

Making Sense of India-Pakistan Relation

Ashish Shashi Khanna

Thakur Ramnarayan College of Law
Email: ashishkhanna5321[at]gmail.com

Abstract: *India-Pakistan relationship for decades has been idealized as an irreconcilable one. This paper traces the relationship between the two nations from the period of partition to make sense of the conflict. This process cannot be undertaken without understanding Pakistan's Kashmir policy since 1947. Its policy revolves around the failure to create a nation for South Asian Muslims, which it sees as its inherent part, and the failure to not integrate it. This paper further examines the strategic importance of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir for China and its impact on the relation between India-Pakistan. The fundamental question that the paper seeks to answer is despite the present economic conditions of Pakistan and its inability to solve its internal issues, and continuous defeats in major wars with India, what ideational factors are present in Pakistan's strategic culture and how it perceives India based on these factors. This paper finally examines the factors involved that impact the relations between the two nations and explores the possibility of eternal peace.*

Keywords: Strategic culture, Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, India-Pakistan relation

1. Introduction

The India and Pakistan relation has been contested since the partition of the two nations, the undermining question is despite its economic conditions and internal issues, why has Pakistan's Kashmir policy remained adamant? It is imperative to understand what Pakistan perceives as a threat and what are the various ideational factors which form its policy on Kashmir. This conflict cannot be understood without taking into consideration the role of the Chinese and the strategic importance of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. The primary goal of states is to gain the power to dominate other states; China follows a similar policy by giving financial and diplomatic support to Pakistan to counter the rising India. China's aspirations to become a chip power requires huge amount of fresh water and thus Kashmir becomes of a strategic value. The question of peace between the two nations cannot be understood without taking into consideration the internal factors and external factors, in the case of Pakistan the role of the army is to preserve the ideology of the state, in case of external factors China is the new United States for Pakistan, which impacts the relation between the two nations. Failing to take into consideration the two factors and adopting a liberal approach to India-Pakistan relations is a policy failure.

2. Partition of India: The Birth of a New Problem

The partition of India and the question of integration of princely states led to the birth of a new problem. To understand the conflict better, it is important to revisit the events of the past. The idea behind a separate state for Muslims was based on the claim that Muslims constitute a separate race and are culturally distinct from Hindus. The question of integration came before four princely states, out of the 565 princely states, Kashmir being a curious case, had a Hindu maharaja and a [1] Muslim population of 78 percent. Maharaja Hari Singh chose to remain independent, on the pretext that [2] acceding to India was an attractive option given his affiliations and family antecedents. Pakistan, on the other hand, gave assurances through the

Muslim League to the Maharaja that the internal sovereignty of the state would be protected.

Jinnah's statement to his fellow Muslim league leaders, considered Kashmir as its inherited and inalienable part. He was convinced [3] "that a dispassionate consideration of the relevant facts of population and geography, the economic and cultural ties, and even the Maharaja's dynastic interest would inevitably point toward accession with Pakistan".

Pakistan's actions were in contrast to what it promised to the Maharaja. It was worried that the congress would somehow convince the Maharaja and give favorable concessions to join India. The Poonch province presented itself in the form of popular disaffection for Pakistan. At the end of August, a party of about thirty Pakistani nationals infiltrated Poonch with the intent to incite the *Sudhan* tribes to agitate against the Maharaja in favor of accession to Pakistan. In early September, about 10,000 residents of Poonch town air their local grievances, and also raised slogans demanding accession to Pakistan. Poonch declared itself *Azad* (free) Kashmir, the results of which sparked a Muslim guerrilla war against the maharaja. On October 23rd, 1947, around 5000 Pashtun tribesmen, crossed the border into Kashmir backed by the Pakistani army and assaulted the heartland of *Kashmiriyat*. The Maharaja when faced with reality decided to accede to India, in response to the actions of Pakistan, India sent its forces and began airlifting in Srinagar. Pakistan considered the actions of India as illegal and demanded a plebiscite to determine the will of the people of Kashmir.

Article 370 is a contested issue having incomplete and unresolved arguments; post the signing instrument of accession, the powers transferred to the union was limited to external affairs, communication, and defense. The provisions of article 370 stated that the President of India shall apply powers of the Indian Constitution to the state with respect to the matters in the Instrument of accession. The state Constituent assembly would frame the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, and the state Constituent assembly would define the constitutional relationship of the state of Kashmir with India. The constituent assembly of the state was yet to be set up, so it

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was decided to keep article 370 under Part XXI termed "Temporary Transitional and Special Provisions" in the Constitution, article 370 had a temporary job, to only act as a bridge between the Union and the state of Jammu and Kashmir until the constituent assembly framed the constitution.

3. Strategic Culture: The Evolution of Pakistan's Kashmir Policy

The history of Kashmir and the events surrounding it pose the following question in the context of Pakistan's policy towards Kashmir, whether the accession of Kashmir to India can be considered as the failure of the two-nation theory. History of Pakistan shows that it is an incomplete and insecure state, to understand the strategic culture of Pakistan, it is important to first understand the concept of strategic culture.

[4] Strategic culture is a 'distinctive set of beliefs, values, and habits regarding the threat and use of force, which have their roots in such fundamental influences as geopolitical setting, history, and political culture

- Ken Booth and Russell Trood (1999)

Understanding strategic culture focuses on what motivates states to perceive threats which is reflected in its history, geography, and political setting. [5] Some scholars believe that States confront different strategic problems with varying material and ideational resources to which they apply unique responses.

Pakistan being a revisionist state, a state that wants to change the status quo in the international system, in the case of Pakistan this is limited to changing borders with India. Its revisionist ambition is backed by the belief that [6] India is an existential threat, that seeks to gain control of its lost territory of Jammu and Kashmir, and it shall resist the rise of India in the international forum. Given the fact that Pakistan's struggle for its national identity and the loss of Kashmir suggests that its policy on Kashmir is unlikely to change, this is evident by the statement made in the United Nations Security Council, in the year 1948, [7] Pakistan stated

"That India has never wholeheartedly accepted the partition scheme and has, since June 1947, been making persistent attempts to undo it."

The partition of India and the accession of Kashmir is seen by Pakistan as India's attempt to dominate South Asia. The History of Pakistan informs us that it is the army that makes major policy decisions, therefore its relations with India are influenced by its domestic factors. The army maintains a hostile status quo in Kashmir as failing to do so would relinquish its position in the society. [8] Pakistan has India syndrome as Jean Luc-Racine puts it. This syndrome leads to a feeling of insecurity which has culminated since 1947, The successive leaders in Pakistan have not been able to free the national mind from this Indian obsession, rather obsession has been used to serve their purposes. The mix of political and ideological factors has led to the culmination of Pakistan's Kashmir policy. [9] According to Christine Fair,

the army of Pakistan has an inalienable duty to protect Pakistan's ideology and geographic frontiers. Its ultimate goal lies in fulfilling the promise of the two-nation theory by seizing Kashmir.

Realizing the importance of ideology in the preservation of Pakistan, General Ayub Khan, Pakistan's first military leader explains in his [10] autobiography:

"Man's greatest yearning is for an ideology for which he should be able to lay down his life.... Such an ideology with us is that of Islam. It was on that basis that we fought for and got Pakistan, but having got it, we failed to order our lives in accordance with it. The main reason is that we have failed to define that ideology in as simple and understandable form."

3.1 The Great Dilemma

The history of Pakistan and the evolution of its policy towards Kashmir reflect its perception towards India, the first part of this paper revisited the events leading up to the crisis in Kashmir, following which the concept of strategic culture was defined. Making sense of Pakistan's policy cannot be undertaken without looking at its strategic culture, which considers the failure to accede Kashmir to its territory, a failure of the two-nation theory, which was the very foundation of the territory named Pakistan. Its hostility towards Kashmir can be understood by the following two factors:

- 1) India is a hegemon that must be resisted, [11] General Ayub Khan voiced his opinion, where he asserts that the ambition of India is to absorb Pakistan or turn it into a satellite state. The survival and struggle with India from the inception of Independence, leads to the belief that India poses an existential threat. [12] Major Khalid Mehmod wrote in 1985 that India wants to restrict the foreign policy choices and options of its neighbours and wants to impose such foreign policy objectives on them.
- 2) The involvement of the army in domestic matters, results in the use of ideology for the preservation of order in the state, the use of ideology and brainwashing of the masses justifies its use of proxy militias to maintain instability in Kashmir. [13] For the Army, victory itself is defined by its ability to challenge India, despite losing to India in major wars; its ability to challenge India is considered a victory.

Making sense of Pakistan and its strategy in Kashmir cannot be undertaken without understanding what its army perceives as a threat which is backed by ideational factors, Pakistan conclusively remains a revisionist state and the question of peace with India remains a stagnant one.

4. China-Pakistan Relation: A Realist Perspective

Hans J Morgenthau defines international politics as the struggle for power, the purpose of countries, Morgenthau argues, is to engage in relations with each other to secure power. The struggle for power defines the international conflicts at play. Understanding the role of China in the Kashmir conflict should be understood from the lens of a

realist. [14] John Mearsheimer argues that a hegemonic power always works to strengthen its power with the intent to weaken the power of its rivals, not doing so would lower its domination over the region. The role of China in Kashmir and its relations with Pakistan is to weaken India and emerge as a superpower in Asia. To understand the hegemonic behavior of China it is important to look back and understand the policies of China pre-1962 war with India, the post-1962 period, and the importance that Kashmir holds for the Chinese.

4.1 A History in Brief

It is imperative to understand the brief history of the Iron Brotherhood between China and Pakistan, the pre-1962 era saw a neutral stance adopted by China on the Kashmir issue, during their visit to India in 1956, [15] Premier Zhou Enlai stated,

"The Kashmir question is an outstanding question between the two nations and we hope that it will be settled satisfactorily.... There is no dispute between the countries that cannot be settled."

This policy was not permanent and soon changed when the events started changing on the Ladakh border whereby China started deploying its People's Liberation Army, which eventually led to the clashes with the Indian security forces. The stance of China tacitly changed, and it started advocating Kashmir's right to self-determination and called it a "war of national liberation".

The 1962 war with China led to it gaining control of the sizable land mass in Leh and Ladakh in J&K. Subsequently, the China-Pakistan border treaty was signed in March 1963, which illegally transferred the Shaksgam valley, which allowed China to enter POK (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir), and access central Asia.

[16] The role of China in the 1971 India-Pakistan war was a blend of *"tempered support, gentle scolding and steely pragmatism."* The period starting from the 1980s onwards saw a shift to its past policy which it followed pre-1962 that the matter be left between India and Pakistan. Surprisingly, in May 1998, after India completed the Pokhran test, China reiterated its old position that the issue of Kashmir should be referred to the United Nations. This approach was reflected during the Kargil conflict in 1999, China went to the extent to call for an international intervention to resolve the Kashmir crisis. [17] Such oscillation helps it derive short and medium-term gains.

4.2 Red Shadow in Pok

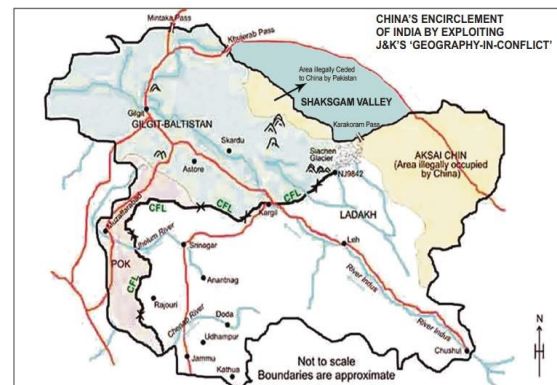
China's policy on Kashmir and its hegemonic interest in Central Asia if considered from the lens of [18] Mearsheimer's offensive realism, the behavior of China, is that of a revisionist state one where the intent is to maximize its powers, and is not satisfied with the existing status quo and is always striving to readdress that power balance to its advantage until it becomes the most dominant power in the system. China's long-term goals in Kashmir show that it is a revisionist state which wrongly interferes in the Kashmir

issue to counter the emergence of India as a global power. The China-Pakistan economic corridor is a glaring example of its hegemonic pursuits.



Source: <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/islamabad-says-china-trade-route-unchanged/26830242.html>

The genesis of this hegemonic gain, originates in 1959, when China and Pakistan initiated the Karakoram Highway project which passes through POK. The strategic decision to select Pok for the development of CPEC yields economic benefits. Expanding China's geographical reach inside Pakistan allows the PLA to come extremely close to India's northern and western flanks. CPEC also acts as a gateway to Afghanistan and provides an alternate route for critical energy imports and other resources. The threat of a two-front war remains with the development of [19] road networks by China which passes through the Shaksgam which connects Karakoram highway with Tibet-Xinjiang highway resulting in the encirclement of J&K (Jammu and Kashmir) from three sides.



Source: <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/gilgit-baltistan-pok-uk-parliament-jammu-and-kashmir-india-pakistan-967661-2017-03-25>

[20] China aims to become the world's leading microchip manufacturer. Manufacturing of microchips requires two important raw materials, the first being sand and the second being freshwater. China's Taklamakan Desert fulfills its demand for sand, but its water resources are scarce, therefore Kashmir solves the water crisis for China. The quest for water explains the CPEC and the construction of dams, constituting the North Indus River cascade that China has undertaken under the CPEC in Pok.

5. Peace: A Possibility Gone Extinct?

5.1 Two-factor analysis

Exploring the possibility of peace requires the understanding of elements that make peace a myth. In the case of India-Pakistan, two important factors make the peace process questionable. The first factor being the domestic factor, as was analyzed in the previous part of this paper, the army acts as the sole protector of the state and maintains its policies, the national identity of Pakistan is based on the two-nation theory, which believes that Hindus and Muslims are two different races and hence cannot co-mingle.

The consequence of this has been that India is perceived as a 'Hindu' nation which threatens Pakistan's identity. [21] This is visible from a book by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto called "The Myth of Independence" where Bhutto states that until a Muslim-majority province remains a part of India, the sole reason for the existence of Pakistan would remain incomplete. Bhutto stated that if Pakistan ever fails to get back Kashmir it will imply that the idea of Pakistan would collapse. The idea of Pakistan is reflected in its strategy to subvert Kashmir. The bilateral composite dialogue hails no relevance when the army has the dominant role in foreign and defense policy. [22] Christine Fair states that the growing power of Islamist fundamentalism in Pakistani society and the role of the armed forces has critically influenced the evolution of a bilateral composite dialogue.

The second factor is Global influence in the region, as was analyzed in the previous sections of this paper on the role of China and its interest in the region, shows that China is the new US for Pakistan. History shows that the United States was once a strategic ally of Pakistan, the United States included Pakistan in its security arrangements such as the Central Treaty Organization and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and provided large amounts of economic and military aid. [23] This relationship had contradictory consequences for the Kashmir dispute. The United States military aid provided an upper hand to the Pakistan army to counter India at its border. The role of the United States has now been overtaken by China, [24] China has bailed out Pakistan, both in diplomatic terms and economically.

The relationship between China and Pakistan was born out of shared animosity towards India. Given the fact that Pakistan is economically dependent on China, the power theory fails to apply in the case of Pakistan, as Pakistan's economic conditions do not allow it to maintain a conflict with India, the aspirations of the Chinese and the strategic importance of the region have to be taken into account to understand Pakistan's strategy.

The two-factor analysis makes it evident at face value that a dialogue with Pakistan will not yield practical value, history makes it clear that Pakistan has used non-state actors against India to subvert the dialogue process. The opening of the Kartarpur Gurudwara holds immense religious significance for the Sikh community, Whether the opening of the Kartarpur corridor can be equated to the fall of the Berlin Wall, and can be regarded as a new chapter in the India-Pakistan relationship, The Kartarpur Gurudwara corridor

had been established when the ties were good, would have been a confidence-building measure. However, that is not possible without renouncing militarist ultra-nationalist groups, the way forward for positive relations rests upon Pakistan first renouncing its support for terrorism.

5.2 The Way Forward

Instead of relying on hard power elements, this paper intends to understand the eternal peace between India and Pakistan, the unfortunate use of religious symbolism to promote hatred towards India makes peace improbable. [25] This is evident by the way history is being taught in Pakistani schools is nothing but political indoctrination based on the separate identities of the Muslims and the Hindus. Scholars hold the view that in Pakistan Social Studies classes students don't learn history. [26] They are required to read a carefully selected collection of fairytales, falsehoods, and plain lies.

The question of whether is possible at all depends on various factors mentioned above, the practical solution lies in perception, it is how nations perceive each other which derives from ideational factors; therefore, it is imperative that there are academic reforms in Pakistan to remove the falsely created misconception that Hindu is an enemy and therefore must India must be resisted. It is ultimately the *awam* or public that can demand reforms in Pakistan to make it a sane nation and implement positive policies and peace with India, which ultimately makes South Asia a secure region.

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Author Profile



Ashish Khanna, is a fourth-year law student at Thakur Ramnarayan college of law.