

## EXPLORING THE ROLE OF IDEATIONAL FORCES IN INDO-PAK RELATIONS

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### Abstract

*The article explores the construction of relations between India and Pakistan with regard to the intangible ideational forces, which add to the material side of the equation. It examines the role of ideational forces in shaping the identity, security dynamics and political relations between the two countries. The analysis detects whether the underlying factor of the conflict can be attributed to the prevalent discourse, inspired by ideology, history and concomitant with identity. Speech acts are rather important in terms of relations between countries; where a change in rhetoric may have an impact on the progression of ties. A critical discourse analysis reveals the varied ways in which the ideational factors of religion and historical experiences come into play in the states' discourse, the media narrative and the non-state actors' narrative. Analysing the ideational aspect of discourse is essential; as these narratives take the shape of policy decisions and state behaviour; they generate a continuous cycle of mistrust and animosity amid both the countries.*

**Key words:** *Ideational Forces, Discourse Analysis, Religion, Historical Experiences, Narratives*

### Introduction

The enmity between Pakistan and India has been an impediment for peace in the South Asian region since the creation of the two states in 1947. The conflict that started with rivalling identities later took upon dimensions of border issues and water dispute. The two sides have fought four wars and today both are nuclear power states. Both the countries maintain an almost constant antagonistic disposition towards each other. However, there has been rarely any stagnancy in their ties. Although, the rivalry keeps on evoking global attention, enough could not

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be done to resolve the conflict. The enduring conflict between the two countries has been a point of much academic deliberation.

Major part of International Relations' research that evaluates ties between India and Pakistan adheres to the Realist perspective. However the conflict between the two South Asian states is not limited to material aspects, such as balance of power, territorial disputes and atomic weapons alone. Rather history is marked by a variety of instances of non-material divides including controversy of Urdu and Hindi language or clashing standpoints regarding cow slaughter. The material aspects of the Indo-Pakistan conflict can be adequately explained by the ideational factors that impart meaning to the rivalry and underlie it. In particular, Constructivism - that gives weightage to beliefs, culture, values, customs, historical events, intersubjective meanings, can be very useful in studying and evaluating the Indo-Pakistan relations.

The study explores whether the causal variable shaping the unique India-Pakistan ties relates to ideational forces or not. It studies the role of ideational forces in shaping the identities of the two states along with their security dynamics and political relations. Moreover, the varied ways in which the ideational factors of religion and historical experiences manifest themselves in the state narrative, the media narrative and the non-state narrative of the two states have been analysed. Also, the interplay of these distinct discourses in shaping the inter-state relations has been deduced.

## **Ideational Forces and the Framing of National Identity**

Constructivism holds that people associate with one another and form group identities on the basis of ideas. A state determines its identity and stakes on the grounds of mutually held ideas. Therefore, identities of states evolve from these ideas.<sup>1</sup> The conflict between Pakistan and India has always encompassed the problem of identity. Rather, the equation amid the two has contributed in forging and changing their identities. The upsurge of Hinduism and Islamic nationalism, and the part they have in designing the ideological parameters and identities of the two states, play a vital role in the persistence of conflict between the two.<sup>2</sup>

Burke opines that no other set of global religions are more incompatible to each other than Islam and Hinduism.<sup>3</sup> Looking into the

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999): 1.

<sup>2</sup> Vali Nasr, "National identities and the India-Pakistan conflict," In *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry*, Edited by T.V. Paul (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 178.

<sup>3</sup> S.M. Burke, *Mainsprings of Indian and Pakistani Foreign Policies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1975), 12.

Hindu social order, there are internal divisions of doctrine along with societal discord. On the contrary, Islam is an entity greater than only being a belief-system; it is also a fraternity, a 'nation'.<sup>4</sup> Islam is a global and extrovert religion while Hindu religion is a local and introvert one.<sup>5</sup> The injunctions of the two religions hindered their corresponding sets of believers from turning into a uniform, harmonious people in the sub-continent, regardless of living alongside each other for a long stretch of time.<sup>6</sup>

Within the sub-continent, an increasing number of followers of Hinduism and Islam engaged in creating derogatory myths about each other, a practice that is continuing till date.<sup>7</sup> Besides, the independence of the two states materialized along with widespread bloodshed, thus accentuating their determination to uphold that every person needs to have his place, retain a consistent 'national identity' and be a citizen of a country. It fortified the notion that accomplishment of separate homelands was predestined. Such a perspective has essentially wrought the outlook of the two adjoining yet antagonistic countries. The neighbours thus have their interest in the maintenance of expressions of otherness, primarily by educational, political, administrative and governmental means.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the official identity of both the states is evidently different. Indians have been living in an officially secular country while Pakistanis have been inhabitants of an Islamic dominion.<sup>9</sup>

### **Hinduism and Indian Identity**

Indian state took into account the multiplicity in its ethnicity, language, religion and culture, and subsumed it in the Nehruvian expression of 'unity in diversity'.<sup>10</sup> In order to cater to such diverse kinds of identities, the major Indian leaders adopted a dual plan. Firstly, they adopted "composite nationalism" and secondly relied on democratic

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 13-14.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen P. Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington D.C.: Brooking Institution Press, 2004), 20-21.

<sup>8</sup> Sanjay Chaturvedi, "Process of Othering in the Case of India and Pakistan," Royal Dutch Geographical Society, KNAG (2002):152. [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9663.00191/pdf](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9663.00191/pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Stephen P. Cohen, *Shooting for a Century: The India-Pakistan Conundrum* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 17.

<sup>10</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, "Unity in Diversity," (Speech, Hyderabad, January 15-18, 1953), Indian National Congress, <https://www.inc.in/en/media/speech/unity-in-diversity>.

principles to resolve disputes.<sup>11</sup> 'Composite nationalism' or 'secular nationalism' stresses on pluralistic (co-existing) and syncretised (amalgamation of cultural values) system, while 'Hindu nationalism' calls for absorption, into the overriding ethos of Hinduism.<sup>12</sup>

The Hindu nationalistic wave has truly confronted the secular outlook of the Indian state since the end of 1980s.<sup>13</sup> I.K. Shukla, a renowned Indian anti-Fascism activist, has highlighted the increasing role of *Hindutva* in India. "Indian identity is Hindu identity... India can be kept secular only if its Hindu identity can protect India (-M. M. Joshi)."<sup>14</sup> For Hindu nationalists, Hindu faith imparts the Indian state its unique character. Therefore, the rest of the belief-systems ought to adapt to the hub that is Hinduism. They hold that as the Indian territory has historically remained inhabited by the followers of Hinduism therefore it needs to be regarded as a Hindu realm<sup>15</sup> Conversely, for Gandhi, anyone can be Indian if he accepts the ethos of India as his.<sup>16</sup> However, majority of leadership from India were against the idea of creating an independent state for the Muslims living in the sub-continent, since the notion existed in utter contrast to the model of a united, secular country.<sup>17</sup>

### Islam and Pakistani Identity

The ideational forces of ideology, culture, norms and language together laid down the foundation for Pakistan's identity in the form of the Two Nation theory. 'Muslim nationalism' was based on religion as an indicator of identity. It also catered to the rise of the Muslim nation in a setting where they did not have sway.<sup>18</sup> Jinnah aimed at instituting a 'liberal democratic Muslim welfare state in Pakistan'.<sup>19</sup>

Pakistan was formally turned into an Islamic republic as a result of the Objectives resolution in 1949. The document called for a just society, democratic norms, harmony, egalitarianism, and liberty, "as enunciated by Islam", later leading to disagreements regarding what the religion entailed

<sup>11</sup> Vibha Pingle and Ashutosh Varshney "India's Identity Politics: Then and Now," *Managing Globalization* (2006),361, [http://ashutoshvarshney.net/wp-content/files\\_mf/indiasidentitypoliticsthenandnow11.pdf](http://ashutoshvarshney.net/wp-content/files_mf/indiasidentitypoliticsthenandnow11.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 364.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 362-363.

<sup>14</sup> I.K. Shukla, *Hindutva: An Autopsy of Fascism as a Theo Terrorist Cult and Other Essays* (Media House: Delhi, 2003), 36.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 362-363.

<sup>16</sup> Pingle and Varshney, "India's Identity Politics," 369.

<sup>17</sup> Cohen, *Shooting for a Century*, 60.

<sup>18</sup> Nasr, "National Identities," 180.

<sup>19</sup> Javid Iqbal, *Islam and Pakistan's Identity* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 2003), 353-354.

of a country.<sup>20</sup> The identity of Pakistan, after initially being constructed on the idea of two-nation theory, has continually being shaped by its animosity with 'Hindu' India.<sup>21</sup>

Thus following its creation, "Islamic Pakistan" has been describing its identity in relation to the opposition to "Hindu India".<sup>22</sup> The impact of exploiting atrocious recollections of independence by both the parties, in order to sustain distrust and perpetuate animosity has been extensive.<sup>23</sup> Otherness has come to be crucial for consolidating nationhood in the two states; as signboards of land demarcation, as indicators of antagonistic ties, and as means of countries' safety and autonomy. New Delhi and Islamabad; alongside the hegemonic designs of their respective ideational outfits, continue to draw, reinforce and legitimize borders amid 'Self' and the 'Other'.<sup>24</sup>

### **Role of Ideational Forces in Shaping Indo-Pakistan Security Dynamics**

The strategies of New Delhi and Islamabad have remained under the influence of ideational discrepancies and history. The choices made by both the sides in their external policies attest to the significance and weightage of their intersubjective understandings and security outlook vis-à-vis each other. The two sides have grown accustomed to viewing any issue concerning their inter-relations from the standpoint of security, given the violence and reservations of the bygone days. Besides, the outlook of policy-makers has had a significant part in modelling the security strategies of the countries.<sup>25</sup>

Generally, the external policy of Islamabad remains to have a profound religious impression.<sup>26</sup> As for India, it keeps on paying tribute to Gandhi's statute of 'non-violence' yet only verbally. <sup>27</sup> Every time the external conditions bettered, New Delhi and Islamabad have constantly reverted to their individual permanent leitmotifs of non-alignment and

<sup>20</sup> Hussain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), 16.

<sup>21</sup> Ian Talbot, *Reinventing the Nation: India & Pakistan* (London: Arnold, 2000), 214.

<sup>22</sup> Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, 15.

<sup>23</sup> Chaturvedi, "Process of Othering," 152.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>25</sup> Moonis Ahmar, "Security Perceptions in the Indo-Pakistan Relationship" *Pakistan Horizon* 37, no. 1 (First Quarter 1984): 102-103. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41403911>.

<sup>26</sup> Hasan Askari Rizvi, "Pakistan: Ideology and Foreign Policy," *Asian Affairs* 10, no. 1 (Spring, 1983): 49, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30171948>.

<sup>27</sup> Burke, *Indian and Pakistani Foreign Policies*, 33.

Islamic unanimity respectively.<sup>28</sup> Pakistani state felt vulnerable from a couple of threats; Indian threat and Communist ideology. Therefore, Pakistan allied with the West in an attempt to ensure its safety from both the entities.<sup>29</sup> As for New Delhi, it remained committed to non-alignment for decades after its independence though lately there has been a gradual movement toward multi-alignment.<sup>30</sup>

New Delhi's view regarding Islamabad has oscillated amid the points of disengaging completely and engaging comprehensively.<sup>31</sup> Islamabad on its own, and augmented by its rapport with Beijing, is a vital liability for the security matrix of New Delhi. The former is therefore considered as an obstruction in New Delhi's quest to attain the aims of its national grand strategy.<sup>32</sup> New Delhi believes that a robust Islamabad will eventually create imbalance in the immediate power equilibrium.<sup>33</sup> In addition, Indian security apprehensions vis-à-vis Pakistan, in most cases emerge as a manifestation of the ideational difference of religion. Islamabad is blamed for interfering in Indian domestic matters on grounds of displaying apprehension for the treatment of the Indian Muslims. Also, New Delhi accuses Islamabad for prompting the Khalistan movement, of the followers of Sikhism, in India. Similarly, Islamabad does not skip a chance to bring up the Kashmir dispute on every global and Muslim forum.<sup>34</sup>

On the other hand, the ideational force of history provides the foundation of Pakistan's security perceptions about India. Indira Gandhi declared as a premier of India that, "I am proud of my forefathers but I will never forgive them for accepting division of India." She vowed that she should be evaluated during her term for the manner in which she undoes that fault of the previous Indian leaders.<sup>35</sup> It is such long held ambitions of retrieving the '*Akhand Bharat*' or United India that make up one of the foundational blocks for the Indian goal of regional hegemony. That is why Islamabad perceives New Delhi's power positions, ranging from its army's

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>30</sup> M. K. Narayanan, "Non-Alignment to Multi-Alignment," *The Hindu*, September 22, 2016. <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/Non-alignment-to-multi-alignment/article13982580.ece>.

<sup>31</sup> Shaukat Iqbal, *The New Great Game and Security Challenges for Pakistan* (Karachi: Paramount Books Ltd, 2015), 219.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 220.

<sup>33</sup> Ahmar, "Security Perceptions," 110.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 109-110.

<sup>35</sup> Iqbal, *The New Great Game*, 221.

dominance to such projected situations as Indian acquisition of veto power and rise as a great power, as a risk to its safety.<sup>36</sup>

### **Ideational Forces and Indo-Pakistan Security Issues**

The major issue areas in the security dynamics between the two states can be explained by their ideational context. The tussle for Kashmir may be viewed through the prism of contending notions of pluralistic secular Indian identity versus Islamic Pakistani identity.<sup>37</sup> Before partition, the Hindu rajas established an institutional mechanism that ignored the larger Islamic community.<sup>38</sup> Pakistani notion of self that sees the overtly Muslim territory of Kashmir like an integral portion of the state's religious character is erected in competition to the official secularity of India which espouses that Kashmiri customs and language can be well-kept in the heterogeneity of India.<sup>39</sup> The problem unavoidably returns to the kind of ties amid Islamabad and New Delhi.<sup>40</sup>

The issue of Kashmir and the clash regarding water distribution are interlinked. The contested river structure provides sustainability to populations on both sides of the border.<sup>41</sup> Weighing the valid apprehensions; including ensuring qualitative and quantitative balance, costing, suitability according to the rainy weather, is in itself quite troublesome. In addition, the matter has attained a rather intense emotionally and ideationally charged angle.<sup>42</sup>

As for nuclearization, the military in Islamabad and the ruling party in New Delhi were the key agents in generating the core discourses in this regard. India used the ideational force of '*Hindutva*' for framing the narrative and garner acceptability for the move. The construction of the Pakistani narrative was based on the notion of an 'Islamic bomb'<sup>43</sup> and the

<sup>36</sup> Ahmar, "Security Perceptions," 108.

<sup>37</sup> Matthew Hill and Nishank Motwani, "Language, Identity and (In)Security in India-Pakistan Relations: The Case of Kashmir," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 40, no. 1(2017): 123 .

<sup>38</sup> Ayman A. Khondker, "The Factors Affecting South Asian National Hierarchy," Research Paper, Hamilton: Colgate University, 2015, [http://asianstudies.buffalo.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2015/09/MGR2015\\_AymanKhondker.pdf](http://asianstudies.buffalo.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2015/09/MGR2015_AymanKhondker.pdf).

<sup>39</sup> Hill and Motwani, "Language, Identity and (In)Security," 123-124.

<sup>40</sup> Cohen, *Shooting for a Century*, 51.

<sup>41</sup> "Kashmir and the Politics of Water," *Al Jazeera*, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/kashmirtheforgottenconflict/2011/07/20117812154478992.html>.

<sup>42</sup> Cohen, *Shooting for a Century*, 43-44.

<sup>43</sup> Pervez Hoodbhoy, "Can the Islamic Bomb become Reality? *EACPE*, <http://eacpe.org/content/uploads/2014/02/Is-the-Islamic-Bomb-for-real.pdf>.

Indian threat.<sup>44</sup> The ideational factors played a vital role along with the tangible aspects of might and supremacy. The contradictory ideational forces shaping the states' identities were further cemented by the establishments on both the sides, to ensure validation of their decisions on going nuclear.<sup>45</sup>

The withdrawal of American forces from Afghan soil will provide Indian and Pakistani sides an arena for proxy confrontations, yet again.<sup>46</sup> Overall, the scenario of the region is stuck amid terrorist threat and the dynamics of nuclear policies that is worsened by the dearth of negotiation, absence of procedures for arms control, continued distrust and the upsurge of fundamental political entities.<sup>47</sup> Although the nuclear option is archaic, yet it is not completely out of the question. The security perceptions can be backslid by deconstructing the outlooks of the two sides, increasing engagement and finding out spheres of shared concerns.

### **Impact of Ideational Forces on Indo-Pakistan Political Ties**

Outlook regarding the interests of the two states takes shape from history. Their outlooks have a tendency to continue the old pattern between the two states.<sup>48</sup> Various forces at work in the Pakistani and Indian state have led to the generation of contradicting historic versions, as is usually anticipated from such countries that have remained antagonistic toward one another for over seven decades. The ideational forces of history and religion are being utilized by the establishment for framing their narratives and creating a 'social reality'.<sup>49</sup> Religious ideology has an impact on the conflicts between countries from the perspective of the differences in ideology amid the conflicting states; particularly in a situation when a country based on religion comes in conflict with a

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<sup>44</sup> Pervez, *Socially Constructed Security Dilemma*, 173-174.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 213.

<sup>46</sup> Frederic Grare, "India-Pakistan Relations: Does Modi Matter?" *The Washington Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (Winter 2015): 109. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0163660X.2014.1002158>.

<sup>47</sup> Zulfqar Khan, "India-Pakistan: Emerging Trends in Strategic Dynamics," *The Korean Journal of International Studies* 13, no. 3 (December 2015): 592, <http://dx.doi.org/10.14731/kjis.2015.12.13.3.577>.

<sup>48</sup> Sanjeeb K. Mohanty, "South Asian Conflicts : Potent Sources and their Significance," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 70, no. 4 (October - December, 2009): 1205-1211, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42744030> 1205-1211.

<sup>49</sup> Haider K. Nizamani, *The Roots of Rhetoric: Politics of Nuclear Weapons in India and Pakistan* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2000).



country espousing secularism. This scenario most probably causes the conflict to turn violent.<sup>50</sup>

### Pakistani Official Discourse and Ideational Factors

As per the overriding geostrategic perspective of the officials in Islamabad, New Delhi has imperialist tendencies and harbours ambitions to demote Islamabad to a subservient position.<sup>51</sup> In the case of Pakistani official narrative, the use of ideational forces largely accounts for substantiating the 'otherness' of India. Islamabad's acts cannot be considered the only reason of Indo-Pakistan strained ties. Hindu nationalistic movements have performed a vital part in the Indian state from the early 1990s. Nevertheless, the kind of links between religion and state in Islamabad and their coming into contact with the politics of New Delhi have heightened the acrimony.<sup>52</sup>

Pakistan defines itself as opposed to a "Hindu India" that never approved of the independence of the separate Muslim homeland and has been attempting to dismember it as per the state narrative. I.K. Shukla, a renowned Indian anti-Fascism activist, has highlighted the increasing role of *Hindutva* in India.<sup>53</sup> Within Pakistan, the nation-wide propagation of this account, apart from creating bitterness toward the Indian state, has caused trouble for the Hindu community living within Pakistan. Nevertheless, the development of National Action Plan (NAP) for fighting extremist activities works towards keeping the biased outlook vis-à-vis minority groups in check. <sup>54</sup> Mainstream religious clergy have arisen as strong political entities.<sup>55</sup> Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl's Secretary General and Deputy Chairman of Senate Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, injured in the explosions in Mastung in May 2017, stated that, "*Indian conspiracy has led to instability in Pakistan.*" He asserted while pointing toward India that everybody realizes "*what forces were involved in the attack. India has still*

<sup>50</sup> Peter S Henne, "The Two Swords: Religion-state Connections and Interstate Disputes," *Journal of Peace Research* 49, no. 6 (November 2012): 755, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41721660>.

<sup>51</sup> Sanjay Chaturvedi, "Process of Othering in the Case of India and Pakistan," 2002, Royal Dutch Geographical Society KNAG, 153. [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9663.00191/pdf](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9663.00191/pdf).

<sup>52</sup> Henne, "The Two Swords," 764.

<sup>53</sup> I. K. Shukla, *Hindutva: An Autopsy of Fascism as a Theo Terrorist Cult and Other Essays* (Delhi P Media House, 2003): 36.

<sup>54</sup> Umair Jamal, "The Plight of Pakistan's Hindu Community," *The Diplomat*, June 23, 2016, <http://thediplomat.com/2016/06/the-plight-of-pakistans-hindu-community/>

<sup>55</sup> Maleeha Lodhi, *Pakistan Beyond the 'Crisis State'* (Oxford University Press: Karachi, 2011): 101

not accepted Pakistan's independence."<sup>56</sup> Here the ideational factor of historical experiences is employed to construct the negative-other representation of India. The classic rhetoric of New Delhi not accepting the independence of Pakistan has been incorporated. In addition, India is explicitly accused for creating instability in Pakistan.

Within the state, there are few that call for establishing a theocracy including Jamaat-e-Islami. While a number of people maintain that Islamic ideology is not much pertinent to the state, majority of the population remains impartial between the couple of standpoints.<sup>57</sup> The strong linkage between the creation of Pakistani state and the religion of Islam intensify the importance of sacred symbolism in the political discourse.<sup>58</sup> Thus, faith itself does not lead to violent actions rather it is the employment of religious principles by politicians that may cause strong actions based on religion.<sup>59</sup> However, 'Jinnah's Pakistan' may thrive until such Muslim population exists in the state that relates to the identity and destiny of other Muslims, and has compassion for the self-respect of minority and marginalized groups.<sup>60</sup>

### Indian Official Discourse and Ideational Factors

India on many accounts has specified that it is a secular country. However, under the title of *Hindutva*, Indians are seeing an upsurge and spread of Hindu nationalist propensities. Thus, nationalistic ideas have taken a new form in India. They are today meant to be situated in a persistent clash with Islamabad.<sup>61</sup> Within politics, the upsurge of Hindu nationalist tide, has led to the creation of a smooth network amongst related sections in 'civil society'; including Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), Shiv Sena, political domain i.e. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the administration headed by BJP in the centre. RSS and VHP apparently maintain substantial sway over the strategies on fundamental matters concerning 'national identity'.<sup>62</sup> Their objectives include: emphasizing the significance of Hindu religion for the

<sup>56</sup> "India should Know Pakistan is a Nuclear State: Abdul Ghafoor Haideri," *The Nation*, May 18, 2017, <http://nation.com.pk/national/18-May-2017/india-should-know-pakistan-is-a-nuclear-state-abdul-ghafoor-haideri>.

<sup>57</sup> Akbar Ahmed, "Why Jinnah Matters," in *Pakistan Beyond the 'Crisis State' ed.*, Maleeha Lodhi (Oxford University Press: Karachi, 2011), 21.

<sup>58</sup> Henne, "The Two Swords," 756.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 754.

<sup>60</sup> Ahmed, "Why Jinnah Matters," 34.

<sup>61</sup> Pingle and Varshney, "India's Identity Politics," 365-366.

<sup>62</sup> Muthiah Alagappa, ed. *Civil Society and Political Change in Asia: Expanding and Contracting Democratic Space* (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 499.

state as well as to develop the integrity of the Hindus. This notion of *Hindutva* is opposed to 'composite nationalism' and also the caste-based Hindu ideological system prevalent for a century.<sup>63</sup>

The BJP-RSS partnership has seriously attempted to 'saffronise' history and inquiry.<sup>64</sup> As the party gained political rein in the country, stern extortions are being faced by the followers of all religious minorities even low-caste Hindus.<sup>65</sup> The election of Narendra Modi as a PM appeared as a key cessation from the revered secular ideal of the country. His part in Gujarat pogrom also stayed controversy-ridden.<sup>66</sup> The government, since the day of its installation, has assumed a firebrand stance vis-à-vis Islamabad. It therefore does not come as a surprise that there has been an increase in scuffles along the Line of Control and 'Working Boundary'.<sup>67</sup> The regional stability is threatened by the emergent tide of Hindu fanaticism.<sup>68</sup>

The violent Hindu jingoism<sup>69</sup> has polarised the Indian masses. The split is amid those who value the secular ideals of Nehru versus those who revere Modi for allowing them to feel proud of their state.<sup>70</sup> As for Pakistan, following 1980s, Islamabad has hardly been bringing up the matter of New Delhi during the period of elections. Seemingly, a harsh stance vis-à-vis Islamabad is what impresses the Indian vote bank.<sup>71</sup>

The role of ideational forces in the form of religion, hate speech, 'anti-other' notions and suppression of minorities is rather pronounced in the case of the Indian side of the equation as compared to the Pakistani

<sup>63</sup> Pingle and Varshney, "India's Identity Politics," 365-366.

<sup>64</sup> Ian Talbot, *Reinventing the Nation: India & Pakistan* (London: Arnold, 2000), 285.

<sup>65</sup> Aymen Ijaz, "Growing Hindu Extremism in India: Implications for Neighbouring Countries," IPRI Talks, December 4, 2015, <http://www.ipripak.org/growing-hindu-extremism-in-india-implications-for-neighbouring-countries>.

<sup>66</sup> Arif Rafiq, "Beware the Emerging New India," *TRT World*, 2017, <http://www.trtworld.com/opinion/beware-the-emerging-new-india-404084>.

<sup>67</sup> Ejaz Hussain, "BJP's Recent Win and Implications for Pakistan," *Daily Times*, updated: March 13, 2017, <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/14-Mar-17/bjps-recent-win-and-implications-for-pakistan>.

<sup>68</sup> Ijaz, "Growing Hindu Extremism in India."

<sup>69</sup> Jingoism means extreme patriotism, especially in the form of aggressive or warlike foreign policy. "The popular jingoism that swept the lower-middle classes".

<sup>70</sup> Irfan Husain "Why the Anger?" *Dawn*, July 29, 2017, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1348305/why-the-anger>.

<sup>71</sup> Nadeem F. Paracha, "India's Strange Preoccupation with Pakistan," *DW*, October 24, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/indias-strange-preoccupation-with-pakistan/a-18803683>.

side. According to the Universal Periodic Review of India submitted to the United Nations (UN) in 2017, the tendency of Indian parliamentarians and members of Central Council of Ministers undertaking hate speech provoking violent actions, has ascended from May 2014. Particularly hate speech that incites mobs of *Hindutva* enthusiasts to carry out violent activities toward Muslims and Christians.<sup>72</sup> Despite of being an ideological state, the discourse emanating from Pakistani officials at present is not as religiously charged as that arising from India.

### **Narrative of Radical Non State Actors and Indo-Pakistan Relations**

Certain non-state actors (NSAs) in both the countries employ terminologies and descriptions streaked with religion and sacred notions to structure the discourse regarding the unique personality and true pursuit of a people.<sup>73</sup> The interlinking of discourses of nationalism and religion ought to be deliberated - on the end where they are generated - as well as on the end where the discourses are received. Rhetoric can resonate on the level of religion; it might be understood on the grounds of religion and sacred ideals by a number of the recipients of the discourse.<sup>74</sup> Also, the impact, connotations, and reverberation of nationalistic rhetoric, is dependent on not the narrative alone but also on the purpose of the narrator and the manner in which the narrative is construed.<sup>75</sup>

### **Radical Non -State Actors in Pakistan and Indo-Pakistan Relations**

Islamic fanaticism is damaging to both the countries and their relations with one another. As religion made inroads into politics during the era of General Zia, some militant outfits cashed into the religious sentiment to encourage their recruits. Although faith based groupings have existed and played a part in the society after the independence, yet the novelty is their engagement in politics. With the passage of time, these groupings have grown aggressive in their response to the adversary - Indian state and the Western states, but have also fashioned themselves as the defender of the state ideology.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Evangelical Fellowship of India, *Religious Minorities in India: Targetted Hate and Violence by Non State Actors, and Issues of Impunity* UPR, Human Rights Council (April-May 2017):4 <http://www.worldevangelicals.org/un/pdf/UPR2016>.

<sup>73</sup> Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism," 10.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Mohanty, "South Asian Conflicts," 1202.

The non-state extremist forces took over the rationale behind the creation of a Muslim state in the sub-continent and tinted it with their fanatic version. The fanatic take-over of the state's description regarding the emergence of the country is a vital factor behind the sourness of ties between the neighbouring countries.<sup>77</sup> Also, following the assault on the World Trade Centre (WTC) in 2001, there is an up-surge in the international concern regarding the augmenting capability and impact of religious NSAs in the Pakistani society, as a factor for transforming the state.<sup>78</sup>

A range of extremist groupings misuse faith as a way to attain different goals ranging from acquisition of power, eliminating sway of the West to recompense for any alleged unjust treatment received.<sup>79</sup> Various non-state radical outfits have been operating in the country including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM),<sup>80</sup> Lashkar-e-Jhangvi,<sup>81</sup> Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), and the Afghan Taliban, among the rest.<sup>82</sup> LeT or 'Army of the Pure' originated in late 1980s. Following September 11 attacks, which led to the banning of the organization by the Pakistani establishment, the group went covert. It split, used various aliases, and quit taking blame for assaults. Nevertheless, the outfit was allegedly involved in numerous noticeable assaults across the border,<sup>83</sup> including train explosions of 2006.<sup>84</sup>

Hafiz Saeed, head of LeT, while addressing a gathering for the cause of Kashmir, stated: "Now the Kashmiri Mujahideen are giving a befitting reply to India at Akhnoor, Uri and other places. It is not me alone but now Baloch people and other Pakistanis are with us."<sup>85</sup> The term

<sup>77</sup> Lodhi, *Pakistan beyond the 'Crisis State'*, 126.

<sup>78</sup> Abdul Rauf Iqbal & Muhammad Ahsan, "Mobilization Enablers for Religious Non-State Actors in Pakistan," *ISSRA Papers* 8, (2016):129-130. [http://www.ndu.edu.pk/issra/issra\\_pub/articles/issra-paper/ISSRA\\_Papers\\_Vol8\\_Issue1\\_2016/07\\_RA\\_Abdul\\_Rauf.pdf](http://www.ndu.edu.pk/issra/issra_pub/articles/issra-paper/ISSRA_Papers_Vol8_Issue1_2016/07_RA_Abdul_Rauf.pdf)

<sup>79</sup> Lodhi, *Pakistan beyond the 'Crisis State'*, 130.

<sup>80</sup> Zahid Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 2007): 25.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 173.

<sup>83</sup> Carin Zissis, "Terror Groups in India, *Council on Foreign Relations*," November 27, 2008, <https://www.cfr.org/background/terror-groups-india>.

<sup>84</sup> A series of seven bomb blasts occurred on the local railway network in Mumbai causing heavy loss of life.

<sup>85</sup> PTI, "Kashmiri Militants giving India 'Befitting Reply': Hafiz Saeed," *Economic Times*, January 13, 2017, <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/kashmiri-militants-giving-india-befitting-reply-hafiz-saeed/articleshow/56528649.cms>.

'*Mujahideen*' highlights the religious undertones of the Indo-Pak conflict around Kashmir. While "Baloch people and other *Pakistanis are with us*" reflects the role of religion in forming identity in the sub-continent. "...*befitting reply to India*" mirrors the anti-India sentiment grounded in historical experiences. Such strong subjects shaped by the radical groups display the partial narrative of the radical non-state actors imbued with ideational forces of Islamic ideology and anti-India sentiment. It indicates how the ideational factors, in the non-state narrative, affect the Indo-Pak relationship.

The non-state discourse has varied avenues to influence the masses' perception about the other, through religious seminaries, mosques, and philanthropic organizations of the extremist outfits. The inculcation of religion, and in some instances historical experiences, in the non-state narrative allows the substantiation of negative intersubjective understanding of India in Pakistan.

### **Radical Non- State Actors' Narrative in India and Indo-Pak Ties**

Within India various non-state Hindu radical groups, are operating to impose their vision of Hindu nationalism on the Indian state. These advocates of *Hindutva* describe the civilization prevailing in India as Hindu, consider Indian state as a Hindu entity and strive for establishing the dominance of the followers and ethos of Hinduism.<sup>86</sup> For instance, a prominent RSS frontrunner Bhaiyyaji Joshi in 2014, gave a blanket statement declaring that people residing in "Hindustan are Hindus"<sup>87</sup>

Nationalistic drives based on Hinduism in India comprise of three noticeable groups: BJP, RSS and VHP. BJP operates in the domain of politics and VHP in culture.<sup>88</sup> As for RSS, it is one of biggest volunteer-based NGO in the world. It works for the formation of "United India", which may truly represent Hindu values or the *Hindutva* doctrine of the organization. The organization even demanded a saffron-coloured flag, which is representative of the Hindu faith and rejected the three-coloured one for the Indian state.<sup>89</sup> RSS ensures analysing the philosophy and theory along with taking practical steps for the propagation of *Hindutva*.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Sudha Ramachandran, "Hindutva Terrorism in India," *The Diplomat*, July 7, 2017, <http://thediplomat.com/2017/07/Hindutva-terrorism-in-india/>.

<sup>87</sup> "Yogi Adityanath says Nothing Wrong with Hindu Rashtra Concept, BJP Defends him," *Hindustan Times*, April 6, 2017, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/up-cm-yogi-adityanath-says-there-s-nothing-wrong-with-hindu-rashtra-concept-bjp-defends-him/story-aJcX0rQV7bpclddfm80P8I.html>.

<sup>88</sup> Pingle and Varshney, "India's Identity Politics," 372.

<sup>89</sup> Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, 52.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

Moreover, the radical groups are carrying out religious conversions under the guise of “*gharwapsi*” or ‘home coming’ asserting the rhetoric that all that live in India have been Hindus in the past. Leader of Dharam Jagran Manch, a Hindu extremist organization stated, “31<sup>st</sup> December, 2021 is the last for Christianity and Islam in this country.”<sup>91</sup>

According to the constitutional directives of India, minorities are guaranteed liberty to observe their religious principles. Yet presently the minorities are finding it difficult to fulfil the basic need to affiliate with a community and express freely. Although, fanatic Hindu elements have been attacking the minorities especially Muslims in the past as well, yet certain organizations might be more blatant and treacherous than the earlier demonstrations of extremist elements.<sup>92</sup> “Re-imagination” project of *Hindutva* is being carried out by the Sangh family. Within the alleged secular pluralist state of India, the followers of Islam have been coerced to undergo religious conversions to the Hindu faith. Their residences are set to fire and individuals are killed for consumption of cow meat.<sup>93</sup> Even graver has been the blanket statement of RSS frontrunners declaring that people residing in “Hindustan are Hindus”<sup>94</sup> With the same token, a vitalised RSS during the rule of Modi, has motivated its zealots to carry out acts against the minorities primarily Muslims. They themselves have imposed ban on cow slaughter; not essentially instructed by law, via vigilante justice and mob killings.<sup>95</sup> They are carrying out religious conversions under the guise of “*gharwapsi*” or ‘home coming’ asserting the rhetoric that all that live in India have been Hindus in the past.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Chandrakant Naidu, “The Biggest Problem with Gharwapsi: There's no Escape from Caste,” *Firstpost*, December 27, 2014, <http://www.firstpost.com/india/the-biggest-problem-with-ghar-wapsi-theres-no-escape-from-caste-2016963.html>.

<sup>92</sup> Mandakini Gahlot “Filmmaker's View: India's Hindu Fundamentalists,” *Al Jazeera*, updated October 8, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/peopleandpower/2015/10/indias-hindu-fundamentalists-151008073418225.html>.

<sup>93</sup> “India's Hindu Fundamentalists,” *Al Jazeera*.

<sup>94</sup> “Yogi Adityanath says Nothing Wrong with Hindu Rashtra Concept, BJP Defends him,” *Hindustan Times*, updated April 06, 2017, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/up-cm-yogi-adityanath-says-there-s-nothing-wrong-with-hindu-rashtra-concept-bjp-defends-him/story-aJcX0rQV7bpclddfm80P8I.html>.

<sup>95</sup> Shahzaib Khan, “India's Age of Extremism”, *The Express Tribune*, July 14, 2017.

<sup>96</sup> Chandrakant Naidu, “The biggest problem with gharwapsi: There's no escape from caste.”

N. S. Ashave meant to unify Indians on the grounds of shared religion, language and rival state.<sup>97</sup> Apart from highlighting ideological differences, Indian NSAs have equated Pakistan being an Islamic country, to it being a fanatic power. The use of ideational factors including religion, and history in the discourse is largely contributing to negative intersubjective understanding between the masses of the two sides. It leads to the sourness of ties amid them. The non-state extremist forces in Pakistan took over the reasoning behind the creation of Pakistan and moulded it with their extremist version. Besides, in the case of India the frenzied non-state organizations work as a spiritual authority for the ruling coalition party as well. Ideational forces of religion in the form of *Hindutva* and historical experiences in the shape of anti-Muslim sentiments, are being employed to consolidate the negative other-representation of Pakistan. Misrepresentation of history is also rife to find justification for the conversion of minorities to Hinduism. The inculcation of ideational forces in the non-state narrative allows the substantiation of negative intersubjective understanding of Pakistan in India.

### **Ideational Forces in the Media Discourse and Indo-Pakistan Relations**

Within the Indo-Pakistan region, a distinctive characteristic of the mass media is the part played by the press through the history. From working as an upholder of over-all community concerns, to turning into a narrator of struggle for independence, to successively running a vigorous campaign for the establishment of autonomous bodies within the two states, the press has shown that media could act as a catalyst in progress and growth of countries.<sup>98</sup>

The media unites as well as disconnects the distinct character and outlooks of the two neighbouring states. Through the years it has facilitated in reinforcing animosity as well as reminiscing of the shared past. Media can simply be a reflection of the truth. However, there is an intrinsically distorted element inherent in media - slanted, sensationalized and selective.<sup>99</sup>

The dynamics between the two states are constructed on the basis of their perceptions of one another. The imageries of 'Other' are not kept

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<sup>97</sup> Ramachandra Guha, "Why India Cannot be Hindu Pakistan," *Hindustan Times*, August 13, 2016, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/columns/why-india-cannot-be-a-hindu-pakistan/story-eWDSfReKg9yd6hJCR9YKwK.html>.

<sup>98</sup> Javed Jabbar, *Prospects of Improving Pakistan-India Relations through Media* (Islamabad: PILDAT, August 2012), 22, <http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/FP/ProspectsofImprovingPakistan-IndiaRelationsthroughMedia.pdf>.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.



restricted to the ruling class. Rather the concept of the 'Other' is transmitted to the grassroots via media.<sup>100</sup> Besides, the way in which specific update is chosen for noticeable presentation and the way in which it is framed and projected largely defines opinions.<sup>101</sup> Media could have a direct impact on policy decisions, or an indirect one via affecting the outlook of the masses. In either situation, the narrative presented by media in both the states is linked to the policy choices made by the state, and is thus pertinent for garnering understanding about the dynamics of the relationship.<sup>102</sup>

The relationship between media and politics is interdependent, innate and essential. Every facet of the state, overtly or covertly is under the impact of politics and thus pertinent to the media. It is when the biased opinions or stakes of the people in government begin shaping the policy of media, that the interaction amid the two entities turns into a source of apprehension. However, this factor is more relevant in internal political matters than in Islamabad's policies concerning New Delhi, whereby mostly the media is intently in line with the state's professed policy. Similar is generally the case with New Delhi.<sup>103</sup>

In the case of Pakistani media, religion and historical customs have been highlighted, but for those aspects that might facilitate normalisation of ties between the two states. Also, the media narrative usually identifies national jingoism based on religion as a source to fulfil political purposes. On the other hand, the Hindu extremist segments and their role in marginalizing the Muslim community in India are also presented as a source of concern.

Indian media on the one hand forwards the state narrative by focusing on the incidences of Islamist religious extremism in Pakistan. At the same time, to enhance the positive self-representation, there is a growing trend in the Indian electronic, print and especially social media to denounce any acts of Hindu jingoism with the tag of 'Not in my name'. The rhetoric condemns the policy decisions of the state and extremist actions of non-state actors that are purported onto religion. Thus, the Indian media plays a dual role. On the one hand, the media presents the acts of lynching and border skirmishes as based on religion and past events and resentment. At the same time, media is also attempting to construct the

<sup>100</sup> Sanjay Chaturvedi, "Process of Othering in the Case of India and Pakistan," *Royal Dutch Geographical Society* KNAG (2002): 153, [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9663.00191/pdf](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9663.00191/pdf)

<sup>101</sup> Jabbar, *Improving Pakistan-India Relations*. 23.

<sup>102</sup> Sunniva Lagnestål Melhuus, *Perceptions of a Conflict – A Qualitative Analysis of Indian and Pakistani Mass Media* (Karlstad: Karlstad University (Spring 2013), 12-13.

<sup>103</sup> Javed Jabbar, *Role of Pakistani Media in Pakistan-India Relations*.

narrative in such a manner that challenges the acrimonious version presented by the state and non-state actors.

Though the part of media pertaining to news reporting might always have the antagonism and strain that portray schism and stances in the domain of politics. Yet, the other part of analysis and contemplation, that might have fewer readers daily but that has a stable snowballing impact adds to create an atmosphere where transformation in the existing state of affairs is probable.<sup>104</sup> As a consequence, the ideational forces of religion and history work their way into the media narrative in two ways. On one hand, the state narrative is consolidated by the media, grounding their political choices in religion and historical experiences. On the other hand, there is a growing trend of activism in the print media on both sides of the border, calling for watering down the negative impact of religion on the ties between the states.

## Conclusion

Indo-Pakistan discourse, emanating from political elite, non-state actors and media sources has kept on underscoring religion and history, thus negatively affecting each other's perceptions. In the case of Pakistan, employing Islam for nation's unification and security stayed supreme. Islamic ideology has been employed to unite the people in times of uncertainty. Faith has been used as leverage against the outer Indian problem, and to unify the masses internally. Religious fervour has steadily built in, prompting the people and framing the grounds for policy decisions. In the case of India, the plurality of the masses defines Indian secular identity on one hand while on the other end the gradual empowerment of radical forces defines the Indian identity around Hindu nationalism – thus the belief in the notion of *Hindustan is for Hindus*. The nostalgia of the lost territory of *Akhand Bharat* has remained the driving force in determining their security dynamics.

Religion is much more influential in the state narrative of India as compared to Pakistan, despite the former being a secular state. In the case of Pakistan, historical experiences of partition and violent clashes are employed to consolidate the image of India as a threat, thus reinforcing the inter-subjective understanding between the two states.

In the narrative of radical non-state actors, religion is the vital feature for both the states. The non-state discourse emanating from India is replete with the quest for mobilizing the masses for the creation of *Hindu Rashtra* (state) in India, marginalizing the minorities, and treating Pakistan as an Islamist extremist state. NSAs in Pakistan have grown aggressive with time. They have presented themselves as the defender of

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 23.

the purported state ideology against Indian and Western influences and have used religion as a means to achieve power and influence.

Media narrative plays a dual role. It underscores the religious and ideological differences and historical dimension while framing the dynamics between the two states. Concurrently, it laments that the equation amid the two states is being negatively impacted by the religious zeal and long-held bitterness of the masses. It is disappointing that the impasse in Indo-Pakistan ties is continuing particularly in a scenario where collaboration is required on various matters at the level of the region. In addition, the attitude of PM Modi and RSS toward Islamabad reinforces the government's perception of New Delhi as the gravest threat to the state. Media has a part to perform in such a situation. It should not abandon the notion of increased public interaction as a challenge to the official discourse.

The interplay of the different discourses reveals that the state narrative is reproduced as well as challenged by the media narrative. As for the non-state narrative, it is influential vis-à-vis the state policies in India given the close ties between the NSAs and the state. In both Pakistan and India, the non-state discourse has varied avenues to influence the masses' perception about the other: religious seminaries, mosques, temples and philanthropic organizations.

As these narratives take the shape of policy decisions and state behaviour, they generate mistrust and animosity among states. Negative interstate behaviour translates into negative inter-subjective understandings that further enable such use of religion and historical experiences in the discourse, and the cycle continues. In the Indo-Pakistan relationship, the projection of the past is real. Historical experiences have over time transformed and mutated to attain new features. As the enmity has grown old, these mutated historical accounts have gained intensity. The initiators hold grievances and crises recur as the underlying issues are not catered for. Whenever conflicts arise, the government's apprehensions regarding loss of popular support creates space for ideational, primarily ideological forces to impact the actions of the government. In the absence of continued negotiations over age-old clashes, the threat of nuclear crisis will prevail in the region. The inability of the two leaderships to attain a *modus vivendi* on unresolved matters reflects their incapacity to persuade their nations towards transforming antagonistic ties such that may benefit the two sides.

