Part I

Introduction

1 Causes of the India–Pakistan enduring rivalry

T. V. Paul

The India–Pakistan rivalry remains one of the most enduring and unresolved conflicts of our times. Begun in the aftermath of the birth of the two states from British colonial rule in 1947, it has continued for well over half a century with periodic wars and crises erupting between the two rivals. The conflict has affected all key dimensions of inter-state and societal relations of the two antagonists. Despite occasional peace overtures and periods of détente, it shows no signs of a permanent settlement in the near future. Since the late 1980s, the open acquisition of nuclear weapons by the two states, the increasing number of crises involving them, and the introduction of terrorist tactics into the conflict have led to the heightened possibility of a cataclysmic war breaking out in South Asia with unimaginable consequences.

What explains the persistence of this rivalry even when some other long-running conflicts in different parts of the world have come to an end? Do existing theories of enduring rivalries provide compelling explanations for this ongoing conflict? Can the rivalry and its persistence be understood on the basis of factors at the international, societal, and decisionmaker levels of analysis? Is it the convergence of these factors that keeps the conflict enduring in nature? Why do the near- and medium-term prospects of negotiating an end to this enduring rivalry look bleak? Does the answer lie in the territorial nature of the rivalry, disparate national identities of the two states, and the peculiar power asymmetry between the two parties, or the fundamental incompatibility in the strategic goals they seek? Can the extensive works on enduring rivalries and the emerging literature on asymmetric conflicts shed light on this conflict?

Theories of enduring rivalries and asymmetric conflicts

Enduring rivalries are defined as conflicts between two or more states that last more than two decades with several militarized inter-state disputes punctuating the relationship in between. An enduring rivalry is characterized by a "persistent, fundamental, and long term incompatibility of

goals between two states," which "manifests itself in the basic attitudes of the parties toward each other as well as in recurring violent or potentially violent clashes over a long period of time."[1] Although there is difference of opinion among analysts on the number of disputes and inter-state crises required for calling a rivalry "enduring," I accept the categorization by Paul Diehl and Gary Goertz, who treat an enduring rivalry as one that involves at least six militarized disputes during a twenty-year period. This specification, according to them, allows defining the concept along "spatial consistency, duration and militarized competition."[2] In other words, an enduring rivalry cannot be episodic or of short duration; it should be ongoing for a reasonably long period on a continuous basis before it can be termed "enduring." Enduring rivalries are also called "protracted conflicts," but the main difference between the two concepts perhaps lies in the inter-state dimension of the former.[3] Whereas a protracted conflict can be internal or intra-state, involving state and/or non-state actors, an enduring rivalry specifically refers to inter-state conflicts.

An enduring rivalry is often characterized by zero-sum perspectives on the part of the participants. The conflict can become entrenched and societal as parties view each other as highly threatening to their security and physical survival. Enduring rivalries tend to be typified by periodic inter-state crises and, in some instances, war, although war is not a necessary condition for a rivalry to be categorized as "enduring."[4] John Vasquez argues that relative equality in power capabilities is necessary for a rivalry to remain enduring, since in a highly unequal power situation the

[1] According to Zeev Maoz and Ben Mor, these conflicts tend to have four major characteristics: (1) an outstanding set of unresolved issues; (2) strategic interdependence between the parties; (3) psychological manifestations of enmity; and (4) repeated militarized conflict. See Maoz and Mor, *Bound by Struggle: The Strategic Evolution of Enduring International Rivalries* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 5.

[2] Paul Diehl and Gary Goertz, *War and Peace in International Rivalry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 44, 48; see also their chapter in this volume; and Paul F. Diehl (ed.), *The Dynamics of Enduring Rivalries* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998). Some key samples of this literature are: William R. Thompson, "Principal Rivalries," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 39 (June 1995), 195–223; Frank W. Wayman, "Rivalries: Recurrent Disputes and Explaining War," in John Vasquez (ed.), *What Do We Know about War?* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 219–34; and Scott D. Bennett, "The Dynamics of Enduring Rivalries," *American Political Science Review* 93 (September 1999), 749–50.

[3] On protracted conflicts, see Edward Azar, Paul Jureidini, and Ronald McLaurin, "Protracted Social Conflict: Theory and Practice in the Middle East," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29 (1978), 41–60; Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, *A Study of Crisis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 6.

[4] On crisis, see Patrick James, *International Relations and Scientific Progress* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2002), 57–62.

stronger party will in general be able to impose its will on the weaker side and put an end to the conflict.[5]

Asymmetric conflicts involve states of unequal aggregate power capability, measured in terms of material resources, i.e., size, demography, military capability, and economic prowess. Intangible factors such as will and morale are not included in assessing national power capabilities as these are difficult to measure.[6] Further, these factors tend to change over time and are difficult to notice until a real military contest takes place. Weaker parties in asymmetric power dyads often use these intangible means to bolster their military and political positions during both war and peace. Within asymmetric conflict dyads one may notice wide disparity in power capabilities (as in the US–Cuba or China–Taiwan cases) or limited disparity (as in the North Korea–South Korea case).

The India–Pakistan conflict is both enduring and asymmetric, but the power asymmetry is truncated and mitigated by many factors. In particular, the weaker party, Pakistan, has been successful in reducing the asymmetry through strategy, tactics, alliances with outside powers, acquisition of qualitatively superior weapons and nuclear arms since the late 1980s, and, for over a decade, low-intensity warfare. The materially stronger power, India, is not overwhelmingly preponderant in the theater of conflict – Kashmir – and has been vulnerable to asymmetric challenges by the weaker state, Pakistan. Nor is Pakistan too small or incapable of mounting a sustained challenge, as it has proved over half a century. Pakistan, with a population of over 141 million, is the seventh largest country in the world. Its territorial size is larger than most Middle Eastern and Gulf states, except Saudi Arabia and Iran, and its elite has sufficient wherewithal and high level of motivation to sustain the conflict even if at a high cost to its society in terms of economic and political underdevelopment. The asymmetry is built into the structure of the conflict, the power balance, and the goals and objectives that the two parties seek. I argue

[5] John A. Vasquez, "Distinguishing Rivals that Go to War from Those that Do Not: A Quantitative Comparative Case Study of the Two Paths to War," *International Studies Quarterly* 40 (December 1996), 531–58. Although there is good logic in this argument, empirically this may not be the case, unless one is willing to include intangible factors in assessing the power capability of states. The overwhelming preponderance of one side as contrasted with limited overall superiority is critical here in determining the impact of asymmetry on the type of rivalry.

[6] This definition is elaborated in T. V. Paul, *Asymmetric Conflicts: War Initiation by Weaker Power*s (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 20. On this subject, see also Andrew Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," *World Politics* 27 (January 1975), 175–200; and Ivan Arreguín-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Security* 26 (Summer 2001), 93–128.

that this peculiar asymmetry makes the conflict deadly and prolonged. This truncated asymmetry, in recent years buttressed by nuclear weapons, makes the resolution of the conflict unlikely any time soon.

Origins of the rivalry: the historical legacy

A brief historical survey of the origins of the conflict is necessary at this point. The roots of the India–Pakistan rivalry lie in the two visions of statehood that arose within the context of the nationalist movement in the Indian subcontinent. The Indian National Congress, spearheaded by Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, sought a unified country built around the principles of secularism and liberal democracy. Although the majority of the Congress Party membership came from the mainstream Hindu population, the party embodied all major ethnic groups of India and had a vision of a state not supporting any single religion. Many Muslim leaders were wary of majority rule which they viewed as tantamount to Hindu rule and demanded safeguards by way of separate electorates. In order to press for their demands with the colonial rulers, they formed the Muslim League Party in December 1906. Their claim for separate electorates was accepted by the British in the Government of India Act of 1909, which offered limited political rights to the Indian subjects. The British rulers were sympathetic to separate constituencies for Muslims which they hoped would weaken the incipient nationalist movement, spearheaded by the Congress Party. However, over time this policy helped to unify the Muslim community in a communal and political sense and sowed the seeds for the idea of Pakistan. Although the Congress Party initially accepted separate Muslim electorates in 1916, it subsequently rejected the idea in the constitutional proposals it made in 1928. Alienation from both the British and the Congress Party led to the proposal for a separate Muslim homeland by the League, which was first put forward by the poet Muhammad Iqbal in 1930.[7]

The Government of India Act of 1935 was pivotal in the rise of Muslim separatist nationalism, with the League under Mohammad Ali Jinnah deciding to contest elections for limited self-governing provincial governments in 1937. The overwhelming electoral victory of the Congress Party in six provinces and that party's decision not to form coalition governments with the Muslim League – which had not fared well even in the separate Muslim constituencies – disillusioned Jinnah, who then began to propagate the merits of the two-nation theory. The Congress Party's

[7] Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 317.

rejection of Jinnah's demand that the League be recognized as the sole party of Indian Muslims (because the Congress itself had a substantial Muslim membership) and the misdeeds of some Congress provincial leaders embittered Jinnah and his followers even further.

In March 1940, at its meeting in Lahore, the League proclaimed as its goal the creation of Pakistan as a separate homeland for Indian Muslims and the Congress–League schism widened even further. The May 1944 Gandhi–Jinnah talks and the June 1945 Simla conference of top Congress and Muslim League leaders failed to break the deadlock between them. The League also benefited from its somewhat supportive position of the war effort by Britain. The arrival of the Labour Party government under Clement Atlee in July 1945 speeded up the Indian independence process. In 1946, the Cabinet Mission sent by Britain proposed that a union between British India and the princely states be established and a constitution drafted. However, this proposal failed to resolve the divide between the Congress and the League. During this time, Hindu–Muslim communal clashes intensified in many parts of India and the last British viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, came to the conclusion that the creation of Pakistan was inevitable. Accordingly, the two independent states of India and Pakistan were born on August 15, 1947, with Pakistan gaining the Muslim majority British-administered areas in the northwest and Bengal and India obtaining the rest of British India, while the fate of the 500-odd princely states remained undecided.[8] The partition was followed by one of history's largest mass migrations – over 10 million people from both sides – and was accompanied by brutal violence.

The Indian Independence Act of 1947 contained a provision that the 562 princely states – scattered throughout the subcontinent and partially autonomous under British rule – had the option to join either India or Pakistan. Thanks largely to the efforts of Sardar Vallabhai Patel, almost all states within India joined the Indian Union while Jinnah succeeded in gaining the accession by the Muslim princes within Pakistan's territorial domain. Three princely states decided to stay independent from both India and Pakistan: Jammu and Kashmir in the north, Hyderabad in the south, and Junagadh in the west. While the rulers of the latter two were Muslim, the majority of their population was Hindu and their accession to India occurred through internal revolt or Indian police actions. New Delhi legitimized these accessions through subsequent popular referenda. Only Jammu and Kashmir emerged as the most contentious, given its geographical proximity to Pakistan and a majority Muslim population

[8] For historical accounts on this, see Percival Spear, *A History of India* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1999), vol. II, 226–29; Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 324–49.

(concentrated largely in the northern areas and Kashmir Valley) even as a substantial Hindu population inhabited the Jammu area and a Buddhist population lived in the Ladakh region. The Hindu ruler of Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh, first chose to remain independent from both India and Pakistan, but in reaction to an invasion in October 1947 by tribal forces from Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (which were aided by Pakistani regular troops), he sought India's help. Following his signing an agreement to accede to India and the approval of Kashmir's undisputed leader of the time, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the Indian forces intervened and managed to partially evict the intruders. Jinnah's decision to send in Pakistani troops escalated the conflict to a short war between the two states, which lasted until the end of 1948.

A ceasefire agreement was reached between the two states under the auspices of the United Nations, which came into effect on January 1, 1949. A ceasefire line was established dividing Kashmir, with nearly two thirds of the state under Indian control and the rest under Pakistan, which the latter called "Azad" or "Free" Kashmir. The ceasefire line was monitored by a UN observer mission until 1972, when it was renamed Line of Control (LoC), and has been actively manned by the regular forces of the two countries, with sporadic shellings, occasional skirmishes, and limited incursions. Three major wars (1947–48, 1965, and 1971) and a minor war, Kargil (1999), have been fought over control of the territory, but neither country has succeeded in changing the line to its advantage.[9] This military stalemate is only part of the story of the rivalry between the two states. Understanding the structure of the conflict is critical to explaining why the India–Pakistan conflict persists as an enduring rivalry.

The structure of the conflict: asymmetry in goals

The India–Pakistan conflict is simultaneously over territory, national identity, and power position in the region. The political status of Kashmir, from Pakistan's perspective, is the unfinished business of the partition of the subcontinent on a religious basis in 1947. Successive Pakistani leaders have viewed the gaining of the entire Jammu and Kashmir state from Indian control as their core national mission for identity and strategic reasons.[10] To the Pakistanis, the Indian-controlled Muslim-majority state

[9] For a history of the conflict, see Victoria Schofield, *India, Pakistan and the Unfinished War* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2000).

[10] For an excellent assessment of Pakistan's identity and the role of Kashmir in it, see Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

of Kashmir, if given full freedom to choose in a plebiscite, would join Pakistan. However, as Bose puts it: "this state-centered, legalistic interpretation of the 'right to self-determination' is significantly different from the highly populist version articulated by proponents of an independent Kashmir."[11] Thus, despite the preference of most Kashmiri nationalist groups for independence or greater autonomy from both countries, Pakistan steadfastly holds the view that the partition of the sub-continent is still incomplete and that Pakistan's Islamic identity will not be total until the territory is unified with that country.

From India's standpoint, besides being an integral part of India legally by virtue of the instrument of accession signed by the Maharaja, Kashmir is very much a part of the nation's secular identity. To New Delhi, partition was completed in 1947 and no further territorial concessions to Pakistan are feasible. Further, India argues that the several democratic elections that it has held have legitimized the accession. The pressure of the nearly 125 million (12 percent of the total) strong Muslim population in India attests to the Indian belief that partition on the basis of religion was an unfortunate historical *fait accompli* and that ceding Jammu and Kashmir, or even portions of the Kashmir Valley or the Vale of Kashmir, where the Muslims constitute a majority, to Pakistan would result in a second partition, negating India's secular credentials. Indians in general fear that letting Kashmir go could open the floodgates of separatist movements in other parts of India and that it may be followed by intercommunal violence reminiscent of the partition days. There exists no serious constituency in India from the left to the right that believes that Kashmir should be ceded to Pakistan.[12] Extreme right-wingers in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would want to forcefully integrate Kashmir and even recover the portion held by Pakistan (Azad Kashmir), since ceding it to Pakistan or allowing independence to Kashmiris will be tantamount to placating the minority Muslims, while more moderate political groups would like to see a peaceful integration of Kashmir within the Indian Union. It seems that restoring Kashmir's pre-1953 autonomous status is the maximum concession that most Indian moderates would agree to.[13]

[11] Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir, Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 165, 168.

[12] On various Indian perspectives on Pakistan, see Kanti Bajpai, "Indian Strategic Culture," in Michael R. Chambers (ed.), *South Asia in 2020* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US War College, 2002), 245–303; see also, Maya Chadda, *Ethnicity, Security, and Separatism in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

[13] If implemented, the central government in Delhi will limit its jurisdiction in Kashmir to defense, foreign affairs, communications, and currency while the authority of the Indian

Despite the rhetoric about the indivisibility of Kashmir, it seems that the Indian elite and public could live with the status quo on the territorial division, i.e., acceptance of the Line of Control separating the Indian and Pakistani sides of Kashmir as the permanent border.[14] However, even in this instance, compromise has been constrained by the disparate positions within the Kashmiri liberation movement. This movement is a conglomerate of groups, some of which want to create an Islamic state while others are more tolerant toward the inclusion of the minority Hindu and Buddhist populations. The involvement of Islamic insurgent groups from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other parts of the Middle East and Central Asia and the deadly terrorist tactics they employ have undermined their cause within India. In the post-September 11, 2001 context, they also have lost much international sympathy as the intimate links between some such groups and al-Queda have been exposed. Despite this, the fact remains that a peace settlement between India and Pakistan would require the fulfillment of Kashmiri aspirations in some meaningful way. The challenge remains how the three mutually exclusive claims of India, Pakistan, and the Kashmiri movements can be accommodated, satisfying the aspirations of the three contestants simultaneously.[15]

Some of India's domestic constraints arise from the tendency of democratic states not to make territorial concessions, especially to non-democratic countries. This is because the political leader and party that make territorial concessions, especially under threat of violence, are not likely to get re-elected.[16] The Indian political parties seem to be unwilling to make territorial concessions to either China or Pakistan partly because of this factor. Despite its position of no revision to the territorial status quo, India has not been successful in fully integrating the Kashmiri population and legitimizing its control. This lack of success is due partly to the sometimes highhanded tactics of the Indian security forces in dealing

Election Commission and Supreme Court will still be maintained over the state. Harish Khare, "Kashmir: New Roadmap Taking Shape," http://www.hinduonnet.com, November 18, 2004.

[14] In November 2004, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reiterated the inviolability of India's territorial boundaries, but hinted at the possible Indian concession of loose borders between the two Kashmirs and considerable autonomy for the Kashmiri population. Singh was responding to Pakistani President Pervez Musharaff who had proposed the creation of seven demilitarized autonomous regions on both sides of Kashmir, granting some of them independence or giving the option of joint control by India and Pakistan, or placing them under UN mandate. "Indian PM Rejects Kashmir Proposal," BBC News, http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/40203, November 17, 2004.

[15] Bose, *Kashmir, Roots of Conflict*, 165.

[16] On the constraints that democracies face in war and peace, see Paul K. Huth and Todd L. Allee, *The Democratic Peace and Territorial Conflict in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), ch. 4.

with Kashmiri opposition groups and the general population, and the questionable past electoral practices of the national political parties and their allies in the state. Although the Indian side of Kashmir is more economically prosperous and politically democratic than the Pakistani counterpart, India has not been able to attract a majority of the Kashmiris to its secular/democratic identity. The Indian strategy has been to give time (as it did in the cases of other insurgencies in the Punjab and the northeast) for the major groups to become exhausted and reconciled to integration with India, and to engage in both coercive and non-coercive measures to quell the insurgency in the meantime. This strategy seems to have worked in the Punjab in stemming the tide of a violent separatist movement in the 1980s. The major difference is the irredentist dimension and the extensive involvement of outside actors in the Kashmir conflict. Further, India has maintained the separate identity and autonomy of Kashmir through a constitutional provision, and in recent years has agreed to include the issue of Kashmir as one of the topics in the composite dialogue for rapprochement with Pakistan.

Even after more than half a century of conflict, neither India nor Pakistan is willing to compromise on the Kashmir issue, nor do they have the capacity to force a settlement on each other. None of the wars that they fought was decisive enough to settle the issue once and for all. The 1971 War resulted in a military debacle for Pakistan and the loss of the eastern wing of its territory, but the secession of Bangladesh consolidated Pakistan's military assets on the western front. India was not able to translate the victory into a lasting political settlement. The war also increased the Pakistani elite's perception that India is out to destroy Pakistan as a state, and some of its members still harbor vengeance for the humiliation of 1971. A compromise has also become difficult given that the societal dominance of the Pakistani army has been built largely around the acquisition of Kashmir from India and balancing the power of its larger neighbor. Although the army will still retain numerous internal and external security missions, reducing the significance of the Kashmir issue could diminish the value of the army in Pakistani society and the extensive corporate interests built around it.[17]

Thus the fundamental asymmetry is about national identities and the role that the territory in dispute plays in each state's conceptions about

[17] The Pakistani army has emerged not only as the defender of the country, but a major player in the country's agrarian economy. The officer corps holds not only considerable social-political prestige, but its members are major landowners in the country and, as a result, they have benefited from the semi-feudal politico-economic order. Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 277–78.