the military capabilities of a hostile Pakistan that, according to India, trains Islamic terrorist for attacks on Indian soil and threatens its national interest. Since 9/11, \$13.5 billion in military hardware provided to Pakistan

has, from the Indian point of view, strengthened Pakistani air and naval capabilities needed for potential combat with India.

If the rapprochement between the US and India was a product of the disappearance of the Soviet Union, which ‘liberated’ India to intensify bilateral relations with all major powers, Pakistan had opted to align itself since the 1950s when it became part of the SEATO and CENTO agreements. The hallmark of Pak-US relations was an almost continuous military assistance, which helped modernize the Pakistani army, indirectly helping in the conventional warfare rivalry with India.¹⁰⁴ Mainstream political parties that came to power during periods of civilian rule never attempted a strategic realignment away from the US, perhaps mainly due to the army’s pressure. After 9/11, relations changed from a military alliance to cooperation built upon the war on terrorism, with the US continuing to support the army all the while stepping up pressure for it ‘to do more’ in its counter-insurgency policies.

Like India, Pakistan has also been cautious with its relations with the US, but for different reasons. Externally, it benefits from the financial and military assistance of the United States, and was able to get concessions in the AfPak for example not to include the Kashmir issue and to view Afghanistan from the interests of Pakistan. At the same time, however, Pakistan hosts a population which has the highest anti-American sentiments in the region, with anger mounting, among other things, over civilian casualties from US drone attacks. As noted above, the closeness of the government with the US, including in its attempts to do more in the war against terror, has led to massive internal resistance and criticism for sending the troops to the NWFP. As Ahmed Rashid notes, as the endgame in Afghanistan approaches, relations between the US and Pakistan have plunged to their worst since 2001 and Obama and his aides do not seem to have a coherent strategy on how to deal with Pakistan.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, however, the US has been wary of a dangerous standoff with Pakistan because of its nuclear capabilities. Since 2007, Wikileaks disclosed, the US had mounted a highly secret effort to remove from a Pakistani research reactor highly enriched uranium it feared could be diverted for use in an illicit nuclear device.¹⁰⁶ In early 2011, American intelligence assessments had concluded that Pakistan has steadily expanded its nuclear arsenal since President Obama had come to office, and it was on a path to overtake Britain as the world’s fifth largest nuclear weapons power. Rashid argues that the US neglect to deal with the security obsession between the two nations will come at the cost of not finding peace in Afghanistan: ‘There can be no peace in Afghanistan until these two neighbours sit down and talk about a common approach to both Kabul and Kashmir, rather than negotiating by proxy war’.¹⁰⁷

In the pre-1998 phase, before both Pakistan and India conducted nuclear tests, the US was interested in promoting greater regional stability in South Asia as an incentive to prevent India from going overtly nuclear. But the shift of interest has meant a different reaction to this rivalry. The US under Obama administration had tried to strike a balance between the two nuclear-armed South Asian powers. By playing with both sides, it has contributed to the securitization of both while trying to gain concessions on the war against terror, Afghanistan and the rising threat of China.

104 Jamshid Nazar, “A History of US-Pakistan Relations”, *Chowk.com*, .December 12, 2003.

105 Ahmed Rasid, “ The Road to Kabul Runs Through Kashmir: Why the key to winning in Afghanistan is peace between Islamabad and New Delhi”, *Foreign Policy*, November 10, 2010

106 Scott Shane and Andrew W. Lehren, “Cables Obtained by WikiLeaks Shine Light Into Secret Diplomatic Channels”, *The New York Times*, November 28, 2010

107 Ahmed Rashid, 2010

The Rise of China

The US interest in cultivating relations with both countries at the same time, and for making gestures such as endorsing India for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, signals intentions to use these countries to check the influence of an increasingly assertive China, which it considers as an economic challenger, not only in Asia but in international relations in general.

For India, the 'China factor' is a valuable chantage for Indo-US strategic rapprochement, and it positions itself as a possible democratic and pluralistic alternative and counterweight to an authoritarian and unpredictable China. However, the US has greater strategic and economic interests in China. In the meantime, the possibilities of political alliance between China and India in the region are minimal: Compared to India, China enjoys a much stronger position in South Asia, and its recent rise and assertiveness not only puts it in intense economic competition over rising energy needs for both nations, but also creates security challenges for India. China's strategic inlay in the region is through economic rather than military means, which is far more effective. It is for example building a railroad that will eventually connect Xinjiang to the port of Gwadar in Balochistan, Pakistan. But the fear is not only of economic nature: China has deployed an infantry battalion of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) at Khunjerab Pass, which straddles the border between China and PoK, on the Karakoram highway, for the security of its workers engaged in building the railroad.

Pakistan's interest in keeping good relations with China is both for economic reasons, manifested in the railroad project to Gwadar, but also for security guarantees. Both China and Pakistan are allied against India. China has traditionally viewed Pakistan as a counterweight to India, while Pakistan has only been happy to play that role. Despite the thaw in Sino-India relations, the Chinese still see Pakistan as a counterweight to the increasingly hostile India-US geo-strategic partnership that continues to threaten Chinese interests. On a broader geo-strategic level, China's plans of maritime expansion as well as finding trade openings in the Muslim world also rests heavily on Pakistan's possibilities as a gateway.¹⁰⁸ In February 2010, China agreed to build two nuclear reactors in Pakistan, a move that was seen as strategic tit-for-tat following the India-US deal. Without Chinese help, there would be no Pakistani nuclear bomb. Apart from its nuclear-energy investments, China is also constructing dams, building infrastructure and exploring for precious metals, in addition to supporting the development of the strategic deep-water port at Gwadar. Yet, hopes to have that serve as a primary conduit to Central Asian trade have been clouded by the security situation, which has seen Gwadar possibly eclipsed in that role by an Indian-backed port in Chabahar, Iran.

Whether it is the issue of Kashmir or water, the Chinese have supported Pakistan against India on a wide range of issues. The Chinese in return maintain a great deal of influence within the Pakistani ruling elite, which they hope will translate into great access to the Arabian Sea waters as well as into Afghanistan and Central Asia. For both these countries, therefore, India poses a great challenge as a regional power. China has long utilized Pakistan as its balancer against India, just like the US is now using India against the Chinese. In the cold fight between China and India for increased influence in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the region, Pakistan again is only happy to play the China card for its own national interests, not to mention the idea of letting China keep India at bay. Washington's perceived shift toward India has led some among Pakistan's elites, particularly within its powerful security establishment, to place more emphasis on Islamabad's relations with Beijing. An escalation of US pressure 'to do more' could prompt Islamabad to strengthen its ties with China.

108 Imtiaz Gul, "FATA Insurgency and Relations with China", *Weekly Pulse*, 2 July 2010, http://imtiazgul.com/july_02_2010

China, in the meantime, is keen on encouraging security competition to counter India's rise. It has maintained a calculated silence on Kashmir, declaring the dispute bilateral in nature and a 'left over' of colonialism, partly because it knows that any offers of third party mediation will not be accepted by India. But the silence over Kashmir may also be partly due to the fears of China of opening the Pandora box of its own Islamic militant problem in Xinjiang province that threatens to destabilize the Communist government. In response for the lack of comments on Kashmir, China can expect little attention to the plight of Muslim Uighurs in neighbouring Xinjiang from Pakistan.

Russia

Relations with Russia are more secure for India than Pakistan. Russia, the successor to the Soviet Union which Nehru and Ghandi's foreign policy tilted toward, supports India on sensitive questions such as Kashmir, Jihadi terrorism, nuclearization, missile development and UN Security Council reform. Russia's continued commitment to India is based on geography and history, as well as strategic interests in cooperation on military industry technology. The common interest between India and Russia in Afghanistan over support for non-Pashtuns and the blocking of a Taliban take over also signals an alliance that stands against the US-Pakistan nexus in the region. Yet, if the choice is clear for India within the South Asia RSC, it also is weary to balance the cultivation of its relations with Russia in a way as not to alienate the US.

Pakistan's relations with Russia have traditionally been clouded and overshadowed by the India-Russia alliance on military technology, which during the cold war was matched almost equally by Pakistan-US military transfers. Additionally, ideological differences between a communist Soviet Union and an Islamic Pakistan was one reason why the latter was keen to equip and fund the Afghan Mujahedin: In a way, the downfall of the USSR, which followed its defeat in Afghanistan, can be said to have been partially caused by Pakistan. Following the end of Communism in Russia, ties between the two countries failed to pick up, with both countries continuing to back different ethnic groups in Afghanistan and due to the continued Russian support for the Indian army. Here again Pakistan has viewed relations with Russia through the prism of its own rivalry with its number one enemy, India.

Iran

Despite enjoying close ties with pre-revolution Iran, Pakistan has had a rather shaky relationship with Iran since then and Iran-Pakistan relations have remained strangely ambivalent. They have worked together on the nuclear front since both countries were alleged by the international community of being involved in nuclear proliferation. But Pakistan and Iran differ substantially when it comes to religion, not only because of the Shia government of Iran and the Sunni legacy of Pakistan, but also because of the increasing fundamentalism (along Wahabi and Deobandi schools) which influences Pakistani society. These tensions have been exacerbated by events in Afghanistan where both sides have found themselves supporting opposing players. Afghanistan is the major bone of contention between Iran and Pakistan since they have been supporting opposing groups ever since the 1990s and do not hold the same position when it comes to the possibility of talks with the Taliban. The Iranians remain sceptical of any Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan since they see the entire situation as being a zero-sum game: Pakistan's gain is Iran's loss.¹⁰⁹ With the Iranian cultural ties with the Hazaras and Tajiks, and the 1996 massacre of Iranian diplomats fresh in the minds of the Iranians, a Taliban comeback would not be tolerated.

109 Hillary Mann Leverett, "AfPak Behind the Lines: Iran in Afghanistan and Pakistan", *Foreign Policy*, The AfPak Channel, July 6, 2010.

In Afghanistan, the Iranians are supposedly facing a Pakistani-Saudi nexus which is operating against vital Iranian interests. The Iranians are so fearful of this nexus that they may agree to working with the US to set up a representative government in Afghanistan that would protect Iranian interests, but their overtures are not accepted by the US. At the same time, the Western coalition in Afghanistan, backed by the Afghan government, has increasingly denounced Iranian interventions in Afghan politics and support to resistance groups fighting US and NATO troops, particularly in the Western areas of the country.

In the meantime, any budding relationship between Pakistan and Iran may get jeopardized by growing incidents of terrorist attacks by Jundullah in the Iranian province of Sistan and Balochistan, which have raised suspicions of Pakistani involvement. While military officials cannot risk instigating instability in Iran, perhaps the last neighbouring country with whom Pakistan enjoys some level of trustful relationship, here too, as in India and Afghanistan, it has not been able to reign in the cross border activities of its own non-state actors operating through its porous borders. For Pakistan, relations with Iran present a dilemma: On the one hand, the thorny relationship between Iran and the US, and the uncertainty of a possible strike against Iranian nuclear facilities by the US or Israel presents an element of insecurity for Pakistan if forced to take sides between its two allies. On the other hand, however, the development of Pakistani economy depends on the realization of the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline agreement, especially since Pakistan is facing the worst energy shortages in history. The pipeline agreement that was signed despite India's dropping out and US opposition indicates that both leaderships are committed to forging partnerships wherever they see room for mutual benefits.

While the Pakistanis cooperate with China on the development of Gwadar port, India supports the development and expansion of the Chabahar port in Iran, which could facilitate India's trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia – and bypass Pakistan. India maintains warm ties with Tehran, despite voting with the US against Iran's nuclear program development in 2005. The alliance between Iran and India is historical, and since the overthrow of the pro-Western Shah, the two countries have become more united in their non-alignment inspirations. They have also supported the same non-Pashtun factions in Afghanistan both during the Jihad against the Soviets and since.

Balancing Powers

The entry of US/NATO forces in Afghanistan and the rise of China could have acted as external catalysts for transformation of the India-Pakistan conflict, but uncertainties have kept them both insecure and in persistent rivalry. In the meantime, security dynamics within the South Asia RSC are reinforced by the rivalries between global powers, while the extra-regional alliance that the two countries form is a reflection of their own rivalries. The US maintains the balance of power between Pakistan and India by cultivating both good and cautious relations with both. Pakistan's interest in keeping good relations with China is as much for security guarantees against the common challenger of India as it is for economic reasons. India's continued good relations with Russia as the successor state to the Soviet Union, as well as with Iran, with which it has common interests in supporting non-Pashtuns against Sunni fundamentalist Taliban take over, signals an alliance that stands against the US-Pakistan and China-Pakistan nexus in the region. In the meantime, both countries' interests in joining the Russia and Chinese-led Shanghai Cooperation Organization show that they are cognisant of a changing global dynamic where the centre of economic and military power is gradually gravitating toward the East.

In the meantime, neither India nor Pakistan can 'divorce' their own RSC, not only because they are still engulfed in primary security dynamics from within, but because the wider region and the international scene is itself in fluctuation. Until economics takes a more prominent role in

forming alliances, as may be if the China/Russia finance based coalition is able to counter the political and military dominance of the US and allies in Afghanistan, regional and international relations continue to be run on mutual security interests, and the India-Pakistan relationship will endure as a conflictual as opposed to a cooperative one.

Part IV) Afghanistan: Zone of Contestation or Cooperation?

Afghanistan, in this conglomeration of security dynamics, continues to play the role of an insulator. The problem of Afghanistan is periphery to, and not the core of, the security problems of South Asia. India and Pakistan's interests in Afghanistan are primarily a reflection of their own security aspirations and insecurity fears. They are motivated by the rationale of checking on the influence of each other, continuing their proxy war on Afghan soil, albeit indirectly and through unconventional methodologies: For Pakistan, influence over Afghanistan is necessary for maintaining strategic depth against India, but also as an opportunity to gain cooperation with the US which has entered the wider regional scene with its military deployment. For India, economic influence in Afghanistan allows it to be recognized as a major donor in the region, while turning public opinion in the country against Pakistan and insulating itself against the dangers of drugs and fundamentalist Islam in the region. In this section, we shall examine the details of this triangular relationship according to five categories of motivations for Pakistan and India's involvement with Afghanistan: 1) Territory and history; 2) extension of their own insecurity/security; 3) legacy of national identity; 4) external relations; and 5) economic motivations.

Territory and History

The shared borders, including the sharing of ethnic groups across both sides of the border, are one of the primary motivations of Pakistan's interest in Afghanistan. Tensions with Afghanistan are a direct consequence of the manner in which British India was partitioned back in 1947. While modern-day Pakistan's Eastern provinces of Punjab and Sindh were clearly in favour of joining Pakistan, the NWFP and Balochistan were rather reluctant. While in Balochistan, the Muslim League leadership brokered terms and conditions of accession with tribal elders and heads of princely states, NWFP opted for Pakistan on the basis of a hotly contested referendum. The province's main political party, the secular Awami National Party (ANP) of today, was a Congress ally and thus in favour of united India. Soon after the creation of Pakistan, Afghans began contesting the legitimacy of the Durand line, claiming that it was an artificially created border that went against the historical realities of the region.¹¹⁰ They argued that the splitting up of the Pashtuns, bonded closely by tribal allegiances, was a legacy of British colonialism that needed to be dismantled. The Pakistani establishment's insecurity due to its own Pashtun population led to a cold war with Afghanistan during the 1950s, and ever since, the Pakistani security establishment has pursued policies aimed at maintaining a friendly government in Kabul, one that does not contest the status quo vis-à-vis the Durand line.¹¹¹

India, on the other hand, evokes a larger cultural and historical region when it claims to also be a neighbour of Afghanistan. In reality, however, it is cognizant of the fact that Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan will persist, even after the US departure, if for nothing else but the tangible geographic factor. Instead, India sees its role as retaining 'a moral relationship' in order to curtail the possibility of criminal and terrorist networks attacking Indian interests in

110 The original text of the Durand Line Agreement of 1893 can be accessed at:

<http://www.khyber.org/pashtohistory/treaties/durandagreement.shtml>

111 Frederic Grare, "Pakistan" Chapter in Ashley J. Tellis & Aroop Mukharji, Editors, *Is a Regional Strategy Viable in Afghanistan?*, Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010, pp. 17-27.

Afghanistan, as they did with the Indian embassy bombings.¹¹² India, in a sense, considers Afghanistan as part of its own backyard.

Extension of Insecurity/Security

Pakistan's primary fear of being encircled through Afghanistan contributed to the development of its 'strategic depth' policy since the 1950s which justifies perpetual involvement in Afghan affairs. The doctrine of 'strategic depth', developed as a consequence of the view that strategic narrowness poses a grave challenge to Pakistan's very existence, sees Afghanistan as providing an additional cushion in case of an attack from the western frontier while it prepares for conventional wars with India on the eastern front.

The pursuit of depth also motivates the ISI and the Pakistani Army to maintain ties with the Taliban in Afghanistan and considering them as strategic assets.¹¹³ While numerous Pakistani analysts have pointed out the obvious shortcomings of this doctrine,¹¹⁴ to some experts, it was only Generals Hamid Gul and Aslam Beg who had single-handedly pushed for the 'strategic depth' doctrine.¹¹⁵ The fact that the civilian governments during the 1990s were never on board with this concept indicates that peaceful coexistence in the AfPak region is not possible unless democracy is allowed to firmly take root in both countries. It also signals that the civilian and military officials in Pakistan have differing views about the role that their country should play in the regional context.

While Pakistan continues to consider Afghanistan as a potential safe backyard vis-à-vis its long-standing rivalry with India on the eastern front, it also maintains other types of security interests in Afghanistan, in addition to the desire to curb Pashtun aspirations for a united Pashtunistan: The narcotics problem, for example, is one of the factors that remain strongly influenced by events in Afghanistan. Given the large quantities of opium being produced across the porous Durand line, it is impossible for Pakistan to curb this problem without active support from the Afghan side. Similar cooperation is necessary to curb the nexus between organized crime and insurgency on both sides of the border.

India, in the meantime, views involvement in Afghanistan not only a necessity to curb Pakistani influence over militancy in the region, but also as an opportunity to gain respect as a leader. As such, the motivation is on the basis of what can 'secure' India: Stabilizing the region while gaining respect from the West as an economic power. For this reason, India's focus on long-term intervention and assistance in stabilising Afghanistan does not include sending troops in support of NATO and the coalition, which can prove unpopular among the Afghan population, although it has more than 1,000 members of the paramilitary Indo-Tibetan Border Police and the 'Border Roads Organization' – an adjunct to the Indian military deployed in Afghanistan, whose official mission is the protection of Indian construction teams and businesses. An outright Indian military intervention in Afghanistan could shift the battleground away from Kashmir and the Indian mainland, and would make Indians sitting ducks for what they consider Pakistan-trained and sponsored neo-Taliban.¹¹⁶

112 Interview with Former Foreign Secretary Shashank , New Delhi, April 14, 2010

113 Imtiaz Gul, "US strategy in Afghanistan Tough times for Pakistan", *Foreign Policy*, 11 December 2009.

114 Ikram Sehgal, "The Strategic Dialogue", *The News International*, 10 March 2010.

115 Grare, 2010.

116 "Pak to US: Limit Indian troops in Afghanistan", *Times of India*, Jun 11, 2006, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Pak-to-US-Limit-Indian-troops-in-Afghanistan/articleshow/1636909.cms>

Instead, the route adopted is economic, where India has an advantage. As the sixth largest international donor to Afghanistan, India's \$1.2 billion aid pledge not only assures a position as a benign and needed presence, but it sets itself morally in contrast with what it perceives as the double game with the Taliban that Pakistani intelligence agencies and army are playing in Afghanistan. A December 2009 poll conducted for ABC News, BBC and the German ARD by the Afghan Centre for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research showed that ordinary Afghans viewed India more positively than any other country.¹¹⁷ India seeks to contrast Pakistan's proactive interventions which have created deep anti-Pakistan feelings amongst government officials and the general population alike.

In official Indian discourses, the aid given to Afghanistan is not for rivalry with Pakistan but an opportunity to create social infrastructure, capacity and connectivity.¹¹⁸ In realist terms, it seeks to insulate itself against the dangers of narcotics and fundamentalist Islam in the region.¹¹⁹ Yet, it cannot also be denied that India feels that Pakistan should not get strategic depth in Afghanistan and use its advantage to attack Indian interests. For this reason, it has opened up consulates in the regions to 'monitor' the borders, but which the Pakistanis accuse of using as fronts for arming insurgency in Balochistan.

National Identity

As discussed in Part II, ethnic and religious identities present security challenges for Pakistan. Preventing an ethnic blowout is therefore an important motivation for Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan. A potential unification of the 43 Million Pashtuns across the Durand line poses great threats, not only to the Pakistani state's very existence, should there be calls for secession around 'Pashtunistan', but also to the identity of the state, which has so far managed to keep the Punjabis in the majority. Pakistan's involvement in Afghan affairs is therefore also intended to ensure that a pro-Pakistan government is installed in Kabul which will not allow the opening up of the Durand line question. At the same time, because of the establishment's historical legacy of support to the Pashtuns and the Taliban during and after the Afghan civil wars, it does not want to see the victory of an anti-Pakistan Northern Alliance consisting of non-Pashtuns come to power in Kabul. But Pakistan is also faced with a dilemma: A Pashtun government in Afghanistan may appear to be less anti-Pakistan than the Northern Alliance, yet a Pashtun takeover of Kabul may also signal the rebirth of the Durand line dispute. It was under the rule of none other than the Pashtun King Zahir Shah that the border dispute reached its peak. While Pakistan's Pashtun population is currently content with being part of Pakistan,¹²⁰ events across the Durand could change that, as has been the case with the militant problem since 911.

The second unresolved element of identity in Pakistan, whether the country's main identity should be about Islam or national interest (nationalism), similarly becomes projected on Pakistan's dealings with Afghanistan. Musharraf's decision to join the US-led coalition against the Taliban and Al Qaeda initiated heated debates in Pakistani politics, and criticism from opposition and religious parties for the damage it would do to Pakistan's relations with the Muslim Umma. The debate pitched the Islamists against the liberals, aligned behind Musharraf's slogan 'Sab se Pehlay Pakistan' (Pakistan First), who believed that the country must only be concerned about its own long-term national interests, irrespective of the religious affinity with the

117 "71% Afghans Favour India, 2% Pak", *Outlook India*, Jan 20, 2010

118 Arvind Gupta IDSA workshop April 13th, 2010 New Delhi

119 Interview with Mr. Shashank

120 Grare, 2010.

Afghan people. While Islamists give precedence to religious and historical affinity, liberals apply rationality in their approach to foreign policy.

The debate about Islam versus nation, or which school of Islamic thought is acceptable for society within Pakistan becomes mooted when it comes to opinions about the role of religion in Afghan society, however. Political commentators such as Zaid Hamid and General Hamid Gul argue that since the Taliban regime brought peace and stability in the county, their version of Islam represents the aspirations of the Afghan people. Moderate commentators, however, see that while Afghan society is naturally conservative, the Taliban interpretation of religion is outrageously perverted and does not represent their interpretation of traditional of Islam. Most Pakistani analysts in their writings and interviews contend that only the Afghans should be allowed to choose the type and importance that they want to grant to their religion. General Hamid Gul, in an interview for this project, argued that Afghanistan's liberation from US 'occupation' would represent an Islamic victory, but as to what type of Islam and which specific laws and jurisprudence needed to be adapted, had to be decided among Islamic scholars of the region.¹²¹ Yet, for such debates to take place within Afghanistan there needs to be stable and efficient institutions and a governance system that allows voices to be heard. State building and institutional building does not, however, feature on the agenda of those who advocate for the return of the Taliban. Instead, the discourse takes up an anti-colonial position, with the Taliban representing resistance to the US presence, while nation building in Afghanistan is left out of the picture. The contradictions within Pakistani discourses on identity and religion in Afghanistan are clearly a reflection of the unsettled agenda within Pakistan.

India, on the other hand, preferring to have a multi-ethnic solution for the future of Afghanistan, appears more cautious about condoning a fundamentally religious governance system. Not only does a mono-ethnic and religious Pashtun/Sunni Taliban model contradict the very essence of Indian pluralistic national identity, India is especially concerned about its own Sikh population within Afghanistan. During the partition of India in 1947, Sikhs and Hindus sought refuge in Afghanistan as a temporary safe heaven because they could not join India from the western fringes of Pakistan, and joined other settlers who had gone in the nineteenth century. Before 1992, Afghanistan had a population of over 50,000 Hindus and Sikhs in areas like Jalalabad, Kandahar, Khost, Kabul, Ghazni and Laghman, but their numbers had dwindled to 1,500 Sikhs by 2009.¹²² India, with its multi-ethnic fabric and its own ambition to curb the influence of Pakistan, thus opposes a role for former insurgents in the Afghan government which are considered to be both Islamic and Pashtun. It also worries that integrating the Taliban will come at the expense of the ethnic groups it supported, Uzbeks and Tajiks of the former Northern Alliance.

External Relations

The entry of the US into Afghanistan brought to full intensity the penetration from the global level to the regional conflict formation. As seen above, the US has engaged in a balance of power between Pakistan and India by maintaining both good and cautious relations with both. Both countries, in turn, try to pull US flavours to their side, especially with the lack of clarity about the long term interests of the US in the region, and with the lack of a viable strategy of engagement and support by other powers such as China and Russia, at least for now. Engagement in Afghanistan, from this viewpoint, can be seen as an opportunity to gain favours with the key player of the moment, the US.

121 Interview with Hamid Gul, Rawalpindi, June 2010

122 Deepali Gaur Singh, "The Kabulis of India", *Kabulpress.org*, Sunday 13 September 2009, <http://kabulpress.org/my/spip.php?article4048>

By default, Pakistan has been able to convince the Americans that the pacification of Afghanistan cannot be guaranteed without the involvement of Pakistan. Not only has it offered to broker negotiations with the Haqqani group, but its intelligence services, including the likes of the retired Hamid Gul, are proven to maintain relations with the Taliban, something that first a dubious report from the London School of Economics and subsequently the Wikileaks cables seemed to reveal in 2010. If the Indian Army maintains training programs with the Afghan national army, the Pakistani special relationship with the Taliban leadership is a much more important element for consideration. Pakistan may be accused of playing a double-game in Afghanistan by the US and its Western allies, whereby it is accused of continuing to provide clandestine support to militants while being part of the global war on terror. Whether this is ultimately proven right or not, perceptions of this double game gives credence to the importance of Pakistan in the equation for the stabilization of Afghanistan.

India, on the other hand, seeks respect as a generous donor. However, it too is accused of providing behind the scenes support, together with Russia and Iran, to elements within Afghanistan that resist the Taliban. In the meantime, the importance of its cooperation on Afghanistan is seen as considerably less significant by the global powers that India seeks to impress. By way of example, a significant snub toward India was the sidelining of India during the London Conference of February 2010, presumably as a result of Pakistani lobby among Western allies. Faced with no choice, the Indian Foreign Minister claimed after the Conference that India could give a try to Taliban power-sharing in Kabul. To critiques within India, instead of accepting a defeatist position which can have long term national security imperatives, India should deploy its own political cards instead of a contingency plan to deal with the Talibanization of Afghanistan: Re-activating linkages with the Northern Alliance leaders and Pashtun elements opposed to Pakistan, active diplomacy to forge a joint Russia-India-Iran regional grouping initiative on solution of the Afghan conflict, and withdrawing its aid and infrastructure projects. As one analyst puts it, 'Should India's policy establishment once again shy away from 'hard decisions', then India might as well give up all its pretensions to being a regional power in South Asia and be doomed to political and strategic sidelines in South Asia.'¹²³ Such positioning for India would mean a confrontation with the US, however, which the country cannot afford unless and until it can ally itself not just with an Iran-Russia nexus, but with China as the rising power of the region.

Economic Motivations

A final element of strategic interest of both countries in Afghanistan is economic dividends. Both countries' ambition of benefiting from projects worth millions of dollars by providing transit services to Central Asian states through Afghanistan cannot be fully accomplished unless peace is established in Afghanistan. Yet, instead of cooperating together on economic projects that have benefits for all three countries, rivalry between India and Pakistan, as well as larger geo-political impediments hamper the realization of the full potential of cooperation.

Pakistan, which, until NATO opened the Northern Transit Route through Central Asia, benefited from rent provided by allowing for the NATO supply route, has taken a defensive position in blocking the access of India through its borders. When it finally agreed to sign the Afghan Trade Agreement (ATA) in July 2010 to allow landlocked Afghanistan to export to India through its land routes, it was only an outcome of intense US pressure. The Indians wanted market access as well but were only granted partial rights of usage, reflecting the deep mistrust between the two

123 Subhash Kapila, "Afghanistan: London Conference 2010 A Strategic Failure", *South Asia Analysis Group Paper no. 3643*, South Asia Analysis.org, 2 February 2010. <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers37%5Cpaper3643.html>

countries. The ATA had been held up only due to bilateral problems between India and Pakistan, with Pakistan accusing India of denying it similar access to Nepal and Bhutan. Cooperation between them, however, would only be beneficial for the entire region by opening up trade.

The ancient Khyber Pass has for centuries been the centre for trade and commerce across the Durand line. The level of trade across the Durand line has never been properly documented, however, due to the fact that a lot of informal trade takes place across the porous border. For example, informal trade between Afghanistan and Pakistan is estimated to be worth \$10 billion per annum.¹²⁴ Given Pakistan's traditionally poor tax to GDP ratio, regulating even part of this trade will help stabilize Pakistan's often critical balance of payment situation. Trade between the two countries can also change the negative perception of Pakistan in Afghan minds, but requires mutual trust between the two governments. Afghanistan's war-torn economy requires trade as well as infrastructure development, both of which require land-based transit routes. If properly documented, even the international aid based infrastructure would produce much needed revenues for both governments. In the meantime, corruption at all levels of government in both countries not only inhibits trade, but also aids smugglers and terrorists to easily transport their goods across the Durand line without scrutiny. To this are added the Durand line's porous nature, and Afghan and Pakistani objections to boosting border control through fencing, making undocumented informal trade a durable phenomenon.

Pakistan, in the meantime, is not only the most economically viable trade route for landlocked Afghanistan, but its Arabian Sea ports (Gwadar and Karachi) provide economically viable transportation options to the vast natural reserves of Central Asia. From the Pakistani establishment's viewpoint, a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, even under the Taliban, provides Pakistan an opportunity to establish deeper trade and economic relations with Central Asia, given that they have identified transit trade as a major long-term revenue generation source.¹²⁵ But politics impede the realization of this objective. For example, the Turkmenistan gas pipeline project remained stalled for years due to the insecurity of its transit route through Afghanistan. The Iran-Pakistan \$ 7.6 billion cross-border gas pipeline deal was finally signed in July 2010 after years of negotiations. The gas pipeline, once operational, is expected to take care of as much as 20% of Pakistan's energy needs. India, which was a part of the project earlier, was left out of the project after it hesitated over several technical and economic issues: the price of the gas, Islamabad's reluctance to ensure safety of the pipeline on its soil and the high transit fee asked by Pakistan. The failure of India to stay in the project is a missed opportunity for tripartite cooperation between Iran, Pakistan and India.

But India has not stood by idly in exploring the economic benefits of cooperation with Afghanistan. In fact, it became Afghanistan's fifth-largest donor, pledging \$1.2bn since 2001 and providing aid to education, health and infrastructure projects. It has also developed a 215km road connecting the Iranian border to Afghanistan's arterial highway, which will eventually allow India to transport goods by sea to the Iranian Chabahar port it is helping develop. This circumvents the overland route, blocked by Pakistan, and boosts Indo-Afghan trade, which was estimated to be \$538m during 2007-8.

If trade and economic projects with and through Afghanistan have been hampered by problems of insecurity and rivalry, the absence of economic cooperation between the two key players of

124 Raja Karthikeya Gundu and Teresita C. Schaffer, "India and Pakistan in Afghanistan: Hostile Sports", Center for Strategic and International Studies, *South Asia Monitor*, N. 117, April 2008, 1-3.

125 Javed, M., "The Emergence of Central Asian Republics and their impact on South and West Asia", Department of International Relations, Karachi University, Number 1, 2002, pp. 124-181. Accessible at: <http://pr.hec.gov.pk/Chapters/658-7.pdf>

South Asia, as noted above, presents a major impediment to the development of regional trade which can be an incentive for peace. Pakistan-India trade relations are marred by bureaucratic inefficiencies, trade barriers and a general lack of trust.¹²⁶At the Wagah crossing between India and Pakistan, only perishable goods such as vegetables and fruits are allowed passage within 2-3 business days, with other goods delayed much longer, making India-Pakistan trade almost non-viable. Pakistan has not yet granted India the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status despite the latter having granted Pakistan the status. Pakistan has traditionally feared that opening up of trade would, in the long term, hamper its own domestic industry. Yet, improving relations with India would allow Pakistan to benefit from the economic growth of India, if nothing else, through providing employment for its migrants.

126 Allaouidin Masood, "Benefits of trade links. Aman ki Asha" - A Peace initiative by Jang Group, Pakistan & Times of India, April 11, 2010
http://www.amankiasha.com/detail_articles.asp?id=44

Conclusion

From this analysis, it can be concluded that Afghanistan remains a zone of chaos into which the main security dynamic within the South Asia RSC, the Indo-Pakistan conflict, is projected. While criminal and terrorist trans-national networks originating in Afghanistan do threaten the security of the sub-region, a more significant security priority of India and Pakistan consists of their mistrust and rivalry with each other. More than Afghanistan drawing in the neighbouring states along the lines of its domestic rivalries, it is the external rivalry that defines how the two states view Afghanistan, as well as how they act within it.

In the final analysis, neither Pakistan nor India is indeed capable – even if interested, at least in the case of Pakistan’s desire for a friendly government in Kabul – in establishing its hegemony over Afghanistan. In the post-US scenario, it is possible that Pakistan’s establishment will have little or no leverage with the Taliban, as the latter have increasingly taken a more independent role from their former allies and have denounced Pakistani involvement in instability in Afghanistan, even during the Taliban regime of the 1990s.¹²⁷ Yet despite this, Pakistan’s role in any negotiations is inevitable. Pakistan may cease its behaving in a destructive way in Afghanistan if its insecurities vis-à-vis India is addressed. If both want influence there, it is primarily because they seek solutions to their own insecurities, as well as guarantees from the US against each other. This means that as long as the core insecurities within the South Asia RSC are not resolved, negative influences may continue and hamper stabilization efforts in Afghanistan.

While the US administration sees improved relations between India and Pakistan as ‘a key piece of the puzzle . . . the heart of the deal’ in Afghanistan,¹²⁸ it has not tackled their bilateral differences so far, however. This is both due to the fact that third party interference in core issues such as Kashmir would be rejected by both Pakistan and India, but also because, in a way, balancing power between the two works to the benefit of the US in the region. After all, external powers are drawn into the conflict along the dividing line, but the ambiguities of US policies keep both countries bogged down. The emerging geopolitical rivalry between the US and China ultimately may decide how these relationships play out in the future.

In the meantime, it would be difficult to stipulate a blanket and standard regional approach to the Afghan problem without taking into account the core insecurity problem within the South Asian region. The conclusion is similar to what Ahmed Rashid has argued, that the road to Kabul is partly through Kashmir. However, in our analysis, the issue of Kashmir is only part of the conflictual relationship between Pakistan and India and it is not the entire story. The process of fragmentation within Pakistan, induced by the uneasy relationship between the military, the civilian government, political parties, Islamic groups and the Pashtun problem, all affect how the relationship with India unfolds. India, on the other hand, may have more internal stability, but it still considers Pakistan a threat, among others, to its rising ambitions to ‘divorce the region’ and become recognized as a major power. Sustained irreconcilability of national identities, coupled with unresolved territorial disputes in Kashmir, alleged state backing for terrorist attacks, alliance with extra-regional powers, and blockage of economic projects, are among some of the ways that India perceives of Pakistani’s so-called sabotage of its aspirations to big power status that can ‘divorce the region’. While India seeks to project a more outward looking vision, its ambitions are curbed by the ongoing conflict with Pakistan as well as its inability to gain respect as a leader

127 Rahimullah Yusufzai, “Could the Taliban reconcile with Kabul?”, *The News International*, 26 January 2010

128 Karen DeYoung, 2010

within the region and by external powers. Pakistan, on the other hand, disintegrating from within, is fragmented and has a defensive position.

As a result, and despite the existence of a common security complex, a sense of commonality in security, economic and political interests has not emerged between the South Asian countries, nor facilitated by existing regional and global institutions such as SAARC, which has been unable to move on many of its initiatives because of the India-Pakistan hostility, and because, as a primarily economic organization, it has not been properly mandated with political mediation. Because of the irreconcilable differences over national identity, and the role that identities within play in the formulation of state possibilities, it is virtually inconceivable that, as Jonson and Allison speculate, further interactions could foster common values and interest which eventually may lead to close security cooperation between states in a so-called security community.¹²⁹

But what could tilt this balance and shift the South Asia security complex into a security community based on cooperation? A number of factors that could enhance cooperation can be considered:

Interaction in the economic and environmental fields may develop into a mutual interest between the parties in pursuing further cooperation in military and security affairs. The regulation of the Indus Water Treaty and cooperation on water sharing could be an entry point for India-Pakistan relations. If the existing pipeline projects and construction of alternative roads through seaport in Gwadar (Pakistan-China) and Chabahar (Iran-India) are currently fostering exclusive competition, other smaller scale economic projects could explicitly try to build bridges between the major donors and recipients of this region: these can include joint projects in technology, health, education, power, communications and natural resource exploitation between Pakistan and India with Afghanistan. Cooperation among the Indian and Pakistani private sector in existing companies in Afghanistan is already showing the way to possibilities.

Joint efforts by the states in combating insurgency and terrorism could have the added benefit of lowering mistrust and rhetoric about state-backed terrorism as proxy to direct confrontation between Pakistan and India. The problem of terrorism and insurgency needs to be tackled as a criminal phenomenon, but underlying state-based interests need to be dealt with through appropriate diplomatic and institutional mechanisms for a consensus for peaceful resolutions. Another great game in the region can be avoided if there could be more cooperation on combating insurgency in Pakistan. This, however, requires the revival of the India-Pakistan dialogue and shifting Pakistani attitudes toward the Taliban as they face internal insurgency. The Indians may also have to provide more security guarantees on the Eastern front so that Pakistan could concentrate on its Western border regions.¹³⁰ Ultimately, however, the insurgency cannot be managed by military means alone, but will require an ability to engage with its political, economic and social root causes.

As far as Afghanistan is concerned, neutrality would be the solution to keep neighbours from intervening, but beyond rhetoric, a neutral Afghanistan does not appear to be a possibility in the near future because the state institutions are too weak to handle external pressures, and because the exit of US and NATO troops need to be guaranteed before neutrality can be genuinely discussed for Afghanistan.

129 Roy Allison and Lena Jonson, L., "Central Asian Security: Internal and External Dynamics", In R. Allison & L. Jonson (Eds.), *Central Asian Security, The new international context*. Washington D.C., Brookings Institution Press 2001 (pp.1-23 at p. 9).

130 Ashok K. Mehta, "Avoiding Another Great Game", *The Wall Street Journal*, January 11, 2010

Ultimately, as mentioned above, positive changes in the global order could impact the relationships within the RSC. Although for now, the competition within draws on and uses the latent rivalry between the US and China externally, the possibility of cooperation and alliance between China and the US would change dynamics. This may mean that, at the minimum, a shift to multi-polarity could provide more incentives for cooperation and less for proxy rivalries within South Asia. Although countries are doomed by their geography, cooperation, rather than conflict and competition can also define their relationships.

South Asia and Afghanistan: The Robust India-Pakistan Rivalry

Is Afghanistan a playground for the India-Pakistan conflict? Or, are the countries in South Asia – Pakistan in particular – the recipients of unrest that spills over from Afghanistan? Alternatively, is the larger neighbourhood, South Asia and Afghanistan included, simply a victim of rivalry between global powers? Views on the relationship between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries vary widely. The different views have fundamental consequences for how one understands the conflict, and for what policies one finds constructive. Cognizant of the roles of actors in Central

Asia and the Persian Gulf region, and excluding neither the importance of Afghan domestic factors nor global forces, this paper emphasizes the way that the India-Pakistan conflict – the overwhelming security issue in the South Asian region – informs the two countries' engagement in Afghanistan.

With the announcement of the beginning of the gradual US troops withdrawal from July 2011 and plans to hand over security responsibility to Afghan forces in 2014, attention has moved to the role of neighbouring countries in fill-

ing in the expected political vacuum. The question is whether neighbouring states would revert to behaviour witnessed in the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, where their influence on different warring ethnic groups sowed further discord for national unity and contributed to the civil war of 1992-1996, or, whether they will be able to exert positive influences over the surviving Afghan state and contribute to regional stability.