

**INDIA-PAKISTAN CRISES AND DOMESTIC POLITICS:
A STUDY OF THE KARGIL CONFLICT AND
OPERATION PARAKRAM**

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation titled “**India-Pakistan Crises and Domestic Politics: A Study of the Kargil Conflict and Operation Parakram**” submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that the dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Introduction

This principal purpose of this work is to describe and analyse the conflict in Kargil in 1999 and Operation Parakram of 2002, focusing particularly on the role played by domestic factors. The following questions will be posed in the study: What were the proximate causes of the Kargil conflict and Operation Parakram? Why did these two crises occur in such quick succession after India and Pakistan went overtly nuclear? Why were the attitude and responses of the two countries markedly different in each of these crises even though both took place under similar conditions of nuclear parity? Why did the Pakistan state embark on a peace process with India while simultaneously facilitating incursions into the Indian territory thereby nullifying all attempts at peace in the region? Why would the Indian government mobilize troops in such massive numbers after the Parliament attack and then unilaterally demobilize them with much of its demands remaining substantially unmet by Pakistan?

The proposed study seeks to investigate these questions and attempts to fill a gap in the existing literature from the vantage point of a 'second image' analysis of the two crises. In the process it will also try to shed some light on a few macro-level theoretical issues concerning nuclear deterrence in South Asia, International Relations Theory in the region and broader aspects of India-Pakistan relations.

Kenneth Waltz (1959) coined the term 'second image' to refer to the domestic causes of international outcomes. While the 'first image' concerns itself with human behaviour, the third focuses more on the notion of international anarchy at the systemic level. Much of the literature on the topic has focused on structural level explanations of the events thereby failing to grasp the political and domestic context in which the Kargil conflict and the military build-up of 2001-02 took place. These structural level explanations have usually restricted themselves to understand why the two events did not lead to full fledged wars and the impact that nuclear weapons had on these two crises. In essence the existing explanations tend to focus more on the consequences of what transpired once these crises were set in motion and overlook the inherent motives, objectives and constraints of the ruling dispensation of the countries whose acts initiated the crisis. While

these explanations are robust and their articulation rigorous, they remain inadequate in answering the precise questions put forth above specially with regard to the timing and the differing attitudes and responses of the two governments of the day. At a wider level the proposed study is an attempt to understand and dissect the complex political dynamics that bedevils India-Pakistan relationship and ascertain the manner in which these domestic subtleties feeds into the larger decision-making processes both in times of war and relative peace.

Background

The fraught nature of India-Pakistan relations became more intricate with the two countries going overtly nuclear in the summer of 1998. Whether those tests made the subcontinent more secure or were instrumental in making the future of the region bleaker is a debate yet unsettled. But two major crisis that immediately followed after the nuclear explosions were the Kargil conflict of May 1998 and Operation Parakram in 2001-2002. While one was a full-fledged war, albeit in a limited theater of operation and with limited means, the other had all the potential to escalate into a major nuclear war considering it was the largest military build-up in the history of the subcontinent since 1971.

The Kargil Narrative

In the spring of 1999 Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee embarked on his historic bus-diplomacy. This was in response to an invitation from the Pakistan premier to his Indian counterpart to visit Lahore and initiate a peace-process to normalize Indo-Pak relations which were on a downward spiral since the two countries went nuclear. However, at the same time the Lahore-process was underway, Pakistani soldiers, mainly from the Northern Light Infantry (NLI) were crossing into the Indian side of the Line of Control (LOC) and had thoroughly entrenched themselves in strategic positions in Mushkoh, Dras, Kaksar, Batalik and Turtok. Strategically the Dras sector was the most important as from there the intruders' could directly observe and interdict National Highway (NH-1A) which was the only road that could be used to deliver military supplies between Srinagar and Leh. The Indian army came to know about the intrusions only in the first week of May. Realizing the enormity of the situation, thousands of soldiers were sent to evict the

intruders. Facing severe casualties in the initial stages of the conflict, as the Pakistani intruders were lodged in high altitudes and favourable strategic locations, the Indian Air Force (IAF) had to be pressed into service. It is important to mention that in all these combat operations, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) of the Government of India had issued strict instructions to restrict the battle operations within the Indian side of the LOC.

As the number of infiltrators increased, by mid June the IAF and the Indian Navy was also kept in alert status. In the midst of intensive combat operations in Kargil, international and bilateral diplomatic efforts gained momentum. The Prime Minister of the two countries spoke to each other in an attempt to defuse the crisis. The international community shuddered at the thought of the crisis escalating to a major war and the danger of nuclear threshold being crossed. The US President personally intervened into the situation and urged the two parties to resist from increasing the domain of the conflict. The attempts of Pakistan to bring international focus on the Kashmir issue did not cut much ice either with the Americans or the Chinese. It was a diplomatic failure on many counts for Pakistan. It did not succeed in internationalizing the Kashmir issue. Moreover in his July 4 meeting with Nawaz Sharif, President Clinton made it unambiguously clear that Pakistan had no other option than to withdraw its troops from the Indian side of LOC lest the danger of nuclear war was perilously close. The Kargil conflict finally came to an end after the Indian forces managed to evict the intruders from the Indian side of LOC and the Pakistan had to withdraw its troops owing to diplomatic pressure from the US. It officially concluded with the announcement by the Defense Minister of India George Fernandes on 17th July 1999, that the last of the intruders have vacated Indian territory.

The Operation Parakram Narrative

Different actors in South Asia tend to learn divergent lessons from similar outcomes. The story in the case of the Kargil war was no different. Each party saw it as a victory for itself. It was this variation in perception about the same event that in many ways resulted in the 2001-02 crisis between India and Pakistan. Pakistan went into another spell of

military rule owing to a coup by General Musharraf and the over-throwing of Nawaz Sharif's government. In the build-up to this crisis three incidents in particular shook the very truce that was established after the end of the Kargil War. In December of 1999 Pakistan-backed *jihadi* groups hijacked an Indian Airlines plane and kept it in Kandahar from where they negotiated the release of three terrorists- Masood Azhar Alvi, Syed Omar Sheikh and Mushtaq Zargar- for the safety of the passengers in the plane. In October 2001, militants of the *Jaish-e-Mohammad* group in Kashmir launched an attack on the Jammu and Kashmir assembly in Srinagar. 38 people died in the attack and the Chief Minister of the state Farooq Abdullah urged for reprisal attacks on the state where the terrorists were based. The final nail in the coffin was the attack on Parliament in December 2001. With government of India's patience running out, it ordered massive mobilization of troops along the border within two days of the attack. Rhetoric flew thick and fast with leaders from both the countries conveying that all options including nuclear weapons were on the table. In fact, by January 2001, Pakistan was reported to have put its nuclear weapons on high alert. The deployment of the Prithvi missiles by India was matched by the Hatf missiles of Pakistan.

Another crisis in the horizon brought in Western intervention in the region. Colin Powell was sent to bring the situation under control. Then followed the January 12 speech of Musharraf in which he reiterated Pakistan's political, moral and diplomatic support to the Kashmir cause but also banned outfits such as *Jaish-e-Mohammad* and *Lashkar-e-Toiba*. The situation in the region eased for sometime but got aggravated again with the attack by militants on an Army camp in Kaluchak in Jammu on May 14. Things were back to square one and another month and half of heightened tension prevailed before the Americans again intervened and got Musharraf to agree to end cross-border terrorism. Verifying this assurance through intelligence reports coupled with the fact that the intensity of cross-border shelling had reduced considerably, the atmosphere in the region acquired a sense of normalcy. But it was only in October that the Indian government announced that the forces will be withdrawn from forward areas.

How do scholars and practitioners view these two crises? What according to them are the dominant variables that could explain the manner in which these crises played out? What are the insights they proffer with regard to the lessons learned from these two crises and the behaviour of the two countries? The next section attempts to peruse through the existing literature on the topic and highlight some of the main findings.

Review of Literature

This review of literature assesses the current state of research, trends and debates on issues of India-Pakistan relations and is broadly divided into three sections. The first looks at the literature that seeks to explain the logic of enduring rivalry between the two nations. The second engages with the role that the introduction of nuclear weapons play and the application of theories of deterrence in the region. The last segment focuses on the role of external actors in crises situations specially in the two cases that this study proposes to investigate.

The Enduring Rivalry

Maoz and Mor (2002) characterize an enduring rivalry by “a persistent, fundamental, and long term incompatibility of goals between two states,” which “manifests itself in the basic attitudes of the parties towards each other as well as in recurring violent clashes over a period of time.” Such a definition is quite useful to categorize India-Pakistan relations considering how antagonistic their relationship has been since independence. However, an interesting aspect of this relationship is in its power dynamics. There is a need for relative equivalence in power for a conflict to remain enduring (Vasquez, 1996). However, in the case of the two countries, there is an asymmetric division of power, still the conflict endures. It would be suffice to say that India-Pakistan conflict is both enduring and asymmetric. What explains this paradox? Such a situation is unique because in an asymmetric power dynamic, the stronger party can overcome the weaker one thus putting an end to the conflict once and for all. The answer, some argue is in the historical legacy of the two states.

At the root of this rivalry is a history that is complicated and complex. Two divergent visions of nations and statehood which emerged during the freedom struggle (Spear, 2000; Wolpert, 2000) and which are yet to find a closure. Immediately after independence the status of Kashmir becomes a bone of contention and has remained a cornerstone of the conflict narrative between the two countries. Three major wars- 1965, 1971 and 1999- have been fought but Kashmir remains a burning issue without undergoing any change of its status since 1947 (Schofield, 2000). While Kashmir is unfinished agenda for Pakistan since partition as it is a Muslim majority state it also has certain strategic advantages for the country that holds it (Cohen, 2004). However, Kashmir is also hailed as a symbol of its secular national identity by India and is held on to by the Indian state not only for its strategic rationale but also for its significance for the secular fabric of the country. A Muslim majority state within a Hindu majority Union of India is an important emblematic gesture that India would like to reflect. In fact, identity and the complex manner in which it is enmeshed with the territorial aspects of a state make the conflict more intractable in nature (Ganguly, 2001; Geller 2006). A similar argument is made by Vali Nasr (2006) who believes that national ideologies of both the countries have become more religious in nature. The absence of a distinct identity for Pakistan has forced it to construct one which is in perpetual opposition to India. Leng (2006) argues that the existence of a *realpolitik* culture that tends to imitate the behaviour of the other never allows the two countries to come out of this spiral of rivalry. This *realpolitik* argument is reinforced by the continued support of countries like USA and China to Pakistan in order to maintain the balance of power in the region vis-à-vis India (Kapur, 2006). Saiderman (2006) tends to touch upon the domestic angle to some extent wherein he argues that the rivalry has endured because of the irredentist aims of Pakistan and anti-irredentist aims of India. However, this does not explicate the reasons as to why both the countries adopt such policies or educate us about the drivers that propel them to continue with such age old claim.

The literature that explains the enduring rivalry in such historical detail is vast and significant. However, it fails to account for the peculiar nature of each crisis that unfolds. The arguments that flow from all these explanations can be used for any kind of crisis

between the two countries thus adding negligibly to our current concerns of understanding why particular events took place within the political context of that day and age. There is a kind of static insularity to these explanations which fails to account for the fact that politics, at the end of the day, is a dynamic process with ever changing equations and motives.

Theories of Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia

An enormous amount of literature has emerged in recent times debating whether nuclear deterrence has actually worked in South Asia thus making the region more stable or it has not. Scholars who believe that nuclear weapons have had a soothing effect on regional conflicts are generally in the camp of proliferation or deterrence optimists. While there are those who believe that the introduction of nuclear weapons in the security dynamics of the region has made the situation gloomier and therefore a pessimistic future awaits the subcontinent.

Devin Hagerty (2009) argues that though nuclear weapons played an enabling role in Pakistan's decision to undertake the Kargil adventure, it dissuaded the Indian government from escalating the war beyond a point. Optimists such as him go on to argue that "The Indian and Pakistani governments, despite compelling incentives to attack one another during the crisis under examination, were dissuaded from doing so by the fear that war might escalate to nuclear level" (Ganguly and Hagerty, 2005). Continuing in the same vein, regarding the 2001-02 crisis proliferation optimists argue that nuclear weapons had a positive effect on the confrontation (Praveen Swami, 2009). Swami argues that not only nuclear weapons restricted the military options of the two countries during the crisis but also made the two countries more amenable to US intervention in the conflict.

However, the proliferation pessimists points towards two different kinds of dangers. One is the political, technological and organizational pathologies in a nuclear environment that can make proliferators behave in sub-optimal fashion with dangerous consequences (Sagan, 2003). The second version of this pessimism relies on the rational actor model of a state and argues that nuclear weapons can in fact incentivize certain weak proliferators

to engage in destabilizing behaviour (Kapur, 2007). In this tradition scholars such as Neil Joeck (2009) points out that even though India and Pakistan were nuclear states in 1998, Pakistan was not deterred from engaging in a war thereby provoking India. Thus nuclear weapons proved insufficient to deter another nuclear adversary. In a stream of thought similar to the one expressed by Kapur, Kanti Bajpai (2009) argues that the very cause of the 2001-02 crisis can be traced to the possession of nuclear weapons by Pakistan wherein it could encourage Kashmiri militants to pursue their agenda more vigorously and also the attack on Parliament which in turn led to the crisis. The main fulcrum of the proliferation optimists is their reliance on deterrence theory. Waheguru Pal Singh Sindhu (2007) argues that deterrence theory alone is inadequate to explain the Kargil war and 2001-02 crises. He urges the need for including more organizational and strategic culture theory. Also he points out another flaw in the conventional deterrence understanding. In South Asia the deterrence dynamic is not in a dyad but there is a third player which is China with the possible inclusion of US. In such a triplet or a quartet, the logic of deterrence theory becomes much more complex to comprehend. Moreover the fear of non-state actors and the danger of nuclear weapons falling in their hands further complicate matter.

External Influence

The third segment which is miniscule in comparison is the literature that basically concerns itself with the role of the external powers in diffusing the crisis (Chari, Cheema and Cohen, 2007). These accounts deals with the personal accounts and memoirs of diplomats involved in mediating between the leaders of India and Pakistan. A few of them involves officials such as Bruce Reidel's (2002) account of the Nawaz Sharif-Bill Clinton interaction in 1999 or Strobe Talbott's (2004) book describing his negotiation with Indian and Pakistan leaders to control their arms race.

As surveyed in the literature listed above one can see that none of the approaches deals with the domestic imperatives and motivations of the decision-makers during the Kargil conflict and the 2001-02 crises. This study seeks to address that deficiency in the existing

scholarship and thereby lend analytical clarity to the subject. Given below are the definition, rationale and scope of the present study.

Definition, Rationale and Scope of the Study

The proposed study could be defined as an examination of the larger processes in war-making between India and Pakistan. This would involve outlining the linkages between domestic politics and crises between the two countries. It would also entail studying the various domestic imperatives and the compulsion of the ruling dispensation to placate and pander to its domestic constituency. While the study would remain sensitive to the historical trajectory of the aforementioned crises, its primary thrust would be to dissect the domestic political context surrounding the conflicts.

There are two primary reasons that inform this study namely- to focus on the second-level analysis of war making between India and Pakistan and to enrich our theoretical understanding about conflicts that plague the region. Much of the intricacies of the relationship between these two countries get subsumed in the structural-historical narrative of the region. The domestic political dynamics at different points of time and the pulls and pressures that a ruling government is subjected to is a variable often given a short shrift in the literature that deals with the relationship between them. This has important implications for theorizing about the region as well. The manner in which the two countries approach, behave and react to crises in the neighbourhood and amongst themselves deserves a far more nuanced approximation than a linear systemic explanation can offer.

The study shall map the historical trajectory of the conflicts with a focus heavily weighed on the immediate causes, decision-making procedures and motivations of domestic actors. This is not to discard the existing structural explanations but to enhance our judgment about certain political decisions made prior to, during, and after the crises in order to supplement our understanding of the events and the manner in which they unfolded. A thick domestic-level study of the conflicts helps us to avoid painting the complex nature of stability-instability paradigm in the subcontinent with broad brush

strokes and instead facilitates in recovering the multitude of actors, processes and stakeholders crucial for peace in the region.

Research Questions

1. What are the linkages between domestic politics and war-making particularly in the case of India and Pakistan?
2. Why did the Kargil conflict erupt in the midst of an ongoing peace-process between the two countries?
3. What were the strategic objectives India sought to achieve through Operation Parakram and how successful was it in achieving those?
4. Why did both the countries draw divergent conclusions from the same conflict and outcome in the case of Kargil?
5. How do the two crises illuminate our understanding about nature of regimes and stability in South Asia?

Hypotheses

- Civil-military tension in Pakistan coupled with the political brinkmanship of the ruling government was primarily responsible for the Kargil conflict.
- Operation Parakram was pursued by the Indian government to assuage and appease its domestic constituency, and not with specific strategic considerations.

Research Methods

The proposed study involves qualitative theoretical research that is empirically grounded. The theoretical literature on domestic level variables to study conflicts would be examined against the existing empirical scholarship on the Kargil conflict and Operation Parakram in order to broaden our analytical appreciation of the linkages between domestic politics and war-making. Much of the exercise would be interpretative in nature and within the constructivist ontological framework.

The study would rely on both primary as well as secondary sources. Important historical and theoretical materials explaining past crises and India-Pakistan relationship in general would be treated as secondary sources. Memoirs of individuals, archival documents and newspapers of the times when these two crises unfolded would be relied upon extensively.

Chapters

1. Domestic Politics and International Crises: Theories and Contending Explanations

This introductory chapter would lay down the theoretical framework within which the proposed study is going to be based on.

2. The Kargil Conflict

The chapter seeks to focus on the causes and proximate reasons for the initiation of the Kargil conflict with special emphasis on the domestic political situation in Pakistan.

3. Operation Parakram

The crisis of 2001-02 with massive troop mobilization by the Indian government, its intended effect and final consequences will be discussed in this chapter.

Conclusion

The final chapter will collate all the findings of the study and draw macro-level inferences.

Chapter 1

Domestic Politics and International Crises: Theories and Contending Explanations

This chapter reviews the various strands that focus on the domestic level variables to account for wars, conflicts and crises in International Relations (IR). The centrality of the state in the study of IR can hardly be refuted considering the fact that most theories of IR tend to focus on states as the most common unit of analysis. Be it neorealism (Waltz 1979), neoliberal institutionalism (Keohane 1984) or even constructivism (Reus-Smit 1999, Wendt 1999), the state remains the fundamental object of inquiry. The new schools of thought, namely the critical, the feminist or the post-modernist schools, which emerged out of the third great debate in IR, also tend to dissect and problematize the workings of the state and its apparatus. The reason why so much attention is devoted to the study of the state is on account of the notion of 'sovereignty'. As a sovereign entity, a state has the ultimate authority over the territory it controls and the citizenry within it. This understanding flows from one of the key assumptions of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) which is that authority is indivisible and rests in a single head of the state (Hinsley 1986: 26; Krasner 1999: 11).

State-centric theories of IR assume that states are the primary actors in the international system. Because the authority of the state is deemed indivisible under the precepts of the Westphalian notion of the unitary state, a state is perceived to possess a national interest which is homogeneous in nature. For example, Morgenthau (1978) assumes national interest to be state power while neorealism (Waltz 1979) tends to view national interest to be state survival and power. It is human nature from which the drive for power originates (Morgenthau 1978: 36-38) and states have to survive in an anarchic international system which resembles the state of nature (Mearsheimer 2001: 32-36), a system that has no over-arching authority. The idea of national interest, however, is not without its detractors. One of the first scholars to critique the idea was Arnold Wolfers (1952) who argued that the definition of 'national interest' rarely remains stable and changes with

time and context, thereby making it difficult to define. Often the terms 'national interest' and 'national security' are used interchangeably with dangerous consequences wherein it is used as a rhetorical device to garner support for particular policies that would benefit only a select few and not the nation as a whole.

Because national policies affects different groups of a state in differential fashion, much of the recent literature in IR tend to focus on domestic interests and institutions in order to identify, analyze and explain the policy preferences of a state. This new research tends to argue that scholars must pay attention to the manner in which various groups in a state are mobilized in the political process and thereby enable the state to make policy choices. This chapter would review some of that literature which explains state behaviour by analyzing state-level variables. In doing so, it will first look into the level of analysis problem in IR, then the domestic or state-level explanations of international crises and round it up with some criticisms as to what are the limitations that a researcher should be aware of when analyzing international politics at this level.

The Level of Analysis Problem in IR

In 1959 Kenneth Waltz in his seminal book *Man, the State and War*, proposed three levels of analysis for the phenomenon of war to be studied. His analysis reflects the phenomenon of war in three distinct 'images' and locates three different types of explanations. It is only after doing an extensive survey of the literature in which philosophers like Hobbes, Rousseau, Cobden, Marx have thought about the question of war and peace that he reached this conclusion of dividing his analysis into three images.

His 'first image' is that of human behaviour. He writes, "Wars result from selfishness, from misdirected aggressive impulses, from stupidity. If these are the primary causes, the elimination of war must come through uplifting and enlightening men." (p.16) Waltz argues that for pessimists peace is simultaneously a utopian dream as well as a goal while optimists believe that human individuals can be reformed. Pessimists tend to exaggerate the importance of human nature and because human nature is such a complex entity, any hypotheses can be duly justified. He says of behavioural scientists that because they fail

to comprehend the real significance of political framework of international action. This social and psychological realism has produced a political utopianism in his opinion. (p.77)

Waltz's 'second image' deals with the internal structure of states. How the states are internally organized is important in order to understand war and peace and removing the defects of states would make sure that there is peace. However, The use of internal defects to explain external acts of a state can take many forms: (i) type of government generally bad - deprivations imposed by despots upon their subjects produce tensions that find their expression in foreign adventure; (ii) defects in governments not inherently bad - restrictions placed on the state in order to protect the rights of its citizens interfere with executing foreign policy; and (iii) geographic or economic deprivations - state has not attained its "natural" frontiers, or "deprived" countries undertake war to urge the satisfied ones to make the necessary compensatory adjustments. (p.83) He opines that liberal thought has moved from the idea of reliance upon improvement within separate states to acceptance of the need for organization among them. What this logic tends to imply is to what extent force is necessary to make the world peaceful. Second image optimists argue for a world government but settle down to balance of power as an unhappy alternative. Bad states can lead to war but the opposite that good states are peaceful is not true. It is the international environment that makes states (p.122).

The most important level of analysis for Waltz was the 'third image' focus on international anarchy. He writes, 'With many sovereign states, with no system of law enforceable among them, with each state judging its grievances and ambitions according to the dictates of its own reason or desire - conflict, sometimes leading to war, is bound to occur. To achieve a favorable outcome from such a conflict, a state has to rely on its own devices, the relative efficiency of which must be its constant concern' (p.159) War occurs because there is nothing to prevent it: there is no automatic adjustment of interests among states and there is a constant possibility that conflicts will be settled by force (p.188). Talking about balance of power in the system, he opines, 'A balance of power may exist because some countries consciously make it the end of their policies, or it may exist

because of the quasi-autonomous reactions of some states to the drive for ascendancy of others. It is not so much imposed by statesmen on events as it is imposed by events on statesmen' (p.209).

Waltz concludes by saying that, 'The third image describes the framework of world politics, but without the first and the second images there can be no knowledge of the forces that determine policy; the first and second images describe the forces in world politics, but without the third image it is impossible to assess their importance or predict their results (p.238).

In his later work, *Theory of International Politics* (1979), Waltz defines a system, as 'composed of a structure and of interacting units'. The unit level of the system is defined as 'the attributes and interactions of its parts' and the system level as 'the arrangement of the system's parts'. Waltz's analysis is concentrated on system and structure. Instead of concentrating on unit level, like the state, explanatory ability can be based upon interacting structures of the system. Examining the interacting structures of the system the level of analysis problem will be disciplinised through mutual action of structures and units.

David Singer's article *The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations* (1961) challenged the existing IR scholarship of that time and argued that the level of analysis problem is simply a decision of which level is better to be studied. What a scholar should be aware of are the advantages and disadvantages of using a particular level. Let us briefly look at those pros and cons of using a certain level of analysis according to Singer.

The systemic level of analysis is the most comprehensive of all the levels and gives a total picture of international relations. It encompasses in totality all modes of interactions within systems and environments. The focus on system enables us to study patterns of interactions. However, there are certain inherent problems if analysis is carried out at this level. The first difficulty is that the analysis might exaggerate the impact of the system

thereby subsuming the effect of actors in the system. It also tends to veer away from national autonomy and the ability to choose for different actors thereby making any analysis deterministic. Even though this level of analysis gives a satisfactory basis of prediction, the behaviour of actors is often predicted in general terms.

In contrast the state level of analysis gives richer detail, more depth and a holistic portrayal of issues and actors involved. This level is regarded as a better option to analyze foreign policy decisions and investigate the processes through which those policies are made.

Putnam's Two-Level Game theory is an argument against international relations literature which mainly focuses on purely domestic or international analyses. He argues that theories based on domestic causes and international effects ("Second Image") or international causes and domestic effects ("Second Image Reversed") are inadequate in fully representing international relations (Putnam, 427-460). To better illustrate the constraints and goals of policy makers at both domestic and international levels, Putnam develops the Two-Level Game approach.

The two-level game theory developed by Putnam emphasizes the interactive process that occurs when a national leader finds himself negotiating international agreements simultaneously: the international negotiation (level 1), wherein the leader tries to reach an agreement with other leaders; and a domestic negotiation (level 2), wherein the leader tries to get the agreement accepted by the legislature. This simultaneous game at both levels tends to push the negotiators of both parties into a logjam where they have to deal with intense domestic pressure coupled with international pulls and pushes. The two types of pressure are fundamentally different, if the negotiations were held in a pure national or international realm, the scene would have been quite different.

Putnam's two-level game centers on the range of agreements for Level I, the international set those are acceptable to a majority at Level II, the domestic constituency. This range is known as the win-set for the particular country on which the analysis is focused. The "win-set" is defined as "the set of all possible Level I (international) agreements that

would 'win' _ that is, gain the necessary majority among the constituents" (Putnam 1988: 439). By analyzing the international negotiations from the perspective of one country through win-sets, Putnam argued that it is possible to estimate the impact of the domestic politics on the success of the international negotiation. From this model, then, Putnam hypothesized that larger win-sets make Level I agreement more likely and, conversely, the smaller the win-set the more likely the negotiations will break down. Also, the relative size of the Level II win-sets will affect the distribution of the joint gains at Level I. A smaller win-set at Level II can be a bargaining advantage for a country at Level I. Along the same lines, the successful international agreement must fall inside the Level II win-set. The larger the Level II win-set, the more likely there will be a successful agreement reached. However, the larger Level II win-set increases the likelihood that the Level I negotiator will be challenged by other countries.

"All- purpose support for international agreements is probably greater in smaller, more dependent countries . . . as compared to more self-sufficient countries . . . for most of whose citizens the costs of no-agreement are generally lower. More self-sufficient states with smaller win-sets should make fewer international agreements and driver harder bargains in those that they do make" (Putnam 443).The two-level game accounts for the influence of international forces on domestic politics; the new domestic conditions prompted by these international influences will, in turn, affect international politics. However this kind of effect is seen more in the economic domain rather than the politico-military one.

Thus the level of analysis problem has been dealt with various perspectives. While the 'first image' that Waltz talked about is hardly taken into account in theorization of international relations, it is the second and the third image that has always been the focus of analysis for scholars and practitioners of international politics. The next section will delve into the further theorization that has gone into the investigation of domestic politics and their relation to international crises.

Domestic Politics and International Crises: An Overview

The foreign policy choices a country makes and the response thereafter can be many. If a country has only one possible response then domestic politics as a unit of analysis is irrelevant. However, that is not the case. One cannot imagine understanding a country in a singular and one-dimensional fashion. The kind of regime at home, the nature of external pressures and threats, or the resources a country accrues from outside has important bearings on the foreign policy choices of a state.

The tragedy of IR as a discipline, since its inception, has been its innate fascination with the “realist” paradigm thereby undermining the role of domestic actors in international conflict. While historians have been more concerned with the internal workings of the state, political scientists and more so scholars of IR persuasion tend to give too much emphasis on the systemic constraints and interactions between states to explain war and crises in world politics. This approach to understanding international politics made a slight shift with scholars devoting more attention to decision-making as far as foreign policy is concerned at the organizational (Allison 1971) and individual (Jervis 1976) levels. But the focus on societal level variables was still missing from these new paradigms. Things began to change in the 1980s with a huge amount of research going into the “democratic peace thesis”. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1795) wrote an essay to put forth the criteria of establishing, what he called in his own words, ‘perpetual peace’. For him, the cornerstone for perpetual peace was the universal establishment of a republican civil government. Since most of the governments were not democratic during his time, his assertion was simply lost. However, Rummel’s (1979) quantitative analysis and Michael Doyle’s (1983) essays delineating the philosophical roots of the thesis gave the idea a new lease of life. The democratic peace thesis fundamentally argues that liberal states do not go to war with each other because of economic reasons as well as because of certain significant common values they share. Because decision-makers in non-democratic states are not bound by checks and balances of institutions neither they are accountable to their people, they have a greater incentive in going to war according to this proposition. In the last two decades, a lot of research has focused on this aspect of a state and its subsequent foreign policy behaviour. The debate

on the efficacy of this thesis still rages as there are no agreements on a host of issues like defining 'democracy' and 'non-democratic states', the involvement of democratic states in war with non-democratic states and their initiation, and also on the larger issue of methods employed to reach the conclusion. Layne (1994) accuses this thesis of making correlations and not causations hence making it a theory of negligible value. Waltz (2000) describes this idea of liberal peace that democracies do not go to war with each other as a fact that deserves explanation and not theory as purported by some scholars.

Marxist-Leninist theorization in IR has been on the decline, more so after the end of Cold War, not that it was ever in ascendancy as far as the discipline is concerned. Marxism in IR has been a strange case of mutual neglect (Maclean 1988). However, this strand of thinking has been one of the oldest when it comes to looking at the nature of state and society to understand the behaviour of states in the international arena. The 19th century philosopher Karl Marx argued that social and political relations in a society were determined by the relationship between the owners of the means of production and the workers, i.e. between the capitalist class and the proletariat. Much of Marx's works focused on the domestic politics of the state and did not venture into the international or systemic domain. It was Vladimir Lenin (1916) who analyzed the developments within capitalism in his pamphlet, *Imperialism- The Highest Stage of Capitalism*.

Lenin developed his theory of imperialism amid an intensification of European engagement with the periphery. This intensification had begun during the second half of the 19th century. Domestically, capital was concentrating into large monopolistic corporations integrated with and led by a few large financial oligarchies.

Lenin theorized that these two developments were intrinsically linked. The concentration of capital created inequality. Inequality in the core constrained aggregate demand levels. The general population could not absorb the mass of commodities achieved by higher levels of productive capacity. Insufficient demand created continual realization crises. The price of raw materials threatened profits further. The falling rate of profit required economic expansion to open up new regions for investment, sources of raw materials, and new consumer markets.

From the premise that the capitalist class controls the state politically, Lenin theorized that finance-capital, the dominant form of capital, used the state machinery to colonize the periphery. In the periphery, capitalists would (1) use oppressed peripheral labor to produce primary commodities and raw materials cheaply; (2) create an affluent strata (a peripheral elite) to consume expensive commodities imported from the core; and (3) undermine indigenous industry, making the colonies dependent on core investment.

The overall effect was that the core pumped wealth out of the periphery. The wealth flowing into the domestic economies of the core stifled the fall in the rate of profit. Lenin called this set of circumstances "imperialism."

The Military Elites: For Schumpeter (1951), imperialism was not only harmful for the nation but for the entire capitalist class within a state. He argued that the reason why states engaged in imperialist policies was because it served the interests of the powerful military elites of the country. These elites in turn used aggressive foreign policies to advance their own interests and maintain their position of domination in the state. Schumpeter (1951: 33) says, "created by the wars that required it, the machine now created wars it required."

The Diversionary Theory of War: The idea that political leaders often indulge in external conflict behaviour and initiate international crises to divert the attention of the public from the domestic situation in the country is often termed as the diversionary theory of war. One of the early works on this aspect of domestic politics and international conflict was done by Quincy Wright (1942). Wright examined public opinion as a variable to determine the conflict behaviour of states and developed something called the General Tension Level (GTL). His study found that autocratic or authoritarian regimes had high GTL that made them more war-prone while democratic regimes tend to slide up and down the scale as per the public opinion. In his words, the reason for frequent international wars is the propensity to "indulge in foreign wars as a diversion from domestic ills." (Wright 1965: 74) He also asserts that the cause of war is the belief that

war is a “necessary or convenient means...to establish, maintain, or expand the power of a government, party, or class within a state.”(ibid: 327).

Simmel (1898) argued that tension or conflict with an out-group tends to increase the internal cohesion of a state and political mobilization against the ‘other’ is easier as the public tend to ‘rally around the flag’. The support for political leaders in such situations is greatly enhanced and so does the power of the government as the in-group/out-group cleavages widen. Dahrendorf (1959: 58) arguing on the same lines says, “It appears to be a general law that human groups react to external pressure by increased internal cohesion.”

However, though the proposition that leaders are drawn to war in the hope of enhancing their domestic support has many takers for an explanation, not all kinds of domestic insecurity leads to external wars. Statistical research shows that the relationship between domestic issues and external use of force is not a strong one (Meernick, 2004). If such is the case, it is pertinent for us to inquire under what conditions political leaders are more likely to make use of such diversionary tactics. It is often argued that during periods of electoral cycles, leaders are more prone to use force to build up their support base. Scholars such as Russett (1990), James and Oneal (1991) argue that the likelihood of ‘othering’ and playing on the in-group/out-group dynamics is more potent at times when elections are on the horizon. This has often led people to conclude that democratic states are more vulnerable to this kind of war since elections are a regular feature of democracies through which political leaders seek legitimacy from the general public. In authoritarian regimes, the rulers are not concerned about domestic legitimacy since it was never there in the first place nor are they accountable to their people (Gelpi 1997).

Siverson and Emmons (1991) try to examine whether democracies have a tendency to align with each other more than what probability would suggest. In trying to figure this out, they take two periods into consideration, the alliance choice of democratic states from 1920 to 1939 and 1946 to 1965. The conclusion they reach is that from the period 1920 to 1965 and more so from 1946 to 1965, democracies have been biased as far as

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alliance choices are concerned. Their study also throws up a few interesting observations as far as the period they studied are concerned. While allies have a higher propensity for war against each other and democracies have a higher propensity to align with one another than expected, but then democracies do not fight each other. There is an apparent contradiction inherent in those observations which the authors believe is irreconcilable as per their study but they think that it does throw some light on the aspect of democratic political alliances and the thesis that democracies do not go to war against each other can be explained by the nature of democratic foreign policies.

Not all democracies are the same and there are certain distinguishing features of democracies on account of the relationship between the state and the society that they share. Two important parameters to analyze in such a case are the cultural/ideological domain and the nature of institutions. While the former forms the bedrock on which the state as a whole tends to make preferences, the latter tends to be the medium through which those choices are mediated. Gaubatz argues that the closer a society is to an impending election, the greater will be the societal restrictions on the course of action that a state follows (1991:213). Thus electoral cycles act as a major constraint on a state's behaviour towards conflict. But where from does this logic emanates?

First is the liberal belief that citizens would always act as constraints for the government to go to war. Kant believed that if the people were aware that going to war meant that they would have to lose their lives and belongings, they would always be hesitant to undertake it. "By contrast, under a constitution where the subject is not a citizen and which is therefore not republican, it is the easiest thing in the world to start." (Kant 1949, 438). The inference from here is that democratic leaders facing elections would have an added incentive not to go to war or making extra efforts to avoid one. Their immediate electoral goals i.e., winning elections will supersede their international goal of initiating or getting involved in a conflict.

There is a contrarian point of view vis-à-vis the above rationale. Scholars such as Hermens (1944), Kennan (1951) and Lippmann (1955) have often pointed to the notion

of mob mentality of the masses wherein democratic leaders play upon those instincts and instigate foreign wars. Therefore from this standpoint, one can expect leaders to engage in more conflicts as the elections draw closer in order to polarize and mobilize the domestic public.

A third category of authors tend to believe that public sentiments are highly dynamic, ever changing and do not follow cyclical time periods. Hartz (1955) in his analysis of American political beliefs argues that there is a kind of messianic zeal in the manner they comprehend the idea of democracy. This leaves the state only with two options – withdrawal or to go an extra mile to convert the world- when those ideals comes in conflict with the larger contradictions and limitations of the external world. Almond (1950) suggests that public mood is irregular and superficial in nature and that explains would often explain why America simultaneously comes across as an interventionist force while deep down it desires isolation, a subterranean cynicism clouds its overt idealism and an ever-lurking uncertainty about the future always shadows its optimism.

Mueller (1989) brings in the perspective of the effect that an event has on the public mood. He studies World War I and argues that the event brought a fundamental shift in the manner in which the public perceived wars. He asserts that before WW I, the public used to approve of foreign policies which are conflictual in nature and the idea of a war was not ensconced as a taboo. However the scale of death and destruction of this war led to major change in their attitudes about war in favour of peace.

What is the relationship between the domestic political system and war proneness of a state? This is a question that Hagan (1994) attempts to investigate. He says that domestic political systems influence foreign policy in two ways. First, they affect the type of leaders that come to power and the respective orientation of these leaders towards international affairs. Secondly, once a leadership is in power, it is the domestic political processes which very often shape the definition of what constitutes national interest. Thus, a significant effect of this linkage is that it brings the realm of domestic politics and the foreign policies which account for that into the mainstream international relations

theory. Hagan (1993) argues that by integrating research on the nature of political opposition that a leader faces with the one on the orientation of leaders gives us a better idea of how regimes deal with domestic oppositions and whether domestic politics would have an amplifying or diminishing effect on what happens in foreign policy.

It is a conventional wisdom that democratic leaders are more accountable than autocratic leaders. Infact this is one of the important premises on which the democratic peace thesis works wherein it is argued that because a democratic system has checks and balances, its leaders are more accountable to their domestic constituencies thereby limiting the use of force at times when the public believes that the losses of war far outweigh the gains. However recent literature tends to give explanations on the contrary to this logic. Brown and Marcum (2011) focuses their attention on winning coalitions and argue that a winning coalition's abilities to monitor and sanction a leader increase as its size decreases. Therefore they suggest that autocratic leaders are more accountable than democratic leaders due to the monitoring and sanctioning advantages of smaller coalitions relative to larger ones. Moreover, they also analyse the ability of the leader to generate audience costs and hypothesize that large-coalition leaders are likely to make a larger proportion of concessions in closed door diplomacy than small-coalitions. The rationale here is that large-coalition leaders have greater room to hide policy choices from their supporters while those with small-coalitions are bound by their constituencies' greater monitoring costs thereby stifling the room for larger concessions. This has important consequences as far as bargaining and negotiations during crisis are concerned. Democratic and autocratic leaders might have different approaches to international crisis bargaining thus affecting the outcome of those negotiations.

The role of civilian oversight over the military is an important component in the analysis of conflict initiation. The dominant view is that military officers are more cautious in initiating a conflict than their civilian leaders because experience of military combat has a sobering influence on their attitude towards war and they are hesitant to engage in one until they are sure of a favourable outcome of the war. However, Sechser (2004) argues that this reluctance on the part of the military might just be a product of strong civilian

control over the military. He opines that military officers always have the incentive to engage in war but they don't because the possibility of them being punished for any ill-thought out misadventure by their civilian leaders is high.

In the above sections we saw the various domestic level theories of international relations that account for national behaviour of states during crisis. Given the diversity and range of variables these theories employ, it is without doubt that the second level analysis makes such compelling case to be counted as a substantive base to study international politics and state actions. However does this mean that Realism is dead? While the above sections pointed to the richness that can be brought to our research agenda by focusing our agenda on the multitude of variables at play during international conflict, what does scholars of realist persuasion have to say about this new domain of research in international politics.

Realism's Reply

In his review essay on Jack Snyder's (1991) book *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambitions* which attempts to bridge the gap between domestic and international affairs, Zakaria (1992) says that the book basically highlights the difficulty of constructing a domestic politics model that determines international outcomes. He argues that Snyder while trying to combine the domestic and international levels of analysis makes the mistake of interpreting realism in a manner that minimizes the powerful effect of the international system on state behaviour. Therefore, all it can offer is a restatement of the traditional *Innenpolitik* case. Snyder's book asks the broader questions: why do "great powers" over expand so often? (p.1). Zakaria believes that Snyder's work relies heavily on domestic politics model and fails to come out with a novel interpretation of international behaviour of states because expansion as a phenomena cannot be dealt with by undermining the systemic concerns. His attempt is to build a domestic explanation that has the same power and sweep as systemic theories. Such generalization becomes impossible in his scheme of argumentation. Zakaria believes that "a good theory of foreign policy should first ask what effect the international system has on national behaviour, because the most powerful *generalizable*

characteristic of a state in international relations is its relative position in the international system” (p.22). He opines that domestic politics has a crucial influence on foreign policy. However, the folly one often commits is to frame it as some kind of a competitive theory vis-à-vis realism. In order to account for a nation’s foreign policy and behaviour in international politics, one needs to look into systemic, domestic and a host of other factors and at the same time be careful enough to explain what behavioural outcomes can be explained by which factors.

There is a more subtle answer that is given by Kapstein (1995) to the question whether Realism is dead. He argues that may be as a theory Realism is dead but it is alive as a paradigm and will continue to do so for a long time. For structural realism’s demise, an alternative paradigm needs to emerge on the horizon as per Kuhn (1962) and till then, realism will remain the cornerstone for students desirous of making sense of international politics and the discipline of International Relations will be defined by the same. Kapstein is of the opinion that though important works on domestic politics and international relations (Mesquita and Lalman 1992, Rosecrance and Stein 1993, Snyder 1991) challenge realism in its own “home ground”, they fail on two accounts. First, these works rarely go beyond the case study material thereby nullifying any possibility of generalization. Secondly, these works fail to provide any decisive modification of structural realism (p. 753). He also appreciates the paradigm of neorealism on the ground that perhaps it is “the only paradigm that actually treats domestic politics and international system as a whole” (p.773). The never-ending romance for neo-realism can be attributed to something Thomas Kuhn (1972:77) wrote:

Let us then assume that crises are a necessary precondition for the emergence of novel theories and ask next how scientists respond to their existence. Part of the answer...can be discovered by noting first what scientists never do when confronted by even severe and prolonged anomalies. Though they may begin to lose faith and then to consider alternatives, they do not renounce the paradigm that has led them to crisis...The decision to reject one paradigm is always simultaneously the decision to accept another.

The aim of this review of various theories and contending explanations in the domain of domestic politics and international relations was to have a broad idea of the present status of the discipline. What we saw was that while domestic politics remains a very important level of analysis, however that does not make the case for realism any weaker. The idea of this dissertation is not to supplant a theoretical framework at the expense of the other. The effort here is to enrich our understanding of crises and conflict in the subcontinent. In doing so, a domestic level analysis is resorted to because much of the analysis tends to give this approach a short-shrift thereby undermining its explanatory potential. It is no one's case that structural explanations of conflict in South Asia are flawed, the only miniscule contribution that this work hopes to make is to argue that though those analyses are empirically rigorous, they are at certain levels insufficient and inadequate. It is that very research gap that this dissertation aims to plug.

Chapter 2

The Kargil War

The aim of this chapter is to describe, analyze and provide alternative explanations of the Kargil war of 1999 wherein it is proposed that though the existing arguments regarding the initiation of the war and its termination are well laid out, they are insufficient. This chapter will focus on the domestic-level explanations in order to illuminate several facets of the conflict which have been overlooked.

In its attempt to do so, the chapter would first describe the war, and then it would focus on the motivations of the actors who initiated the war in the first place i.e. Pakistan. The next section would look into the existing explanations in the literature on the conflict. Finally it would try to substantiate the argument that tension in civil-military relations in Pakistan wherein both the civilian and the military leadership were trying to gain an upper hand in the polity of the country was a primary reason why the conflict was initiated in the first place and took place at a time when it did.

Overview

The much-hyped Lahore peace-process received a severe setback when in the spring and summer of 1999 Indian and Pakistani forces fought an intense limited war in Kargil and adjoining areas of the Great Himalayan mountain ranges. The significance of this fourth India-Pakistan war and the first since 1971 cannot be missed. Not only did it derail the peace-process between the two-countries just when it seemed that a breakthrough on the contentious issue of Kashmir and a larger reconciliation in relationship between the two countries was on the horizon, more so when that relationship had reached its nadir after both the states went nuclear. It also brought back the attention of the international community on the region which was termed the world's most dangerous "nuclear flashpoint" after the two countries went overtly nuclear. Fear of an all out war lurked in the minds of the leaders and policy wonks in the West and those who were optimistic about a stable deterrence existing in the sub-continent which would prevent major wars between India and Pakistan, were not so sure anymore.

The military operation in Kargil was of a nature that fell somewhere between a low-intensity conflict and a full-fledged war. While the number of casualties exceeded 1000 and heavy artillery and significant airpower was employed, the war remained confined only along the Line of Control (LoC) and no other front was opened to gain strategic advantage vis-à-vis the opposition forces. In the spring of 1999, while the Indian soldiers were on a routine patrol near the town of Kargil on their side of the LoC, they were ambushed by intruders who had occupied bunkers and posts, about 5 miles deep into the Indian territory. These are posts generally vacated during the winter months by the Indian forces on their side of the LoC and likewise reciprocated by the Pakistani forces in their territory. It took the Indian establishment quite a while to realize the nature and substance of the intrusion. Once it became clear that the infiltrators were not Kashmiri militants, but troops from Pakistan's Northern Light Infantry (NLI), Indian forces launched a major military offensive that was backed by diplomatic maneuverings as well. It is noteworthy, that this was only the second time that a conflict was being played out between two nuclear-armed countries. The other such confrontation took place between China and USSR over Damanskii Island in the Ussuri River in 1969 (Goldstein 2003). The Kargil conflict is an important case study for scholars, who wish to analyze how two nuclear armed states entered into a conflict, what trajectory the conflict followed and finally how they terminated it.

In order to do so, it is important for us to first delineate the motives that led Pakistan to initiate the conflict in the first place. So what are the factors that the Pakistani decision-makers weighed in when they thought of launching this operation? Jasjit Singh (1999) argues that such an attempt was in line with the revisionist nature of the Pakistan state which sought to change the political and territorial status-quo. The Kargil Review Committee (2000) report also makes a similar argument and asserts that the war was another attempt by the Pakistani forces to figure out lacunae in India's defence forces which can be exploited. Pakistani defence analyst Shireen Mazari (2003) believes that the Kargil war was an outcome of historical grievances and the continual skirmishes that occur between the two forces along the Line of Control. Shaukat Qadir (2000) is of the opinion that the Kargil war happened at a time in the history of Pakistani establishment

wherein everyone was looking forward to prove something. While all these explanations do have some basis, they are insufficient. Also, most of these assertions tend to view the conflict in terms of “enemy images” thereby sacrificing objectivity and neutral analysis. Often these explanations tend to glorify the achievements of a particular country while looking down upon the other side with an inherent bias in their pronouncements.

There are two substantial reasons that lie at the heart of everything that is problematic or conflictual in India-Pakistan relations. While historical grievances form the bedrock of this conflict-prone relationship, Pakistan’s search for parity vis-à-vis India is another factor that has contributed negatively to this fragile relationship between the two countries. These two have been the motivating factor between each crisis that has occurred between them. Here we look at both in some detail.

India-Pakistan Relations: A Tumultuous Affair

As and when the Britishers were leaving the subcontinent, they made sure that their parting actions have consequences for the whole region for a long time to come. The subcontinent was divided into India and Pakistan leading to a situation which was both comical and untenable. The creation of East and West Pakistan, both regions separated by a huge geographical landmass of India, made sure that the partition would not be the last time the people of this region would see violence and bloodshed of enormous proportion. Pakistanis always believed that the terms and conditions of Partition were greatly unfair to them. Be it the manner in which the Radcliff commission drew the border or the arrangement made for distributing the civil and military assets to the two countries, a sense of grievance prevailed among the people and leaders of that country. However, nothing could match their sense of betrayal than the manner in which the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir acceded to the Indian union.

In 1947, as the ruler of Jammu & Kashmir Maharajah Hari Singh was contemplating to keep an independent state and not accede to either India or Pakistan thereby delaying the completion of partition, tribal rebellion erupted in Poonch. These tribal forces were duly assisted by the Pakistan army officers. India sent in troops to fight the intruders thus

resulting in the first war between the two countries after independence (Jones 2002, Ganguly (2001), Cheema 1990). It is ironical that Kargil has always enjoyed a crucial position as far as war-fighting between India and Pakistan is concerned. During the First Kashmir War, in October 1947, the Gilgit Scouts made a successful coup attempt in the Northern Areas. These so called “Azad Forces”, in February 1948, laid siege on the garrison in Skardu where non-Muslim civilians and military personnel had taken shelter. By May 1948, they had conquered the Zojila Pass and the towns of Kargil and Dras. With the fall of Skardu and Kargil in quick succession, the Valley of Kashmir became vulnerable. Moreover, the only channel of communication between Srinagar and Leh which was over the Zojila Pass and through Kargil was cut off. This raised serious concerns about the security of Leh (Palit 1972:241). India had to counter-attack with forces from Srinagar and Leh. Heavy fighting took place between the two sides from June to December 1948, finally resulting in the Indian army getting back control of Dras, Kargil and Zojila Pass (Dasgupta 2002).

There are two important implications for this First War on Kashmir. The Gilgit Scouts, who formed the “Azad Forces”, were later integrated into the NLI of the Force Command of Northern Areas (FCNA). Folklore, memories and stories are an important component of South Asian history and here too it has its own impact on the psyche of the soldiers. The very fact that Kargil was captured by these units, even though small in number was passed on to generations thereafter thereby instilling a sense of confidence and motivation that it is possible to repeat the act of 1948 (Ali 2004). The war also showed India’s willingness to defend and protect this strategically important area, even if it meant deployment of enormous number of battle-forces in order to evict intruders.

The Second Kashmir War also featured Kargil prominently. In August 1965, a contingent of Pakistani forces and *mujahideen* were sent across the ceasefire line to instigate disturbance in the Indian-administered part of Kashmir, the name of the operation came to be known as *Operation Gibraltar*. In an operation largely reminiscent of the 1948 and 1999 wars, the idea here was also to conduct raids in the Kargil area so that the link between Srinagar and Leh could be severed (Cloughley 1999:68-77). However, the

proposal did not work out as initially planned out. The Pakistani forces failed to incite the local population, there was no insurgency as anticipated by them and the Indian forces did not have to resort to oppressive measures that could have justified Pakistan's intervention. Even though *Operation Gibraltar* turned out to be a major failure, it did not stop President Ayub Khan from asking his army chief to go ahead with the next scheme – *Operation Grand Slam*. The plan here was to initiate a limited incursion into the Indian territory of Akhnur, thereby cutting the only road link with Kashmir. What the President visualized was a war of attrition that can be fought with India in order to weaken its resolve over Kashmir thereby forcing it to come to the negotiating table. But the operation was doomed from the very start. It failed to recognize the fact that India might respond by engaging in a full-scale war. The policy of attrition that the Pakistan forces planned to employ was one that was contradictory to the aims that were sought to be achieved by them. India having a much larger force directly negated the benefits of this approach. India retaliated by deploying troops in massive numbers along the international border thereby engaging in a full-fledged war for the second time with Pakistan. In the midst of the cold war with India leading the non-alignment movement and trying to avoid getting enmeshed in the power politics of the two blocs, Pakistani planners thought that their alliance with the United States of America would prevent the Indians from escalating the war. They relied on the United States to support them both politically and militarily in case of any eventuality but this did not turn out to be the case in the end (Kux 2001:159-160). There are echoes of what happened in 1999 with the events of 1965. Pakistani generals depended too much on external forces to bail them out in times of crisis and also under-estimated India's resolve to engage in full-scale wars whenever its territory is threatened.

The third war between India and Pakistan resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. The domestic politics of Pakistan which implemented policies that would hugely benefit the dominant Punjabi community of West Pakistan at the expense of their East Pakistani counterparts was deeply resented by the Bengali community. The Bengali vote united in the 1970 elections bringing to power the Awami League. The military government in Pakistan refused to hand over power to the duly elected party and instead launched a

brutal assault on the Bengalis. Secessionist insurgency erupted which was duly supported by India. Later India intervened militarily thereby defeating the Pakistani forces, cutting Pakistan into two and leading to the creation of an independent Bangladesh. Not only was a country divided into two, the Indian forces also captured 90,000 prisoners of war and Pakistan was forced to sign the Shimla peace accord in 1972. The 1971 war is significant as far as thinking about security and survival goes in the subcontinent. Even though the war had nothing to do with the most intractable problem of the region, i.e. Kashmir, the outcome of the event left a lasting impression specially in the minds of Pakistani military and political leadership. For them, the point was driven home that given an opportunity of weakness or vulnerability, India would surely and jeopardize Pakistan's existence as an independent state. This kind of a mindset has often made Pakistan to seek for vulnerabilities on the Indian side and exploit them to their advantage. Kargil was a manifestation of the same thought process.

The accession of Kashmir to the Indian union is not only considered unjust and illegitimate by Pakistan but is also driven by some hard strategic and political considerations. In 1989, when a violent uprising against the Indian state took place in Kashmir after the Indian government fudged the elections in the state, Pakistan responded to the events in the valley by supporting the insurgent groups in the valley monetarily, militarily and politically. The presence of the *mujahideen* groups in Kashmir made sure that a vast number of troops have to be stationed in the valley in order to tackle the insurgents. This in turn meant that the number of forces on the border is compromised thus giving a sense of relief to the Pakistan forces which are anyways smaller in number. If Pakistan were to stop supporting the insurgent groups, its planners believe that the Indian military would be free to undertake more adventurous missions against Pakistan thus harming the survival of the country. Years of mistrust and fear, compounded by India's role in the 1971 war have inculcated a certain sense of paranoia among the leadership which prevents it from taking a different course on Kashmir or charting a new path in India-Pakistan relations.

In the Pakistani perception, not only was the accession of a Muslim-majority state, ruled by a Hindu ruler to India a grave injustice both in spirit and letter of the conditions laid out for partition, also the manner in which the Kashmiri population has been treated in heavy-handed fashion by Indian authorities after it joined the Indian union is a matter of grave concern. While this concern finds expression in the streets and the domestic politics of Pakistan, the military has its own strategic rationale to support policies that would make the Indian state uncomfortable. Political leaders have to be sympathetic to these concerns and therefore pitch the Kashmir question and the plight of ordinary Kashmiri people in such a fashion that it can placate its domestic audience and at the same time stimulate the rest of the world to take cognizance of the injustices being committed by Indian forces in the valley so that the international community can pressurize India to submit to Pakistan's demands. This kind of an approach obviously requires the use of force by Pakistan military at some level thereby significantly reducing the maneuverability space as far as negotiations on the Kashmir issue is concerned. The Kargil war needs to be seen in the larger context of the Kashmir question which continues to nurture the historical grievances that Pakistan has had since its inception as a separate nation. Pakistan's attempt in 1999 to engage in asymmetric warfare thereby circumventing its lack of capability vis-à-vis Indian military is a continuation of Pakistan's policy to wrest Kashmir through unconventional means. If this strategy had succeeded in 1999, it would have been a major boost both for the waning insurgency in the valley and the morale of the Pakistani forces that are yet to recover from the humiliation of the past defeats. Moreover, for the political leadership this triumph would have helped to consolidate their position within their domestic constituency.

If Kashmir has been the bone of contention between India and Pakistan since independence, the sense of grievance among the Pakistan army got aggravated with the loss of the Siachen glacier to India in 1984. After 1984, the Northern Areas have been subjected to constant border skirmishes between the forces of the two countries. Former President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf in his memoir *In the Line of Fire* says, "Kargil was not a one-off operation, but the latest in a series of moves and countermoves at a tactical level by India and Pakistan along the Line of Control in the inaccessible,

snowbound Northern Areas.” The occupation of Siachen in 1984 was seen as a major humiliation by the Pakistan army, coming close on the heels of the defeat in the 1971 war. The loss of Siachen to India became a major issue domestically in Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto blamed the military junta of Zia-ul-Haq of being incompetent of protecting national territory. In the army ranks, a kind of tactical mindset began to take root that any weakness on the Indian front needs to be exploited. This kind of approach was one of the contributing factors that lead to Kargil.

The fact that an operation like the one in Kargil was in the minds of the Pakistani forces for a long time is beyond doubt. Former information minister Altaf Gauhar writes, “The occupation of the strategic hilltops in Dras, Kargil, and Leh has been a major objective of the Pakistan army ever since the Indians occupied Siachen.” (*The Nation*, 1999). Although there are no confirmed accounts that the top brass of the political leadership and the army may have been directly involved, at the tactical level operations like Kargil were being planned quite regularly since Pakistan lost Siachen. In May 1989 the FCNA launched a tactical offensive and captured the Chumuk Glacier. However, when it again tried to do something similar in the Chulung sector in 1992, the FCNA suffered heavy losses. The very same forces which were lauded for their bravery a few years back were now subjected to ridicule and humiliation. The message among the FCNA ranks got through that an FCNA commander cannot afford to lose a post to the Indians. Therefore taking risky initiatives in order to seize small grounds is a better alternative than to lose an inch. Also, because the terrain in the Northern Areas is so difficult and weather conditions so harsh, it is difficult to dislodge enemy positions and regain lost ground.

The India-Pakistan conflict dynamics plays out in two opposite directions which make any meaningful resolution of the issues between the two countries more complicated. On one hand there is a sense of historical grievance on Kashmir, on the 1971 war when the country was broken up into two and more recently when the Indians took seizure of Siachen. These historical reasons force the army to undertake missions like the one in Kargil at regular intervals in order to gain territory, even if it is minimal in quantity. However, the two countries are forced to engage in bilateral dialogues because of

geopolitical reasons and the asymmetry that prevails between them. Even though Siachen happened, Benazir Bhutto and Rajiv Gandhi had to hold talks in 1989 which ended in a failure. After the nuclear tests in 1998, with a deteriorating security situation in the subcontinent, Prime Minister Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharif engaged in bilateral consultations. The very fact that military actions were far removed from the political acts could be ascertained from the fact that just when these two statesman were trying to start a chapter in India-Pakistan relations afresh, Kargil happened thus nullifying all their efforts. It is proof of an irrefutable fact that all the while political considerations are weighed in the capitals of the two countries to bridge differences, hardly any attention is paid to the military situation that persists along the Line of Control.

Although the historical underpinnings of the Kargil war are well accounted for, it differed very significantly from the previous conflicts that had taken place between the two neighbouring countries. The reason is that for the first time the war was fought between two nuclear-armed states which was not the case earlier. A lot many explanations have focused on the nuclear dimension of the conflict. In the next section, we look into some of the major propositions forwarded on the effect of nuclear weapons on the Kargil war of 1999.

The Nuclear Dimension to the Kargil War

It was roughly within a year's time after India and Pakistan acquired nuclear weapons that Kargil happened. The impact of this new development in the subcontinent and its latest conflict obviously had varied interpretations and explanations. These analysis look into different sorts on questions regarding deterrence theory in South Asia, the changing motives of military planners after the induction of nuclear weapons in their arsenals, the military and specially nuclear doctrines, and their effect on stability in the region and most importantly what can be expected in the future conflicts between the two countries considering the same nuclear dimension persists.

Scott Sagan (2003) believes that the 'stable nuclear balance' between the two countries allowed Pakistan to undertake more adventurous options against India and Kargil was a

manifestation of that mindset. Pakistan hoped to achieve its twin objective through the war. First, it knew that because there was nuclear parity in place, India cannot mount a full-scale offensive against Pakistani forces thereby giving it an opportunity to carry out a low-intensity conflict. Secondly, the international community would be worried by the events in the region and would step in. This would help the Pakistanis to bring the spotlight back on Kashmir forcing India to reach a settlement. A similar view is espoused by Cirincione in his book *Deadly Arsenals*.

Proliferation optimists like Sumit Ganguly and Devin Hagerty (2005) argue that “the Indian and Pakistani governments, despite compelling incentives to attack one another...were dissuaded from doing so by fear that war might escalate to the nuclear level.” (p. 9). They are of the opinion that nuclearization of the subcontinent has had positive consequence in the larger perspective. Nuclear capabilities of the two countries has acted as a powerful restraint on their behaviour during conflicts and had they not possessed these weapons, they would have ended up fighting another full-fledged war like the ones in 1947-48, 1965 and 1971.

Although India and Pakistan declared themselves to be nuclear-weapons states in 1998, it is conventional wisdom that both the countries were nuclear-weapons-capable by the late 1980s. Basrur says that border skirmishes between the two countries were independent of the events that transpired in May 1998. What this line of argument conveys is that Pakistan always had enough compelling reasons to engage or instigate conflict along the Line of Control or Kashmir. Taking this assertion forward, Hagerty (2009) argues that it is illogical to state that nuclear weapon is the *cause* that led to the Kargil war. He believes that because Islamabad achieved nuclear parity with India, nuclear weapons proved to be an *enabling* factor which when taken into account along with Pakistan’s historical grievances and policies over Kashmir, presented itself as a complex multi-variable calculation of interests and risks in 1999 (ibid. 109).

Timothy Hoyt (2009) makes a similar argument wherein in his opinion while mutual nuclear deterrence emboldened the Pakistani military to take aggressive action in 1999,

the same resulted in complacency among the Indian ranks due to which its response to the infiltration was slow and confused. When the two countries became overtly nuclear, it was believed by the elites of both the countries that nuclear weapons are political and not military tools which would have a stabilizing impact on the relation between them (Hagerty 1998, Tellis 2001). However, the impact of having nuclear weapons in their arsenals on the behaviour of each other was seen as contradictory. Therefore, nuclear weapons did not deter war neither did it cause the Kargil conflict in the first place. However, it gave the Pakistan army an added impetus to carry out low-intensity conflict.

Kenneth Waltz, however takes a nuanced position in response to those who believe that nuclear deterrence did not prevent the Kargil war. According to him, deterrence is not supposed to stabilize crisis accruing to long-standing disputes but it does limit the scale of violence. “The obvious conclusion to draw from Kargil is that the presence of nuclear weapons prevented escalation from major skirmish to full-scale war.” (Waltz 2003: 115). Even a proliferation pessimist like Scott Sagan believes that because nuclear deterrence was operation in South Asia during the Kargil war of 1999, conventional military forces were deployed cautiously by both the governments of the day.(Sagan 2003:98-99).

Much of our understanding about conflict under the shadow of nuclear weapons and theories of deterrence has been shaped by the actions and policies of the two superpowers during the Cold War. Neil Joeck (2009) makes a comparative study of the cold war practices with those that transpired during the Kargil conflict and comes up with a pessimistic account of the impact of nuclear weapons on the stability in the region. In his seminal book *Arms and Influence* (1966) Thomas Schelling describes nuclear deterrence in terms of competition in risk taking. The idea here is that even in the presence of a nuclear umbrella, states can continue to take escalatory steps and may be willing to engage in brinkmanship till the time one party lowers the guard and gives up. Joeck believes that the Indian and Pakistani response during the war is consistent with Schelling’s analysis. As the war progressed, both sides took escalatory steps which had the potential to go out of control. Joeck’s reading of the situation is that the presence of

nuclear weapons did not deter the war but increased the chances of a catastrophe manifold.

Joeck (2009) uses another parallel explanation related to Cold War theorizing of deterrence policy to answer the basic question: Why was Pakistan not deterred? In their analysis of limitation and simplification of deterrence theory Alexander George and Richard Smoke (1974) focus on the initiator nation of a conflict rather than the defender. In their opinion, in order to account for deterrence failure, one needs to look at the multiple options that are available with the initiator. If there are other options at the initiator's disposal, deterrence should work. In the current case, since 1984 when the Indians seized Siachen, all other covert military and diplomatic options to revert back to the status-quo has either failed or proved to be inadequate. Pakistan was left with the singular option of initiating the conflict in 1999 after a decade and half struggle over Siachen had yielded little rewards. George and Smoke asserts that in cases where the initiator fails to read the defenders willingness and commitment, deterrence is likely to fail and even if they perceive the defenders commitment rightly, in the absence of other policy options, the initiator may be constrained to undertake certain actions but not deterred fully (Ibid, 526).

Scholars of pessimistic persuasion like S.Paul Kapur (2008) agrees to the fact that since the two countries became nuclear no major war has taken place but also cautions against such complacency in the future. According to him, there are two fundamental destabilizing factors that have been injected into the security situation of the subcontinent with the nuclearization of the region. By removing the all-out retaliation option on India's part, it has encouraged Pakistan's aggressive behaviour since it knows that the presence of nuclear weapons curtails many a policy choices for India. Secondly, because of an existing nuclear parity, India has been forced to undertake aggressive conventional military postures that make the security situation in the South Asian neighbourhood much more fragile.

Because Kargil was a war fought between nuclear states, reactions from across the world were one of apprehension and fear. The international community and more notably the role of United States and the personal engagement of President Bill Clinton with the issue deserves much attention. In the Cold War era, there were no third party mediations and Kargil drove home the point that the international observers won't be sitting idle if something goes awry between the two neighbours. The next section looks at the role played by the United States in facilitating the manner in which the conflict unfolded and finally terminated.

Domestic Politics in Pakistan and the Kargil War

Since the inception of Pakistan as an independent entity, the countries' military has played a fundamental role in the manner in which it conducts its foreign policy. Such has been the influence of the men in uniform that every aspect of political life is governed directly or indirectly by the military, more so in matters related to strategic relations and external behaviour. It would not be an exaggeration to argue, considering the history of Pakistan, that the military establishment enjoys a virtual carte-blanche on foreign affairs of the country. This chapter's aim is to argue that one of the fundamental reasons why Kargil happened was because there was a tension between the civilian and military arms of state wherein each was trying to establish its dominance over the other. A series of events that transpired prior to the Kargil war and after it was over gives us a clear indication of a rift between the two. However, before focusing on those events, it is important to underline the political role of the military in Pakistan.

One of the most complex polities in South Asia, Pakistan grapples with major problems at the institutional level. Because of the overarching influence of the army in the politics of the country, the political elites and leaders are always trying to ensure their survival once they are in power. Getting to be in power itself is a daunting task in the country. Zulfekar Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto became Prime Minister when the events in the region forced the army to reduce its role in the political domain of the country. Because they were the most prominent politicians at those times and enjoyed mass support, they could become the premier of Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif and Benazir in her second term

managed to become the head of the state through democratic elections. However, Mohammad Khan Junejo and Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, it is widely perceived, were made Prime minister only through the help and effort of the intelligence services. The army maintains a deep mistrust of the political class and because it practices a policy of divide and rule between the religious and mainstream parties; democratically elected leaders are never sure about their survival or hold on power. The policy of the army to support national parties at times and provincial at others makes the already fragile polity increasingly vulnerable.

Being a multi-ethnic nation, Pakistan encounters a multitude of problems related to issues of linguistics, ethnicities and religious groups. To reconcile the demands of each and every faction is often a monumental task. On top of that the failure to govern and the army's opportunistic measures to always undercut the civilian government in power make the situation more intricate for the country. Economic and fiscal issues, maintaining the federal balance thereby ensuring that there is proper devolution of power and resources to the provinces, and the larger question of Pakistan's identity as to whether it is going to be an Islamic state or it is to be modeled along a modern nation state with democratic and liberal values, are some of the larger existential question that the country has to grapple with quite frequently.

Given all these predicaments that the Pakistan state faces, what exactly explains the dominant role of the army in the nations' politics? Cohen (2004) argues that the professional integrity of the army and the institution as a whole is widely seen as non-corrupt. When pitched vis-à-vis an inept and corrupt political class, the military comes across in glowing terms in comparison to their civilian counterparts. In a country with weak institutions and political elite without a vision for the nation as a whole, the army was the only institution that was seen to possess acceptable degree of competence both by Pakistanis and foreigners. This state of affair often justifies their involvement in the problem afflicting the country. Four military coups in its relatively small history go onto show that the intervention of the military in the political affairs has gained roots through a certain historical trajectory, one which has left an indelible imprint on the politics of the

country. There is a well-documented cycle that plays out at constant interval as noted scholar Hasan Askari Rizvi (2001:208) points out. That the army disregards and mistrusts the civilian authorities as incompetent is well known. Whenever there is a crisis in Pakistan, the army steps in to take corrective measures. Often these measures involve bringing about radical changes constitutionally. Because the army is seen as the most respected and competent organization in the country, there is an initial euphoria among the civilians who are tired of their inept leaders. However, once the initial exhilaration is over, discontent brews among the general population which leads the army to let civilian leaders back into power. The military makes sure that even if the civilian authority is in power; its strangle-hold over the politics remains intact. From Ayub Khan in 1958 to Yahya Khan in 1969 and from Zia-ul-Haq in 1977 to Parvez Musharraf in 1999, this is the cycle that has been repeated with minor differences.

Thus we see that the relationship between the military and the civilian governments have always been an uneasy one. How did this dynamic play itself out during the Kargil war? The chapter set out to propose that there was increasingly a rift between the two and because of their contradictory objectives both on the domestic and the international front. While the civilian government of Nawaz Sharif wanted to show its dominance over the military, the army was unwilling to relent.

Nawaz Sharif's Relations with the Military

Nawaz Sharif's first term as Prime Minister lasted from November 6, 1990 to July 18, 1993. However it was his second term from February 17, 1997 to October 12, 1999 which was more remarkable considering that it was during this term that Pakistan went nuclear and also fought a war with India since 1971. He came to power with a huge majority winning 137 out of the total 207 seats that went for elections in 1997 and accounted for almost 50% of the total votes polled. After coming to office he either eliminated or weakened his political rivals both within and outside his party. While he set up commissions of inquiry into corruption charges against Benazir Bhutto and her husband, he got rid of oppositional elements within the PML as well. Buoyed by a huge majority that brought him to power, he stripped the President of his constitutional powers

to dismiss a Prime Minister, and installed his own man Rafiq Tarar as the President. He also manipulated local elections and transferred judges as and when he deemed fit.

But all this pales in comparison to what he wished to do with the army. His agenda was to curtail the military influence in the politics of the country and thereby consolidate his own position. He knew that as long as the army continues to be all powerful, his hold on power will remain uncertain. Sharif told one Pakistani colleague in the PML that the plan was “to induct 50,000 soldiers into WAPDA and the Railways each, and the next year to bring them into other areas, and at the same time make peace with India, thus reducing the effective size of the army and its main mission.”(Cohen 2004:150)

The death of former President General Zia ul-Haq in an air crash in 1988 led to a situation wherein political power in Pakistan was split between the President, the Prime Minister and the army chief, and all three tried to gain or compete for a foothold over the politics in the country. Civilian governments in the past have all contributed to the weakening of the major institutions in the country in order to establish their own control and limit dissident voices. Nawaz Sharif’s government was no different as explained above.

After the presidency and the judiciary had been taken care of, Sharif’s next move was to make the military subservient to civilian command. His first attempt in doing so was to facilitate the resignation of the army chief, General Jehangir Karamat. Karamat’s fault was that he proposed the setting up of a National Security Council. This council was to have representatives from the military, the bureaucracy and the cabinet which would be competent enough to deal with the major problems Pakistan was facing. The purpose that this council was to serve was two fold. One was to institutionalize national security decisions thereby doing away with the personalized nature of governance that prevailed in the country. Two, Karamat believed that considering the range of issues afflicting the country, from sectarian violence to corruption at every level of politics, the army deserved to have a larger say in the national security matters that concern Pakistan both domestically as well as internationally. The sacking of their chief just three months prior

to his retirement was seen as an affront to the armed forces and a well thought out move on the part of the civilian government to undermine their morale. General Parvez Musharraf, who was appointed the next army chief, notes in his memoir, “There was even greater resentment in the army than I had imagined over General Jehangir Karamat’s forced resignation.”(p.85)

While Musharraf resented the interference of civilian authority in the military domain, Nawaz Sharif tried to play out the same game with the various components of the security establishment that the military has traditionally played with political parties. Sharif tried to woo senior military leaders to his side for rewards and lucrative appointments thus trying to drive a wedge within the military. He gave direct access to the Inter Services Intelligence Directorate (ISID) chief, Lt. Gen. Ziauddin thus bypassing the established chain of command. Once this chain was disturbed, the two important institutions of the Pakistani security establishment, General Head Quarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi and the ISID in Islamabad increasingly grew suspicious of each other’s motives thus hampering communication and exchange of information. No doubt, during the Kargil war, this had severe repercussions on the functioning and operational strategies of the 10 Corps and FCNA.

On the external front, and specially regarding relations with India, Nawaz Sharif took a line that was different from the hawkish-elements in his army. He believed that Pakistan can do business with India and hence became part of a summit level dialogue with Prime Minister Vajpayee in Lahore in 1999. Thus here too there are considerable differences between the army and the civilian authority on one of the singularly most important issue of forging peace between the two countries. The rift came into wide open when Parvez Musharraf, as the chief of the army, did not turn up to greet the Indian Prime Minister. It is a matter of contention and no definitive account exists as to whether Sharif knew about the Kargil incursions as and when he was holding summit level talks with his Indian counterpart. While the army maintains that the premier was briefed about the operation and he still went ahead with the Lahore talks, there are other accounts which say that Sharif was kept in the grey zone meaning, that he knew that the army was upto something

across the LOC but did not have detailed information about the preparations, the plans and the logistics.

Whatever may be the case, after the end of the war, Nawaz Sharif was removed from office by a coup initiated by Musharraf thus bringing an end to an eventful tenure. The striking thing about this government was its determination to bring the military under its firm control and thereby consolidate its position for a long time. Sharif wanted a civilian government that would be in complete control of the country and all its institutions including the army so that his power is not circumvented by the most powerful organization in the country, the nation's military.

Concluding Remarks

It would be a prudent argument to make when we say that research at the domestic level of analysis and anything to do with domestic politics will have a particular leitmotif: holding onto power. The concern in the minds of most statesmen, and South Asia is not different, is to make sure that they are not ejected from their seat of authority. However, this mindset tends to play out differently in different kind of political systems. In the chapter discussed above, it is clear that the civilian government would go to any extent to undercut the powers of the military, at times putting national interest at stake, just to make sure that he is not thrown out of office. What Kargil shows is a deep insecurity that lies in the minds of politicians, specially in Pakistan, with regard to their relation with the military. Another important aspect, related to this first component is the notion of near and far enemy. While the idea of far enemy is the external threat that neorealism talks about, the near enemy is the one within one's own boundaries. In functional and robust democracies, these can be oppositional groups who are seen as adversaries, in the case of Pakistan, for a civilian government it has often been the military. This articulation of adversaries tends to get linked up with various other components of the polity and often the government of the day is battling its internal foes as much as it is its external enemies. The linkages can be complex, thereby difficult to decipher and therefore it becomes increasingly difficult for scholars to explain the cause of a crisis with certitude. This chapter attempted to show that instead of taking a short-cut and relying on structural level

explanations to avoid getting into the messiness of politics of the subcontinent, it is often worth the effort to dissect those linkages and power-dynamics that often escapes the naked eyes. Not that the structural explanations are invalid, just that a little more of detailed study helps to make our research more enriching.

Chapter 3

Operation Parakram

This chapter makes an assertion about the 2001-2002 crisis that the military build-up that took place during this period was an effort of the ruling dispensation of the day to assuage and appease its domestic constituency and was without any specific strategic considerations. In its attempt to do so, the chapter will first describe the events that transpired between the end of Kargil war and the attack on the Indian Parliament. Then it would lay down the narrative of Operation Parakram and along with it offer the explanations that tend to view this crisis through the prism of nuclear weapons. The next section would inquire into the domestic level variables like the political culture of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the impact of domestic audience on the crisis. Finally it would try to answer why the crisis ended up to be a failure for India in strategic terms.

The India-Pakistan crisis of 2001-02 was the fourth in a series of crisis that the subcontinent witnessed in quick succession. While the Brasstacks crisis of 1986-87 and the Compound crisis of 1990 brought the two nations close to war, in 1999 they did finally end up fighting a limited war in the mountains of Kargil. The heavy troop mobilization that India resorted to along the Line of Control (LOC) in 2001-02 after the Parliament attack on December 13, 2001 seemed to suggest that the lessons of Kargil were not heeded by the two countries and a nuclear war was looming on the horizon. But what were the reasons that led to Indian troops being moved to the border? Many would argue that because the Parliament was attacked by terrorists harboured by Pakistan, India moved on the offensive. Though that may be the immediate cause, it tells only half the story. To make sense of India's actions, one needs to account for all that happened between the end of the Kargil war and the Parliament attack.

Prelude to the Military Build-up

While the public mood in India after the Kargil war was simultaneously joyous and somber, Pakistan faced its fourth military coup. Nawaz Sharif was removed from his post of Prime Minister and General Pervez Musharraf came to power imposing military rule in

the country. While the Lahore process seemed a distant history, India-Pakistan relations after the war went from bad to worse. Pakistan's military planners learnt the lesson that Kargil was a failure of magnanimous proportions on their part but also saw an opportunity to secure their objectives in Jammu and Kashmir by escalating the level of *jihad* in and outside the state to unprecedented levels.

Within months after the Kargil war ended, an Indian Airlines flight flying from Kathmandu was hijacked and taken to Kandahar in Afghanistan. India had to release three dreaded terrorists- Masood Azhar Alvi, Syed Omar Sheikh, and Mustaq Zargar who were lodged in Indian jails- to secure the release of the hijacked passengers. It was no coincidence that soon after their release all these terrorists and the hijackers could be traced to Pakistan (Mir 2006:45-59). The battle in Kargil must have been over but the war over Kashmir was to continue irrespective of what happened in the summer of 1999.

The Indian security and political establishment thought that it is prudent to engage with the secessionist political groups in Jammu and Kashmir. To this effect Prime Minister Vajpayee initiated a unilateral ceasefire on offensive operations against the largest terrorist group in the state- Hizb ul-Mujahideen (Swami 2003). In response, the various militant groups launched a series of spectacular attacks on high value civilian and military assets starting with the attack on the sector headquarters of the Border Security Force at Bandipora in Kashmir. The Indian government's policy of political dialogue with the separatists backfired as civilian casualties mounted. Praveen Swami (ibid.) states that during this period, as a result of cessation of operation against the militant groups, civilian death tolls increased substantially. In December 2000, just two days after the government announced the extension of the ceasefire on operations against militants, *fidayeen* suicide-squads attacked the Red Fort in New Delhi which killed two soldiers and one civilian. Though this attack did not result in any impressive gains for the terrorists, the message for the political class was clear. The situation could not be allowed to drift, more so because a nationalist party like the BJP cannot afford to rest on the laurels of the Kargil victory and had to be seen to be doing something about national security. First Kandahar, then Bandipora and now Red Fort, patience within the ruling

establishment was slowly running out. Operation Parakram was a result of this frustration which culminated with the Parliament attack.

The Operation Parakram Narrative

The events of 2001-02 and the crises that followed can be broadly classified into two parts. The first is from December 13 to the middle of 2002 while the second lasted from May 14 to middle of June 2002. The Indian troops remained mobilized and ready to go to war during this period from December to June. On December 13, 2001 five Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorists entered the Parliament complex, armed with grenades, assault rifles and explosives to carry out a high-profile attack. The Parliament was in its monsoon session and the objective of the terrorists was to inflict high-value casualties. However, the plot was foiled by the security personnel stationed at the Parliament House but not before six policemen and one civilian were killed and eighteen others injured. All the five terrorists were killed in the gun-battle that ensued between them and the security forces.

The very next day New Delhi accused Pakistan of sheltering and being involved with terrorist groups which had the audacity to carry out such attacks on India. Prime Minister Vajpayee retorted that India was ready for the “decisive battle” (Rajagopalan 2005: 116). On December 15, the India government ordered immediate mobilization of its armed forces towards the border. Vajpayee, who felt a sense of betrayal after the Lahore summit when Pakistan presented him with Kargil, felt let down twice over after the Parliament attack. A series of attacks that have been mentioned leading up to the December assault had already tested the limits of the Prime Minister’s patience. The Prime Minister was in favour of carrying out special forces strike which would have resulted in strikes against terrorist training camps in Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK) and also destroy all links to the PAK with the rest of the country. The motive was also to disrupt the logistical supply for the Pakistan military and possible Chinese assistance.

To quote former army chief, General V.P.Malik the December 2001-02 military build-up code named Operation Parakram was the “largest deployment of forces since the 1971 India-Pakistan war.”(*The Tribune*, 16 December 2002). The Indian Air Force (IAF) “was

put on high alert” by December 18 and Indian troops have been moved to forward positions along the LOC. The official version was that the troop movement was in response to the forward movement of heavy Pakistani Rangers on the border areas (*Hindustan Times*, 19 December 2001). Within a week’s time, both Indian and Pakistani forces were preparing themselves for an all-out confrontation. India recalled its High Commissioner from Pakistan and suspended all road and rail links with Pakistan. (*Hindustan Times*, 22 December 2001) While the Pakistanis were moving their Hatf-I and Hatf-II missiles into eastern Punjab, India placed its Prithvi missiles at northern Punjab, thus making Islamabad vulnerable (*Hindustan Times*, 23 December 2001).

Rhetoric flew thick and fast. Musharraf warned India against undertaking any misadventure against Pakistan. Pakistan’s foreign minister Abdul Sattar referred to the threat of nuclear weapons and told that the conflict had the potential of escalating to nuclear war (*Hindustan Times*, 30 December 2001) By the first week of January, Pakistan was reported to have put its nuclear arsenal on high alert. The Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes was quoted as saying, “We could take a [nuclear] strike, survive and then hit back. Pakistan would be finished.” (*Hindustan Times*, 30 December 2001). In the midst of all the rhetoric however, Musharraf was under heavy pressure from the international community and specially from the United States. On January 12 he was forced to make a televised speech in which he laid out his policies on terrorism and militancy. The basic contours of his speech included banning terrorist outfits like Jaish and Laskar along with sectarian political parties. He reiterated Pakistan’s political, diplomatic and moral support to the cause of Kashmir but also said that no organization will be allowed to use terror using Kashmir as an alibi. India did not get the terrorists it had demanded to be extradited but it did get a warning that its forces should be careful not to cross the border (*Hindustan Times*, 13 January 2002).

India welcomed Musharraf’s speech but with caution. It preferred to wait and watch his subsequent actions and policies before deciding on the next course of action. In the meantime, the Americans were conducting hectic two pronged diplomacy and often the

only chain of communication between the two countries. US Secretary of State, Colin Powell emphasized the need to resume talk between the two countries. India responded by arguing that any talks with Pakistan had to be composite and should not be held hostage to the Kashmir issue. Meanwhile, the forces were to stay put on readiness along the border. On the ground however, the situation showed hardly any improvement. To prevent the escalation of the conflict further, Pakistan proposed the phased withdrawal of forces which India promptly rejected. But the positive thing to have happened since Musharraf's January 12 speech was that the level of tension that existed after the Parliament attack and the rhetoric that vitiated the atmospherics between the two countries had come down considerably.

But this calm could not be sustained for long. The second half of the crisis started when on May 14, militants attacked the army camp in Kaluchak, killing women and children. Casualties amounted to thirty three. Musharraf's speech started to ring hollow and India declared that US pressure on Pakistan was not having its desired effect as far as action against terrorists is concerned. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met to discuss what options to take. As in December, this time the CCS decided to opt for a diplomatic course of action rather than a military one. Even though it was decided to explore the diplomatic option, both sides once again resorted to military moves. While Pakistan placed its forces on full-alert, the Indian paramilitary and border forces were put under the command of the army (Shukla 2002).

In the midst of all this preparation, terrorists again attacked an army camp in Kashmir on May 19 killing four soldiers (*Hindustan Times*, 20 May 2002). On May 21, Abdul Ghani lone, a moderate Kashmiri separatist leader was killed to prevent any normalcy from returning to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and also to provoke India to initiate a war (*Hindustan Times*, 22 May 2002). On the ground war-preparedness were on full swing. Pakistan test-fired its Shaheen-II missiles, moved its reserve corps to the border areas, and its 10 Corps to block passages through which there was possibility of Indian attacks on the PAK.

On May 22 in a meeting of the Pakistani cabinet, Musharraf argued that the only way to prevent war with India was by stopping cross-border terrorism. He was aware that considering the present geopolitical situation wherein the discourse on terrorism had acquired a different meaning in the wake of 9/11, the international community would be totally sympathizing with India and the long-held position of differentiating between freedom-fighters and terrorists would not carry much traction (Zaidi 2002). Five days later, on May 27 Musharraf in another televised speech stated that infiltration in Kashmir has stopped and the international community should urge India to de-escalate the conflict and resume the dialogue process. He promised that Pakistani won't allow export of terror anywhere but also warned that if attacked by India, Pakistan "will respond with full might", a reference to the use of nuclear weapons which was not to be missed (*The Hindu*, 28 May 2002).

However, hardly any substantial improvement happened on the ground with artillery shelling in the Kargil and Siachen sectors highest since the 1999 war (*Hindustan Times*, 29 May 2002). Travel advisories were issued by various embassies in India. Such was the apprehension of an all-out war in the region that countries like US, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand asked its non-essential diplomats and dependents to leave the country (*Hindustan Times*, 31 May 2002; 1st June 2002). On the 1st of June, over a hundred diplomats left the country. However, just when this evacuation was underway, the rhetoric on both sides began to cool down. Musharraf (2002) in an interview to CNN said that the international community should not even be discussing about nuclear war in the subcontinent because no sane individual can ever think of going in that direction (*Hindustan Times*, 2 June 2002). India's Defence Minister George Fernandes, who threatened about nuclear war just a few months, was heard making conciliatory statements. While he admitted that the border was tense, he deemed the situation to be stable (*Hindustan Times*, 2 June 2002).

After this relative calm was restored in the relationship, substantial improvement in the ground situation was also observed. Towards the end of June, Indian officials believed that shelling across the LOC has reduced by 90 percent. By the end of July, travel

advisories were slowly lifted and the situation limped back to normalcy. But because the Jammu and Kashmir elections were near, India did not want to take any chances in ensuring that the elections go off peacefully. The troops were maintained in the border till the elections got over in October. Once those elections were complete, Indian forces were slowly pulled back from the forward areas (Beck and Cicconi 2006).

Operation Parakram once again brought India and Pakistan precariously close to a war which had the potential to spiral into a nuclear war. But why did it not escalate to such levels. In trying to answer that question, analysts and scholars have tried to look into the role of nuclear weapons, the effect it had on the conduct of the crisis and whether the nuclear dimension of the crisis can adequately give a holistic understanding about the crisis. The next section would look into some of those explanations.

The Effect of Nuclear Weapons on the 2001-02 Crisis

As in the case of Kargil, the analysis of the military build-up in 2001-02 has involved enormous explanations from the vantage point of nuclear deterrence. Likewise, the debate between the proliferation optimists and proliferations pessimists is still to be resolved. Both camps look at the same conflict through the same prism of nuclearization in South Asia but reach two diametrically opposite conclusions.

Praveen Swami (2009) argues that nuclear weapons played a central role in ensuring that the crisis of 2001-02 on account of the Parliament attack does not escalate into a major war. He fixes his lens on the final outcome of the crisis and looks at the positive developments in Indo-Pak relations since the termination of the crisis. A cease-fire since 2003, which has largely remained in place, a number of confidence building measures between the two countries which include bus services between Poonch- Rawalakot and Srinagar-Muzaffarabad, and significant dialogues on how to figure out innovative constitutional measures to find a solution to the intractable issue of Jammu and Kashmir are some of the heartening takeaways that have come about since the crisis got over. He also points out to the fact that even deadly terrorist attacks thereafter like the 2006 Mumbai train bombings have not evoked a fiery response on the Indian side unlike 2002.

He asserts that the existence of nuclear weapons proved to be a major constraint on the both India and Pakistan- restricting both, India's conventional and Pakistan's sub-conventional military options.

Ganguly and Hagerty (2005:180) argue that, "The fear of Pakistan's resort to a possible nuclear threat was paramount in the minds of Indian decision-makers, thereby inhibiting a resort to all-out war." Making a similar argument Cohen (2004) in his testimony before the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations opined that the apprehensions of the crisis being escalated into a nuclear war was the principal factor that stopped the Indians from going ahead with their military operations. Rajagopalan (2005: 3) goes to the extent of saying that not only has the spread of nuclear weapons in any way augured badly; in fact it might have a soothing effect on regional conflicts. Even Musharraf believed that the 2001-02 crisis was a "trial for who blinked first". In his opinion, it was India which blinked first, after which Musharraf decided to draw back his forces. A change of heart took place in the Indian leadership which enabled a *détente* to begin.

On the other side of the spectrum are proliferation pessimists who delve on the negative aspects of nuclear proliferation and nuclearization in South Asia in general. While they would agree to the optimistic account that nuclear proliferation helps to limit the escalation of a crisis into major wars and induces caution in the behavior of states having nuclear weapons but they also argue that may not be the case always. Proliferation pessimists believe that in a situation where rival states possess nuclear weapons, it opens up a strategic space for risky behavior. The incentive to indulge in aggressive conduct can often outweigh the cautious approach to a situation. Karnad (2005:111) concludes that among Pakistani strategists, nuclear weapons have played a vital role in curtailing India's ability to respond massively in conventional terms.

Kanti Bajpai (2009:169) believes that nuclear weapons were the cause of the 2001-02 crisis. He focuses his attention on an increasingly prominent discourse in South Asia which is that nuclear weapons can deter nuclear weapons and might also deter conventional war but it is useless as far as sub-conventional or unconventional warfare is

concerned. (ibid.) In fact the very presence of these weapons in South Asia acts as an incentive to engage in these other forms of unconventional warfare with impunity. Thus, he identifies nuclear weapons as the structural cause of the crisis that took place in 2001-02.

The empirical evidence however shows that India did not go to war even though it had mobilized its troops to forward positions and this is often taken as a proof by proliferation optimists to make a case for nuclear deterrence in operation. Proliferation pessimists, after identifying the structural cause of the conflict on the presence of nuclear weapons, tend to argue that in order to answer the question as to why India did not go to war, one needs to take a thorough stock of India's conventional capabilities. They argue that India's conventional forces were grossly inadequate to launch a major offensive against Pakistan.

Let us look at the options India had on the table when it decided to mobilize its troops along the border. It could engage in hot pursuit as it was the least provocative response to the attack on Parliament and also the least costly in terms of casualties. However, all the effort might not lead to anything substantial, the terrorist camps being makeshift in nature and could be easily built (Sandhu, 2002). In the wake of US attack in Afghanistan, most of the terrorist camps had been relocated further away from the LOC and widely dispersed as well in PAK that makes quick excursions with precision guided attacks a very difficult task (Krishan 2001).

The next option was of surgical strikes at camps and facilities in PAK with the help of both land and air forces. However, the Indian army was not well-equipped with this art of warfare. Be it in its force structure which needs to be substantially different than the one used in classical warfare or in terms of equipments, the defence forces were found lacking in both. Add to that the difficult terrain of PAK and easy target for the Pakistan forces could significantly raise the casualties on the Indian side.

Destroying militant camps in PAK was the third option in front of the Indian forces. The idea here is to eliminate those camps within PAK, hold territory and align it with the LOC to India's advantage. But this plan too suffered from a few shortcomings. First it amounted to starting a general war and such an approach required India to penetrate at least 80-100 km inside the Pakistani territory to make a decisive impact which was not an easy task. Moreover, holding more territory means requirement of more troops and communicating over wider ranges. This can often be a problem in combat situation vis-à-vis an enemy which has a smaller territory to navigate and hence move swiftly and adjust accordingly. Supporting forces could be deployed by Pakistan in such a scenario much more easily than when the Indian troops require replenishment. On top of that India's conventional force advantage was not much superior as the numbers might suggest. This had the potential to jeopardize both offensive and defensive operations.

As far as military balance was concerned, the army had to move three divisions from the northern front against China to the Pakistan front. This relocation took quite a while thus nullifying any advantage of surprise attack. The Pakistan army got adequate time to position themselves (Sood and Sawhney 2003: 150-152). In 2001-02, Indian army had 1.1 million troops compared to 550,000 of Pakistan. This gave India a 2:1 advantage. However this advantage did not amount to overwhelming strength that can crush the opponents. It is to be remembered that almost nice divisions of troops guarded India's border with China thus bringing the ratio with Pakistan closer to parity (ibid.145). Compounding the problem for India is the presence of around 3,000 militants in Kashmir and about 30,000 Muslim mercenaries at Pakistan's disposal which can be used effectively to bog down a vast number of Indian troops (Bedi 2002).

As the above analysis shows, nuclear proliferation pessimists have a persuasive case to make as far as India's restrained behaviour during the 2001-02 crisis and that argument does not rely on the nuclear dimension to the conflict. Sheer facts and numbers coupled with military realities on the ground show that India did not have a huge advantage over Pakistan, which was absolutely necessary to decisively go ahead with an all out war. Bajpai (2009:176-177) puts it succinctly when he argues, "That the two sides did not go

to war is principally due to India not having the conventional force advantage that promised “victory” either in Kashmir or in Rajasthan.”

But then if that is the case, why would the government of the day hastily mobilize its troops to forward positions along the border and ask its forces to be in alert state even when it knew of the difficulties inherent in carrying out a full-fledged war with its nuclear-armed neighbours? To seek an answer to that question, we need to focus on the domestic attributes of the government in power and make certain inferences from those attributes and related concerns in order to get a wider perspective on the issue.

The Role of Domestic Constituency on Operation Parakram

This chapter started with an assertion that Operation Parakram was initiated by the Indian government to assuage and appease its domestic constituency and not with any specific strategic considerations. There are two parts to this proposition; one will deal with the government’s desire to pander to its support base while the other would try to show how the government was clueless about the strategic implications of initiating this operation.

The Political Culture of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its Domestic Audience

The 13th Lok Sabha elections brought the BJP and its coalition partners to power. This was the first time that an alliance had managed to garner a majority in the lower house of the Parliament and formed a government that survived its full term of five years. The BJP as an organization traces its ideological and philosophical beliefs in *Hindutva* or cultural nationalism. *Hindutva* is the desire to rediscover India’s glorious Hindu past and restore its superior glory of the ancient times. And that golden Vedic age can only be brought back when Hindus are assertive, conscious and have a sense of cultural pride in them. To this end, the leaders of such persuasion would like to do away with notions of non-violence and peace that the Gandhi-Nehru era preached. Foreign Minister in the NDA government, Jaswant Singh believes that the “ersatz pacifism” of Buddhists, Jains, Vaishnavites, and Gandhian views were responsible for “twisting India’s strategic culture into all kinds of absurdities” and enfeebling a once fierce nation (Singh 1999:13). Just by

looking into the core tenets of ancient texts like *Arthashastra* and *Mahabharata*, one can decipher the essence of the Indian military mind, which helped Hindu kings to rule over vast swathes of territory from Central Asia to Southeast Asia (Bakshi 1990: xix). To quote a BJP ideologue, K.N.Govindacharya, the main shift that the BJP needs to make in the foreign policy thinking is to mark a clear departure from the timorous Brahmin Bhakti tradition to the one which pays homage and heeds to the warrior traditions of revolutionaries (Chaulia 2002).

Adherents of the BJP ideology often refer to India's weakness and marginalization in world affairs. Policy choices of the Nehruvian era are what they consider responsible for such a state of affair. This constant lament about the state of affair and India's lack of power on the world stage is juxtaposed with the proposition that the BJP is a better alternative than the other political parties and hence should be voted to power. The promises of a strong India and an aggressive posture towards defence of the country helped to widen its mass base substantially (Jaffrelot 1996). These pledges were lapped up by a newly-emerging middle class who wanted a firm government at the centre who can keep the promises made to them before elections.

The party likes to believe that it is an organization that delivers on what it promises without caring about the immediate political outcomes. There is a certain conviction in its thought process, which it would like to rub onto the general public as well, that it is a party for whom the country comes first and any policy that it deems is beneficial to the country is carried out. The BJP tries hard to sell to its own party members and general population the proposition that it is the only "nationalist" and "principled" party in the political firmament. Giving the impression that for the party, nothing comes before or above national interest, it wants to convey that it is a party with a difference whose belief in certain principles are not altered by the trials and tribulations of everyday politics (Mishra 1998).

In contrast to the Congress culture which shows a certain reluctance to the politics and culture of power and status, the BJP, as a conservative party considers these to be the

cornerstone of their existence. Its ideologues would go to large extents to valorize ideas of strength, order and hierarchy both in society and in the international domain. They are in a comfort zone when discussing hard power, specially military power. It is this political culture that enabled Vajpayee to undertake the nuclear tests in Pokharan in 1998 (Perkovich 2000). While his predecessors could not take the risk of doing so, Vajpayee could because he knew that he has a strong domestic audience both within his ranks and among the public who adhere to the sentiments that propelled him to give the go-ahead to the tests.

All this analysis about BJP's political culture is important for us because it gives us a clue as to the kind of domestic dynamics the party operates in. Pokharan 1998 proved to be the high point of Vajpayee and BJP's political history. A vast majority of the domestic population in India supported his move to make India a nuclear-armed state. This was in complete consonance with the promises made in the election manifesto of the BJP. The party wanted to restore India's honour and lost glory, and the best way to recover it was through brute military power. What else can be more ultimate a weapon than having nuclear-tipped missiles in the arsenal of the defence forces.

However, raising high expectations has its own downside to it. After the successful nuclear tests of 1998, Vajpayee had to deal with the Kargil war as a care-taker prime minister after his government lost the vote of no confidence in the Parliament. Though the Indian forces managed to evict the intruders from the mountains of Kargil, a series of daring attacks on high value targets by Pakistan backed *jihadi* groups just after Kargil took away a lot of sheen from the image of a robust party and a strong prime minister. Atal Bihari Vajpayee who had been in active political life for almost forty years first became a prime minister for thirteen days and then thirteen months. When he again became the Prime Minister in 1999, he did not want history to repeat itself and was very careful that he completes his term. He tried to nullify every effort that would hamper his political survival.

It is in this context that the military build-up of 2001-02 needs to be seen. The BJP after the nuclear tests and Kargil war had raised expectations to such high levels that any shortcomings on the security front came in for heavy criticism, specially within its own ranks. The Parliament attack of 2001 was seen as one such act that heavily dented the party's image as a strong and robust defender of national security. A section of the BJP and its supporters were unhappy with Vajpayee's initiative of declaring unilateral ceasefire and engaging in political dialogue with terrorist groups in Jammu and Kashmir. The BJP leaders argued that such endeavours of peacemaking with a deceitful adversary on the part of the government are seen as signs of weakness and party cadres find it difficult to reconcile with (Vyas, 2000). The then General Secretary of the party Narendra Modi felt that "defensive steps will neither protect innocent people nor bring about a change of heart among terrorists" and Pakistan deserves to be paid back in its own language (*Times of India*, 8 August 2001). In fact when the Agra Summit of 2001 took place, BJP was very adamant that along with the future status of Kashmir, cross-border terrorism, proxy war and ISI involvement in the Kashmir valley should be treated as core issues (*Daily Excelsior*, 10 July 2001). After the failure of the Agra summit, the party hailed L.K.Advani as "the hero of Agra" who "prevented 'them' from selling our country to Pakistan" (*Deccan Chronicle*, 9 August 2001). This shows a complete disconnect between the moderate elements on Vajpayee's side and the more hawkish ones in the *Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh (RSS)* or the *Sangh Parivar*. For Vajpayee, even though he did not subscribe to the hardline position of the Parivar on many issues, he knew that for his political survival he needs to keep the ideologues in Nagpur in good humour.

It is this very reason that when the Parliament attack happened in December 2001, Vajpayee immediately ordered troop mobilization along the border. The attack vindicated the beliefs of those in the BJP's rank and file who had tried to dissuade Vajpayee from his peace overtures to Pakistan and the insurgent groups. These BJP workers and leaders considered it "yet another betrayal" (Advani 2002). Making comparisons with America's invasion of Afghanistan to root out the Taliban after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the RSS made constant demands for the declaration of war against Pakistan. Because the hope from the party on the national security front was so high, Vajpayee had to do something

in order to placate the RSS ideologues as well as general supporters of the party. According to Sood and Sawhney, “the government simply got carried away as there was pressure to do something equally spectacular to show the domestic audience that India meant business (2005:188) The idea to order troop mobilization is part of that strategy to assuage the grief of the common public on account of the numerous terrorist attacks and to appease his bosses in the RSS which was very important for his own political survival as the Prime Minister of the country.

While the above section shows that the actions taken by the Vajpayee government were directed towards calming his domestic audience, it is also important to underline that the civilian leadership did not have any specific strategic goals or motives when it instructed the troops to be stationed along the LOC. The Indian troops, that had the most massive build-up since the 1971 war, were stationed in forward positions for almost ten months and the external world was kept on tenterhooks about the developments in the subcontinent, yet it would be fair to say that the military build-up per se did not produce any desired outcome. The fundamental problem was that when the government ordered Operation Parakram, it failed to have as strategic roadmap considering its demands and its end goals. The next section analyses this short-sightedness on the part of the ruling dispensation of the day and asserts that the whole exercise turned out to be futile in the end.

The absence of a coherent strategic vision

The use of threat to influence the behaviour of the other is often termed as coercion. This is exactly what India was resorting to in 2001-02 after the Parliament attack so that Pakistan can be coerced to act upon the terrorist groups harboured by them to wage its sub-conventional warfare with India. However the coercion did not yield the desired result and there are a few substantial reasons for it. Patrick Bratton (2010) delineates three major reasons for India’s doomed compellence strategy.

First, the Indian government kept changing its demands. On December 29, the then national security advisor Brajesh Mishra told the G8 that India were ready for talks,

provided that Pakistan took ‘credible, firm and substantive, and visible actions’ against terrorists operating from “territory it controls today” (Aneja 2001). Two days later, the Indian government demanded the extradition of 20 criminals staying in Pakistan. A couple of days later Vajpayee said that, ‘The two crucial elements in this would be strict curbs on sources of financing and denial of safe haven for training, arming and operation of terrorists’ (*The Hindu*, 4 January 2002). Again in January, while in the US, Advani said that Pakistan must halt cross-border infiltration (Advani 2008: 648). Thus we see a constant shifting of Indian demands which jeopardizes effective signaling to the opponent. Domestic politics played a crucial role in this constant change of demands. The hardline elements in the party demanded stronger action against Pakistan, urging hot pursuit into PAK to destroy terrorist camps. The Home Ministry under L.K. Advani also pitched in with a set of their own demands which complicated matters further. The ministry wanted 20 criminals sheltered in Pakistan to be extradited to India.

Second, there was a lack of coordination between the civilian and military thereby hampering the sharing of communication. The ad-hoc nature of decision-making and the civilian-military relations often complicates matter, more so when there is hardly any interaction between the two (Raghavan 2009). After the Parliament attack, an enraged Vajpayee wanted the forces to do land and air strikes in order to engage in ‘hot pursuit’ across the LOC. However when the Chiefs of the Defence forces explained the risks involved in the mission and suggested a larger conventional response, the government decided to go ahead with general mobilization and diplomatic pressure on the Pakistan government. The instructions given to the military by the civilian authority was so vague that it underscores the point that there was no strategic vision that went into the troop mobilization along the border. About the December 16 meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security, A.G. Noorani (2003) writes

According to informed Army sources, the Prime Minister called the three service chiefs and told them to prepare for a war with Pakistan. On being asked by General Padmanabhan what the government expected from the war, Vajpayee is understood to have said: *woh baad mein bataayenge* (that will be told later)

This kind of a disconnect between the civilian and the military has obvious implications for a coherent strategy to be evolved. The military would be unaware of the political objectives of the civilian government and would not know the exact point at which military force is to be used; neither would the civilian authority know what is happening on the ground. Sood and Sawhney (2005) make an assertion on similar lines. They argue that the reason why India failed to carry through on its threats was because the military build-up “was not a thought-out action but a knee-jerk reaction to the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament.”

Lastly, the government of the day attempted to coerce Pakistan through Operation Parakram and at the same time asked the US to coerce Pakistan. These two actions were working at cross purposes since the US one hand was trying to reassure the government that it was trying its best to put pressure on Pakistan while on the other hand it was telling Pakistan that it would make sure that India does not attack them. On top of that, by inviting US into the conflict dynamics, the BJP government seriously constrained its maneuverable capability on the use of force.

Thus it can be concluded that the government of the day failed to garner rich dividends for all the effort that was put in and the resources that were used in the ten month long stand off. Like the Kargil war, paying greater attention to the domestic level variables enlightens us to further nuances of the crisis that a straight forward nuclear pessimist versus nuclear optimist debate fails to comprehend.

Concluding Remarks

The ability of an ideologically oriented party on nationalist lines to go to any extent without giving much thought about the strategic imperatives of its decisions is what this chapter underlined. Indian politics has undergone a massive transformation in the coalition era. Gone are the days when political parties attempted to make their constituencies broad-based. In today’s polity, parties are more comfortable to keep their own constituencies in good humour. This fragmentation of the political domain has its

consequences. Leaders are forced to vouch for policies that would cater to their own constituency and ideologue, Operation Parakram was precisely an effort in that direction. The idea of ratcheting up the rhetoric against the enemy so that the sense of grievance can be alleviated is another tool to ensure survival in office by political leaders. If in the case of Pakistan, the civilian authority is constantly under the threat of the military, in India the supporters and cadres often end up asking tough questions. In moments such as these when survivability is uppermost in mind and leaders find themselves vulnerable, they need to be seen to be 'doing' something. This is what explains the hurry of the Vajpayee government to mobilize troops without taking into account the larger geo-strategic considerations. Its constituency was to be made to believe that their government was not weak and what better way to demonstrate that than by massive mobilization of troops to the forward areas and vitiating the atmosphere to dangerous levels. The crisis of 2001-02 highlights the importance of domestic audiences and shows why they are an integral variable to be taken into account while trying to understand the reasons behind the decisions of leaders in the subcontinent.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this dissertation was to enrich our understanding about conflict dynamics in South Asia, specially with relation to India and Pakistan. The aim was to engage with domestic –level variables in the case of two crisis – the Kargil war of 1999 and Operation Parakram of 2001-02 and investigate the significance of internal attributes of the two countries in order to explain the manner in which they initiated a conflict, carried it out and finally terminates it. What are those factors that weigh in the minds of the political elites and the military planners in crisis situation? How much of those factors are amenable to systemic level assertion and at what point it becomes necessary to delve into the internal workings of the regimes and political dispensation in power in order to grasp the reality on the ground? These are some of the questions with which this work started in the first place.

More importantly, this dissertation also attempted to elucidate our appreciation of three macro-level questions. By analyzing the role of domestic actors and constituencies, it sought to emphasize on the importance of the second-image analysis, more so when the terrain is as difficult and complex as South Asia. This is significant for international relations theory and research agendas on theory building in South Asia in the future. Any attempt at coming up with frameworks or theories for the region has to encounter the complexities of the region rooted in its history and its internal political dynamics. Secondly, much of the analysis of India-Pakistan relations specially after the two countries went nuclear in 1998 is seen through the prism of nuclear deterrence. There are nuclear optimists and pessimists having different takes on the impact of nuclear weapons on the conflicts that have erupted since then or continuing for long. However, as this work went on to show, even though those explanations have validity, are put across with empirical rigour and are persuasive to a large extent, those analysis remain insufficient in understanding the manner in which the nuclear dimension is played out in relation with

complex linkages within the larger polity of the two countries. This has important implications for our understanding of the role of nuclear weapons in South Asia and theories of nuclear deterrence in general. Lastly, in conjunction with the above two propositions, the study also attempted to investigate the nature of India-Pakistan relations without the trappings of classical and dominant Western international relations theory. The idea was to assert that straight-jacketing this complex dyad into existing frameworks can often lead to more questions than answers. The components at play between India and Pakistan are multi-dimensional and involve many other variables that the existing range of theoretical frameworks within the IR domain may not succeed to completely comprehend the exact nature of this relationship.

But before trying to answer those macro-questions, it is important to summarize the findings of the study.

Summary of the study

After the introduction about the research problem and the objective of the study that also included a brief literature review of the topic under study, the dissertation laid out the various theories of domestic politics in International Relations Theory and their contending explanations in chapter 1. The idea here was to give a broad overview of the variables that are examined when a second-image analysis is done to understand foreign policy behaviour of states and their decision-making. The chapter touched upon the diverse internal factors that can be employed into our analysis to enrich our research agendas thus lending more explanatory power to problems in international relations. In order to do so, first it talked about the level of analysis problem in IR in detail. Then it moved onto explain the propositions of democratic peace thesis, Marxist Leninist analysis of global interactions among states and the dynamics of capital at play, the diversionary theory of warfare and the motivations of state leaders to engage in conflict, more so at times when elections are near and public opinion needs to be swayed in their favour and the impact of the military in conflict initiation. The chapter also looked at few of the criticisms and short-comings of this approach.

Chapter 2 dealt with the Kargil war where after giving a brief overview of the war, existing explanations and analysis of the conflict were put forth. It was argued that though the existing literature on the Kargil war is overwhelmingly tilted in favour of the impact of nuclear weapons on the causes and consequences of the conflict, they cannot account for the precise time in which the conflict took place. Though both the nuclear optimists and pessimists claims are valid and offer rigorous analysis, they are inadequate to understand the many facets of the conflict. In order to discover the multi-layered nature of the event, the chapter argued, one needs to look into the domestic politics of Pakistan and specifically the nature of civil-military relations in the Pakistan. There is a historical background to the role of the military in the country's politics and the rift between the civilian and the military authorities where each wanted to consolidate its position is an aspect that is often overlooked or undermined in the analysis of the Kargil war.

If the focus was on the domestic dimensions of Pakistan during the Kargil war, it shifts to India and its principal ruling party during Operation Parakaram which is the subject matter of chapter 3. Here again the existing literature tends to view the crisis from the prism of nuclear deterrence. Optimists argue that because deterrence was operational, the crisis did not escalate to war. Pessimists on the other hand assert that nuclear weapons were the structural cause why the crisis occurred in the first place. They also point to the conventional military dynamics of the day to explain why India did not carry out its threat. Doing a second-level analysis of the conflict, this chapter argues that it was the need to alleviate and appease its domestic constituency that the government of the day headed by the BJP initiated troop mobilization. It also goes on to argue that there were no specific strategic goals that the government had in mind which can be seen by its lack of knowledge about military operations in a difficult terrain and also by its failure to articulate its demands coherently. While the need to cater to its domestic audience flows from the BJP's image as a nationalist party with a political culture that valorizes hard military power that cannot be seen to succumb to constant instigation Pakistan on issues of national security and prestige, the inadequacy in terms of strategic thinking can be

accounted for by the lack of co-ordination and dialogue between the civilian and military components of the establishment.

Insights and Inferences

However, what are the larger inferences that can be drawn about from this study? There are three broad strands within which one can try to situate that inquire. One is the role of nuclear weapons and its implications for deterrence theory. Second is the validity of using a multitude of variable to make sense of conflict-dynamics and reality in South Asia and more so in the case of India and Pakistan. Lastly, to liberate our understanding of India-Pakistan relations from straightforward causations and co-relations, and rather investigate the complex linkages between history, ideology and identity that is a hallmark of this relationship. Only when we are able to accept the true nature of those intricacies, can we appreciate measures that will bring peace to the region. Let us look at all these three major inferences in a little more detail.

What does the study tell us about nuclear deterrence in South Asia? One of the most common ways to answer this question is to compare the India-Pakistan situation with the cold war one. In fact the manner in the Kargil crisis of 1999 unfolded had some striking similarities with the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. The argument is not that the conclusions or lessons can be juxtaposed on either of the conflicts interchangeably but to point out that there are parallels which points to the fact that even though there are no straightforward general laws in international politics, there are chances of situations and behaviors to repeat themselves. Even the words that were once used to convey a message are used exactly in the same manner. For example, during and after the Kargil war, India said that it would respond to the proxy war by Pakistan “with prompt retaliation, in a manner, time, and place of India’s choosing.” This had an uncanny resemblance to what John Foster Dulles wrote in 1962, “The way to deter aggression is for the free community to be willing and able to respond vigorously at places and means of its own choosing.” In fact, Timothy Hoyt concludes that during the Kargil conflict, India was following a path similar to that of the superpowers in the 1950s. Scholars also point to the ‘stability-instability paradox’ as Glenn Snyder proposed in 1964. What it means is that strategic

stability at higher levels allows the space for instability by making lower levels of violence relatively safe since escalation to nuclear confrontation can be dangerous. The Kargil war is often shown as a demonstration of this paradox.

However, the nuclear relationship between India and Pakistan varies significantly on both these counts. The past four crisis starting with Brasstacks when it is believed both India and Pakistan possessed opaque nuclear capabilities, has shown that there are social, political, economic and military reasons why India and Pakistan do not fight total wars against each other. Unlike the cold war era when the USA and USSR were locked in a zero sum game battle, India and Pakistan do not share that kind of a mentality because of the asymmetry in their relationship. The game theoretical model that is often used to explain behaviour of states in a nuclear dyad considers the two parties to be more or less equal. However, in the case of India and Pakistan, such parity is elusive. Moreover, the restraint shown by India in the last four crises is often seen as a manifestation of the ambivalent nature of relationship that the two countries share rather than nuclear deterrence. The stability-instability paradox becomes inapplicable because of India's far superior nuclear potential which can be translated into nuclear force and also the vast difference in the resource base between the two states. Much of the scholarly literature tends to misinterpret the stability-instability paradox about nuclear and sub-conventional conflicts while in reality it was a proposition about the relationship between nuclear and conventional military balances. The history of India-Pakistan conflict tends to predate the acquisition of nuclear weapons and nuclearization hardly makes any difference to the motives and goals of the two countries.

Thus South Asia presents some novel learning in terms of nuclear deterrence theories and behaviour of states in a conflict dyad. It can be persuasively argued that though there are traces of Cold War thinking that can be found in the rhetoric and political posturing, classical deterrence theories are at some level irrelevant to understand the nuclear relationship in the region.

The second strand of thought relates to the agenda of research and theory-building in South Asia and wishes to infer from the two conflicts under study certain macro-level conclusions about the same. Hayward Alker said that the primary purpose of theories are to clarify and simplify reality in essence, theory should be able to explain, comprehend and interpret reality. However, there are fundamental disagreements in the discipline of International Relations as to what constitutes that reality. South Asia has been the playing field for all those contestations and debates about the notion of reality. A historical experience, unlike the West, multiple narratives of that history with inter-linkages that run deep and wide makes it impossible to apply the tenets of Western frameworks into the varying perspectives on the notion of reality, facts and truth. While this can confuse and confound people engaged in the business of theory-building, it also has the potential to open up newer avenues in research.

One of the basic inferences that can be drawn from the above study is that though the dominant realist paradigm is often used to understand the conflict dynamics, it fails to account for many crucial aspects of the region. It is true that no theory can be completely wrong or right neither can a theory explain everything. However, it cannot be denied that parsimonious explanations based on causation often does not help us reach very close to the reality on the ground. It also shows the lacunae that persist in our understanding of the region. It can also be asserted that as long as we rely on received wisdom blindly and not engage with the region historically and sociologically, our research would be found wanting.

Finally, a study on India-Pakistan relations cannot but say something about the direction the two countries should be headed in order to start a new chapter and fulfill the vast promise that this region holds for its people. A veteran observer and thinker of international politics, more so of India-Pakistan relations, Amitabh Mattoo puts it presciently when he argues that though the conflict between India and Pakistan is easy to describe, it is painfully difficult to explain. He says that effort by scholars to comprehend this relationship has more often been an "Occidental attempts at forcing an Eastern intellectual puzzle into a preconceived Western mould. Unfortunately, India-Pakistan

relationship is, and has been, about almost everything that matters: history, ideology, memory, prejudice, territory, identity, religion, sovereignty, ideology, insecurity, trust, betrayal and much , much more in a *desi* way.”

Thus even though this dissertation attempted to do a second image or domestic level analysis of India-Pakistan crisis, there are inherent limitations to that analysis as well. The shortcomings are on account of the complexities delineated in the above paragraph. The number of abstract variables at work here cannot be comprehended by a single level of analysis or framework. The analysis and solution to India-Pakistan conflicts lies in an overarching review of every macro and micro detail in material, theoretical, philosophical and metaphysical terms. The search for a grand reconciliation might seem a utopian goal, using variables at all levels of analysis and beyond is something theorists might quibble about but when the future of a subcontinent is at stake, parsimony should be the least important of the desirable attributes. In Shakespeare’s Hamlet, thus spake Polonius: “Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit, And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes...I will be brief...”...Unfortunately our realities, our location and our predicaments do not allow us the luxury to be brief and indulge in brevity. The task ahead is cut-out for all of us who have a stake in the prosperity and well-being of the region, be it in praxis or in theory.

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