THE

GEOPSYCHOLOGY THEORY of INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Escaping the Ignorance Trap



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The Geopsychology Theory of International Relations in the 21st Century

Escaping the Ignorance Trap

B. M. Jain

LEXINGTON BOOKS Lanham • Boulder • New York • London Published by Lexington Books An imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc. 4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706 www.rowman.com

6 Tinworth Street, London SE11 5AL, United Kingdom

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Jain, B. M., author.

- Title: The geopsychology theory of international relations in the 21st century : escaping the ignorance trap / B.M. Jain.
- Description: Lanham : Lexington Books, [2021] | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "This book explains how geopsychology is different from mainstream international relations theories, arguing that peace and stability in the troubled parts of the world warrants understanding the psychological dispositions of non-state actors and authoritarian regimes"—Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020050271 (print) | LCCN 2020050272 (ebook) | ISBN 9781498573597 (cloth) | ISBN 9781498573603 (epub)

- Subjects: LCSH: International relations—Psychological aspects. | Geopolitics— Psychological aspects. | Non-state actors (International relations) | Transnationalism. | Geopolitics—Asia—Case studies. | Conflict management—Asia—Case studies. | Asia—Foreign relations—Case studies.
- Classification: LCC JZ1253 .J35 2021 (print) | LCC JZ1253 (ebook) | DDC 327.1/019—dc23
- LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020050271

LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020050272

^{® TM} The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

Contents

List	of Tables and Figures	vii
Pret	face	ix
Ack	cnowledgments	xvii
Acr	onyms	xix
1	Geopsychology Theory Building: Conceptual Underpinnings	1
2	South Asian Geopsychology: A Case Study of India-Pakistan Relations	55
3	India-Pakistan Engagement with the Greater Middle East	97
4	China's Foreign Policy Behavior: Understanding through the Lens of Geopsychology	125
5	The Nuclear Conundrum on the Korean Peninsula	147
6	U.S. Strategic Misadventures in the Middle East: A Victim of Its Own Logic?	171
Cor	Conclusion	
Appendix A: Interview with Madhukar S. J. B. Rana		211
Bibliography		217
Index		239
About the Author		251

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List of Tables and Figures

TABLES

Table 1.1	Comparison: Mainstream Theories and the	
	Geopsychology Theory	17
Table 2.1	Key Statements of Pakistani Military Elite on Kashmir	75
Table 2.2	Rival Psychology: Key Statements of Pakistani Leaders	85
Table 2.3	Rival Psychology: Key Statements of Indian Leaders	86

FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Characteristics of the Geopsychology Theory	14
Figure 1.2	Violent Non-state Actors: Sources of Support	24
Figure 2.1	Nepalese Psychology and India-Nepal Relations	58
Figure 2.2	Nepalese Perception of India's Policy Toward Nepal	59
Figure 2.3	Nepalese Perception of China's Policy Toward Nepal	59

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Preface

This volume is a modest attempt to offer the theory of geopsychology (GT) in international relations (IR) with its essential components and assumptions while purveying a critique of mainstream IR theories. The book's central aim is to bridge the existing gaps and address flaws in the corpus of IR theory. Accordingly, it focuses on the impact of psychological dispositions of individual, non-state, and authoritarian actors on international politics. While the significance of contemporary IR theories cannot be denied, they are "insufficient" to explain the dynamics of bloody violence, ethnic conflicts, and civil wars and also to illuminate those underlying conditions that might trigger peaceful changes in a violent world order. Besides, mainstream IR theories have been unable to predict the future course of the international system.

What intrigues me most is that billions of dollars are being squandered on inane and outdated conflict, peace, and security studies at the top world-class universities, research centers, and think tanks—public and private. Things have drastically changed now. In the face of global threats such as global terror, insurgency, refugees' migration, environmental degradation, and the COVID-19 pandemic, the states' coercive means and hegemonic stratagems have become redundant to bring about peaceful changes. For, old assumptions and doctrines in IR are based on a fallacious logic of seeing the world through narrow national security lenses.

What I need to emphasize is that non-state and transnational actors, neglected so far in mainstream IR theories, have the potential to leave a deep mark on the course of world politics. Paradoxically enough, great powers, albeit with an overwhelming military power and the state-of-art technology, have been unable to change the behavior of violent non-state actors. Rather, the latter have proven their unshakable resolve to win the endgame. Also, they have displayed their ability to inflict greater damage on "their sworn

Preface

enemies." In defense of my assumptions, I have used historical narratives, public statements of ruling leaders, surveys, and interviews with civilian and military bureaucrats.

It is disappointing that strategic pundits at the world-class think tanks are scrambling for establishing the supremacy of their findings and policy recommendations. As a result, they create more confusion for policymakers without offering a precise roadmap to tide over short and long-term crises. Recently, one of the Washington-based senior scholars comments that India has failed to "overawe" its neighbors by not acting as a regional hegemon to advance its national interests. This argument is untenable mainly because of the misapplication of the doctrine of hegemonism—a brand of the Cold War era—in the era of global interdependence.

If viewed against the above backdrop, perhaps none of IR theorists ever thought of studying geopsychology as an independent IR branch in today's complex world politics. Though massive literature exists at a macro level on conflictual and security threats, IR scholars have hardly conducted scientific studies at a minuscule level to find out the root causes of conflicts of myriad nature from the psychological perspective. The Western IR community has ignored the importance of psycho-cultural peculiarities of the masses and ruling elites from South Asia, the Middle East, and Afghanistan—the epicenter of conflicts and terror-ridden activities. They are cut off from hard-boiled realities of a specific country or region in terms of psyche and belief systems of civilian and military elites, schooled and groomed in the local sociocultural environment.

Undeniably, power operators and foreign-policy conductors are heavily dependent on recommendations of premium research institutes that churn out studies but without the aid of a geo-specific psychological barometer to make an accurate diagnosis.¹ Also, the rational-choice model is infeasible to study policy behavior of Asia's influential actors preconditioned by their local traditions, cultural values, and regional predilections. As such, solutions to the nagging problems ought to be discovered in power wielders' behavioral patterns since they are capable of and adept in maneuvering political and strategic decisions in their favor.²

HOW DID I DEVELOP THIS THEORY?

In my early academic career, I had the privilege of interacting with James Rosenau, a guru of IR theory, in the question-answer session at the American Center Library, New Delhi, in the late 1970s. When I asked him about his secret behind developing novel ideas and innovative concepts, his straightforward reply was "puzzle your mind!" Thereafter, I began toying with

an idea of perceiving contemporary and current developments in world politics from unconventional perspectives while bearing ground realities in mind as a South Asia insider. Another opportunity came to my door. At the International Political Science Association (IPSA) World Congress held in Washington D.C., August-September 1988, I had an envious opportunity for informal discussions with an array of leading IR scholars. Deliberations in IPSA's various sessions contributed to enriching the range of my thinking in the IR field. The process of dialogue and discourse continued. I made a maiden attempt at introducing the psycho-cultural paradigm in Nuclear Politics in South Asia: In Search of an Alternative Paradigm (1994). Besides, I published many articles on the psychological dimension of conflicts in peer-reviewed journals, including paper presentations at international conferences. However, I would like to make a special mention of my paper "Peace Dialogue Between India and Pakistan: A Geopsychological Perspective" presented at the 2008 International Peace Research Association (Leuven, Belgium) conference. The audience's response was overwhelmingly encouraging. The paper was later published in a reputable international journal.

In that churning process, I ventured into laying out a conceptual framework of geopsychology in India in the New South Asia (London: IB Tauris, 2010). Its rave reviews prodded me to bring out a full-length book on geopsychology. Anand Menon, Kings College, London, in his review essay endorsed the relevance of geopsychology in understanding conflicts and wars in South Asia. He wrote that "congenial antagonism can be explained in terms of the concept of geopsychology." A brilliant review in Choice Magazine by A. Mazumdar, St. Thomas University, gave an added impetus to my work on the geopsychological approach. Further, Ian Hall, Griffith University, Australia, wrote a lengthy review on India in the New South Asia: "Jain's key theoretical insight is that 'geopsychology' is poised to supersede geopolitics or geoeconomics.... Fusing geopolitics with psychology, geopsychology directs attention to the deep-seated convictions of national elites that are forged . . . by their experience of the place in which they live and their neighbors, by 'historical processes' and especially by bitter personal experiences." I am deeply thankful to all of them.

The late Professor Madhukar S. J. B Rana, a former finance minister in the government of Nepal, embraced my geopsychological paradigm in his application to Indo-Nepal relations. He said, "I might say that this concept of geopsychology is the wisdom endowed upon me by Prof. B. M. Jain of Rajasthan University, Jaipur."

This is how I have been able to place this book in the hands of global readers and researchers.

Preface

RATIONALE

Geopsychology is relevant for understanding how the forces of nationalism, religion, and ethnicity shape the resolve of non-state actors to fight the mightiest nation-states, as witnessed in the cases of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the ISIS in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. Also, it helps one understand the psyche of authoritarian regimes. For example, Syria has been afflicted with the worst kind of civil war under the dictatorial regime of Bashar al-Assad since 2011. But the international community has been unable to offer a tangible solution to help end one of the worst civil wars in human history. Military solutions have failed. Diplomatic confabulations have not yielded the desired result. Perhaps the only hope lies in understanding the psyche of ruling leaders and appreciating the domestic conditions. This warrants a fresh research into the causes of the ongoing civil wars and insurgencies in the different parts of the world.

Given this, the GT sets out to plugging loopholes in mainstream IR theories—classical realism, structural realism, neoliberalism, and constructivism—which are inadequate to explain many and varied changes occurring in the international system. Nor do they recognize the role of non-state and authoritarian actors, capable of impacting the global political order. Its classic case is exemplified by IR theorists' inability to offers answers as to how and why violent non-state actors like Osama bin Laden could challenge the supremacy of the United States as well as "subvert" the rule-based international order.

In the anarchical world order, the struggle for economic and military power necessitates cooperation among state actors to minimize the damage caused by ambitious and egoistic actors. Though Robert Art and Robert Jervis have spelled out the dilemma of anarchy as the fact of international politics, they have not offered the convincing logic behind the ongoing conflicts of myriad nature. As mentioned before, no single theoretical approach or paradigm can boast of making diagnosis and prognosis of today's complex world order. Stephen M. Walt rightly observes, "We are better off with a diverse array of competing ideas rather than a single theoretical orthodoxy."

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

There is no dearth of literature on IR theories. We can find new formulations and interpretations in the current literature, corresponding to the events occurring in global politics. The approach of this volume is to lend a "new voice" to geopsychology in the IR field. Undeniably, fresh ideas and contested notions interplay with the forces that remain at the forefront of the blood-letting world. Perhaps no country or continent is insulated from the violence-centric world order. As such, there is an imperative of understanding the geopsychological preponderance in the thinking and decision-making approach of regional actors in the realm of foreign policy and public diplomacy. Indeed, some of predominant IR theories have been unable to decipher, dissect, and comprehend the psyche of influential sections of society with divergent historical, cultural, and political backgrounds. Essentially, the issue-specific problems are bound to interact with decision-making processes in the realm of defense and security policies.

The GT is both normative and empirical. Per the yardstick of a theory, it is explanatory, descriptive, prescriptive, and predictive. It is descriptive in elaborating causal factors behind violence and conflicts. It is prescriptive as to how the emerging conflicts can be prevented from snowballing into civil wars. At the same time, the GT is more of what is, not "what ought to be." But *ought to be* cannot be segregated when we lay out a theory's hypotheses or assumptions. So to say, the geopsychology paradigm takes into account the normative dimension wherever it is essential and the empirical facet wherever it is indispensable. The actual issue is to plumb the throbbing rather than dress up the throbbing. Therefore, the normative element reflects in geopsychology whose justification lies in its utility. Keeping this in mind, geopsychology offers a unique perspective to supplement the existing IR theories. What is important in this analysis is what kind of world we are living in. This logic should lead us to "new insights" and interpretations.

Theories are helpful in understanding complex situations and surroundings in the uncertain world of today. Mearsheimer rightly observes, "In fact, none of us could understand the world we live in or make intelligent decisions without theories." It should be mentioned that IR theories have been unable to make safe predictions because researchers do not fully take cognizance of a comprehensive and complex nature of a research problem consisting of numerous factors (such as systemic upheavals, domestic conditioning, and influential actors) impinging upon the study's findings and recommendations.

To establish the GT's rationale and relevance, this study employs a casestudy approach to analyze the data collected through diverse sources to validate assumptions, as spelled out in Chapter 1. For this purpose, it incorporates the region-specific case studies: India-Pakistan relations in South Asia; Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq in the Middle East; and China and North Korea in East Asia. Subsequent chapters focus on testing the assumptions by citing examples and providing empirical data.

In defense of my assumptions, I have used primary and secondary sources of data: surveys, interviews, long discussions with former civilian and military bureaucrats, and public statements of ruling leaders. I have utilized the archival and existing literature on nationalism, culture, geography, and

Preface

history to distill the information as to how each element is indispensable in the construction of perceptions and belief systems of local and national actors inhabiting a specific country or region. For instance, the book explains how nationalism plays a key role in producing and sustaining the anti-West psychology or an anti-Japan psychology among Chinese leaders, academia, intellectuals, and the e-media folk.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

Chapter 1 offers a comprehensive critique of mainstream IR theories and advances the geopsychology theory by fleshing out its key components and assumptions. The subsequent chapters constitute the application segment through case studies. Chapter 2 examines India-Pakistan relations from a geopsychological perspective focusing on the interconnected issues of cross-border terrorism and the Kashmir imbroglio. It also discusses how the nuclear psychology of India and Pakistan based on congenital hostility and enemy images may trigger the nuclear exchange. Chapter 3 examines India-Pakistan engagement with the Greater Middle East (GME) to see how their conflicting perceptions and competing psychological approaches toward the region have done more harm than in bringing peace, security, and stability in the GME. Chapter 4 presents a case study of China's foreign policy behavior and its relations with the outside world through the lens of geopsychology. Chapter 5 illuminates the psychological underpinnings of the North Korean nuclear conundrum fueled by the autocratic regime's perception of the United States as a real threat to the regime and to the country's national security. Chapter 6 presents a case study of the U.S. Middle East policy, including Afghanistan, showing how the United States became a victim of the ignorance trap neglecting the region's culture, societal values, local traditions, and the mindset of violent non-state actors such as the Taliban and the ISIS. Ultimately, the Trump administration buckled to negotiations with the Taliban to end the longest war in Afghanistan. In the concluding part, I have tried to offer answers and interpretations and have taken cognizance of the limitations of the GT.

PROJECT CHALLENGES

The biggest handicap in undertaking this project was the lack of financial, infrastructural, and institutional support. Not a single penny came from any source, including the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (the apex research body in India), which

xiv

boast of encouraging and supporting the first-rate research in the country. I approached a few other funding sources, but their response was abysmally disappointing. In addition, I invited some IR scholars via LinkedIn for collaboration, but perhaps the novel approach intimidated them. From pen to paper, and from printer to scanner, I have spent money out of my meager resources. This apart, I lacked institutional support to engage a research assistant to carry out foundational and peripheral tasks such as the collection of data, information, and facts. I was engaged throughout this project's journey from conception to completion, while fulfilling numerous academic and research commitments.

Despite these handicaps, I have endeavored my best to produce a wellresearched work. Public policy practitioners should find it useful in averting the impending conflicts. The GT should be a useful tool not only to diagnose conflicts and civil wars but also to offer viable solutions. Broadly speaking, its function is to anticipate threats to peace and stability and help facilitate offsetting future crises in volatile regions where local and national leaders, including various sectarian groups, are at loggerheads.

I am sanguine that this book would not only stimulate debate and discourses but would also be useful for graduate students, academia, and research scholars working at think tanks. Finally, I alone am responsible for any errors, deficiencies, and interpretations. I am willing to accept critical observations and productive suggestions on further sharpening theoretical nuances and insights.

NOTES

 B. M. Jain, India in the New South Asia: Strategic, Military and Economic Concerns in the Age of Nuclear Diplomacy (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010).
 Jain, Preface to India in the New South Asia.

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Acknowledgments

I owe a debt of gratitude to a long list of colleagues and friends who contributed to enriching the range of my thinking and arguments in several ways. Though it is difficult to mention them all, my special thanks go out to the veteran scholar and peace thinker Richard Falk, professor emeritus at Princeton University, for offering his incisive comments and useful suggestions to further improve upon the quality of the theoretical part. I am grateful to Andrew Irwine, professor at the University of British Columbia- Okanagan. He shared his thoughtful observations on myriad dimensions of the proposed geopsychology theory during our conversations at the campus cafeteria when I was an honorary visiting professor there in 2017. I owe a great deal to Joseph Tse-Hei Lee, Pace University, New York City, for reading the earlier draft of the manuscript and offering comments, especially on China's geopsychology in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am grateful to Harsh Pant, King's College, London; Shalendra Sharma, Lingnan University, Hong Kong; and Jihwan Hwang, University of Seoul, South Korea, for their insightful comments on the manuscript.

My thanks are due to James Patrick, University of Southern California, T.V. Paul, McGill University, and Johan Galtung, the "principal founder" of peace studies, for their support and encouragement. I have greatly benefited from Galtung's musing over my paper "Indo-Pak Kashmir Issue," presented at the IPRA conference in Calgary long back. I would like to thank Ramanand Sen Gupta, senior journalist, New Delhi, and Major General (rtd.) Shashi Ashthana, New Delhi, for sparing their valuable time for long discussions over many facets of Indo-Pak and Sino-Indian relations from historical, cultural, and psychological perspectives.

I thank all the participants for responding to survey questions, constituting an important source of my findings. I would like to make a special mention of the late Madhukar S. J. B. Rana, former finance minister of Nepal, who enlightened me on the Nepalese psyche with reference to Kathmandu's relationship with New Delhi. He cleared up some of my lingering doubts on persisting irritants between the two countries. I am thankful to Nepalese friends—Sanjay Upadhya, Dwarika Nath Dhungel, Bihari Krishna Shrestha, and Santosh Sharma Poudel—for offering their frank observations and forthright comments on Indo-Nepal relations from the psychological perspective.

I am grateful to the editor, *International Journal of China Studies*, the University of Malaya, for granting me permission to reuse my article in an updated version. Also, I have included a revised version of my article titled "India-Pakistan Engagement with the Greater Middle East." I am thankful to the publisher of *Perspective on Global Development and Technology (PGDT) Journal* for its permission to reprint it.

Let me extend my heartfelt thanks to Senior Acquisition Editor Joseph Parry who keenly sensed my intellectual curiosity to do something "new" by flagging off this project. Also, I am thankful to Alison Keefner, Megan Murray, and Monika Jagadeesh, for overseeing the production of the book.

I am thankful to my son, Rahul, and daughter, Romi, for their support and encouragement. This book would not have been possible without the constant support and help of my daughter Romi, Faculty of Management, University of British Columbia-Okanagan. Virtually, she lived with this book project from its inception to completion. More important, she did a superb job of copyediting, apart from extending help in preparing tables and charts.

Finally, I am indebted to my wife, Manju, for her patience and encouragement that sustained me throughout this book journey.

xviii

Acronyms

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
AQAP	Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CAA	Citizenship Amendment Act
CAS	Central Asian States
CBMs	Confidence Building Measures
CCP	Communist Party of China
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CE	Central Eurasia
CNN	Cable News Network
CPI-M	Communist Party of India-Marxist
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)
DW	Deutsche Welle
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EU	European Union
EU-3	European Union, Britain, France
FOIP	Free and Open Indo-Pacific
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GME	Greater Middle East
GT	Geopsychology Theory

XX	Acronyms
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICBM	Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INC	Indian National Congress
INF	Intermediate Nuclear Force
IPKF	Indian Peace-Keeping Forces
IPGL	India Ports Global Ltd.
IR	International Relations
IRGC	Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
IS	Islamic State
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
JCPOA	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
J & K	Jammu and Kashmir
LAC	Line of Actual Control
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
LIO	Liberal International Order
MNCs	Multi-national Corporations
MNNA	Major Non-NATO Ally
MNS	Maharashtra Navnirman Sena
MoU	Memoranda of Understanding
MSF	Maritime Security Force
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NDB	New Development Bank
NMD	National Missile Defense
NPR	National Population Register
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRC	National Register of Citizens
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PNE	Peaceful Nuclear Explosion
РоК	Pakistan-occupied Kashmir
PRC	People's Republic of China
PP	Political Psychology
ROK	Republic of Korea
RSC	Regional Security Complex
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organization
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
TAPI	Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India
TMD	Theater Missile Defense
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
	Organization
US	United States
USIP	United States Institute for Peace
USA	United States of America
USIPNCA	US-India Promotion of Nuclear Cooperation Act
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WHAM	Winning Hearts and Minds
WFP	World Food Program
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Chapter 1

Geopsychology Theory Building Conceptual Underpinnings

The International Relations (IR) discipline has undergone a dramatic change since the tragic occurrence of 9/11.¹ IR scholars, engaged in studying traditional military threats to international peace and security, need to rethink and revamp old and inane research tools to deal with various nontraditional threats² to global order, primarily emanating from violent non-state actors (NSAs) and repressive regimes. It is a patent fact that they have the potential to undermine "processes of peace" and flare up conflicts across the globe.³ Non-Western states and decolonized political communities are voicing their serious concerns about the imperative of curbing and containing multitudinous conflicts at global, regional, and national levels. In this context, geopsychology, though an inchoate paradigm in the IR literature, can proffer causal factors behind endless conflicts and suggest pragmatic means to induce peaceful changes without resorting to coercive and bullying tactics. For this, the geopsychological framework of analysis has been introduced in this chapter in the background of contextual interpretation and structural assumptions.⁴

The chapter argues that IR scholars could not explain "the return of ethnonationalism," "violent extremism," and revivalism of cultural heterogeneity. Nor have mainstream IR theories such as neorealism and neoliberalism been able to offer palpable logic undergirding causal variables as to why a system is "conflictual" or "peaceful." It is not the function of anarchy to force states into "recurrent security competitions." Rather, anarchy is the creation of states themselves since it has no "determinant logic."⁵ Also, Alexander Wendt's constructivist paradigm cannot explain the changing contours of conflicts and cooperation among states. In realistic terms, not all aspects of "human reality" are shaped by ideational structures or cultural socialization as constructivists subscribe to.⁶ In this context, a reviewer of John J. Mearsheimer's book⁷ (2018) writes that liberal states are "likely to end up

Chapter 1

fighting endless wars, which will increase rather than reduce the level of conflict in international politics and thus aggravate the problems of proliferation and terrorism... Liberal hegemony is a contradiction of liberalism. It is intolerant of differences in societies and cultures. Social structures that do not embrace liberal values and democracy should be socially engineered out of their backward ways."⁸ Similarly, Mearsheimer's offensive realism theory, as subsequently discussed, is divorced from ground realities obtaining in Asian countries which were victims of imperialism, colonialism, and racialism.

Before introducing the geopsychology theory, the chapter offers a critique of the main IR theories to understand the salience and necessity of geopsychology as an analytical framework in global politics.

A CRITICAL OVERVIEW OF MAINSTREAM IR THEORIES

IR theories are essentially the product of historical and diplomatic experiences of the Western world, based on its societal structures, its cultural values, and its political and intellectual traditions. As a result, Western historical experiences are by and large irrelevant to non-Western societies.⁹ It is an arduous task for Western scholars to grasp the complex interplay between internal dynamics and security structures in the global South,¹⁰ known for heterogeneous cultures with divergent historical narratives. Importantly, Western IR scholars treated the global South as a periphery in the international system.¹¹ T. V. Paul, James McGill Professor of IR and former president of the International Studies Association (ISA), laments this situation, ascribing it to "the parochialism of Western IR and the inability of regional scholars to come up with groundbreaking theoretical works."¹²

The foundation of IR theories is traceable to the protuberant influences of Western political philosophy. These influences include Greek philosophy (represented by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle), the Roman legal system, Kant's moral philosophy, Hegel's ideal state, Marx's historical materialism, Hobbes's state absolutism, Locke's theory of consent, Rousseau's theory of general will, and Freud's psychology of human nature. Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* contributes to the understanding of the human mind and human behavioral patterns to find empirical truth about peoples' perceptions and belief systems.¹³ Ali Teymoori and Rose Trappes elaborate it further:

Kant's revolutionary description of our mental faculties as conditions of our experience and knowledge of the world created an understanding of the human mind as both very powerful and at the same time distinctly limited. As the exercise of our cognitive faculties is necessary for us to experience the world,

we cannot escape their influence. This means that we can never gain a truly "objective" take on the world outside of our experience: the world for us is always mediated through the structuring forces of intuition and understanding, imposing time and space and conceptual relations on our raw sensory data.¹⁴

The underlying idea is that IR studies need to explore human experiences to assess their impact on decision-making in the domain of foreign policy and diplomacy. The above quote makes it clear how important the study of psychology is in IR. The central point is that IR theories have gradually but steadily evolved in the process of cyclical changes in the pre-Westphalian system of IR. These changes are inevitable as it is evident from the rise and fall of empires.¹⁵ Accordingly, many "fashionable" and popular theories have emerged, ranging from idealism through realism to neoliberalism and positivist constructivism, over a while.¹⁶

In the face of change and continuity in the international system, IR theories have crystallized from classic realism of Thucydides through classical realism of E. H. Carr's *The Twenty Years Crisis 1919–1939* (1964) and Hans J. Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations* (1948) to Kenneth Waltz's structural realism in *Theory of International Politics* (1979). Undoubtedly, theorists of realism have enormously contributed to enriching the IR field. In fact, realism, a buzzword throughout the Cold War period, dominated the theoretical landscape in IR in the twentieth century.¹⁷ Even in the twenty-first century of global interdependence, Morgenthau's theory of realism has not lost its sheen.¹⁸

Realist scholars such as Hans J. Morgenthau, Henry A. Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, John Mearsheimer, Robert Owen, and Robert Jervis, the author of groundbreaking work titled Perception and Misperception in International Politics (1976), have made commendable efforts to understand and analyze the behavior of small, intermediate, and major powers within the framework of power hierarchy. The hierarchical power structure is capable of explaining convergence or dissonance of interests between nations. In this respect, Morgenthau and Kissinger are of the view that the nature, pattern, and processes of decision-making concerning various categories of emerging powers are rooted in human nature that drives them to expand their influence to dominate others.¹⁹ This might remain an unshakable foundation of the behavior of national and international actors. However, no single model in IR theory is universally acceptable. Nor is any IR theory patently "right" or "wrong." The underlying logic is that each paradigm in IR, based on diverse hypotheses and assumptions, has its value. Keohane and Nye opine that "there is no reason to believe that a single set of conditions will always everywhere apply, or that anyone model is likely to be universally applicable."20

It should not spring a surprise that IR theorists are competing with one another to claim supremacy of one's theory. As mentioned before, IR theories are Western-centric, dominated by American scholars, in particular. Ikenberry and Mastanduno agree that "American international relations theories are deeply rooted in Western philosophical traditions."²¹ This is one of the main reasons that Western IR scholars have consciously or unconsciously neglected the importance of historical narratives and experiences of colonialism by non-Western countries that had inestimably suffered at the hands of Europe's colonial powers. In the postcolonial societies, the political leadership in the global South embarked on embracing free-market economy, neoliberalism (the 1980s and 1990s), and neo-structuralism (from 1990s onward). Third World leaders are now articulating their voices for an imperative of establishing a fair, just and equitous world order²² at various global and regional platforms-nonaligned movement (NAM), BRICS, G-20, APEC, and African Union (AU). Interestingly, China, India, Brazil, and South Africa, representing major emerging economies, are now invited to the summit meetings of G-7-the rich nations' club. The fast-growing economies of Third World nations have gradually increased their "financial influence" among global governance institutions. For instance, BRICS' Shanghai-based New Development Bank (NDB) has dealt a serious blow to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) monopoly in disbursing loans to developing nations with stringent strings. Unlike the IMF, dominated by the United States (the largest quota holder over 17 percent), there is no quota system in the NDB with veto power. Recognizing the growing influence of the global South in the emerging global economic architecture, postcolonial scholars are now studying Third World countries by taking into account their history, colonial experiences, geography, societal structures, culture, and ethnic compositions.23

IR theorists are divided over the feasibility and usefulness of contemporary and current theoretical paradigms in international politics. Perhaps, they have little to say as to why historical, cultural, and psychological dimensions of IR have not been addressed in the analysis of and prediction about the impending conflict or crises of one kind or another across the globe. This underscores the premise that no mainstream theories could grasp complex problematic issues in international politics. This situation can be attributed to unidimensional approaches to understanding the crisis or conflict issues in world politics. Moreover, realism and its variants such as structural realism²⁴ and offensive and defensive realism could scarcely account for the increasing role of transnational actors who are catching media headlines. Amitav Acharya observes that "realists remain largely disinterested in a whole range of transnational forces and issues which their rivals see as increasingly defining and shaping international relations."²⁵ He further notes that the issues "such as refugees and migration, environmental degradation, human rights abuses, etc. have remained largely outside the purview of realist theory."²⁶ Rather, IR theory realists were initially euphoric about the triumph of market forces and liberal democracy with the demise of the Soviet Union and a much talked about "the end of history."²⁷

The real problem with realism and liberal IR theorists is that they view state actors in terms of "ideological battles" while being averse to the "power of humans" in terms of history, culture, faith, and ethnicity. This view is reinforced by Amy Chua, a law professor at Yale University. Chua describes humans as "tribals" who live in groups and who naturally develop the "group instinct" and identity, deeply etched in their psyche that affects policy decisions of the ruling class.²⁸ In many parts of the world, group identities "matter most"—ethnic, religious, and sectarian—the adherents and crusaders of which are prepared to "kill and die" to advance their causes. On the contrary, America perceives the world through a narrow lens of the nation-state. Resultantly, it got itself embroiled in unnecessary overseas battles ranging from Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan, without tangible gains. U.S. reversals, for example, in the Middle East may be attributed to its poor knowledge about the salience of local cultures, local traditions, and societal beliefs of multiethnic groups that go their "own path" and think in their ways.²⁹

Dale C. Copeland writes, "Classical realism, hegemonic stability theory, and neo-realism all have their strengths. Overall, however, they either are too static in their understandings of relative power or are too quick to blame domestic pathologies for the costly wars of world history."³⁰ T. V. Paul in his presidential address at the ISA conference in Atlanta, Georgia, March 2016, maintains, "Realism in particular is pessimistic on peace or peaceful change, a major reason why strategic studies do not discuss it. Liberalism and Constructivism present more optimistic positions, but . . . these approaches generate many challenges to actual policymaking."³¹

In effect, universal acceptance of a particular IR theory is neither possible nor desirable. "True universality lies in recognizing the diversity of actors and agents in world politics and finding common ground among them."³² In this context, inter-paradigm debates whether on Morgenthau's classic realism or Kenneth Waltz's structural realism or John Mearsheimer's offensive realism or Alexander Wendt's social constructivism in international politics have barely reached a consensus on an overall acceptability of any of these IR paradigms.³³

Interestingly, Peter J. Katzenstein³⁴ challenges the "binary" approach (such as Western vs. Non-Western) to IR theory. Making out a case for the "complementarity," he writes, "Resisting the urge of choosing one or the other dimension of knowledge, we are better off avoiding black-or-white while considering both, as we seek a better understanding of world politics."³⁵

Chapter 1

Hedley Bull, the founder of the English school of thought, rejected all forms of "utopianism."³⁶ His contribution lies in developing the concept of "world society" or "world system" of which he offered the sociological analysis. Other representatives of the English school called upon states for "mutual recognition of sovereignty." For them, sovereignty is a "social contract." As such, nation-states cannot monopolize it. In the process of decolonization in Asian and African continents, the relationship between "order and justice" underwent a radical transformation. Voices for freedom, dignity, and autonomy resonated throughout the dark and desolate walls to which Third World nations were confined. The centers of power and dominance were forced to rethink along parameters of equality and autonomy to let each individual control his/her destiny and "diverse futures." Bull also stressed "the importance of recognizing the rights of individuals, not just of States, in international society."37 Over time, he "turned more and more to the questioning of the dominant culture, in a movement that he called 'the revolt against the West.' This revolt was based on five themes: the struggle for equality of sovereignty, the anti-colonial revolutions, demands for racial equality, the struggle for economic justice and the struggle against cultural imperialism."³⁸ To Bull, individuals, history, and ideas are important in affecting "international activity." He comes closer to the strands of geopsychological research that attaches the importance to history and regard for other cultures, as opposed to the "dominant cultures" of the West.

So far, the much controversial concept pertains to Barry Buzan's security complex. It has been defined as a set of units within a specific geographical boundary, sharing and experiencing the sense of "security interdependence." Buzan developed it in his book People, States, and Fear (1983),³⁹ whose central thesis is that security interests bear regional character. Basically, his regional security complex (RSC) is a narrowly structured concept that veers around a cohort of European nations with shared threat perceptions, cultural values, and security interests. Oddly enough, Buzan misapplied it to South Asia and the Middle East full of profound contradictions and contrasts. The nature, scale, and depth of their domestic and foreign policy issues and priorities are qualitatively much different from those of the West with its homogenous character in terms of values and systemic structures. Perhaps, Buzan ignored particularities of volatile regions in the Asian theater in terms of history, colonial experiences, ruling elites' psyche, and role of religious chiefs in impacting domestic and foreign policy structures. As a close insider of South Asian affairs, I intend to bring home the point that the RSC framework is neither workable nor justifiable in drawing parallels in the cases of India and Pakistan in South Asia, including those of Israel and Palestine in the Middle East, and Saudi Arabia and Qatar in the Gulf region. In Syria's case also, the security complex framework is infeasible. Syria and Turkey

present a complex scenario. They are at loggerheads over defense and security issues. The situation has been further compounded with the strategic presence of America and Russia. For instance, Russia is an arch supporter of Syrian president Assad to protect his regime by supplying massive arms and weapons. On the contrary, America insists on the regime change as a precondition to bring peace and stability in the region. Their clashing security stakes and interests have rather trenchantly fueled the civil war going on in Syria since March 2011. In view of the above scenario, it is clear that the RSC's applicability hinges on friendly and cooperative relations between regional states.

To validate my assumption as to why the RSC is inapplicable to South Asia, I have argued that India and Pakistan have little scope for cooperative security because of their congenital animosity since the partition of undivided India in August 1947. The basis of the partition was the two-nation theory that led to three wars over Kashmir—a Muslim majority state.⁴⁰ Both countries carry the historic baggage of mutual hatred and rivalry. Given the Indo-Pak adversarial relations, India perceives China as a "potential threat" to its own security and to South Asian peace and security. On the contrary, Pakistan looks upon China as a stabilizing force against an Indian hegemony. More important, Pakistan perceives India, rather than China, as an existential threat to its national security.⁴¹ In this context, Sugio Takahashi also refutes the potential and usefulness of the RSC, especially in the context of volatile regions.⁴² Takahashi argues that the RSC is "not made of mere geographical factors but consists of actors who may have major concerns."⁴³

Undoubtedly, regionalism is emerging as an important unit in IR theory because of the growing trend of regional transformation.⁴⁴ But with South Asia, the mode of conflict resolution through cooperative security does need to address the region's unique characteristics in terms of history, geography, culture, religion, ethnicity, and political system. The RSC is premised on autonomy, equality, and foreign policy choices as well as on shared policy goals among regional actors. Therefore, further research is needed to identify the characteristics that might lead to building cooperative security with a greater degree of acceptability by the parties involved.⁴⁵ Takahashi further says that cooperative security demands "certain universality" supported by common threat perceptions and security challenges. He writes:

The objective of the cooperative security here is the prevention of large-scale organized invasions, and more specifically, it aims to prevent the accumulation of weapons of mass destruction and other offensive arms in the world and at the same time remove the causes that necessitate offensive arms and shift the military system in each nation toward more defensive military posture.⁴⁶

Chapter 1

More important, the concept of RSC is a misfit in India-Pakistan relations⁴⁷ when Buzan argues that the New Delhi-Islamabad confrontation has not been because of the Cold War dynamics.⁴⁸ On the contrary, the ground reality is that the Indo-Pakistan hostility got accentuated with the introduction of the Cold War geopolitics in South Asia by the United States and Soviet Union in advancing their respective geopolitical and geostrategic interests. Moreover, the U.S. policy of fostering military parity between Pakistan and India not only triggered an armaments race in the region but also fueled the "competitive" psychology between them. Pakistani military elites staunchly supported Pakistan joining the U.S.-sponsored military alliances-SEATO and CENTO. Naturally, these alliances helped build up Pakistan's military sinews. Given this, the Cold War scenario left no scope for shared security threats between India and Pakistan to develop a cooperative security framework. Nor is the current scenario salubrious even for resuming political dialogue when their relations are at the nadir. Further, religion and culture are being used as instruments of state policy to spread mutual hatred and animosity. Notably, Pakistan has been employing religion as an expedient political weapon to sponsor terrorism in the Kashmir Valley. Also, Islamabad has been politically exploiting "untamed madrasas" to fuel the hate-India campaign.49 In a similar vein, the right-wing BJP government at the Center has been hotly using the Hindutva card to polarize the nation along religion.⁵⁰

As such, there is no palpable ground for security interdependence between New Delhi and Islamabad. There is no such thing as a South Asia security complex, unlike the ASEAN security complex or Asia-Pacific security complex or "Northeast Asia security complex." In brief, cooperative security in South Asia remains a pipe dream.

Pluralism

IR theory has developed "as a social science" in leading U.S. universities, contributing to an array of fresh paradigms basically to address challenges to and to lay out policy choices for U.S. policymakers to serve the country's national interests and maintain its global supremacy. In pursuit of it, "paradigm confrontation" among IR theorists began. But over a period of time, the latter at least began to realize that there was an inevitable need for "inter-paradigm debate" to heed prominent voices coming from non-Western IR scholars studying the role of myriad diversities in societal structures and political regimes ranging from democratic to theocratic and authoritarian regimes. With the rise of "various forms of pluralism,"⁵¹ it appeared that "theoretical peace" was in the offing. Gradually, it has paved the way for the acceptance of diversity in IR theories—a sign of scholarly maturity.⁵² In the words of Stephen M. Walt, "We are better off with a diverse array of competing ideas

rather than a single theoretical orthodoxy. Competition between theories helps reveal their strengths and weaknesses and spurs subsequent refinements, while revealing flaws in conventional wisdom . . . we should welcome and encourage the heterogeneity of contemporary scholarship." ⁵³

Essentially, IR scholars need new paradigms, each unraveling "the untold story"⁵⁴ of the current complex interdependent world order. The emerging scholarship in IR studies is more fascinated by history, culture, and nationalism that profoundly impact the pace and direction of the international system. The new-generation IR researchers increasingly realize that novel threats and challenges need innovative solutions, rather than clinging to outmoded and old-fashioned paradigms divorced from the realities obtaining in a system in the information age. For instance, in the name of ethnicity and culture, the Turkish regime unleashed "chaos and bloodletting" by waging a war against Kurds on the Turkish border.⁵⁵ To lower down the escalating tension between Turkish authorities and Kurdish groups, fresh approaches (psycho-centric) are needed to address legitimate concerns of the Kurdish rather than resorting to bloody repressive means. The point I am trying to make is that we need a pluralistic approach in IR theories to address novel forms of violence, conflicts, and insurgencies that have engulfed the world today.

INTRODUCING GEOPSYCHOLOGY

In light of the critique of IR theories purveyed in preceding pages, an attempt is made to define geopsychology as a concept and to discuss its nature, assumptions, and characteristics to understand intransigent problems and find a way out of predicaments facing the global political and security order. Geopsychology can be briefly defined *as a set of perceptions, images, and belief systems, formed of shared history, culture, nationalism, religion, and ethnicity, which shape the mindsets and behavioral patterns of non-state and authoritarian actors and communities inhabiting a specific geographical area.*

In practical terms, the human psyche is a byproduct of human experiences. And the human experience is shaped and articulated by "cognitive faculties" that potentially influence perceptual processes and belief systems of national and regional actors. So to say, there is a continuous interaction between cognition and perception, which plays a leading role in the foreign policy decision-making. Simultaneously, cognitions and perceptions are determined and shaped by a host of factors such as geographical terrains, collective memories,⁵⁶ and local traditions and cultural values.

Lately, the study of psychology in IR has gathered momentum with the rise of nonmilitary threats. In this context, Tickner and Wæver's (2009)⁵⁷

Chapter 1

contribution to the "geocultural" dimension of IR comes close to my study on geopsychology that assigns a prominent place to historical and cultural characteristics of a geographical area. It is pertinent to mention a recent piece by Rebecca M. Miller, formerly associated with the *National Interest*, in which she argues for the inclusion of psychology as a mandatory course in the IR curriculum. She writes:

At the very least, anyone engaging in serious negotiations with leaders of another country should be knowledgeable about that country's culture, including the nuances and patterns in psychological and sociological behavior that are prevalent in that country. . . . Cultural studies, sociology and psychology are not fluffy, useless subjects. They are serious, underrated subjects that need to be given a more central role on the international-studies stage.⁵⁸

Miller underlines that culture and psychology play a crucial role in foreign policy and diplomacy. She further writes, "If the top officials in this country continue to undervalue the roles culture and psychology play in understanding human behavior, the general public might as well assume that they are not serious about facilitating sincere, informed, productive dialogues with foreign officials."59 In a similar vein, Howard J. Wiarda cautions about the perils of inattention to "political culture": "If we do not fully understand other countries including their culture, America's sense of superiority-'we are better than you'-condescension, and patronizing attitudes toward other countries will simply be perpetuated, which is a disaster for American foreign policy."60 He elaborates, "Failure to understand other countries will produce more unexpected, unanticipated upheavals like the Iranian revolution which brought us the mullahs, dictatorship, and nuclear weapons. Think of Iraq or Afghanistan, how little we understand their culture and society and, therefore, the difficulties of our fighting there."⁶¹ Likewise, Christian Reus-Smit writes in Foreign Policy (2019), "In today's world politics, culture is everywhere. The rise of non-Western great powers, the return of ethnonationalism, violent extremism justified in the name of religion, and so-called white resistance-the list goes on. Yet those who should be best placed to explain it—international relations scholars—are ill equipped to do so."⁶² He explains, "IR's failure to integrate contemporary conceptions of culture is more than an academic curiosity-it has far-reaching implications for how we understand today's global politics of culture."63

Conceptual Underpinnings

Willy Hellpach, a German scholar, first used the term "geopsyche" in his groundbreaking work *Geopsyche*.⁶⁴ Trained essentially as a physician and

environmental psychologist, he is credited with coining the term environmental psychology. He spelled out the effects of natural objects such as the earth, the moon, and the sun on humans and their social environment. He examined climatic and geographical effects on human behavior at "macro, mezzo and micro levels." Also, he analyzed "the effect of color and form; the effect of extreme environments-such as the Tropics or the Arctic; the effect of urban microclimates."65 Hellpach's study on the natural environment ('Tropics or the Arctic') is a guidepost to the understanding of an inseparable relationship between nature and human behavior and between the natural environment and societal beliefs and values. For Hellpach, the goal of research in environmental psychology should not be an "artificially individualized psychic life." Rather, to him, "the psyche in as far as it depends on its factual environment."66 However, he did not provide a comprehensive and scientific exposition to geopsychology. Nor did he intend to apply it to a complex interplay of power and national interest in international politics. Nevertheless, Hellpach's contribution in the field of environmental psychology was of pivotal importance.

Also, Ronald W. Scholtz, a mathematician and psychologist who taught environmental systems science, explored "human-environment interactions" in psychology, sociology, and economics. He investigated how perception is determined and influenced by environmental conditions. Scholtz writes, "It is common knowledge that weather, climate and landscape change the mood and character of people."⁶⁷ Notably, Scholtz and Hellpach studied "colors and shape of landscapes" that affect human behavior. To them, "the material environment" has also the bearing on "individual performance and human perspective,"⁶⁸ whereas in international politics human actions transcend national boundaries and fall in political, economic, cultural, and social domains.

Some scholars opine that it is possible to explore the potential of geopsychology using modern technology and statistical techniques. They define geopsychology as

the relationship between the complex matrix of static and time-varying geophysical and geochemical variables within a locality and human behavior.... There is a strong correlational evidence that long-term geophysical fluctuations may shift a population's cognitive style and its responses to environmental crises... the optimal creativity and adaptability of future populations may require determination of the empirical congruence between the person's neurocognitive profile and the geophysical.⁶⁹

One can draw an inference that the environment and human psyche are interconnected. Also, the perceptive frame of each society differs from region to region, or country to country, depending on societal structures and cultural upbringing of the masses, ruling elites, and NSAs who internalize "the norms and value orientations" held by the community or local group living in a "socializing environment."⁷⁰ This necessitates a holistic understanding of geopsychology to understand and analyze human behavior. According to Enric Pol, "The geographical environment refers to that which exists in the real world and the behavioral one refers to the environment experienced by a person."⁷¹ Succinctly, geopsychology reflects "climatic and geographical effects" as a natural environment, as a social environment, and as a historical-cultural environment in a given geographical region.⁷²

Nature, Scope, and Characteristics

The geopsychology theory (GT) is an inclusive and multidimensional enterprise that aims to develop a concise, coherent, and workable framework of analysis to explain the behavior of non-state and authoritarian actors, including communities, in terms of wielding a substantial leverage to influence the currents and cross-currents of world politics. It does not have fixed boundaries, unlike realism that does not go beyond the nation-state, not attaching importance to transnational actors or "supranational structures." In effect, NSAs do not have a significant place in discussion and discourses of realists, while the GT takes note of the fact that NSAs are being necessarily engaged in negotiating legally binding agreements: for instance, the peace agreement signed between U.S. officials and the Taliban at Doha in February 2020. In brief, the GT departs from the modus operandi of realists who insist on states as the only legitimate entities in foreign policy and security domains. It may be noted that violent NSAs enjoy a parallel sovereign authority on the pattern of state's sovereignty within their geographical boundaries and have the capability to leave a global impact on their decisions and strategies. It is a truism that violent NSAs have a global outreach. Therefore, the study of their geopsychology is helpful for state agencies to make proper planning and develop matching strategies to induce peaceful changes in conflict-ridden zones.

While compared to the scope of neorealism, neoliberalism, and constructivism, the GT's scope is comprehensive and multidisciplinary. Encompassing all major disciplines of knowledge, it entails the study of geography, history, politics, social psychology, and applied psychology. For this reason, the GT's scope is more inclusive than that of geopolitics and geoeconomics. For example, geopolitics entails the impact of geographical features on foreign policy approaches, and geoeconomics means "the use of economic instruments . . . to produce beneficial geopolitical results"⁷³ or the deployment of "liberal-institutional strategies" for fulfilling "economic objectives."⁷⁴The GT provides a rich platform for understanding human psyche and behavioral patterns when security threats from NSAs are on the rise, especially in the most disturbed regions such as the Middle East, South Asia, and the Korean Peninsula.

At the same time, the GT is not a substitute for geopolitics or geoeconomics, nor does it contest their usefulness. Rather, it unravels how attitudes and behavioral patterns of individual and NSAs are important in locating sources of threats from multiple geopolitical challenges. Essentially, the GT is like a lighthouse in stormy and dark seas to show the right path to international and regional elites who are tasked with framing strategies to deal with civil wars and insurgencies. For instance, to fulfill its energy needs, China has better understood the psychology of ruling leaders in Africa and Latin America where China is exploiting their natural resources but in exchange of offering aid and promising infrastructure development. On the contrary, the United States offers military weapons, which the common people detest and form the view that America's interest in the region such as the Middle East is focused on plundering their natural resources rather than investing its financial resources in their economic development.

Interestingly, traditional IR theories are largely the product of time and space. They narrowly focus on national power and power sharing at the international level as well as on the primacy of hegemony as a determining factor as to who rules whom. But these theories have not diagnosed the conditions of war and peace in Third World countries, which are still qualitatively much different from those of developed nations.⁷⁵

In a similar way, constructivism is subsumed under geopsychology that transcends constructivists' emphasis on "the social dimension of international relations, and [demonstration of] the importance of norms, [identity], rules, and language."⁷⁶ Also, constructivism has many versions,⁷⁷ rendering it difficult to determine which one is more appropriate in diagnosing and resolving conflicts in different parts of the world. Moreover, constructivism, mainly based on societal practices, cannot be transplanted into the IR field.⁷⁸ Constructivists claim to explain Gorbachev's "new political thinking" that hastened the demise of the Cold War and also underline "the increasing importance of norms of humanitarian intervention, and the spread of liberal democratic values."79 Nevertheless, constructivism has been unable to account for the role of strategic partnership and interdependence in the emerging global security order. It misses the psychological dimension of IR and the importance of historical narratives in defining foreign policy and diplomacy. At the same time, constructivists acknowledge inbuilt inconsistencies that "arise from the combination of a social ontology with an epistemology that rests on a separation between an external world and the internal thought processes of individuals."80 Scholars such as Amitav Acharya are even skeptical about the status of constructivism as a theory in stating that "one cannot be sure whether constructivism is a mainstream theory or even a theory at all."⁸¹

Briefly defined, geopsychology is constitutive of the mental make-up and behavioral patterns of the people, including those of ruling leaders and influential sections that hail from a specific geographical area. Their mindset and conduct carry an imprint of their perceptions, prejudices, and beliefs based on common religion, common ethnicity, and shared historical experiences. Figure 1.1 lays out the GT's characteristics.

Explanatory, Descriptive, Normative, and Predictive

The GT's descriptiveness applies to detailing or elucidating the constituents of a geo-specific psychology. In this context, the subsequent chapters will illuminate how the edifice of psychology is built up by centuries of cultural, social, political, and historical layers, molding mindsets of masses and ruling leaders. Interdisciplinary in nature, it exhibits interplay of numerous variables shaping the geopsychology. For example, the history-based description delineates historical patterns and presents a chronology of events and formation of narratives at critical junctures of a nation's life.

The GT's normative underpinnings connect with its policy prescriptions for war avoidance and conflict resolution. In its prescriptive form, it can suggest how state actors can avoid direct confrontations with violent NSAs and



Figure 1.1 Characteristics of the Geopsychology Theory. Source: Prepared by the author

authoritarian regimes to pave the way for a peaceful change in conflict-ridden regions.

The GT is able to predict the future course of world politics. It can foresee implications of great powers' intention to bring about regime change and fan implacable hostility against defiant nations. By logical implication, the GT can explain and forecast factors dictating the rise of extremist groups such as Islamic State (IS) and jihadi elements. Further, it is capable of predicting the "idiosyncratic" or unconventional behavior of individual despots and authoritarian regimes. Interestingly, IR scholars generally argue that states are always uncertain about the intention of their counterparts. This view is not true in entirety in the case of North Korea. This is exemplified in Kim Jongun's firm and obdurate conduct determined by his long-held predilections and hatred toward the United States. For example, he had the effrontery to issue a direct threat of attacking the United States or wiping out South Korea and Japan from the globe. America's repeated threats of imposing harsh sanctions against Pyongyang hardly induced a change in Kim's policy postures. Therefore, the understanding of the role of psychological disposition of regional and national actors in policy formulations and decision-making can only be ignored at its peril.

Significance and Aims

The GT purports to bridge the "knowledge gap" in IR theory by illuminating the distinctive features of a region in terms of geography, history, ethnicity, religion, culture, and understanding the policy behavior of national, regional, and international actors.⁸² In terms of significance, geopsychology is a policy compass in the voyages of a foreign policy. It sets out to fill the gaps in the Western-dominated mainstream IR theories that have mostly neglected the role of collective memories, societal and cultural values, and belief systems of Asian societies in shaping their foreign policy behavior. This is particularly true of South Asia, the Middle East, and Northeast Asia. Though IR scholars have richly contributed to studying foreign, defense and security policies, they have paid little attention to the importance of studying the geopsychology of transnational and violent NSAs and autocratic regimes (for instance, in North Korea, Syria, and Turkey) that run the state affairs by their whims and fancies.⁸³ Therefore, the GT sets out to studying, explaining, and analyzing the attitudinal behavior of non-state and authoritarian state actors. Accordingly, this work lays emphasis on the place of violent NSAs such as the ISIS, terror networks, and jihadists, including authoritarian regimes, in global and regional politics. Unlike democratic regimes, they enjoy a monopoly over conducting state policies both in internal and external domains. The study also suggests that new risks and threats in South Asia-the epicenter of extremism and religious fundamentalism—have aggravated the possibility of a nuclear weapons falling into the hands of radicals and jihadi elements.

On the record, geopsychology has remained an "estranged sibling" as a branch of IR. Partly, it could be attributed to the primacy of geopolitics during the Cold War era when IR theorists were more interested in studying military alliances for maintaining the balance of power. They emphasized "structural conditions within which states act rather than the characteristics of individual countries-their domestic political institutions, for example."84 And partly they were too preoccupied with research on militarized interstate disputes to give a pause to consider the relevance of geopsychology as a mode of conflict prevention or crisis management at global and regional levels. Partially, it was because of European scholars' passivity as they were engrossed in studying European politics. Their primary focus was on developing fitting theoretical frameworks, enabling European leaders to realize the vision of an integrated Europe. Furthermore, Western scholars were more attentive to conducting research on the UN and Bretton Woods institutions that contributed to advancing the United States' economic, and security interests in power maximization rather than supporting a moral state⁸⁵ in the bipolar politics.

Joshua Kertzer and Dustin Tingley of Harvard University spot a significant transformation of political psychology (PP) in IR. They have identified the key research areas of growth in PP: "the surge of interest in emotions and hot cognition, the rise of more psychologically informed theories of public opinion in IR, a nascent research program [effects of IR on individuals] [dubbed as] 'the first image reversed,' and neurobiological and evolutionary work."86 However, PP is inadequate to diagnose the complexity of geopsychology of individual and NSAs. Perhaps, no concise, clear, and convincing explanation has been offered so far by IR scholars as to why the state behavior of national and international elites could not be studied scientifically. For instance, Waltz argues that states are concerned with preserving their share of power as well as expanding and consolidating it to replace the existing power structure. But many critics argue that "neorealism, like classical realism, cannot adequately account for changes in world politics. . . . They contend that neorealism ignores both the historical process during which identities and interests are formed, and the diverse methodological possibilities."87 On the contrary, geopsychology takes national and regional peculiarities into account: for instance, Chinese characteristics shape the direction of China's foreign policy and diplomacy. The GT does not deny that states act to enhance power, but it is the geopsychology of ruling leaders that dictates the degree of and approach to such pursuits.

Table 1.1 delineates characteristics of major IR theories to show how the GT is distinct from them.

		Mainstr	Mainstream Theories		
Features	Realism	Neoliberalism	Constructivism	Complex Interdependence	Geopsychology Theory
Central Thesis	 Perpetual struggle for power among states (Classical realism) Anarchical international system (Structural realism) 	Primacy of economy & trans- nationalism <i>Proponents</i> : James Rosenau, Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye & M. Doyle	Primacy of ideas & norms <i>Proponents:</i> Alexander Wendt &Peter Katzenstein ²	Absence of hierarchy; multiple channels connect societies; military force between governments is prohibited <i>Proponents</i> : Robert Keohane &	Mental make-up and behavioral patterns of non-state actors and authoritarian regimes, and communities
Human Behavior	-Centrality of human nature (Classical realism- Hans J. Morgenthau & Reinhold Niebuhr) - Centrality of bipolarity (Structural realism/ neorealism - Kenneth Waltz)	Market forces and human behavior are mutually interactive	 "Circumscribed" by norms and practices in a country's national identity Explains human behavior in the social world 	 Individuals constitute a principal unit and there are variations in human behavior Emphasizes on the impact of "rules and institutions" on human behavior 	 Human psyche is grounded in historical narratives and collective memories Geo-centric behavioral patterns

Geopsychology Theory Building

(Continued)

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	Instruments	Power, force, coercion, treaties	International institutions/NGOs; "civil rights movements"; supranational structures; economic globalization; and spread of democratic values	Ideas and norms	Manipulation of economic interdependence, political bargaining, international organizations, and transnational actors	Terror, <i>jihad</i> , propaganda, psychological warfare, domestic repression (North Korea & China), and historical narratives

Table 1.1 Comparison: Mainstream Theories and the Geopsychology Theory (Continued)

18

Chapter 1

Prediction	Weak possibility of prediction (e.g., the peaceful demise of the Soviet Union	Predicts the inevitability of economic and trade interaction and cooperation at	Inability to predict "the content of ideas"	Predicts the decline of America because of complex interdependence between major,	Increased anti-alien resentment; resurgence of chauvinism and cultural nationalism; emerging conflicts; and the future
Issues	count not be predicted) Conflict and power struggle	tic grount tever Economy, development, & prosperity	Importance of identity and "shared ideas"	ranking powers Monetary issue, ocean politics, & regime change	-Respect & honor versus power -New issues: Ethnic
		-	instead of "material" interests	5	conflict; religious radicalism; natural resources; anti-regime change; conflict
					management, conflict resolution -Forces: nationalism, past history, local cultural
Time-frame	Cold War	Cold War & Post- Cold War	Post-Cold War	Cold War & Post-Cold War	values, and religious faith Post-Cold War & Post- 9/11
Source: Prepared by the author	by the author	TO off outford account of off	chi di porcha chi di di cha	w of humiliation and in foreign	Source: Prepared by the author 1 MMilo closeical collered socies ensured in human nature the CT roots it in the chared history of humilitation and in fereim cornelered tickoring with sociecultural

1. While classical realism³ posits power struggle in human nature, the GT roots it in the shared history of humiliation and in foreign occupiers' tinkering with sociocultural systems of the local populace.

2. Constructivism, which evolved in 1990s as an approach to IR, is silent over the role of ideas, identity, and norms in influencing defense and security policies as well as in reordering the international system. Constructivism is primarily a social aspect, which ignores psychological, political, and security theories.

'Geopsychology offers "a unified set" of predictions on any problematic issues. ²Peter J. Katzenstein, The Culture of National Security: Norms And Identity In World Politics (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1996).

³Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948).

Chapter 1

WHY GEOPSYCHOLOGY MATTERS

It may be recalled that Henry Kissinger, a traditional realist, agrees that the concept of balance of power can no longer define today's "perils" or "possibilities." Subscribing to the inevitable impact of psychic forces on the mindset of the new generation leadership in Third World countries, Kissinger argues that IR's old patterns are crumbling and old solutions are no longer feasible. Keeping this in mind, let us spell out major trends in IR as a contextual backdrop to the building blocks of the GT. First, the impact of information and communications technology on local populations' psyche has been tremendous. The wave of anger spread over throughout the Middle East against foreign occupiers, with the locals complaining that they spoiled the sanctity of their religious injunctions and tinkered with their social and cultural moorings. Indeed, the Internet and social media have emerged as potent instruments for disseminating the jihadist ideology across the globe. India, for example, had been relatively insulated from the Muslim extremism for long, but the Internet has facilitated the spread of tentacles of the ISIS and the rise of Kashmir-based local radical groups. For nearly three decades, India has been reeling under cross-border terrorism in the Kashmir Valley, primarily sponsored by Pakistan as its state policy. The Kashmiri youth have been used as pawns by Pakistan in the name of religion to take up arms against India's military and paramilitary troops. As a consequence, the Kashmir Valley has been infected with anger and unrest with the launch of vitriolic Internet-based propaganda by social media activists, including TV channels' anchors, and also by indigenous extremist groups on both sides. Further, we witness a revolution in aspirations and expectations of the people aroused by "social media activism" that generates awareness among the masses who have suffered "historical injustices" and have borne the brunt of current racism, as revealed in the case of the "barbaric killing" of George Floyd in U.S. police custody.

Second, ethnic or cultural or low-intensity conflicts are increasingly occurring in the Asian region. To tide over them, the "area-specific" knowledge, including local leaders' perceptions, is categorically important for state agencies. As mentioned earlier, the emerging actors, including MNCs, transnational organizations, and violent NSAs, are capable of exerting influence over decision-making processes in political, economic and security domains. Surely, the world politics has witnessed the rise of new issue areas in nonmilitary and nontraditional domains: human security, global governance, environment, refugees' migration, and humanitarian intervention. International and regional actors cannot simply wish them away.

In an altered security environment, threats to peace and stability are posed mainly by NSAs and totalitarian regimes. The security situation has been further jeopardized by defiant regimes in the Middle East and Northeast Asia.⁸⁸ Given this, one needs to understand the phenomenon of rampant violence and bloodshed, derived from two central sources: violent extremism and radicalization, and the authoritarian regimes in North Korea and Syria. With the latter's emergence on the world stage, the anti-West psychology has got hardened. Further, with an unleashing of unprecedented violence and bloodshed by the ISIS in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan, it is important to bear in mind ISIS's ideational values and belief systems to undertake appropriate counter-narratives to defeat extremist and jihadist forces.

Third, a majority of ruling leaders in the Middle East are against U.S. attempts at the regime change and imposition of liberal democratic values. Whether it be in Iraq, Libya, or Syria, the U.S. military intervention has fueled a deep resentment among Arab countries.⁸⁹ The presence of U.S. troops in Iraq evoked fierce resistance among Iraqis who perceived America as an "imperialist force" rather than as their liberator. Similarly, the 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden lashed out at the United States for occupying the "holy land" of Saudi Arabia, saying that "the enemy invaded the land of our Ummah, violated her honor, shed her blood, and occupied her sanctuaries."⁹⁰ Laden gave a clarion call for the "liberation of the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Holy mosque in Jerusalem from the grip of Americans and their allies."⁹¹ He exhorted the Arab community to boycott American goods, arguing that they were the "victims of American aggression."

Fourth, the primacy of geoeconomics in the 1990s over geopolitics dominated the IR discourse as IR scholars subscribed to the view that productive economies of European and Asian countries could compete with the United States that had dominated geopolitics throughout the Cold War with its hard military resources.⁹² But the growing emphasis on economy and trade encouraged the "turbo-capitalism," hastening "the cultural and environmental apocalypse."⁹³

To recapitulate, the IR debate in the late 1980s centered on the much controversial "the end of ideology" and on "the end of history"⁹⁴ proposition in the early 1990s. In this context, a political commentator wrote,

The "end of history" thesis has been repeated enough to acquire the ring of truth—though it has also, of course, been challenged. Some critics have cited 9/11 as a major counterexample. Others have pointed to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the Arab spring as proof that ideological contests remain.⁹⁵

Perhaps, it was just an accident that the IR discipline underwent a major transformation with the tragic occurrence of 9/11. IR scholars, engaged in ideological, and military and security studies, came to recognize the importance of studying nontraditional threats stemming from violent NSAs who possess the capability to affect the global peace and security order.⁹⁶

Chapter 1

To deal with the global terror either from an individual extremist or from a cohort of extremist groups, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1373 on September 28, 2001, calling on member states "to work together to combat terrorism." Following up on the UN mandate, the Bush administration initiated the war on global terror to eliminate Al Qaeda and the Taliban from Afghanistan. Surely, the global war on terror became a political necessity for President Bush to justify it to safeguard the country's security and to secure a stable and peaceful world order. He authorized military offensive against Afghanistan in October 2001. But that was a hasty decision without an advanced preparation, planning, and strategy. Nor was it backed up with a rigorous action plan to identify potential challenges, risks, and impediments in fulfilling the avowed goal. Also, U.S. strategic planners lacked adequate knowledge about the geographical terrain of Afghanistan, its history, and Afghan society's local beliefs, cultural values, and ethnic diversity. The Bush administration was jubilant over initial successes of U.S. military operations against the Taliban regime. As expected, U.S. troops dethroned the Taliban from power. However, the United States and NATO forces failed to weaken morale of the Taliban that staged a comeback with gusto. On the contrary, the war on terror was widely propagated by Islamist extremist groups as the war against the Islamic world. They used it as a psychological weapon to wage the global jihad against the United States and other Western powers.97

The above scenario reinforces the importance of studying geopsychology to cope with the unprecedented challenges from bloody violence and conflicts across the globe. As mentioned before, the GT is multidisciplinary, informed by major knowledge streams—history, sociology, politics, philosophy, economics, and psychology. It contributes to a holistic understanding of psychological orientations of influential elites—individuals and NSAs—and local communities (such as religious and ethnic groups). In practical terms, geopsychology captures the mood and spirit of our time with the onset of information age. It helps one understand the psyche of NSAs and authoritarian leaders in conflict-ridden regions. In this context, the book presents case studies of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran in a separate chapter to illustrate how the domestic political conditioning enables theocratic regimes and conservative Muslim clerics to win the sympathy and support of the masses for launching offensives against the U.S.-led liberal international system.⁹⁸

G. John Ikenberry, one of the proponents of the liberal international order (LIO), is worried about the crisis facing the LIO, ascribing it to the resurgence of conservative forces.⁹⁹ Nationalist and "xenophobic strands" of "backlash politics" are on the rise. The globalization of liberal order brought with it novel challenges from authoritarian and conservative regimes (represented by Trump in America, Putin in Russia, and Xi in China) whose

mindsets are at odds with liberalists. Notably, President Trump's "America first" policy invited trenchant criticism from United States's European allies and strategic partners in Northeast Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia.¹⁰⁰ In particular, Trump's neoconservative approach toward the Middle East angered the Muslim community, manifest from his pro-Israel stance by granting recognition to Jerusalem as its new capital. Besides, U.S. strategic setbacks in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria have considerably blunted its strategic leverage over totalitarian regimes and violent NSAs—the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and the ISIS.

Further, despotic regimes in the Middle East and the Korean Peninsula have undermined the liberal order and democratic values.¹⁰¹ Along this parameter, China's monolithic political structure does not fit with the "social purpose" of Western liberalism. Rather, it has been shaped by its staunch nationalism backed by vengeance in light of its past humiliation at the hands of the West and Japan.¹⁰² As such, a hard-nosed understanding of a complex interplay of policy-making and the geopsychology of policymakers as well as of the decision-making process and the dictatorial rulers' geopsychology is essential to lay out a pragmatic roadmap to resolve outstanding problems and issues in a volatile world order. What I emphasize is that unlike realism (state as a decisive actor) and constructivism (primacy of ideas and norms), the GT accepts the rainbow colors of interdisciplinary studies for a comprehensive understanding and management of conflicts and crises.

To put it straightforward, no single IR theory is universally acceptable. Nor is there a broad agreement on the impact factor of a specific theory on the course of world politics. Each theory has its value, depending on the contextual narrative. Therefore, much of the evidence to support the GT has been culled from diverse sources—individual experiences, public statements of policy leaders, interviews, and surveys. If someone charges the GT with a controversial approach, it may be argued that controversies generate debate and discourse, essential for the advancement of knowledge. This fact has been perennially embraced and accepted in all disciplines of knowledge. So is the case with the GT. I have supported my arguments by eliciting¹⁰³ views, opinions, and comments of well-knowledgeable respondents with a vast spectrum of backgrounds: media persons, former diplomats, military elites, and intellectuals in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and China.

Assumptions of the GT

The key assumptions of the GT are outlined below:

1. Non-state/transnational actors are primary actors in the international system, capable of influencing the course of global and regional politics.

Chapter 1

- 2. States' employment of punitive measures is unable to change fixed mindsets and behavioral patterns of authoritarian, theocratic, and violent NSAs.
- 3. Historical narratives, collective memories, geography, and nationalism shape the behavior of authoritarian and NSAs.
- 4. Rational choice theory is unworkable in dealing with non-state and autocratic state actors.

Let us understand the context of the above assumptions. First, the rising influence of NSAs¹⁰⁴ on the world stage has diluted the state-centric international system. Transnational organizations such as the European Union have undermined the sovereignty of the nation-states. And violent NSAs use the "internal sovereignty" as "war lords" or rebels taking up arms to directly challenge the state's authority and its armed forces by establishing physical control over the state's territory in certain parts of the world. Examples of such militia groups include the Taliban (Afghanistan), Al Qaeda (Mali and Somalia), ISIS (Syria and Iraq), rebel groups in Idlib (Syria), and Boko Haram (Nigeria). Besides, violent NSAs possess military wherewithal with a cohort of followers to destabilize the state.

Figure 1.2 shows the sources of support to NSAs.

Second, as mentioned before, social media has a key role in articulating the voices of politically and culturally sensitive groups in volatile regions. The modern technology catalyzes molding perceptions and mindsets of the new generation of educated youth. Third, collective memories—shared historical experiences—are the driving force behind the revenge-seeking



Figure 1.2 Violent Non-state Actors: Sources of Support. Source: Prepared by the author

24

mindset among the people.¹⁰⁵ It ought to be remembered that ruling elites exploit the mass psychology for serving their ends, notably for consolidating their political and power-base. Fourth, in the fast-changing strategic milieu, small and medium ranking powers at times pose a much bigger threat to the international peace and security than do regional hegemons. North Korea offers a classic case. This negates Mearsheimer's assessment that medium powers are at the mercy of great powers, equipped with exceptional military and technological capabilities. The GT does not find the common ground with Mearsheimer's thesis that states are always "power-maximizers"¹⁰⁶ or that a "state's ultimate goal is to be the hegemon in the system."¹⁰⁷ For example, the North Korean regime is not much concerned about maximizing its share of world power. Rather, Kim Jong-un's policy strategy was initially centered on forcing President Trump to come to the negotiating table on his terms and conditions. His diplomatic strategy is structured on sensitizing the nuclear issue to challenge the American hegemony which, in Kim's perception, has bruised the North Korean national pride.

Furthermore, the GT argues that hegemonism has paled into insignificance in the age of "complex interdependence." This is evident from the fact that America as a hegemon has been unable to change the behavior and reverse decisions of autocratic actors such as Bashar al-Assad (Syria) and Kim Jong-un (North Korea). The GT contends that authoritarian leaders in China and North Korea enjoy popular base and have the political capacity to mobilize the people against "Great Power dictates." These totalitarian actors are capable of affecting the trajectory of power equations. As such, Mearsheimer's theory is inapplicable in these cases.¹⁰⁸

Simply put, the time has come to conduct rigorous research on the geopsychology of authoritarian regimes and NSAs to develop appropriate strategies to deal with them to save the humankind from scourges of future wars and to steer clear of threats posed by them. At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that authoritarian leaders are too often galvanized by the past narrative of victimization by foreign powers. In view of the contemporary and current scenario, America's arrogant behavior complicated the hitherto nuclear tangle. One might recall that the Pyongyang regime at one point in time was prepared to shut off its nuclear weapons building program on a simple demand that President George W. Bush agreed to a one-on-one summit meeting with his North Korean counterpart. But instead of holding a summit to defuse the nuclear crisis, President Bush called North Korea a "rogue state" and "an axis of evil." These insulting epithets fueled North Korea's anger and resentment and strengthened its resolve to spike and upgrade its nuclear and missile programs. The point I stress is that the United States failed to plumb the retributive geopsychology of North Korea's autocrats. Washington failed to restrain Korea from testing nuclear devices and launching Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles under its nose. Nor could America stop North Korea from issuing offensive threats to wipe out South Korea and Japan from the world map. North Korea's case study testifies that in international politics there is no place for psychological neutralism. The GT posits that it can explain and predict the actor's behavior and intention on the basis of his/her multifaceted social and political background. The details have been thrashed out in a separate chapter on the North Korean nuclear conundrum.

KEY ELEMENTS OF GEOPSYCHOLOGY

Descriptive elements of the GT aid in understanding the peculiar psyche of the people and ruling leaders of a specific geographical area. Their perceptions, outlook, and attitudinal behavior are shaped over a period of time by a host of components: geographical terrain, historical narratives, traditional local norms, cultural values, nationalism, religious beliefs, and ethnicity. These components interact with one another. For instance, the mutually reinforcing forces of nationalism and religion, nationalism and history, and history and local sociocultural values have a profound impact on IR. In the past, IR was heavily biased in favor of positivist behavioralism, ignoring the role of culture, history, and nationalism.

In the following sections, each component's role will be illuminated in the construction of perceptions of the people inhabiting a particular geography. For example, the people from Northeast Asia differ from the Middle East in terms of sociocultural behavior, religious faith, belief systems, and regional particularities in resources, identities, and priorities.¹⁰⁹ This part argues that the IR theory must respond to the challenges and complexities embedded in the interplay of ethnonationalism, culture, and religion.

Culture

The word culture is not amenable to a precise definition. Sociologists and cultural anthropologists have reasoned out that this complexity arises because of its over 500 definitions and connotations. Broadly speaking, culture is a shared system of perceptions and values of a particular ethnic group, differing from other socio-ethnic groups. It imparts an identity to an ethnic group or a group of people. In this context, Christian Reus-Smit observes, "Culture makes individuals who they are and defines what they want and how they think. And it is culture that undergirds social institutions. Cultural unity makes strong societies."¹¹⁰ In that sense, culture by its nature has always been diverse. In this context, the current international system represented by a homogenous Western culture does not fit in the non-Western world's diverse

cultural norms and values. For example, the two Asian giants—China and India—are ancient civilizations dating back over four millennia with profound cultural diversities, opposed to the culturally homogenous international order. In fact, in a "culturally diverse world," the global political order needs to take culture as a base value in today's non-Western-centric international system. In common parlance, the Western cultural foundations are fast eroding; the non-Western cultural renaissance is in the offing. In effect, there is an increasing problem of accommodating diverse "cultural complexities."¹¹¹

According to Immanuel M. Wallerstein, an American sociologist and proponent of world-system theory, culture is used to "signify not the totality of the specificity of one group against another but instead certain characteristics within the group, as opposed to other characteristics within the same group."112 While emphasizing the role of geo-culture, Wallerstein opines that culture and psychology are not "opposites" but a "symbiotic pair."¹¹³ He further observes that "assertion of the particularist culture of the (national) majority to the exclusion of the minority or minorities could be seen as oppressive."¹¹⁴ The culturally oppressed people tend to develop the psychology of hatred against the majoritarian community. So far as South Asia is concerned, the feudal culture has been predominant in constructing and shaping people's perception that they have been marginalized at the hands of the upper crest. Truly speaking, the feudal culture is accountable for the persisting inferiority complex among the suppressed sections of society in the Third World. Jean-Paul Sartre in his monumental work Black Orpheus speaks of "Europe-centric whiteness" in which Whiteman enjoys every privilege. Thus, the image of blackness creates hatred between the black and the white. Therefore, Sartre challenges the whiteness in which the oppressed people were given an "inferior ontological status." In other words, an artificial class division-white versus black-was artificially created, based on the culture of the color.115

Besides, it is important to point up that given the mediating function of geopsychology, the group's cultural affinities are generally exploited to breed mutual rancor to legitimize ethno-religious conflicts. Over a while, meta-physical concerns of local culture get transformed into the "modern hate," and the historical rivalry is projected as a political necessity to outmaneuver the opponent. In this regard, Huntington's "clash of civilizations" theory is misleading. Today, what we see is a clash of competing psychologies borne out of the contrived fears. For instance, *jihad* (holy war), defined in terms of the psychological disposition of extremists, is sustained through the projection of cultural traits of a religiously and culturally organized community. If it is defined in terms of tradition, the "dominant motif" behind inciting the mass psychology is to sensitize the people about an imperative need for protecting religious and cultural identity. Howard J. Wiarda writes: "Culture is

a powerful but often neglected concept in international relations and foreign policy."¹¹⁶

It is, therefore, important to understand and diagnose "the appropriate cultural style" of a society or region in dealing with the latter.¹¹⁷ It is pertinent to mention that the killing of the black American George Floyd in the police custody created the nationwide violent protests against racism in the United States. The black American anger exploded against the police barbarity, which led to the burning of property, including churches. Therefore, President Trump's provocative statement badly ruptured the racial and cultural fabric of America. On the other hand, the chief of Houston police Hubert Arturo Acevedo asked President Trump to keep his "mouth shut" upon his "warning of military deployment": "Let me just say this to the President of the United States on behalf of the police chiefs in this country, please, if you don't have something constructive to say, keep your mouth shut . . . It's not about dominating, it's about winning hearts and minds."118 Acevedo's mention of "winning hearts and minds" favors appealing to the psyche of the ethnically and racially diverse populace, which is central to dousing the flames of the outrage of the black Americans. The anti-racism campaign spread across Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand. For the first time, black people across the world have shown unprecedented solidarity against the prevailing racism in developed nations. This reflects the importance of deep-seated history and culture of the peoples of African origin.

Andy Molinsky, a thought leader, Brandeis University, is of the view that national "cultural differences" do matter. He suggests familiarity with "region norms" and emphasizes doing "homework before entering a new culture" as "one of the keys for successes."¹¹⁹ A similar view, based on empirical evidence, is held by George C. Herring, an American historian. His personal experiences in Vietnam reinforce how important the culture and community values of the local people are. While recapturing his wartime experiences in Vietnam, he writes: "Still, most Americans arrived in the country without knowledge of the land and the people ... 'My time in Vietnam is the memory of ignorance,' one soldier later wrote. Not knowing the language or culture, the Americans did not know what the people felt, or even at times how to tell friend from foe."¹²⁰ Herring further observes that the Vietnamese "were also acutely sensitive to dominance by an outside power. They struggled to uphold their dignity and autonomy."121 This quote shows that the national morale of the Vietnamese is tenacious. It also shows variation in the cultural behavior of the Western society and that of a Southeast Asian society. The latter has a "nuanced perspective" on threat perceptions and challenges. It is because culture shapes and guides people's attitudes and perceptions in feudal and tribal societies. Interaction with locals, raised in a particular social and cultural setting, is important to understanding their psychology.

Writing about the cultural factor's significance, George C. Herring writes in the *New York Times* (September 19, 2017), "From the early stages of the Vietnam War, American officials insisted that winning the hearts and minds (yes, the acronym was WHAM) of the South Vietnamese people was the key to victory. But the Americans tasked with carrying out that strategy were illequipped, linguistically and culturally, to make it work. And in the end, that deficit destroyed whatever goodwill might have existed on either side and doomed America's foray into Vietnam to failure."¹²²

It may be argued that traditions change with the transformation of the social environment. But there are certain immutable values and cultural traits that are not bound by the constraints of time and space. Therefore, the psychological value of cultural diversities needs to be recognized in state policies in the interest of peace and public good.

The GT has become more relevant than IR's mainstream theories for a host of reasons. If seen in hindsight, proponents of realism could hardly expect or anticipate that NSAs might threaten state actors, including the United States. None of their writings gave an iota of inkling that radical elements living on American soil would ever be entangled in planning and executing a dangerous game plan to wipe out its World Trade Center. The question is still lingering in the minds of people why the United States lost the longest war in its history. Why did U.S. administrations from Clinton through Obama to Trump fail to stop North Korea from escalating its nuclear and missile program, attaining the capability to threaten the United States, South Korea, and Japan? Why is the United States silent despite its overwhelmingly devastating retaliatory capabilities against North Korea? Why did a battery of scholars and top U.S. think tanks, engaged in security studies, failed to plumb the mood, attitude and anguish of ruling leaders of defiant states like Iran and North Korea? It is, indeed, senseless to squander away billions of dollars on unproductive research.

It is pertinent to note the timely warning of Henry A. Kissinger. He writes in *World Order* that centuries of diverse cultural, social, and psychological backgrounds and experiences do affect the behavior of international and regional actors. Dan Schnur, a professor at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communications, while reviewing Kissinger's book, comments:

He [Kissinger]notes that our country's unwillingness to recognize those differences has inevitably led to military and diplomatic catastrophes and warns that similar consequences are likely without a greater effort on the part of our political leaders to recognize that Western approaches are not universal. . . . Since our competitors and adversaries have fundamentally different goals than those we have inherited through Western and European convention, he argues, expecting them to adhere to our prescribed approach toward reconciliation is doomed to fail. $^{\rm 123}$

The above quote supports the relevance of the GT, underpinning that the U.S. approaches and goals are not compatible with its competitors and non-Western powers. In effect, U.S. policies need to be tailored to the cultural constructs of Asian communities, especially in conflict-ridden regions.

History

Facts of history, based on records, are critically important in the IR theory building. Nor can historical perspectives be overlooked in international politics. Indeed, history is a mirror to know the past to better live in the present. And nations are shaped by their history.¹²⁴ For, history cannot be reduced to "a single monotone story." Rather, history acts as a bridge between IR theory and facts recorded in the human and diplomatic history. More pertinently, past narratives are valuable in constructing and shaping the psyche of ruling elites and masses. Numerous historical episodes and pieces of evidence validate the assumption that the past events constitute an enduring variable in fashioning the outlook and policy behavior of ruling leaders about the alien powers who plundered their countries' natural resources and heaped humiliation on them.

Further, it is hardly debatable that national actors often use the bitter lessons of history as an expedient political weapon to keep alive collective memories ("shared renderings of the past that help shape a community's collective identity"¹²⁵) among the citizenry to sensitize it about how treacherously they were treated by foreign occupiers.¹²⁶ For instance, China is reviving its history as a flashback of invasions by European powers that treated China shabbily. China has not yet forgotten how the Opium Wars (1839–1942) forced it to sign the humiliating Treaty of Nanjing in 1842.¹²⁷ Similarly, Vietnamese recollect the bitterest past experiences during an American seize of the nation for over two decades, wreaking havoc on their societal and cultural values. The harrowing sufferings made the Vietnamese people mentally tough and psychologically unyielding to disprove America's "spurious notion" that they could be brought down to kneel at its feet.¹²⁸ America could not break Vietnamese national morale. The underlying idea is that history is a navigator for the study and analysis of current international problems.¹²⁹

At the same time, history's negative role lies in evoking hatred and vengeance. So far as South Asian history is concerned, India and Pakistan have remained the captives of the history of the partition theory. The gruesome memory of bloodshed, violence, pilferage, and photogenic revival of how the modesty of women was outraged on both sides refreshes and accentuates

30

the mutual hostility. It is further fueled by an inescapable reality of the past four wars fought between them. But the dilemma remains unresolved, being more of a psychological nature. From the Indian perspective, Pakistan is relentlessly engaged in destabilizing India by aiding and abetting militancy in many parts of the country.¹³⁰ From the Pakistani perception, India is a troublemaker, which has not yet reconciled to Pakistan's existence and identity as a sovereign nation-state.¹³¹ Thus, accusation and counter-accusation informed by the narrowly structured political, ethnic, and religious constituencies in both countries further complicate their hitherto strained relationship.¹³² This is how psychological barriers have brought their relations to the nadir,¹³³ even paralyzing the process of political dialogue.

Afghanistan presents a similar case. Its long checkered history unveils that its proud people with unshakable resolve never surrendered to the world's mightiest empires, including Britain, the former Soviet Union, and the United States. A history of nearly two decades of the U.S. war in Afghanistan confirmed that extremist groups—the Afghan Taliban and the Al Qaeda—are invincible. They have been freely carrying out deadly attacks on U.S. troops without any fear of retaliation to exterminate them. On the contrary, their "anti-American fervor is undiminished."¹³⁴

As such, history stays central to the construction of the geopsychological approach to IR. Subsequent chapters in the book illuminate how historical narratives are prolifically useful to comprehend a myriad of layers posited in geopsychology. The IR studies devoid of history will be tantamount to opening borders with sealed boundaries.¹³⁵

Nationalism

Nationalism is a powerful political ideology that propels political communities of given regions to assert individuality, and political and cultural identity. Though bearing diverse interpretations, this term broadly connotes a "distinct culture," "a sense of oneness," and common awareness about the national identity with an emphasis on the right to self-determination in the case of subjugation by imperial powers.¹³⁶ Despite being a potent force in IR, nationalism has often been neglected as an essential component of IR theory in locating the "seeds of violence" and explaining the causes of conflicts. Political debates on nationalism became widely popular in the1990s when the ethnic cleansing of the Bosnian Muslims of Serbia reached an optimal level of ethno-religious nationalist clashes (between Serbs and Muslims). The divergence in nationalistic outlooks resulted in a gruesome genocide¹³⁷ in different parts of the world. Its instances can be found in Myanmar (against Rohingya Muslims), Sri Lanka (against Sri Lankan Tamils), Iraq (against Yazidis), Rwanda (against Tutsis in the1990s), and in Sudan and Syria. In

Chapter 1

the current phase of the paranoia of nationalism, thousands of Kurds have been killed along Syrian borders. Ethno-nationalistic upsurges could have been averted had ruling leaders been sensible and sensitive enough to take stock of cultural sensitivities of diverse cultural groups in the larger interest of national harmony and integration.

A classic case of Pakistan offers palpable evidence that its dismemberment could have been avoided had Pakistan's military dictators been respectful to the Bengali nationalism in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The history of Bengali people is replete with the revolutionary fervor and sacrifices for cultural assertion. Rather, the Pakistani military indulged in cultural purging of Bengali Muslims in East Pakistan. Pakistan's track record of massive discrimination against its Bengali brethren engendered the emergence of Bangladesh from the womb of Pakistan as an independent and sovereign nation in December 1971.¹³⁸

In the current debate on liberal hegemonism vis-à-vis nationalism, John Mearsheimer acknowledges that nationalism has not been given a proper place in the LIO. He contends that nationalism and liberalism cannot coexist, for "the liberal state seeks to spread its own values far and wide." Mearsheimer states that it is nationalism that triumphs in the clash between the two. He observes, "The influence of nationalism often undercuts a liberal foreign policy. For example, nationalism places great emphasis on self-determination, which means that most countries will resist a liberal great power's efforts to interfere in their domestic politics—which, of course, is what liberal hegemony is all about."¹³⁹ This reinforces the importance of nationalism as a core element of the GT, whereas mainstream theorists ignored discourses on nationalism. Nor did they recognize its primacy in the analysis of the interstate conflict trajectory. As a result, the forces of extremism raised their ugly heads, especially in volatile regions such as South Asia and the Middle East.

Stephen Walt in *The Hell of Good Intentions* illuminates how the U.S. role as a global hegemon has been disastrous with its recklessly overstretched military engagement in the Middle East. Walt terms this hopeless scenario as entrapment in "forever wars" in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹⁴⁰ While militarily intervening in the Middle East, great powers perhaps underestimated the potential of Muslim nationalism in constructing, sustaining, and nourishing their national identity.¹⁴¹ In this context, strategic experts share the view that President Trump has created unnecessary enemies by hurting Arab nationalism and disregarding Arabs' societal and cultural values.¹⁴² This is clearly manifest from his lavish praise-loaded statement for Israel while unveiling his "Peace to Prosperity Vision" speech at the White House on January 28, 2020: "Israel is a light unto the world. The hearts and history of our people are woven together. The Land of Israel is an ancient home, a sacred place of

worship, and a solemn promise to the Jewish people that we will never again repeat history's darkest hour."¹⁴³

As for Iran's nationalism, Daniel Byman, Senior Fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy, Brookings Institution, subscribes to the view that it is "strongly fueled by the history of intervention, manipulation, and exploitation of the country by foreign powers."¹⁴⁴ A similar viewpoint is that Islamic nationalism in the Middle East "rose to create an environment ripe for the IS. The Middle East and North Africa are now more unstable and vulnerable to terrorism than before democracy."¹⁴⁵

It is important to underscore that Arab nationalism is different from the Western notion of nationalism. First, Arab nationalism is rooted in religious beliefs unlike the secular brand of nationalism. Second, Henry Siegman writes that Arab nationalism is connected with "memories of past glories. It recalls a golden age of Arab greatness which is held to be the true image of the Arab genius. It is this genius which Arab nationalism seeks to recreate. . . . For while Europe languished in the somnolent Dark Ages, a great Islamic empire extended from southern France to Samar-kand, from the Atlantic to the Indus, its power and culture dwarfing Christian civilization."¹⁴⁷

This study suggests that the deeply embedded nationalistic fervor¹⁴⁸in North Korea, China, and in Arab countries is a reference point of the geopsychology of ruling political leaders and the masses. It is an open truth that North Korean and Chinese leaderships indoctrinate their masses along the doctrine of nationalism which electrifies them into making supreme sacrifices.

Geography

A few scholars have worked on the significance of geography and environmental conditions in the construction of perceptions, attitudes, and belief systems of local, national, and regional elites pertaining to domestic and foreign policies. A majority of IR scholars have studied geography through the distorted geopolitical lens. But its pivotal role in building NSAs' psyche about foreign occupiers has largely been overlooked. The aim of "geographical psychology," in Peter Rentfrow's view, is that it involves "understanding how individual characteristics, social entities, and physical features of the environment contribute to their organization."¹⁴⁹ He further writes that it is helpful in mapping geographical differences in "psychological phenomena across regions."¹⁵⁰ The studies on "personality profiles" reveal that "geographically close nations are more psychologically similar compared to geographically distant nations."¹⁵¹ This can be seen in cases of neighboring states in the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, and Syria), Afghanistan in Southwest Asia, and Central Asian countries bordering Afghanistan.

Chapter 1

This part discusses how geography has been "an essential tool" in examining conflicts and wars throughout human history. Friedrich Ratzel (1844– 1905), a pioneer of geopolitical theory, wrote, "the geographical features and natural conditions" play a major role in state policies and individual actors' policy behavior.¹⁵² Geography is a primary component in determining peoples' perceptions and attitudinal behavior toward the outside world. This is especially true of the landlocked countries such as Nepal, Bhutan, and Afghanistan whose political necessity is to "remain on good terms with the transit state, regardless of political, social, cultural, military, economic, and other disparities between them."¹⁵³ It was because of the constraint of its landlocked status, Afghanistan had to enter transit agreements with Iran, the former Soviet Union, and Pakistan.

Each geographical region represents a narrative woven in national and local identity among the mass of inhabitants.¹⁵⁴ Geographical locations shape those identities along parameters of their shared perceptions, similar social values, similar ways of life, and common sociocultural values.¹⁵⁵ For example, Afghanistan's rugged mountains and valleys shape and influence the Afghan people's history and psychology. Highlighting the geographical bases of identity resurgence, Kaplan notes:

Mass communications and economic integration are weakening many states, exposing a Hobbesian world of small, fractious regions. Within them, local, ethnic, and religious sources of identity are reasserting themselves, and because they are anchored to specific terrains they are best explained by reference to geography. Like the faults that determine earthquakes, the political future will be defined by conflict and instability with a similar geographic logic.¹⁵⁶

Geographical terrain¹⁵⁷ constitutes a core factor in defense and security decision-making processes of major powers to protect and advance their strategic interests in the energy-rich regions of the Middle East, and the Gulf. A noted scholar observes that "the geography has in effect influenced Afghanistan. As a result of the constant introduction of new cultures, the population is comprised of a multitude of varying civilizations due to this constant ebb and flow of foreign advancement and defeat in Afghanistan."¹⁵⁸ But America's neglect of cultural values and psychological dispositions of multiethnic groups made it much harder to sustain its strategic foothold in a tough and rough geographical terrain of Afghanistan with an "intricate array of mountains and valleys."¹⁵⁹ Its Hindu Kush mountain ranges rendered it virtually impossible to conquer Afghanistan. Despite that, America invaded Afghanistan under an illusion that it would be able to uproot the Taliban and Al Qaeda once and for all with its overwhelming technological prowess and military resources. But it did not happen as per the U.S. wishlist. Robert D.

Kaplan aptly observes, "Embracing the dictates and limitations of geography will be especially hard for Americans, who like to think that no constraint, natural or otherwise, applies to them. But denying the facts of geography only invites disasters that, in turn, make us victims of geography."¹⁶⁰

Another example of a perceptional dimension of the geography-induced psychology is that of Nepal-the Himalayan state. Nepal has inestimably suffered because of its landlocked geographical status vis-à-vis India for import of essential goods and export of commodities. At times, Nepal had been one of the worst victims of its inevitable dependence on India's transit facilities. There are several instances in this regard. In 1989, India did not renew the Trade and Transit Treaty with Nepal following which transit routes on the India-Nepal border were sealed off, disrupting the supply of essential commodities like petrol, diesel, medicines, and food that Nepal used to import from India. Nepal was forced to import the essential goods from China. Another episode shook up the New Delhi-Kathmandu relationship when India imposed an unofficial economic embargo on Nepal in 2015, resulting in a wave of anger against India sweeping through major cities like Kathmandu. As a result of the blockade, the Nepalese people inestimably suffered, which fueled the anti-India sentiment in Nepal. A senior Nepalese journalist observed that an anti-India wave became "the highest in history at that time. . . . Not only the Nepalese leaders but also the Nepali people had the opportunity to understand that India had tried to intervene in Nepal's utterly internal affairs."¹⁶¹ India lost much of its goodwill in Nepalese eyes. In difficult times, Nepal has had to appeal to China to come to its rescue, whether it be the outbreak of earthquake, or economic blockade, or the trade and transit issue.

The underlying logic is that because of its landlocked status, the Nepalese people developed an inferiority complex of a "big-small syndrome." They perceive India as a hegemon and came closer to China for economic and infrastructural aid to stave off dependence on India for over the past seventy years and to maintain Nepal's autonomy in foreign policy and defense sectors. This is how Nepal began drifting from India, especially when the Communist-led government came to power in 2008 under the Maoist leadership of Pushpa Kamal Dahal. Since then, Indo-Nepalese relations have soured. Given this scenario, Indian foreign policymakers are called upon to address the Nepalese psyche by revising New Delhi's Kathmandu policy accordingly. It would help refurbish India's image as a close and friendly neighbor among Nepal's societal and ruling actors. This view is supported by the late Madhukar S. J. B. Rana, former finance minister of Nepal (Appendix A). He conceded that geopsychology is "a most valuable concept in understanding our relationship because Nepalese have a sense of inferiority with India-that's no doubt. But it [Nepal] does also have the feeling that it has been done unfairly in terms of

Chapter 1

not getting its due share. We [Nepalese people] are not interested in aid, we want mutual beneficial projects, but somehow India has still stuck on to the old paradigm of the Panikkar Doctrine of a hegemonistic asymmetrical relationship."¹⁶² This view is further corroborated by Nepalese strategic affairs analysts such as Dwarika Nath Dhungel and Bihari Krishna Shrestha.¹⁶³

A new controversy arose between New Delhi and Kathmandu over Nepal's issuance of a new map claiming "contested territories" with India. It "locates the small stretch of disputed land within its northwest border, between China and India."¹⁶⁴ Speaking in the parliament on May 19, 2020, Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli alleged that India was "bullying Nepal" and warned, "We won't let go the issue of Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani. This is our land, and we will reclaim it. It is not a disputed land. It is our land. India created unnecessary controversy by claiming it as theirs. This government will make concrete efforts to reclaim the territories."¹⁶⁵ In his perception, India is a hegemon which Nepal would not tolerate. It reflects Nepal's nationalist sentiment on the territorial issue.

Religion

It is a profound paradox that in the post-modern global society, dark forces of religious radicalism have sent shock waves to the values of the civilized society and dealt a serious blow to achieving an ideal of a nonviolent world order.¹⁶⁶ The unfolding ethno-religious upsurge in large pockets of the world from Quebec to Kashmir, from Bosnia to Sri Lanka, from Central African states to Central Asian states has caused a gruesome specter of genocide, "ethnocide," and femicide.

Nationalism is driven by the affinity-identity passions of the ethnic community and religious groups that thirst for self-esteem and dignity. To prove this contention, Gidon Gottlieb has cited the cases of ethnic Kurds in Turkey and Iraq, and ethnic Albanians in the Serbian province of Kosovo. He remarks that the use of Kurdish language is barely tolerated in Turkey, and Kurdish national rights are scarcely recognized. In Iran, Iraq, and Syria, Kurds are subjected to repression. The hapless Iraqi Kurds became the victim of the state-sponsored genocide.¹⁶⁷

Sam Pryke lays out how Osama bin Laden and his followers used religious agenda to create a deep wedge between Christians and Muslims. Laden's goal was to "remove all Christians from Muslim lands,"¹⁶⁸ including expulsion of "American infidels" from Saudi Arabia—the territory of the prophet. He appealed to Muslims across the world that they had a "legal duty" to "wage jihad for the sake of God and to motivate our Ummah to jihad so that Palestine may be completely liberated and returned to Islamic sovereignty."¹⁶⁹ It was Laden's belief that it was the holy duty of Muslims to maintain their distinct

identity "within a wider body of Muslim believers."¹⁷⁰ Pryke elaborated that since the advent of nationalism in the Middle East in response to European imperialism in the nineteenth century, nationalism "combined with Islam to produce distinct identities."¹⁷¹

Thus, geopsychology entails the peculiarity of a distinct geographical region in terms of religion, ethnicity, and identity. This can be observed in the cases of South Asia, East Asia, the Middle East, Afghanistan, and North Korea. For example, in the formulation of radical religious identity, the geopsychology of Arab nationals has played a pivotal role: Muslim identity is solely defined by the "togetherness of believers." The togetherness among Arabs motivates the Muslim community to unite against foreign powers, especially against the United States and Britain which, they believe, are bent upon mutilating Islam.¹⁷² As such, they are strenuously reviving their historical, cultural, and religious practices to establish their identity and belongingness. "New forms of expression" of the past values through social media, and projection of nationalist-cum-religious trajectories are aimed at ensuring people's maximum participation in the mass movement against American military presence in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Sudan, and Syria. Importantly, the local population in the Middle East has been registering its fierce opposition to foreign powers' exploration and extraction of the region's potential natural resources such as oil, gas, and minerals. This provides ample evidence how people's geopsychology is important in the Internet age with the diffusion of information and knowledge, indispensable for insulating the region from foreign powers' strategic presence.

Interestingly, Islamic thinkers and theologians refute the "self-evident superiority of European military and industrial power in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries."¹⁷³ They cite the historical evidence of "the Islamic Golden Age" in the medieval period when Islam had profoundly influenced the European culture in art, artifact, music, and agriculture fields. Though Islam is generally considered "the antithesis of Western Christian civilization,"¹⁷⁴ many European political thinkers and philosophers, including Dante Alighieri (an Italian philosopher) and John Locke (an English philosopher and political theorist) came under "Islamic influences." In the postcolonial era, Muslim societies have been reasserting their distinct Islamic identity free from Western influences. And the growing West-Islam divide has produced divergent psychological dispositions, impacting their thought processes and decisional structures in policy matters in political, economic, and security domains.

At the same time, Arab nationalism was more powerful to draw upon Islam to establish the Arab identity. But due to its inability to integrate Arab nations, a "renewed emphasis" was made on political Islam. It facilitated the spread of political ideology of Islam¹⁷⁵ in various parts of the world to unify

the Islam adherents rather than nationalists as a cementing force of togetherness in terms of a well-defined Islamic community. It called upon global Islamists to reformulate their strategies to help establish a "pure Islamic religious identity."¹⁷⁶

In pursuit of that, top religious leaders like Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, after a long exile, came to the forefront to drive out America's military and security engagement with Iran during the Shah regime until 1978. Naturally, the Washington-Tehran relations turned sour after the overthrow of Iran's last monarch (of the Shah dynasty) Mohammad Reza Pahlavi—a close U.S. ally—in February 1979. With Khomeini's declaration of Iran as an Islamic Republic in April 1979, he was appointed the country's supreme political and religious leader for life. His staunch denunciation of the U.S. policy fueled a strong anti-American wave in Iran. Ironically, a decade-long Iran-Iraq war (1980–1990) led to political upheavals, especially with the U.S. involvement in the region. Over a period of time, an anti-American psychology pervaded throughout the Middle Eastern region. Further, Islamist zealots prepared local masses for revenge and retaliation against foreign powers, especially the United States and Britain. In other words, the logic and rationalism did not work in the face of a resurgent Islam as a force to be reckoned with.

Religious radicalism fueled psychological impulses of hatred and religious vendetta, which calcified anti-liberal and antidemocratic passions running high in the region. Realistically enough, jihadist mentality does not heed saner voices, nor does it embrace the rational choice model.¹⁷⁷ Doubtless, extremists' mindset can be traced to their upbringing, schooling, and training along family values, societal beliefs, and religious faith and values. Their psychocultural perceptions tend to interact with the other local people living in the same geographical space. South Asia presents unique ethno-religious differences, for example, between Hindus and Muslims in Pakistan, between Hindus and Buddhists in Sri Lanka, and between Buddhists and Muslims in Bangladesh. On the one hand, multicultural interaction fosters a better understanding among diverse individual groups. On the other, it triggers awareness about an imperative need to maintain their identity against the majoritarian threat. As a result, it continues to foster the subordinate-dominant relationship in the society.¹⁷⁸

This study suggests that there is a deeply entrenched psychic fear among minority religious communities in South Asia, particularly in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, because of the hostile attitude of the majoritarian community. For example, the cases of mob lynching, "the scourge of new India,"¹⁷⁹ have spiked in India in the past couple of years. Harsh Mander reports, "In the years since Narendra Modi was elected in 2014, ugly mob hate has spilled onto the streets, trains and people's homes. Fevered throngs surround, brutally assault and sometimes kill unarmed men, mostly Muslim."¹⁸⁰ As

reported in the *Time*, the U.S. Commission for International Human Rights condemned the lynching of [Tabrez] Ansari [a Muslim in Jharkhand, India], "observing the recognizable pattern of hate crimes against minorities that marks India's dangerous slide into a majoritarianism long dreaded by those who have observed Modi's past on human rights."¹⁸¹ On the contrary, Hindu zealots are feverishly engaged in spreading the cultural nationalism in India. A majority of them support the authoritarian style of governance at the Center.¹⁸² But the stoking of "Islamophobic resentment" and "denunciation of rival parties" might boomerang.

As regards Rohingya Muslims, nearly one million have been displaced from Myanmar and were forced to seek shelter in Bangladesh. They have accused the Myanmar regime of religious and ethnic cleansing. Some Rohingya have sought shelter in India. The Hindu nationalist government led by Prime Minister Modi is committed to driving them out of the country, considering them illegal migrants. Further, the Indian government has opened the National Register in the northeastern state of Assam where Indian Muslims, settled long back, are battling for the national citizenship, whereas thousands of Hindu migrants from Pakistan have been granted the Indian citizenship on the grounds of being the worst victims of Pakistani excesses. Apparently, the citizenship policy is being implemented on the religious basis.

Each individual's psyche is symbolized through shared religion and ethnicity that produces a sense of identity and solidarity among a group of people, looking upon "the religiously others" with disdain and derision. This applies to India and Pakistan in South Asia, and Arabs and Israelis in the Middle East, which are navigating the "complex morass" of the depraved politics in the region. In this scenario, the rational choice model is redundant for practical purposes. This can be exemplified from the geopsychology of congenital hostility between India and Pakistan, further fueled by interplay between common identity and religious affinity.¹⁸³ Besides, regional political dynamics manifest that ruling elites quite often resort to populist rhetoric by playing the religious or ethnic card to serve their narrow interests, having no qualms about fueling mutual animosity and hatred. In effect, religion plays a pivotal role in the construction of the geopsychology.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of the opinion of IR theorists about the salience and importance of the geopsychological framework, I am of a firm view that given the comprehensive and systematic study of the primacy of geopsychology in the current unpredictable international system, geopsychology is bound to exercise a profound impact on international politics. So far, Western and non-Western

Chapter 1

IR scholars have not diagnosed the root causes of various typologies of global and regional conflicts through a reliable and scientific framework. As mentioned, nonmilitary challenges and novel threats are impacting the very foundation of the international system. The GT bridges the deficit in the existing mainstream IR theories, attributed to the neglect of the study of psychology in IR. Foreign policy decisions disconnected from the psychology of the ruling class and masses might backfire.

What I am trying to bring home the point is that the GT can account for the changes occurring in world politics. It entails knowledge about history, geographical terrain, nationalism, and religious faith of the people, and the local and national elite to help prevent conflicts and bring stability in the conflict-prone region. The time is propitious for IR scholars to pay a close attention to recognize the value of studying geopsychology of individual and NSAs and national elites of Asia. The geopsychological framework of analysis offers a reliable and effective mode of diagnosing security conflicts, war, and bloody violence and suggests preventive measures to resolve outstanding disputes.

The study suggests that the GT is a valuable theoretical framework for conflict analysis and conflict resolution through a peaceful change. It helps explain nontraditional threats and suggests ways and means for containing, controlling, and resolving conflicts of myriad nature. As explained before, realism and liberalism failed to capture the iterative and resurfacing dynamics of international politics in the twenty-first century, underpinned by the peculiar mindset of authoritarian regimes whose policy behavior runs counter to the well-established norms and laws of international order. Therefore, it is essential to understand the psychology of authoritarian leaders belonging to a particular country or region to prevent unnecessary and avoidable conflicts and civil wars across the globe.

Furthermore, the historical record of past narratives leaves a potential impact on psychologies of national actors. China and North Korea, for example, have not forgotten the past humiliating experiences at the hands of foreign occupiers. They keep those bitter memories alive among their people by administering the dose of hyper-nationalism. In the throes of long-running anguish against the United States, North Korea is prepared to face the worst consequences emanating from the U.S. hostility. Kissinger warns that the "danger of war, after all, resides less in the existence of the weapons of mass destruction than in the minds of the men who are in a position to order their use."¹⁸⁴ His forewarning fits with North Korea's lingering nuclear threat in the Korean Peninsula. Undoubtedly, provocations hardened the attitude of the North Korean regime. In view of the declining U.S. leverage over its closest Western allies, the latter are treating it as an inconsequential power on the critical issues such as the WTO' role, NATO, climate change, the Middle

East crisis, refugees problem, and human rights. In other words, America is faced with a serious credibility crisis.

Unlike Mearsheimer who claimed his theory to be 75 percent accurate, I have not quantified the GT's accuracy in terms of conflict resolution or predictions about world events. The simple reason is that human behavior and human intentions cannot be scientifically measured. However, GT is an indispensable tool to find how peaceful changes can be brought about in volatile regions that have witnessed profound political and psychological upheavals. It merits a mention that Mearsheimer has observed that despite inbuilt handicaps, "social scientists should . . . use their theories to make prediction for the future."¹⁸⁵ He further writes, "The world can be used as a laboratory to decide which theories best explain international politics."¹⁸⁶ In this context, the GT can predict the impact of mindsets of violent NSAs, including authoritarian regimes, on the global political and security order.

The GT is capable of explaining how Maoists (NSAs) were able to overthrow a 240-year-old monarchy in Nepal. On the contrary, realists and neoliberalists could not adduce a tangible explanation nor could they predict the fall of the monarchy in Nepal. They did not take NSAs seriously in their study and analysis. Further, neorealism overemphasizes the primacy of states' military, material, and technological capabilities. Despite the asymmetries between the non-state (such as Al Qaeda and ISIS) and state actors in terms of power, capabilities, and resources, the former could execute their plans and strategies more accurately. Violent NSAs' goal is focused on bleeding the mightiest power under the banner of *jihad* and religious persecution, providing a clear-cut direction to their followers.

As such, the GT framework fits in the current dynamics of domestic and foreign policies of the countries of the Middle East, South Asia and Afghanistan, and the Korean Peninsula. The persisting psychological battle in volatile regions has rendered the GT more relevant today.

NOTES

1. Peter Katzenstein, "The Second Coming? Reflections on a Global Theory of International Relations," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 11, no. 4 (Winter 2018): 373–90. This article inquires into the distinction between Western and non-Western international relations theory. In the second section, it discusses common knowledge and theories and tacit knowledge and world views. In both sections, the article argues for an approach to the two types of knowledge that is "complementary, not binary." See also Peter J. Katzenstein, Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen D. Krasner, eds, *Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1999). The importance of the 9/11 is debatable. Michael Cox writes

that we need not "overstate the historical significance of September 11. It was not a Pearl Harbor, an end to the Cold War or even an oil crisis. If anything, it was more like the Cuban Missile Crisis that is to say 'a relatively short sharp, event' that will not be without its consequences but that will not in the end be transformative." Michael Cox, "Paradigm Shifts and 9/11: International Relations After the Twin Towers," *Security Dialogue* 33, no. 2 (2002), https://www.prio.org/Publications/Publication/?x=2780.

2. For a detailed analysis, see Cox, "Paradigm Shifts and 9/11," 247-51.

3. There is an increasing importance of globalization in every sector where psychologies of different actors and forces are involved. From this perspective, globalization has facilitated the "diffusion of sovereignty." See Terry Nardin, "The Diffusion of Sovereignty," *History of European Ideas* 41, no. 1 (2015): 89–102.

4. See Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, *Non-Western International Relations Theory: Perspectives on and Beyond Asia* (New York, NY and London: Routledge, 2010).

5. For this part, see Arlene Tickner and Ole Wæver, eds, *International Relations Scholarship around the World* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009).

6. For a brilliant critique of constructivism, see Dale C. Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism: A Review Essay," *International Security* 25, no. 2 (Autumn, 2000): 189–91.

7. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Great Delusion–Liberal Dreams and International Realities* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018).

8. Kevin Doremus, "Book Review: The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities by John Mearsheimer," *71 Republic.com*, February 11, 2019, https://71republic.com/2019/02/11/book-review-the-great-delusion/.

9. Amitav Acharya, *Rethinking Power, Institutions and Idea in World Politics, Whose IR*? (London and New York, NY: Routledge, 2014), 24–39.

10. See Acharya and Buzan, Non-Western International Relations.

11. Stanley Hoffmann, "An American Social Science: International Relations," *Dædalus* 106, no. 3 (1977): 41–60; Katzenstein et al., *Exploration and Contestation*.

12. T. V. Paul, "Recasting Statecraft: International Relations and Strategies of Peaceful Change," *International Studies Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (2017): 9.

13. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (London: Penguin, 1998; its original work was published in 1781).

14. Ali Teymoori and Rose Trappes trace the influence of Kant to psychology. See *The Psychologist* 30 (July 2017), https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-30/ july-2017/revolution-thinking.

15. Paul Kennedy, *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1989).

16. David Jablonsky, *Time's Cycle and National Military Strategy: The Case for Continuity in a Time of Change* (Darby, PA: Diane Publishing Co., 1995); see also, Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics* 51, no. 1 (1998): 144–47.

17. For a perceptive and critical analysis of this part, see Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy* 110 (Spring 1998): 29–32 and 34–46; Stephen M. Walt, "The Enduring Relevance of the Realist

Tradition," in *Political Science. The State of the Discipline*, eds I. Katznelson and H. V. Milner (New York, NY: Norton, 2002), 197–230; Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy* 145 (November/December 2004).

18. See Ethan B. Kapstein, "Is Realism Dead? The Domestic Sources of International Politics," *International Organization* 49, no. 4 (1995): 751–74; Rose, "Neoclassical Realism," 144–72; Randall L. Schweller, "Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Under-balancing," *International Security* 29, no. 2 (2004): 159–201.

19. On human nature and power, see Robert Greene, *The Laws of Human Nature* (New York, NY: Viking Publisher/Penguin, 2018).

20. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 4th edition (Boston, MA: Longman, 2012), 18.

21. Keohanne and Nye write, "It is not immediately apparent—nor should it be taken for granted—that these theories or intellectual constructs are relevant to understanding Chinese," Japanese, or Korean calculations and behavior, 2.

22. For a brilliant critique of this part, see Rajni Kothari, *Footsteps into Future: Diagnosis of the Present World and a Design for an Alternative* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1974).

23. For a detailed analysis, see Randolph B. Persaud and Alina Sajed, *Race, Gender, and Culture in International Relations: Postcolonial Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2018).

24. Joseph M. Grieco, "Structural Realism and the Problem of Polarity and War," in *Power in World Politics*, eds Felix Berenskoetter and Michael J. Williams (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007).

25. Amitav Acharya, "The Limitations of Mainstream International Relations Theories for Understanding the Politics of Forced Migration," *Lecture at Center for International Studies*, Oxford University, October 27, 2008, http://www.amitavach arya.com/sites/default/files/The%20Limitations%20of%20Mainstream%20Internat ional%20Relations%20Theories.pdf.

26. Acharya, "The Limitations."

27. Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest* 16 (Summer 1989): 1–18.

28. See Amy Chua, *Political Tribes: Group Instinct and the Fate of Nations* (London: Penguin Books, 2018).

29. See Kapstein, "Is Realism Dead?," 751–74.

30. Dale C. Copeland, "Realism and Neo-realism in the Study of Regional Conflict," in *International Relations Theory and Regional Transformation*, ed. T. V. Paul (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 72; Copeland, "The Constructivist Challenge to Structural Realism," 187–212.

31. Paul, "Recasting Statecraft," 1–13.

32. Acharya, Rethinking Power, 14.

33. See Tim Dunne, Lene Hansen, and Colin Wight, "The End of International Relations Theory?," *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (September 2013): 405–25.

34. Katzenstein, "The Second Coming?," 373–90; Katzenstein et al., *Exploration and Contestation*.

35. Katzenstein, "The Second Coming?," 388.

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Chapter 2

South Asian Geopsychology A Case Study of India-Pakistan Relations

A complex and dynamic region, with nearly 24 percent of the world's population, South Asia is witnessing a remarkably upward pull in its geopolitical and geostrategic profile in the global political order. This can be ascribed to a cluster of factors that include India's rise as a global power, China's growing strategic presence in South Asia, and the fear of nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan, besides the world community's apprehension of Pakistan's nukes falling into the hands of extremists and jihadists. No less important is the great power gamble in South Asia with its fallout on Afghanistan and the Middle East.

What is striking is the amorphous and ambiguous character of conflicts in the region, ranging from nonmilitary threats and challenges through interstate disputes and ethno-religious conflicts to violent non-state actors' threat to internal peace, stability, and communal harmony. But myriad conflicts in the region stem from the psychological and "theological web" of beliefs and values of ruling elites in New Delhi and Islamabad.¹

The India-Pakistan geopsychology has been constructed and articulated by an array of interactive factors such as history, geography, ethnicity, and sociocultural structures. Theoretically, this part has been thrashed out in greater detail in the first chapter. However, it warrants a brief mention of how perceptions, self-images, war narratives, and past collective memories neatly influence policy and decision-making of ruling leaders who have inherited the colonial psyche of political, religious, and cultural distinctions, further fueled by contrived fears, mutual hatred, and hostility.

Since the emergence of India and Pakistan as independent nation-states in August 1947, both countries have remained perpetual victims of selfdelusions and the mutual enemy images because of fundamental differences in their political, religious, and cultural outlooks.²

Chapter 2

Their warring perceptions resulted in bloody wars of 1947–1948, 1965, 1971, and the 1999 Kargil conflict fought chiefly on the Kashmir issue. Undoubtedly, the Kashmir issue has turned out to be a putrefied ulcer, not by accident, as many scholars believed it to be, but by the well-planned and wellcalculated designs of narrow-minded chauvinists, if one looks objectively at the historical facts.³ The enmity between the two nuclear-armed states has enhanced the potential of nuclear exchange between them, with India's revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status by rescinding Article 370 in August 2019. The Article guaranteed "special rights" to the Muslim-majority state with its own constitution and flag. This swift but resolute action by the Modi government infuriated Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan. Khan accused Prime Minister Modi of being a "racist." This extraordinary situation might trigger an uncertain state of a perpetual war between India and Pakistan. The unresolved Kashmir issue has been seen by a vast majority of scholars as a territorial dispute, whereas it has been a psychological issue ever since its one-third part was occupied by Pakistan (known as PoK) in the October 1947 War. Now, with a basic change in Kashmir's status, it is more apt to be transformed into a tug of psychological warfare between the two hostile nations. For Pakistan, an important question is not merely confined to converting the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories. Rather, it is the modus operandi through which the issue has been handled by the Modi government. Its spillover effects on interconnected issues of crossborder terrorism and nuclear risk escalation cannot be ruled out.

Against the above backdrop, the chapter argues that the competitive psychological warfare between the two nuclear-weapon states poses a real challenge to peace and security in the region. It further argues that none of IR theorists has studied India-Pakistan conflicts so far from a comprehensive theoretical perspective. Though Paul F. Diehl et al. have examined "the enduring rivalries" between India and Pakistan by employing theoretical models of "the punctuated equilibrium and evolutional model approaches,"⁴ the latter have been unable to explain the plausible logic behind outstanding bilateral conflicts. Accordingly, the chapter aims to examine India-Pakistan conflicts from the geopsychological perspective rather than from an outmoded geopolitical one. Before discussing it, the chapter offers an overview of the region in the following sections.

THE PROFILE OF SOUTH ASIA

South Asia comprises seven countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, with a total population of 1.891 billion—nearly one-fourth of the world population. India's population constitutes over

1.3 billion followed by Pakistan's 212.2 million.⁵ Compared to India's giant size, the demographic profile of South Asian countries like Bhutan and the Maldives is extraordinarily minuscule, with a total number of 797,765 and 427,756, respectively. In economic terms, India with its US\$2.957 trillion economy makes up nearly 85 percent of the South Asian economy, and it is the world's fastest-growing economy with over 6 percent of GDP (currently, less than 6 percent owing to the impact of COVID-19). In the defense sector, India's budget for the financial year 2020–2021 was pegged at Rs. 3,37,553 crore,⁶ five times larger than that of Pakistan, but the latter claims a virtual parity with the former in terms of its stock of nuclear warheads. Despite that, India maintains an overwhelming edge over Pakistan in conventional military capabilities, defense infrastructure, and technological breakthroughs.

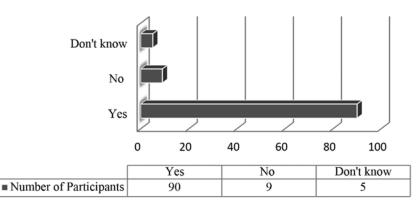
Geographically speaking, India shares land borders with Nepal and Bhutan in the Himalayas in its north, with China in the south, and with Bangladesh and Myanmar in the east, and maritime borders with Sri Lanka and the Maldives in the Indian Ocean. As for Pakistan, it shares land borders with Iran and Afghanistan on the west and with China in the north. Undoubtedly, Pakistan's geostrategic location has enhanced its enduring importance in the great power battle for influence in South Asia in sync with Afghanistan, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

Given India's mammoth size in terms of population and territory, its huge military and economic capabilities, its unprecedented technological prowess in space and software engineering, South Asia's smaller countries, in particular, look upon India as a regional hegemon. This Indian image has been further fueled by Islamabad, relentlessly engaged in projecting India as an arrogant power that constitutes an existential threat to Pakistan's security.⁷ Essentially, their perception of India as a domineering power has stemmed from a series of its concrete actions. These include India's militarily proactive role in Pakistan's dismemberment in December 1971, its May 1974 nuclear explosion, its annexation of Sikkim in 1975, and deployment of Indian Peace-Keeping Forces (IPKF) in Sri Lanka in 1987. The above pieces of evidence reinforce India's image as a predominant power, which has percolated deep into South Asian nations' psyche. While defending India's actions vis-à-vis its neighbors, some Indian strategic analysts argue that Indian cannot transform itself into a nonexistent power to appease its neighbors.⁸ Their logic is fallacious.

A simple definition of power is the capability of a nation to influence the behavior of others to achieve the "intended effects." By this yardstick, India is treating smaller countries with the same impunity to impose its policies to get what it desires. For example, a majority of Nepalese scholars, media, and strategic analysts have openly criticized India for treating Nepal as its "client state." They have blamed the Indian Foreign Service bureaucracy and the Indian leadership for not undertaking concrete measures to improve India's image as friendly toward Nepal. In his interview with the *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs*, Madhukar S. J. B. Rana, former finance minister of Nepal, said:

I think it [geopsychology] is a most valuable concept in understanding our relationship because Nepalese have a sense of inferiority with India—that's no doubt. But it [Nepal] does also have the feeling that it has been done unfairly in terms of not getting its due share. We are not interested in aid, we want mutually beneficial projects, but somehow India has still stuck on to the old paradigm of the Panikkar Doctrine of a hegemonistic asymmetrical relationship which was discontinued along with the Gujral Doctrine in 1996, which was a huge break-through in Nepal-Indo relations. The Mahakali Treaty was signed as a result of the Gujral Doctrine, and then with Vajpayee we go back to something called "regionalism through enlightened bilateralism" which is opposed to the concept of regionalism.⁹

Furthermore, in the survey on India-Nepal relations conducted by the author, nearly 87 percent of the Nepalese respondents (age group= 20–55) agreed that Nepalese psychology impacts India-Nepal relations (figure 2.1), while 79 percent of them termed India's foreign policy toward Nepal "domineer-ing" (figure 2.2). On the contrary, 80 percent of the respondents considered China's foreign policy toward Nepal as "respectful" (figure 2.3).



Do you think that Nepalese psychology impacts India-Nepal relations?

Figure 2.1 Nepalese Psychology and India-Nepal Relations. *Source*: Prepared by the author.

How will you term India's policy toward Nepal?

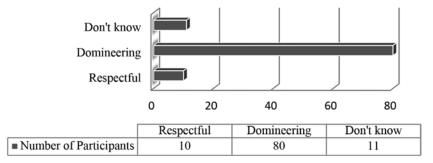


Figure 2.2 Nepalese Perception of India's Policy Toward Nepal. *Source*: Prepared by the author.

How will you term China's policy toward Nepal?

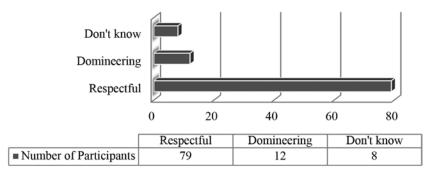


Figure 2.3 Nepalese Perception of China's Policy Toward Nepal. *Source*: Prepared by the author.

One of the survey respondents said, "Especially after the 2015 economic blockade, that too to a country that was suffering from a disastrous natural calamity. The Government of India has lost its credibility in Nepal. So it will have to make a strenuous effort to win back the lost confidence of Nepali people." Another respondent while mentioning India's "over-interference" in Nepal considered India a "domineering neighbor," whereas China was characterized as "respectful to Nepal." Besides, India is perceived as an apathetic maelstrom of the so-called power, unwilling to pull out the region from the economic and security morass. Rather, the rest of the six South Asian states share a perception that India being "the biggest state" has "the greatest responsibility."¹⁰

According to the archived interview data¹¹ pertaining to "India-Nepal relations: Post-2014," perceptions of Nepalese media community have been investigated. In the words of Sanjay Upadhya, a Nepalese journalist and political analyst, "That India used an agitation launched by Nepali Madhesi leaders for greater internal autonomy to camouflage its imposition of a wholesale economic blockade for months [2015] on only served to validate Nepali perceptions of the enduring nature of the divide-and-rule policy India had inherited from the British Raj."12 Surendra Poudel, News Editor with Nepal News, expressed resentment of the Nepalese people against India's intervention in Nepal's internal affairs, producing a lack of "environment of trust" between New Delhi and Kathmandu. He further explains that during the period of economic blockade (2015), "the anti-India sentiment" in Nepal had "become the highest in history [in India-Nepal relations]." He said that the euphoria created by Modi's "neighborhood first" policy soon petered out. It was likened to "an old wine in a new bottle."¹³ Dwarika Nath Dhungel, former Secretary Government of Nepal, complained of India's "micro-management of Nepali politics" as well as the Indian establishment's treatment of Nepal as its "backyard."14

Similarly, though the Sinhalese-Tamil ethnic conflict was not India's creation, the latter was wrapped in it when it became a party to dispatching the IPKF to Sri Lanka. The IPKF's strategic mission was to help Sri Lankan government in controlling the LTTE-a separatist organization demanding a separate state in Sri Lanka. On the contrary, India was seen as an interventionist power in Sri Lankan internal affairs. Ultimately, India had to withdraw its forces from Sri Lanka in the face of mounting pressure from President Rana Singhe Premadasa who viewed the IPKF's presence as a "direct encroachment" on Sri Lankan sovereignty. This perception of Colombo about New Delhi gradually facilitated Beijing's strategic presence in Sri Lanka, jeopardizing India's security interest as well as undermining its influence in the Island state of Sri Lanka. But, India mismanaged and mishandled the situation in Sri Lanka, much because of its indistinctive and ill-defined Sri Lanka policy. Failing to grasp an increasing anti-India psyche in Colombo's power corridor, India played the China card to wean it away from China's debt-trap diplomacy. The new government led by Gotabaya Rajpaksa has signaled that his regime desires to maintain friendly ties with both China and India to advance the country's national interests. This is an obvious message to New Delhi to respect Colombo's sensibilities.

As regards India-Pakistan relations, geopolitics had assumed a notorious character in their relationship throughout the Cold War era. But there has been no respite in their embittered ties even after the end of the Cold War and with the onset of the era of interdependence. But in realpolitik terms, since its birth in August 1947, Pakistan's threat perceptions have been India-centric. The artificially contrived threat perceptions led Pakistani military elites to join the U.S.-sponsored military alliances-SEATO and CENTO-in the 1950s. A widely held notion permeated the thinking of Pakistan's top military brass that there was no way out to achieving the twin objectives of the national security and identity except by joining the U.S.-led alliance system. On the contrary, Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru was staunchly opposed to U.S. attempts at drafting Pakistan into its military alliance system, fearing the arrival of the Cold War to the doorsteps of South Asia. To stave off Cold War buffets in the region, Nehru pursued an independent and autonomous foreign policy to enable India to play a much bigger role in world affairs. Embracement of the nonaligned policy was rooted in the logic of assigning priority to husband India's limited resources for economic development and the public good. On the security front, Nehru felt that India was not faced with an immediate security threat from China, in particular. That logic, based on his soaring idealism, prodded him to pursue the policy of peaceful coexistence to deal with China. But much to Nehru's chagrin, China launched an unprovoked aggression against India in the winter of 1962. Some Indian critics, whether rightly or wrongly, argue that had India joined either of the military blocs, China would not have dared attack India. That argument partly hinged on the geopolitics and partly on the situational factor when India was constrained to plough "a lonely furrow" in the world politics.¹⁵

BACKGROUND

If viewed from the perspective of geopsychology of congenital hostility between India and Pakistan, it has been dangerously fueled by the complex intertwining of political, religious, and cultural variables. Their cumulative impact has been building up of the never-ending enmity. The word "rivalry" in the context of Indo-Pak relations is a misnomer. More important, imaginary threat perceptions get channeled into real ones as they hold contrary images of one another. In a long historical process, the people's psychology gradually gets transformed into a fixed geopsychology, looking upon neighbors as their "natural enemy." Such parallel examples abound in the Middle East and the Gulf region between Arabs and Israel, between Iran and Iraq, between Iran and Saudi Arabia, between Lebanon and Syria. It is important to bear in mind that the inbred geopsychological orientation of political communities and ruling elites of the region ought to be taken into account on critical issues such as humanitarian intervention in domestic affairs, the imposition of sanctions, and the forcible regime change in a bid to advancing great powers' interests.

While applying the psycho-cultural approach to Indo-Pakistan relations, a sense of insecurity is deeply etched in Pakistan's psyche that India constitutes an existential threat to its national security and survival. It naturally breeds incorrigible hatred for India. Stephen P. Cohen, South Asia specialist, reinforces my argument when he says that the persisting "conflict psychology" between India and Pakistan is the real problem that, he thinks, would remain unresolved.¹⁶ About the role of the army in Pakistan, Cohen writes:

While the education provided to [Pakistani army] officers is generally comparable to that of many western military schools . . . its presentation of India remains defective. Indian strategic objectives are said to be fixed, rooted in communal attitudes and illusions of great-power status. The syllabus is often factually inaccurate, and instructors do not encourage debate or discussion on the subject . . . Pakistan does have a real security problem in relation to India, but the Staff College and the National Defence College offer their students a stereotyped, reductionist theory of Indian motives and strategy.¹⁷

According to the Gallup & Gilani Pakistani Poll, November 3, 2017, the majority of respondents (53 percent) said that India would use nuclear weapons against Pakistan in the event of an Indo-Pak war.¹⁸ According to the Pew Poll (June 21, 2011), a majority of Pakistanis (57 percent) rated India as the greatest threat to Pakistan, while 19 percent termed the Taliban and 5 percent considered Al Qaeda as "the biggest threat."¹⁹ Similarly, according to the Pew Research Center, Indians' view of Pakistan is growing "unfavorable" rising from 54 percent in 2013 to 64 percent in 2017.²⁰ Further, the Center's 2019 report, based on a sampling of public opinion in India, states that "a majority believes the Indian government should use more military force than they are currently using" in dealing with the Jammu and Kashmir situation.²¹

In view of the persisting animosity, the chapter examines myriad sources of conflicts between India and Pakistan, which include historical, cultural, and religious ones. The central motivation behind studying the structural factors is to validate the underlying assumptions about the Geopsychology Theory (GT).

HISTORICAL LEGACY

The reign of the Mughal Empire (1526–1857) in India for over three hundred centuries created an enigmatic narrative among South Asian Muslims about

the glorious past of the Muslim rule in India in promoting art, architecture, and literature in Persian and Urdu. After the Mughal Empire, and with the transfer of paramountcy of the British East India Company to the British Crown under the 1858 Act, Muslim nationalism began to germinate in India.²² Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the founder of Aligarh College, exhorted Muslims to "cooperate with the [British] Raj rather than with [Indian National] Congress [INC],"²³ arguing that the British were the "best guardians of Muslim interests" since he believed that the "Muslims' share in administrative posts and in profession could be increased only by professing and proving loyalty to the colonial rulers."²⁴ A turning point in Muslim ideology came about with the establishment of the All India Muslim League at Dacca in December 1906 "under the inspiration of the British Government and the leadership of one of its chief supporters, the Aga Khan. The League had two principal object[ives]: loyalty to the British Government and safeguarding of Muslim interests."25 Bipin Chandra et al. note that the League's primary interest was to "keep the emerging intelligentsia among Muslims from joining the Congress. Its activities were directed against the National Congress and Hindus and not against the colonial regime."26 This reflected the mood and thinking of Muslim Leaguers who were unhappy with the policies of the "Hindu Congress" leaders who they considered antithetical to their moral precepts, cultural heritage, and socioeconomic interests. Other prominent Muslim leaders from the Indian National Congress (INC), including Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a great Urdu and Persian scholar, attacked the League by arguing that its leaders had no mass support from their community and that they came from feudal families and wanted to impose the feudal order on the masses. The internal conflict between the "feudal elements" and modernist secular elements paved the way for a growing alienation between Hindus and Muslims.

At the annual session of the Muslim League held at Allahabad in December 1930, Sir Mohammed Iqbal, in his presidential address, deliberated upon a plan for an independent Muslim State. The state represented the "final destiny" of the Muslim League's ideology, which rested on the principles of cultural autonomy and social justice for Muslims. "[The] rise of Muslim separatist nationalism"²⁷ received impetus from the Government of India Act 1935. Jinnah openly declared that Muslims' political and economic interests would never be safeguarded so long as the "Hindu Congress" dominated and discriminated against Muslims.

However, Jinnah received a serious setback²⁸ when the League performed poorly in the 1937 provincial elections in which the INC captured eight out of eleven provinces, including the Muslim-majority ones. He later charged Congress leaders with "hypocrisies" and political "stratagem" to alienate Muslims from power-sharing. He declared, "Hindus and Muslims were two nations by any definition or test of a nation."²⁹ Jinnah dubbed the Muslim struggle against the "Hindu's Congress" as a struggle for Muslim survival. Jinnah hammered out the point that Hindus and Muslims represented "two distinct" and different civilizations. He agreed that both communities had "close contacts" and even coexisted for centuries but argued that they were never "compatible cultures."

The League articulated a set of demands, designed to safeguard the interests of Indian Muslims, culminating in the demand for a separate Muslim state. These demands were approved at its Lahore meeting in 1940.³⁰ The INC received clear signals that the Muslim League leaders hoped to exploit religious and cultural affinity with the Muslims. This is clear from Jinnah's insistence that there were fundamental and deep-rooted differences—spiritual, economic, cultural, social, and political³¹—between Hindus and Muslims. He reiterated that despite "a thousand years of close contact, nationalities which are as divergent today as ever, cannot at any time be expected to transform themselves into a one nation."³²

Jinnah argued that there could be no compromise between the two different nationalities except accepting the religious nationalism of Muslims by forming a separate Muslim state. He said, "The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, and literature. They neither intermarry nor inter-dine together, and indeed they belong to different civilizations that are based on conflicting ideas and conceptions."³³ In effect, the two-nation theory not only created an "ideological wedge" between Hindus and Muslims but was also responsible for India's partition. More important, Jinnah's victory in winning Pakistan within less than a decade's efforts was held as unparalleled in Muslim history. One may flesh out important inferences from Jinnah's perceptions, images, and belief systems regarding history, culture, religion, mythology, and metaphysics that impinge on India-Pakistan relations. These are:

- India is a hegemonic power, rooted in the "Hindu theocracy."
- Hindus and Muslims represent different civilizations, based on "conflicting ideas and conceptions."
- There is no room for compromise between the two nationalities.
- Both communities represent different religious philosophies.
- Culturally, both the communities do not share common social customs, traditions, habits, dialect, language, and literature.
- Close contacts of the past cannot necessarily bind the two communities into a uniform social order on account of differing philosophies of their respective nationalism.³⁴

The interpretative value of the above points is that there is no fundamental change in Pakistani attitude toward India. In effect, Jinnah's view of "Hindu

India" as an ambitious, domineering, and uncompromising state has not yet diluted among military and civilian elites in Pakistan. The psychological issue with Pakistan is that it wants India to treat it as "coequal." The lingering psychology among Pakistanis is a long Muslim rule in India of which they are proud, and impliedly entertain a sense of superiority vis-à-vis India. In this context, T. V. Paul writes:

Much of the Pakistani elites believe that India and Pakistan ought to be coequals geopolitically and it sees relative parity in military and diplomatic terms as a goal worth striving for, even at a high cost to society . . . Pakistan fears that Indian hegemony in the subcontinent will adversely affect its security and power position. Its perception of parity also arises from its historical understanding of the subcontinent, where Muslims ruled for over six centuries.³⁵

The above instances show how the past history is indispensable for an understanding of the psyche of India and Pakistan that reflects in their policy perceptions and attitudes.

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL SOURCES

India and Pakistan claim to possess religious and cultural distinctions of their own. Being an ancient civilization, India represents a synthesis of diverse cultures, characterized by "unity in diversity." India's eclectic cultural approach has enabled it to survive against the onslaught of external invasions and cultural attacks. This uniqueness is India's actual strength. But gradually, with erosion of ethical values in its political culture, India has lost the luster, resilience, and vibrancy of its culture.³⁶ Not surprisingly, the Indian state has ceased to be an independent arbitrator in resolving ethno-religious differences or disputes. In effect, religious intolerance in India has been on the rise in the past five years. The Pew Research Center analysis (April 11, 2017) of 198 countries ranks India "as the fourth-worst in the world for religious intolerance. In the country of 1.3 billion, the incidence of hostility related to religion trailed only Syria, Nigeria, and Iraq, all places where sectarian violence is widespread."³⁷ Also, India ranks the highest fourth in social hostilities against religion.³⁸

The game of vote politics played by the BJP under the banner of Hindutva has become a dominant "political force." Pakistan left no stone unturned to unleash a frontal attack against the Hindutva brand of Indian nationalism, especially fostered and propagated by the Modi government. Prime Minister Imran Khan's diplomatic punches on international and regional platforms that he slammed against Prime Minister Modi's RSS ideology of establishing a Hindu nation in India were primarily intended to expose Modi's "racist ideology." To prove it before the world community, Khan cited the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Registration of Citizens (NRC), which he emphasized, were motivated to strip Indian Muslims of the citizenship. He insisted that if the Muslims failed to prove their citizenship they would be sent to mass detentions camps. The final version of the list "effectively strips about 1.9 million people in the north-eastern state of Assam of their citizenship."³⁹ The Indian government's argument behind it is to identify illegal migrants from Bangladesh. The Indian Home Ministry has further clarified that the NRC would be implemented throughout the country. This led to the countrywide violent demonstrations against the CAA and NRC. In protest rallies held in New Delhi in December 2019, protestors condemned the CAA as antithetical to "the ethos of the constitution" because it makes "religion a criterion" for granting citizenship. Kuldeep Rohilla, a photographer, launched a scathing attack on Modi by comparing him with Babur, the first emperor of the Mughal dynasty: "Another Babur has come. We have to stop them at someplace. The CAA is not a problem, but the manner of its implementation is an issue."40 At the World Economic Forum, January 2020, perhaps in a more acerbic tone, philanthropist George Soros averred that "Prime Minister Narendra Modi is 'creating a Hindu nationalist state' in India."41

Further, the Indian Muslim community got frustrated over the Supreme Court's November 2019 verdict in favor of Hindus on the controversial Ram Temple in Ayodhya, whereas Indian Hindus rejoiced over it. Bharat Das, a Hindu priest at a temple in Ayodhya in the Indian State of Uttar Pradesh, told Al Jazeera, "It is a historic day for all Hindus across the world and I am really proud of how the Supreme Court handled the entire issue. There couldn't have been a better judgment than this."⁴² On the contrary, the Court's decision was held by India's several legal luminaries, including Indian Muslim organizations and NGOs, as "a one-sided affair," alleged to be under the central government's pressure. At the same time, the Supreme Court agreed in its observations that the demolition of the Babri mosque in December 1992 was "in violation of the status quo orders of this court."⁴³ But the Supreme Court said nothing about the legal proceedings to be initiated against the prime culprits responsible for the demolition. One might recall that the sixteenthcentury Babri Masjid was razed to the ground by Hindu zealots with the connivance of the state administration in December 1992. It triggered massive violence and bloodshed, with an enormous human toll. Shashi Tharoor, a prolific writer and former international diplomat, observes, "The world is understandably troubled by an India seen as increasingly bigoted and intolerant, one that is willfully driving sectarian wedges between its people and is being overtaken by an intolerant majoritarianism that has no appeal to the world outside."44

As regard Pakistan, it has hugely suffered from religious and cultural obsessions since its independence. To Pakistanis, "the Shahi mosque of Lahore and mausoleum of Sir Iqbal do evoke natural veneration among Pakistani people."⁴⁵ For Pakistan, Iqbal is a symbol of its great culture and civilization, whereas it rejects the glories of Indian heroes and cultural icons. Ironically, Indian history is taught in Pakistani schools and colleges in a distorted fashion, for instance, idolizing Muslim rulers in India and eulogizing the legacy of the Pakistani army.⁴⁶ In this context, Stephen P. Cohen writes in *The Idea of Pakistan* (2004):

The Pakistan army has also explored its Islamic heritage in search of strategic guidance. More intense than in comparable armies, notably India's, is the strong linkage between honor, revenge, and force. The Code of Honor inculcated in the Military Academy and through regimental legends has been adjusted to emphasize the "Islamic" dimension of strategy and the importance of fighting for the honor and memory of previous generations, as well as the larger Muslim community. Part of the army's legacy is the idea that any insult or slight must be avenged, not only to punish the aggression of an enemy but to honor the sacrifices of earlier generations.⁴⁷

Saber-Rattling on Both Sides

Indian and Pakistani media are feverishly engaged in bizarre propaganda, projecting each other as one's sworn enemy. Each country extols one's cultural heroes while despises the enemy's icons and legends. Besides there is a growing controversy in India over the recital of *Vande Mataram* (salutation to the motherland), and the playing of the *Jana Gana Mana* (India's national anthem) among Indian Muslims who see them as "the manifestation" of the Hindu revivalism, while Hindu ideologues accuse them of being "anti-national." The politics of communalism has sown the seeds of discord between the Hindus and the Muslims, causing communal flare-up even on minor religious issues. For example, bringing out the *Tajia* procession by Muslims in a Hindu locality or a cow-slaughter by Muslims or holding of Lord *Ganapati* celebrations by Hindus in a Muslim locality do often lead to the communal tensity.⁴⁸

Doubtless, cultural nationalism and religious xenophobia exacerbate communal tensions in the country. An inexorable logic of ridding Indian Muslims of the Hindu exploitation has already taken roots in Pakistani politics and media, engaged in a kind of psychological warfare against India by manipulating the Muslim psyche against the Hindu chauvinism.⁴⁹ Its recent classic case is that of Kashmiri Muslims. After revocation of Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian constitution by the Modi government on August 5, 2019, Pakistani

Chapter 2

Prime Minister Imran Khan and his cabinet colleagues, especially Railway Minister Sheikh Rasheed, the Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, and visual media launched vitriolic propaganda against India that Kashmiri Muslims were being butchered. While addressing the nation on the national TV channel, Prime Minister Khan charged Prime Minister Modi with the "racist ideology" of "ethnic cleansing" of Kashmiri Muslims. He pledged, "We will do everything for our Kashmiri brothers." He blamed the Modi government that former chief ministers and legislators of Jammu and Kashmir had been placed under a siege since August 5, 2019, without Internet, telephone, and mobile connectivity under a black shadow of the Indian army and paramilitary forces.

Also, Indian television channels left no stone unturned in spewing venom against Pakistani TV anchors. In a typical fashion, India media projected Pakistani women anchors as Prime Minister Imran Khan's *visha kanya* (venomous girls). In an immediate counterreaction, Pakistani pop singer Rabi Pirzada on her Twitter account displayed a video with the caption "Preparing a Kashmiri Girl against Modi." Rabi was seen in her living room playing with pythons (*ajgars*), snakes, and crocodiles, threatening Prime Minister Modi with the unleashing of "reptile attack" on him.⁵⁰ On the other hand, a couple of Indian TV channels described Rabi as Prime Minister Khan's "mental *nagin*" (female snake). Whether or not media hate campaigns foster enmity between the two countries, the above narratives purvey a piece of palpable evidence to validate the assumption that both countries' inbred psychology of looking upon each other as an incorrigible enemy triggers optimal tension on both sides.

One may recall, the orthodox Hindu groups and right-wing political parties also idolize their political, religious, and cultural heroes. While feeding on the emotions of Indian masses' love for watching the epics-based serials, Indian electronic media go berserk, igniting the Hindu psyche. To create the Muslim phobia, the committed TV channels resort to provocative tactics to engage panelists into verbal jibes and "impassioned exchanges" on the nonexistent religious issues. It vitiates the political environment that fuels "hate and communal agenda" in the country.

Given this, the right-wing BJP capitalizes on the Hindu psyche, mesmerized by mythological glories and eulogization of their religious icons. One might recall that the process of culturalization and Hinduization culminated in the 1993 Bombay riots in the wake of the demolition of the Babri mosque by tens of thousands of Hindu fundamentalists.⁵¹ In retaliation, the suspected Pakistani ISI-inspired terrorists carried out gruesome terror attacks on Mumbai in August 2003 in which over forty-five people had lost their lives.⁵² It revived the saddest memories of the 1993 serial blasts that had taken a heavy toll of the innocent people.⁵³ The 2002 Gujarat mayhem is a glaring example of the ever worst revivalism of cultural nationalism spurred by the BJP and its right-wing RSS and *Shiva Sena* Hindu militant outfits. In the Gujarat mayhem, thousands of Muslims were killed under the nose of then chief minister Narendra Modi. Prime Minister Vajpayee denounced the communal carnage in Gujarat "as a scar on the nation's conscience."⁵⁴

Besides, the cross-border terrorism has assumed a notorious character over the past two decades. With the changing tactics, terrorists are now directly targeting the Indian army and central paramilitary forces. In militants' attack on the Indian army base at Uri in Jammu and Kashmir in 2016, seventeen Indian soldiers had lost their lives. While reacting to growing militant activities across the borders, India's Home Affairs Minister Rajnath Singh described Pakistan as a "terrorist state." Its immediate fallout was felt on Indian entertainment industry. The Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS), led by its chief Raj Thackeray, "used the attack on the Army base to issue a forty-eight-hour deadline to Pakistani artists to leave India or MNS will push them out . . . Johar[film maker] and the Producers Association agreed to no longer cast Pakistani actors. Johar would also pay more than a million dollars to the Army Welfare Fund, which helps relatives of soldiers who had been killed in combat."⁵⁵

If seen from the point of cultural megalomania on both sides, it not only generates a mass hysteria against each other but also institutionalizes mutual hostility. Gradually, metaphysical concerns of the culture are transformed into "modern hate." In this context, Huntington's "clash of civilizations" theory is somewhat misleading. It is not a clash of civilizations but a clash of competing psychologies that have born out of the Hindu-Muslim syndrome or the contrived fears. The concept of jihad ("holy war") is defined and sustained through a projection of the inherent psychology of a particular culturally organized community. If this is defined in terms of tradition, the "dominant motif" of inciting the mass psychology is to preserve one's cultural identity.

The above pieces of evidences and examples reinforce how religion and culture have been transformed as prime movers in the construction of geopsychology among elites and masses in India and Pakistan.

KASHMIR ISSUE: A CASE STUDY IN GEOPSYCHOLOGY

Kashmir, located in the Himalayan region, has been a bone of contention between India and Pakistan since the partition of British India in August 1947. Over 560 princely states had been integrated into the Indian Union through the Instrument of Accession,⁵⁶ except for the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir (J and K), which got wrapped up in a serious dilemma. Its Hindu

Chapter 2

ruler Maharaja Hari Singh was caught wavering whether or not to accede to India or Pakistan or to remain independent of both. In the meanwhile, Pakistan took advantage of Singh's indecisiveness and saw it as a propitious opportunity to wrest the Kashmir Valley by force and annex it with Pakistan. Toward that end, Pakistani regular forces invaded the Kashmir Valley in October 1947 on Mohammad Ali Jinnah's orders.⁵⁷ The British Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck was in complete disagreement with Jinnah's orders, but it was of no avail. According to the Archives Hub's Papers of Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, October 28, 1947, "Auchinleck describes how he flew to Lahore on receiving the news and met Jinnah, at which meeting he explained the situation concerning British officers and warned of the grave consequences of any threatened military violation of territory which is now part of the Indian Union, after Kashmir's sudden accession to India."⁵⁸

Soon after Pakistan's military invasion of Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh appealed to the Indian government for military help as he had realized it well that his state forces were unable to offer effective resistance to the Pakistani Army. In his letter to Lord Mountbatten on October 26, 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh wrote, "With the conditions obtaining at present in my State and to great emergency of the situation as it exists, I have no option but to ask for help from the Indian Dominion. Naturally, they cannot send the help asked for by me without my State acceding to the Dominion of India. I have accordingly decided to do so and I attach the Instrument of Accession for acceptance by your Government."⁵⁹ Accordingly, Kashmir acceded to India upon the condition of granting it autonomy to be "protected by Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which gave Kashmir the right to make its own laws."⁶⁰

Put simply, India and Pakistan have been locked in the Kashmir dispute since 1947 with "perennial deadlock." Brigadier Narendra Kumar writes, "Geo-strategic significance of J&K is also one of the reasons for instability because the State is a geographic pivot that connects India with Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tibet Autonomous Region." Other than that, the Kashmir issue is patently connected with psychological dispositions on both sides. It is not simply concerned with the territorial dispute but is more about the Pakistani psyche to resist, humiliate, and bleed India. Unambiguously, both India and Pakistan are gripped by psychological obsessions to demean each other. For instance, Husain Haqqani explains and elaborates on the formation of geopsychology of Pakistani society and political community based on "strong anti-India sentiments," "culture of fear," and "ideology of permanent hate towards India and Hindus" by radical elements in Pakistan.⁶¹ Husain Haggani writes, "Pakistani nationalism is defined as anti- Indianism; in India a new nationalism is emerging to delegitimize India's minorities and by extension, delegitimizing a neighboring country where a minority is in a majority."62

An extraordinary situation arose in Jammu and Kashmir when Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a radical decision in August 2019 to scrap Articles 370 and 35 A of the Indian constitution to revoke the special status of the Jammu and Kashmir state with its split into the two new Union Territories: Jammu and Kashmir (with a state legislature) and Ladakh (without a legislature). *The Washington Post* commented that this move "has raised worries of fresh armed conflict in an area that has already suffered decades of violence. Those fears have been heightened by India moving troops into the region ahead of the decision and cutting off Internet access after the announcement was made."⁶³

The editorial in the *Daily Times* wrote, "Modi is going all the way in changing the demographics of Kashmir. Next he will facilitate his hardline base to spread there and dilute the Muslim majority."⁶⁴ Mehbooba Mufti, a former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, warned that it would render India an "occupational force" in the area and called it the "darkest day in Indian democracy."⁶⁵ "The Pakistan army pledged its full and firm support to Kashmiri Muslims at 'all cost' to fulfill the army's 'obligations." Besides, Shehbaz Sharif, an opposition leader in the Pakistani National Assembly, made vitriolic statements against Prime Minister Modi. In an impassioned fulmination, he charged the Modi government with challenging "the Pakistani *ijjat*" (prestige and pride). He said, *hame katana hoga* (we will get ourselves chopped off); *hame har kurbani deni hogi* (we will have to make every sacrifice). The above jibes clearly explain the latent geopsychological outbursts.⁶⁶

In his address to a joint session of the National Assembly on August 6, 2019, Prime Minister Imran Khan warned India of the "worst consequences" of its illegal acts. In an oblique warning, he said that if India ever dared attack Pakistan, the latter would fight till "the last drop of blood." In a super dramatic move, he used "emotional hypes" to mesmerize the members of the National Assembly by hard-hitting at Prime Minister Modi's faith in "racial superiority." He cited Mohammad Ali Jinnah's fear of the Hindus' mindset."67 Imran Khan's hate-India campaign is manifest from his emotionally charged utterances in Pakistan's National Assembly. Its few examples can be cited. He stated, Muslanman Maut se nahin darta hai ("A Muslim is never afraid of death."); Akhiri katre tak mukambla karenge lekin India ke samne surrender nahi kaernge ("We will fight until the end but will not surrender to India."); "Hindustan ki ham superiority nahi manege" (We [Pakistan] will not accept Indian superiority). In his rare gesture of castigating Indian Prime Minister Modi, Khan unraveled his avowed intention, saying that Pakistan would rather follow the course of the Mughal Emperor Tipu Sultan (Known as the Tiger of Mysore State) than that of Bahadur Shah Zafar (the last nominal Mughal Emperor) who presided over the demise of the Mughal Empire in India.⁶⁸ In an attempt at rekindling the Kashmir issue, Khan emphasized that it must be resolved under the principle of self-determination, as laid out in the 1948 UN Security Council Resolution. He writes:

With the nuclear shadow hovering over South Asia, we realize that Pakistan and India have to move out of a zero-sum mindset to begin dialogue on Kashmir, various strategic matters and trade. On Kashmir, the dialogue must include all stakeholders, especially the Kashmiris. We have already prepared multiple options that can be worked on while honoring the right to self-determination the Kashmiris were promised by the Security Council resolutions and India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.⁶⁹

Prime Minister Khan in his unusually lengthy extemporaneous speech of approximately 55 minutes at the UN General Assembly on September 27, 2019, time and again attacked Prime Minister Modi and his government. He warned the world community that there would be "bloodbath in Kashmir." He further argued that Kashmiri Muslims would be more radicalized simply because they were being selectively targeted by the Hindu nationalist government and Hindu zealots. While comparing him to Hitler and Mussolini, Khan described Modi as a "racist" who believed in the "ethnic cleansing" of Muslims. He also told the UN General Assembly's member nation delegates that Modi's RSS ideology was detrimental to Christians also. Do the above public statements not reflect the anti-India geopsychology?

Besides, it was Imran Khan's subtle political move to sensitize the world community that Pakistan was all set to resolve the outstanding disputes with India peacefully. This apart, he intelligently used the services of *The New York Times* in his attempt to besmirch Modi's image by exposing his political designs on Kashmir. He wrote, "On Aug. 5[2019], in its most brazen and egregious move, Mr. Modi's government altered the status of Indian-occupied Kashmir through the revocation of Article 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution. The move is illegal under the Constitution of India, but more important, it violates the United Nations Security Council resolutions on Kashmir and the Shimla Agreement between India and Pakistan."⁷⁰ He further attributed the blame to the Modi government for quelling the liberty and freedom of Kashmiri people by clamping an undeclared emergency. Khan writes:

And Mr. Modi's "New India" chose to do this by imposing a military curfew in Kashmir, imprisoning its population in their homes and cutting off their phone, internet and television connections, rendering them without news of the world or their loved ones. The siege was followed by a purge: Thousands of Kashmiris have been arrested and thrown into prisons across India. A blood bath is feared in Kashmir when the curfew is lifted. Already, Kashmiris coming out in defiance of the curfew are being shot and killed. . . . If the world does nothing to stop the Indian assault on Kashmir and its people, there will be consequences for the whole world as two nuclear-armed states get ever closer to a direct military confrontation.⁷¹

The point I am trying to make is that Pakistan is determined to exploit the woes of Kashmiri Muslims to the hilt by playing the religious affinity card. Pakistani leaders and media have been appealing to the Muslim Ummah to come to the rescue of Kashmiri Muslims and also inciting Pakistani Mujahedeen to come forward to help their Muslim brethren in Kashmir.

Revocation of Constitutional Articles

In the wake of revocation of Articles 370 and 35A, Prime Minister Khan and his cabinet colleagues, including Pakistani media, got ad nauseam engaged in "senseless warmongering rhetoric"-threatening India with first-use of nukes. Khan while addressing the rally in "Observance of Kashmir Hour," in support of Kashmiri people, at Islamabad on August 30, 2019, lambasted Prime Minister Modi, nicknaming him a "fascist." In his public appeal to the rallyists, he prodded them to show solidarity with and make every sacrifice for their Kashmiri brethren. Pakistan's Railway Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad told rallyists that being Muslims, they have a moral duty to stand by Kashmiris who were facing a siege in an indefinite curfew clamped since August 5, 2019. Sheikh Rasheed addressed, saying "listen Modi," "Pakistan army is ready to fight India and will convert Hindustan into 22 Pakistanis" ("Hindustan mein 22 Pakistan ban jayenge"). Rasheed reiterated that in the name of religion, the Modi government wanted Muslims' annihilation or genocide (Katle aam). Imran Khan also went to the extent of saying that Modi's RSS ideology is not only a threat to Muslims but also to Christians in the world. He said "RSS nurses hatred against Muslims; RRS ideology has hijacked India."72

Prime Minister Khan while challenging his Indian counterpart Modi, said that Pakistanis *Eeent ka jabab patthar se denge* ("Pakistanis will respond to [India's] bricks with stones," implying a harsher retaliation)⁷³ Since the scrapping of Article 370, Pakistan has been sounding world chanceries about the worst consequences of nuclear exchange between the two nuclear-armed states not only for South Asia but also for the entire world.

The above instances and evidences reinforce the primacy of geopsychology. It clearly reflects from Pakistani military elites' firm belief that though Pakistan may be militarily, economically and technologically much inferior to India, it is fully capable of bleeding the latter. This perception has been further fueled by the "malign domestic politics" of Pakistan's civilian leadership with "petty and narrow" political interests. It merits a mention that Pakistani military rulers from Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan (1958–1969) through Yahya Khan (March 1969–1977) and Zia-ul-Haq (July 1977–August 1988) to Pervez Musharraf (October 1999–2008) played a major role in deepening and calcifying the anti-India psychology at the cost of democratic institutions.⁷⁴ They did it systematically by carrying out propaganda warfare to malign India that it was hell-bent upon destroying the very existence of Pakistan. One may recall that President Khan, a "consummate tactician," wrote that Pakistan had an "implacable enemy in India."⁷⁵

The War Mongering and Jingoism

War jingoism is deeply embedded on the platter of India's and Pakistan's psyche. While playing with emotions of the people, ruling sections send out unambiguous signals to common masses to gird up loins for the national survival and pride. Not far behind are the visual and print media in both countries. They spew venom against each other. Hypernationalism is quite often used as a tactical weapon to intensify the persisting war jingoism. Social media also engage in "their competitive beating of the war drum—one even donned army fatigues and brandished a toy gun—and their labeling of more temperate voices as "anti-national."⁷⁶

The Indian army's surgical strikes on PoK camps, as a retaliatory action against the Pulwama attack, stoked tensions on both sides. In a suicide bombing in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama in February 2019, a convoy of forty-five Indian soldiers was blown up. The Hindu reports, "The Jaish-e-Mohammed, the Pakistan-based terrorist organization which has orchestrated numerous strikes in the Kashmir Valley, has taken responsibility for what is now the highest toll of security forces in any attack in the State."77 There were voices "from all sections of the Indian population-politicians, celebrities, journalists, and the common masses-to avenge the attack, demanding a war against Pakistan and collective punishment for Kashmiris, including calls for genocide."78 Also, the beheading of an Indian soldier Lance Naik Hemraj of Rajputana Rifles by Pakistani armed forces across the LoC had caused an unprecedented public uproar and outrage across the country. The top military brass reiterated India's right to retaliate. Thus, jingoism was brewing in New Delhi's army headquarters with an aim to evolve an appropriate and effective strategy to teach Pakistan "a lesson."79 Following this gruesome incidence, Indian electronic media added "fuel to fire by giving prime-time broadcast space to jingoism."80 The point is that warmongering assumes a notorious face in the wake of unprecedented incidents such as the 1999 Kargil War and the 26/11 terror attacks on Mumbai, resulting in the nadir of Indo-Pak relations.

Name	Statements	Interpretation
Pervez Musharraf	"I hope the one thing that we want to achieve quite unambiguously is the core issue is Kashmir" ¹	Reiterates Kashmir as the core issue, indispensable for the military for its power and survival to keep the civilian leadership under its control.
Pervez Musharraf	"Four-point solution" to Kashmir, including a gradual withdrawal of troops, self- governance, no changes to the region's borders, and a joint supervision mechanism. ²	Intended to provoke Kashmiri youth to take up arms to bleed India.
Pervez Musharraf	"We will continue to stand by our Kashmiri brethren no matter what ³ The Pakistani nation and Pakistan Army will fight till the last drop of their blood." ⁴	Expression of solidarity with the Kashmiri people, and psychological outburst against India.
General Ayub Khan	 "Indian politicians from the very beginning have despised the existence of Pakistan and they never truly accepted the formation of an Independent Muslim state."⁵ "The 100 million citizens of Pakistan whose hearts have been reciting the shahadah will not rest quietly until the canons of our enemies have been silenced forever"⁶ "The war has begun! To destroy our enemies, our brave soldiers are on the march. Allah has bestowed the Pakistani army with an opportunity to display their talents and skills."⁷ 	Formation of a narrative of "historical injustice," which helps military institutions to remain in power.
General A.M. Yahya Khan	"Twelve crore (120 million) <i>Mujahids</i> of Pakistan! The enemy [India] has once again challenged our self-respect. For your survival and honour rise up as one man and face the enemy as an invincible rock Undeterred by the numerical superiority of the enemy they [Pakistan Armed Forces] are fighting him bravely at every front in accordance with the traditions of <i>Ghazis</i> of Islam We are fighting with a perfidious and ruthless enemy" ⁸	The projection of an enemy image; glorification of Islam; psychological and cultural appeal to Pakistani armed forces to fight India as part of their religious faith.

Table 2.1 Key Statements of Pakistani Military Elite on Kashmir

(Continued)

Name	Statements	Interpretation
General Zia- ul-Haq	 "Islam is our goal. Quran is our constitution. Jehad is our path. War till victory, God is great" "There should be no mistake, our aim is totally clear and strong Liberation of Kashmir valley [<i>sic</i>]. We cannot now allow our Kashmiri brethren to remain with India for a long time."⁹ 	Emphasis on addressing Kashmiris as "brethren," with the role of religion underlined.

Table 2.1 Key Statements of Pakistani Military Elite on Kashmir (Continued)

Source: Compiled by the author.

AP Archive, "Pakistan Musharraf Urdu," April 7, 2001, http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/youtube/14a 3e8ae6d75062932bb4f756c0ca6bc.

²*The Guardian*, December 5, 2006, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/dec/05/pakistan.india.

³India Today, "Kashmir is in Pakistan's Blood, says Pervez Musharraf as He Returns to Active Politics," October 7, 2019, https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/kashmir-is-in-pakistan-s-blood-pervez-musharraf -says-as-he-returns-to-active-politics-1607030-2019-10-07.

⁴"Pakistan to Teach India a Lesson: Pervez Musharraf," The Nation, October 6, 2019, https://nation.com.pk /06-Oct-2019/pakistan-to-teach-india-a-lesson-pervez-musharraf1.

⁵DND, September 5, 2015, https://dnd.com.pk/6-september-speech-of-ayub-khan/97294.

⁶DND, September 5, 2015.

⁷"India has Attacked Lahore and Pakistan is at War, Gen. Ayub Khan," DND.com, September 5, 2015, https ://dnd.com.pk/6-september-speech-of-ayub-khan/97294.

⁸"The India-Pakistan War, 1971," *Pakistan Horizon* 25, no. 1 (First Quarter, 1972): 142–86. ⁹Narender Sehgal, *Chapter 23—Pakistan's Proxy War from the Book—Memorial of Mistakes Converted* Kashmir—A Bitter Saga of Religious Conversion (New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, April 1, 2003), https://mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?18969/Chapter+23++Pakistans+Proxy+War +from+the+book++Memorial+of+Mistakes+Converted+Kashmir++A+bitter+saga+of+Religious+Conve rsion+by+Narender+Sehgal.

To recall, New Delhi has been undertaking soft-peddling measures to put mounting pressure on Islamabad to take stern actions against the Pakistanbased terrorist organizations. For instance, "India has withdrawn the Most Favored Nation status to Pakistan in a signal Coercive diplomacy is likely to continue, but to be effective the effort needs a wider net, especially at a time when the U.S. is seeking Pakistan's help in firming up a deal with the Afghan Taliban."81 India's print and electronic media urged the Modi government to isolate Pakistan internationally for Pakistan's unabated support to Jaish-e-Mohammed and to win the confidence of Kashmiri people in the Valley by addressing the youth militancy, which is chiefly a psychological problem that governments at the Center and the state have failed to address.

The root cause of the persisting unrest in the Kashmir Valley is being glossed over, which is partly ascribed to India's "belligerent postures"⁸² and partly to the staunch Hindu nationalism. A political analyst observes, "The acts of Indian state violence on Kashmiri civilians, unfortunately, never result in international condemnations, marking the kind of erasure that occurs in situations of structural violence."83

Indian and Pakistan television channels were brazenly indulged in a mutual blame game. Shukla and Sirur commented, "In these troubled times, Pakistan's

TV news anchors are redefining journalism with their poetic jibes, offering a quick laugh on this side of the border, inflaming passions on that side, and stabbing media objectivity right through its heart."84 Pakistani journalist Kiran Naz of Samaa TV stated, Agar Pakistan ne jawab de diya toh ek tha Modi ya ek tha Bharat naa ho jave ... Ude toh the Pakistan ko sabak sikhane, par gir pade nalayak kahin ke ("Retaliation by Pakistan may relegate India and Modi to history. Loafers who rose to teach Pakistan a lesson have fallen to the ground").85 Likewise, the Pakistani anchor Fiza Khan of Kohinoor News shouted slogans, "Shame on India,"86 while the Lahore-based 24 News HD said, Hataf, Abdali, Shaheen, Ghaznavi, Ghauri and Ababeel yeh naam nahin Bharat kee tabahi kaa samaan hai⁸⁷ ("These are not simply names but the stuff to destroy India."). The Pakistani anchor cited cities like Nagpur (Maharashtra State of India) that fall within the target of Pakistani missiles. Even the names Gauri and Ghaznavi are the symbols of Muslim glory to remind India of the pains and agonies India had suffered at the hands of Muslim invasions. Essentially, Pakistan has nothing to do with the Mughal names, but its deeply embedded psychology to hurt India prompts Pakistan's civilian and military elites to exhibit that they belong to the martial race, prepared to fight until the end.

In response, India's Zee TV and other pro-Modi channels lambasted Pakistan as if it were nerve warfare. While comparing defense capabilities of both countries, most of Indian TV channels arrogantly taunted that Pakistan would not be able to bear the heat of Indian onslaught against Pakistan. The warmongering media in both the countries whether on the issue of airstrikes or terror blasts continue to indulge in "jingoism and nationalism," with headlines such as "'Pakistan teaches India a lesson,' 'Dastardly Pakistan,' and 'Stay Calm and Back India.''⁸⁸ Thus, "journalistic patriotism" fueled geopsychological impulses of hatred and acrimony. Indian television channels demanded "blood" for carrying out the Pulwama attack by a suicide bomber from Jaish-e-Mohammed. For example, Arnab Goswami, "a famously aggressively Indian news anchor," blurted out, "We want revenge, not condemnation. . . . It is time for blood, the enemy's blood."⁸⁹

NUCLEAR PSYCHOLOGY: A CASE STUDY

Nuclear proliferation in South Asia is rooted in psycho-cultural complexes of ruling elites of India and Pakistan, feverishly engaged in the nuclear arms race. With the propensity for acquiring credible nuclear deterrence as a security guarantee, Pakistan's strategy has been to escalate the building of its nuclear weapons program.

No sufficient literature is available on the psychological dimension of nuclear escalation in South Asia. More than a majority of researchers on South

Chapter 2

Asian studies reiterate that nuclear dangers or nuclear threats are growing. They are continually harping that the new and refined nuclear weapons pose new risks in the region. There is a possibility of "inadvertent" and accidental escalation.⁹⁰ But there is no sound, solid, and reliable work on nuclear escalation in South Asia that unravels the underlying reasons that incentivize India and Pakistan to increase and upgrade their nuclear arsenals. It is also unclear whether or not India's nuclear doctrine of retaliation is firm or flexible or stable. Given an indistinct scenario, a state of uncertainty about nuclear weapons lingers on in the region. This scenario is further compounded as Daniel S. Geller conforms to the views of Scott Sagan that "new nuclear weapon states will be influenced heavily by their military organizations [for instance in Pakistan], and that the biases, routines, and parochial interests of these organizations will result in deterrence failures and unauthorized or accidental usage of nuclear weapons."⁹¹

There is also a fallacious logic that India's no-first-use option is a part of India's strategic culture. Does it not run counter to India's national security? India needs to develop and embrace a sound strategic culture, based on the psychologically induced strategic theorem that guarantees the country's security against all odds and uncertainties. Let me, therefore, argue that the nuclear psychology of India and Pakistan needs in-depth research and analysis for developing a sound and scientific doctrine. I suspect that India's doctrine of "massive retaliation" to Pakistan's first-use nuclear option would deter the latter because its ruling elites' eyes are bloodshot with vengeance. It is more of a psychological game than a tactical nuclear warfare. In effect, nuclear risks would not subside or downsize.⁹²

Political scientists and peace theorists have hardly cared to pay attention to the potential role of geopsychology of policymakers who are adept in creating the pro-nuclear weapon constituency by exploiting the people's psyche under a banner of national survival and identity. This can be best exemplified by Pakistan's late president Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's emotionally overcharged call to his countrymen, in the wake of India's overt hand in Pakistan's dismemberment in December 1971 that Pakistan must build nuclear weapons even if the people were to eat grass.⁹³ In effect, Pakistan saw nuclear weapons as the last recourse to ensure its national security since it discovered that it could not win conventional wars against India. Simply put, building nuclear arsenal was also a political subterfuge by Pakistani ruling elites to gain popular legitimacy.

In the ongoing debate on the nuclear escalation in the region, Pakistan's nuclear psychology is driven by its political complex on being treated as "coequal" by India. With carrying out of six nuclear weapon tests as "tit-for-tat" to India's five, Pakistanis rejoiced over the nuclear tests by having attained strategic parity with India, which Pakistani elites had long dreamt

of. T. V. Paul supports my above viewpoint when he says, "The nuclear arms race between the two states has been another basis for the parity notion. . . . At the same time, Pakistan's search for parity with India has been greatly helped by its military and strategic relationship with China, which has emerged as the main source of Islamabad's nuclear and missile capabilities."⁹⁴ This absolutely reveals the geopsychological preponderance in Pakistani thinking and approach while dealing with India. In brief, Pakistan would never tolerate "Indian hegemony" in the region.

The fact is that both sides are indulging in glorifying their respective nuclear tests. One might recapitulate that scientists and engineers in both countries were accorded the red carpet treatment, with ruling leaders eulogizing their nuclear feats. Nuclear tests were celebrated as if a cricket match was won, given the fact that people in both countries are psychologically overcharged to do or die and are ill-prepared to accept defeat in a competitive game. Christopher Clary and many other scholars are of the view that nuclear proliferation is deeply etched in the national psychology of ruling leaders who desire a quick fix of nuclear weapons against their political rivals. It is based on the notion of national heroes widely propagated and legitimized by ruling leaders in South Asia. This is evident from President General Musharraf's decision to pardon A. Q. Khan, the father of nuclear Pakistani bomb, for his "wrongdoing" by describing him as "my hero." Musharraf stated, "he always was and still is because he made Pakistan a nuclear power."⁹⁵

What do all these examples show? If not the geopsychological megalomania, then what is it? The thesis is further validated when certain constituencies in both countries are mystifying their bombs along with symbols of their religion and culture. If the Indian bomb is termed as the "Hindu" bomb and the Pakistani bomb an "Islamic" bomb in their respective circles, does it not support the geopsychological theory that contrary and hostile psycho-cultural perceptions are rooted in India and Pakistan, which are the real source of India-Pakistani estrangement?

American policymakers are inwardly scared of the Pakistani bomb having a religious and cultural affinity with the Muslim world. Israel is worried about the so-called Islamic bomb and has convinced President Trump that Iran is heading toward making the bomb. That prompted President Trump to declare in 2018 the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal, which had been signed by President Obama and other permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany.

In theoretical terms, India and Pakistan have retained nuclear deterrence as a security guarantee against each other's security threat, though its failure cannot be ruled out.⁹⁶ However, India's nuclear doctrine based on no-firstuse, credible minimum deterrence, and second-strike capability does raise doubt about its efficacy. Some foreign policy Indian experts see no flaw in India's nuclear doctrine, which, they argue, well fits in the geopolitical environment. A couple of strategic experts are skeptical about its efficacy and reliability because of the psychological nature of the nuclear issue. To support their argument they cite a classical case of the Cuban missile crisis, which they argue, was averted not because of nuclear deterrence but because of the statesmanship of John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev. There were other reasons to prove that nuclear deterrence with America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) could not be proffered as a parallel example in the India-Pakistan case.⁹⁷ First, unlike India and Pakistan, there was no territorial dispute between the United States and the USSR. Second, while it was fundamentally an ideological conflict between superpowers, a deeply embedded psychological battle wages between India and Pakistan, interlocked in "a proverbial eye-ball to the eye-ball situation."98 Third, both the superpowers possessed an improved command and control mechanisms. Fourth, they continually carried forward nuclear arms control negotiations, resulting in bilateral treaties such as SALT-1 (1972), ABM Treaty (1972), SALT-2 (1979), INF Treaty (1987), and several treaties were concluded in the post-Cold War period, including START-3 that was signed between President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev at Prague in 2010. Though India and Pakistan have had undertaken confidence-building measures, including a December 1998 agreement on not attacking each other's nuclear facility, they have not engaged so far in a bilateral nuclear arms control negotiating process.

In brief, it was the statesmen-like responsible behavior of the leadership in America and the USSR that contributed to averting the nuclear catastrophe. Therefore, the central question arises whether the leadership in India and Pakistan can claim to possess the statesman-like wisdom. The answer is in negative. For, nuclear deterrence is structured on the psychological base. Both India and Pakistan continue to remain the captives of narrowly structured perceptions of seeing each other as an enemy. Therefore, the real dilemma is that though geopolitics has changed at the global layer, geopsychology of ruling leaders has gained primacy in the policy decision-making. So far as India's no-first-use policy is concerned, it is not intended to bring about a change in Pakistani behavior.99 Rather, it is a confused and indistinct policy that weakens the potency of nuclear deterrence. The latter does not fit in the psychologically induced geopolitical environment in the region. Nor does it fit in the domestic constituency whose louder voices are on the rise for revising the 1999 nuclear doctrine enunciated by the Vajpayee government. On the other hand, the Modi government appears to have spurred the nation-wide debate on the imperative of rethinking India's old nuclear doctrine in an altered geostrategic environment in the neighborhood, whereas Prime Minister Khan repeatedly warned about the horrendous consequences

of nuclear exchange between the two nuclear-armed states, while referring to the scrapping of Article 370.¹⁰⁰

Correspondingly, it is psychopolitik that drives the Modi government's policy planners to embrace more aggressive policy postures toward Pakistan, as manifest from a series of policy actions undertaken by the Modi government that focus more on a hard-nosed policy rather than musing over the nuclear romance of the no-first-use policy. Also, asymmetrical stakes are rooted in the deterrence theory. As regards India and Pakistan, deterrence is more of a geopsychological game rather than a reliable instrument to ensure the country's security. Nor does India subscribe to the theory of limited nuclear war, which in Indian perception, is not a flexible response to the preponderance of geopsychological prejudices embedded in the thinking of ruling elites of India and Pakistan.

Furthermore, nuclear deterrence has become redundant in light of fresh challenges emanating from the lurking fear of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of violent non-state actors—jihadi elements. This has added a new dimension to an obvious failure of nuclear deterrence as a guarantee to national security. Arbatov argues, "Terrorists need nuclear weapons, not for the purpose of deterrence, but for direct employment as well as blackmailing states or the entire civilized world."¹⁰¹ He further points out that nuclear deterrence is futile since "terrorists have no territory, industry, population, or a regular army that might be targets for retaliation."¹⁰²

Fundamental uncertainties concerning the pace, scale, and direction of mutual interdependence are looming large over the region. It is likely to produce a state of inertia on the part of the ruling leaders of the region. Rather, South Asian policy elites have been caught in a dilemma of choosing between appropriate responses and euphoric reactions to discourses on the endgame of politics, and the imperative of a new strategic thinking. For instance, there is no clarity in terms of goals and priorities about strategic cooperation between India and the United States, between India and Russia, and between India and Israel, and similarly between Islamabad and Washington.

Nuclear Parity Doctrine

The geopolitical and geostrategic landscape in South Asia witnessed a big transformation in light of nuclear weapons tests carried out by India and Pakistan in May 1998. With the crossing of nuclear threshold, the nuclear psychology of the ruling class in India and Pakistan reflected from their tone and tenor in public statements. Indian tests caused much fear and tension in Islamabad's power corridor, though India's nuclear policy goal was not focused on Pakistan. But for the latter, it was categorically important to respond to Indian nuclear tests. Pakistani civilian and military leaders were overenthusiastic to have attained nuclear parity vis-à-vis India. But Pakistani fear and apprehension were exacerbated when the Vajpayee government came out with a draft on the nuclear doctrine, which prodded Pakistani military elites, in particular, to pursue proactive nuclear diplomacy to expand Pakistan's strategic space vis-à-vis India.

Therefore, Pakistan's civilian and military leaders embarked upon projecting their country's nuclear-deterrence capability as a force to be reckoned with, fully capable of challenging India's preponderance not only in South Asia but also in the "extended neighborhood." This, in Indian perception, is likely to upset the strategic balance in South Asia. As a result, the loss of India's strategic monopoly following Pakistan's attainment of nuclear parity complicated New Delhi's relationship with Islamabad on the interconnected issues of Kashmir and cross-border terrorism, which might trigger off nuclear exchange between them.¹⁰³

Notably, Pakistan felt more self-confident and more secure vis-à-vis India.¹⁰⁴ Rather, Pakistani foreign policy elites were euphoric over attainment of strategic superiority over India by claiming that Pakistan had conducted six nuclear weapon tests in response to India's five. Pakistan's then foreign minister Gohar Ayub Khan stated in several interviews to the B.B.C. London that India would now come to "senses." His tone toward India was visibly harsher and sterner. Indian political leaders and media also indulged in making histrionic speeches and using "dubious logic" to glorify "the Hindu bombs" against "the Islamic bomb." In other words, the Hindu-Muslim syndrome crystallizes the inbred geopsychology of racial stereotypes and cultural dispositions.

Before carrying out nuclear weapons tests, India and Pakistan were able to maintain the fragile peace in the region as well as to sustain the bilateral political dialogue. The political, security, and psychological environment drastically altered in the aftermath of nuclear tests. First, in Pakistan's perception, it overshadowed India's predominant position in South Asia by attaining strategic parity. Second, the then-president General (retired) Musharraf publicly announced that Pakistan's nuclear tests enhanced the country's image and prestige in the Muslim world, underlining that Pakistan's "Islamic bomb" would be a potential deterrent against the enemies of Islam. In other words, Pakistani ruling elites took up the cudgels in asserting that Pakistan's nuclear-deterrence capability would be a reliable shield against Indian threat to its national security. In this regard, Russell J. Leng observes:

[The] "leading figures in Pakistan have asserted that Pakistan's nuclear capacity played a role in deterring India from using its advantage in conventional forces on three earlier occasions: a preventive attack on Pakistani nuclear facilities in 1984; a planned Indian cross-border attack in conjunction with the Brasstacks exercise in 1986–87; and in 1990 when India was purported to be considering air attacks on mujahidin camps in *Azad Kashmir*... But such arguments gain currency because of a predisposition on the part of Pakistani leaders to assume the worst in Indian intentions. This predisposition has been reinforced by over five decades of recurring crises and wars.¹⁰⁵

Leng further observes that Pakistan believes that its nuclear deterrent capability has worked vis-à-vis India and its "nuclear capabilities have redressed the military imbalance,"¹⁰⁶ which enabled Pakistan to continue with low-intensity conflict in the Kashmir Valley and an open moral and diplomatic support on "insurgency movements" in Kashmir.¹⁰⁷ Third, there is a growing apprehension and fear about the horrendous consequences of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of extremists and jihadists operating in Pakistan. Fifth, the persisting nuclear war psychology on both sides might cause horrendous consequences in terms of human lives, famine, and disastrous climatic changes. It is important to cite the study conducted by researchers from the University of Colorado Boulder and Rutgers University. It estimates such war may cause deaths of 125 million people, resulting in global famine, and lead to a drop in global temperature by 5 degrees Celsius.¹⁰⁸ According to Alan Robock, a coauthor of the study, "Such a war would threaten not only the locations where bombs might be targeted but the entire world."¹⁰⁹

If analyzed from the psychological perspective of "escalation dominance," a perceptual shift in the policy approach of Pakistani civilian and military elites was visible. Pakistan's then foreign minister, Gohar Ayub Khan, in an interview with the BBC in Islamabad, stated, "The Pakistani people will be feeling very proud of the fact that they have an upper edge . . . 'They can be very proud of the fact that we have achieved a strategic equilibrium on the Indian Subcontinent that is in favor of Pakistan."¹¹⁰ It was reported that "Pakistan currently has 140 to 150 nuclear warheads and the stockpile is expected to increase to 220 to 250 by 2025 if the current trend continues.... If that happens, it would make Pakistan the world's fifth-largest nuclear weapon state," Hans M. Kristensen, Robert S. Norris and Julia Diamond said in the report "Pakistani nuclear forces 2018."111 It is likely to have a "dampening effect 'on India's nuclear strategy given its restrained nuclear deterrence." Dalton and Perkovich wrote, "The growing prominence of nuclear weapons in Pakistan's national security strategy casts a shadow of nuclear use over any potential military strategy India might consider to strike this balance. However, augmenting its nuclear options with tactical nuclear weapons is unlikely to bolster Indian deterrence in convincing ways."¹¹² In effect, deterrent effects can be neither measured nor prophesized, especially when intentions of adversary states cannot be predicted. Mahesh Shankar and T. V. Paul write that "faced with the complex security environment

Chapter 2

arising from Pakistani actions, India's actual posture has increasingly drifted in directions that have undermined the logic of a credible minimum deterrent, with the development of an ambiguity that threatens to contribute to the destabilizing trends in the subcontinent."¹¹³ It is also not clear whether India would abrogate its no-first-use doctrine if the potential threat from Pakistan is in the offing.

From the above analysis, it is more than clear that India and Pakistan have learned no lesson from the past wars. Nor have they derived any lesson from the United States and the former Soviet Union, and Russia on an imperative need for developing full proof mechanisms to ensure safety and security of nukes against the potential of extremist group's access to crude n-weapons.

Given the psychological obsessions of India and Pakistan, neither side is expected to budge from its respective position on the nuclear issue. But in terms of psychopolitik, both countries have limited options. They are cognizant of the fact that their nuclear arsenals are not patently safe and secure. Therefore, they need to learn from historical analogies to keep their nuclear weapons secure against the jihadist threat. There is a rare possibility that the leadership in India and Pakistan will go beyond the boundary of psychopolitik.¹¹⁴ However, it is difficult to agree with the viewpoint that the enduring rivalry between India and Pakistan "compelled the rivals to acquire nuclear weapons."115 It is a flawed conclusion that they have acquired nuclear weapons with the motivation to "avoid wars between them."¹¹⁶ Further, it is incorrect to say that nuclear weapons are responsible for prolonging the "enduring rivalry" between them. In fact, it is the deeply embedded geopsychology of mutual hate and enmity, responsible for the estranged ties since the very birth of India and Pakistan as sovereign states in August 1947. By logical implication, the nuclear crisis in South Asia is fueled by the rabid psychology of India and Pakistan to outdo the other (tables 2.2 & 2.3).

In this study, it has been found that it is not Pakistan's territorial aggrandizement that has accentuated hostility and enmity with India. Had it been Pakistan's territorial ambition, Pakistan would not have given away 5,010 square kilometers of the PoK territory to China under the 1963 Agreement. The motivation behind it was to embarrass and humiliate India. In realistic terms, Pakistan killed two birds with one stone. On the one hand, Pakistan maintained its closer strategic partnership with China as an all-weather friend. On the other hand, it divested India of a sizeable chunk of the disputed PoK territory, transferred to China. This psychological masterstroke by Islamabad facilitated a unique model of friendship between Beijing and Pakistan, reinforced by the current flagship China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project to help Pakistan materialize the dream of becoming an "Asian Tiger."¹¹⁷

Cumulatively speaking, Pakistan's state-sponsored terrorism against India since 1989, as manifest from the Mumbai terrorist attack (November

Pakistani Leaders	Statements	Rival Psychology
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto	"If India builds the bomb, we will eat grass or leaves, even go hungry. But we will get one of our own." ¹	An obsession for parity with India
Nawaz Sharif	"Today, we have evened the score with India." ² Note: The context was Pakistan's nuclear tests conducted in 1998.	The sense of vindication; "tit-for-tat tests"
Sheikh Rasheed (Railway Minister)	"Pakistan has small 125–250 gram atom bombs (tactical nuclear weapons) which may hit (and destroy) a targeted area in India" ³	Intimidating India
Prime Minister Imran Khan	"If the [Kashmir] conflict moves towards war then remember both nations have nuclear weapons and no one is a winner in a nuclear war. It will have global ramifications. The superpowers of the world have a huge responsibility whether they support us or not, Pakistan will do everything possible" ⁴	A warning to India and the world community
Pervez Musharraf, February 2019	"Indian and Pakistan relations have again reached a dangerous level. They will be no nuclear attack. If we would attack India with one atomic bomb, then the neighboring country could finish us by attacking with 20 bombs. Then the only solution is that we should first attack them with 50 atom bombs so that they cannot hit us with 20 bombs." ⁵	One can infer from Musharraf's statement that Pakistan needs to hit India hard in the first strike for Pakistani national security against Indian hegemony.

Table 2.2 Rival Psychology: Key Statements of Pakistani Leaders

Source: Prepared by the author

¹The New York Times, May 29, 1998, https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/asia/05 2998pakistan-nuke.html.

²The New York Times, May 29, 1998, https://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/29/world/nuclear-anxiety-ove rview-pakistan-answering-india-carries-nuclear-tests-clinton.html.

³The Nation, September 2, 2019, https://nation.com.pk/02-Sep-2019/pakistan-has-tactical-nuclear-weapons -capable-of-causing-targeted-damage-in-india-claims-sheikh-rashid.

⁴India Today, August 26, 2019, https://www.indiatoday.in/programme/to-the-point/video/pakistan-pm-imran -khan-issues-nuclear-threat-to-india-over-kashmir-issue-1591894-2019-08-26.

⁵ABP Live, February 25, 2019, https://news.abplive.com/news/world/pervez-musharraf-says-if-pakistan-attac ks-with-one-atom-bomb-india-will-finish-us-with-20-bombs-927576.

26, 2008), the attack on the Indian Parliament (2001), the attack on India's airbase in Jammu and Kashmir's Uri region (2016), and the Pulwama attack (2019), purveys an adequate empirical evidence that it is geopsychology rather than geopolitics to destabilize and bleed India. Therefore, this study points out that there are lingering myths circulated by South Asian scholars and experts that India-Pakistan relations are perceived through the prism of geopolitics and geostrategy. But this study suggests that geopsychology

Indian Leaders	Key Statements	From Peaceful Coexistence to Rival Psychology
Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister	 "Non-alignment means that we do not join military blocs which have created a lot of trouble and tension. We did not join any of these blocs."1 "We think that war in the present age with atom bombs and hydrogen bombs should be especially avoided. If war occurs, it tends to spread, and it may become a tremendous nuclear war in which the world would be practically destroyed. There can be no victory or defeat in a nuclear war."2 "Probably the very first thing that we must aim at is disarmament—as complete as it can be—not merely limited to nuclear weapons, although that is very important, but wholesale disarmament."3 	Rejection of the nuclear weapons option and the advocacy of world disarmament. Through the nonalignment policy, Nehru wanted to defend the national freedom and freedom of action in conducting foreign relations in the interest of peaceful coexistence.
Indira Gandhi, former prime minister	"We are non-nuclear states, who want nuclear energy used only for peace but we too have a right to live and be heard."	Nuclear ambiguity: keeping nuclear option open
Atal Bihari Vajpayee, former prime minister	"Our nuclear weapons are meant purely as a deterrent against nuclear adventure by an adversary." ⁴	No first-use; credible minimum nuclear deterrence
Rajnath Singh, cabinet minister	"Till today, our nuclear policy is 'No First Use.' What happens in future depends on the circumstances." ⁵	Possibility of the reversal of the no- first-use policy under India's nuclear doctrine
Prime Minister Narendra Modi	 "We have nuclear of nuclear bombs (the mother of nuclear bombs). I decided to tell them, do whatever you want to do (but we will retaliate).⁶ "In the past our people would weep, go around the world saying Pakistan did this, did that It is now Pakistan's turn to weep. 	The threat of retaliation against Pakistan

Table 2.3 Rival Psychology: Key Statements of Indian Leaders

(Continued)

Indian Leaders	Key Statements	From Peaceful Coexistence to Rival Psychology
	Source: Ibid.	
	"India has stopped the policy of getting	
	scared of Pakistan's threats Every	
	other day, they would say 'we have	
	nuclear button.' Our media used to	
	write that Pakistan too has nuclear	
	weapons What do we have then?	
	Have we kept ours (nuclear arsenal) for	
	Diwali?"7	

Rival Psychology: Key Statements of Indian Leaders (Continued) Table 2.3

Internet Archive, "Full Text of Selected Speeches of Nehru, Vol. 5," https://archive.org/stream/selectedspeec hes05nehr/selectedspeeches05nehr_djvu.txt.

²Internet Archive, "Full Text."

3Internet Archive, "Full Text."

⁴Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, October 7, 2002, https://www.mea.gov.in/interviews.h tm?dtl/4823/Transcript+of+Interview+of+Prime+Minister+Shri+Atal+Bihari+Vajpayee+with+the+Financ ial+Times.

⁵India Today, August 16, 2019, https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/india-no-first-use-nuclear-policy-may -change-rajnath-singh-1581403-2019-08-16.

⁶The Economic Times, April 17, 2019, https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/pmnarendra-modi-says-he-called-paks-nuclear-bluff-because-india-is-n-power/articleshow/68926584.cms ?utm source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst.

⁷The Times of India, April 21, 2019, https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/elections/news/have-we-kept-our -nuclear-arsenal-for-diwali-pm-modi-on-paks-n-threats/articleshow/68978310.cms.

has played a pivotal role in bedeviling and calcifying adversarial relations between India and Pakistan. The study further argues that the therapy of psycho-prophylaxis is needed to dilute the deepening layers of mutual hatred and hostility.

CONCLUSION

The chapter argues that even if India and Pakistan were to end up inking the political agreement on the no-first-use of nukes, it is doubtful that they would abandon the deeply embedded mindset of mutual vengeance. More important, parallelisms cannot be drawn between them on nuclear control mechanisms in line with the two superpowers that concluded over two dozen arms control agreements.

In realistic terms, their nuclear approaches are mired in an utter confusion over judgments: the limited nuclear war can be fought or that a minimal nuclear deterrence guarantees national security or that the nuclear war can be controlled. This is primarily attributed to their lack of a basic understanding of the nature of nuclear weapons that possess incalculable destructive power. Blinded by deep-seated anger and vengeance, political and military communities in current regimes in both countries whip up war hysteria, relentlessly engaged in a mutual blame game. It would be the most tragic decision if either party uses nukes to settle political scores.¹¹⁸

A serious flaw related to South Asia's nuclear security order is the question of imparting rigorous technical training to military and civilian personnel for nuclear weapons' maintenance. There is no evidence in sight that India and Pakistan have prepared their military forces technically and psychologically as to how nuclear weapons and deployment systems will be integrated into their defense structures. There is no guarantee that nuclear deterrence will enable both countries to prevent a nuclear exchange. However, the GT is an efficacious means to bring about peaceful change in the attitudinal behavior of ruling leaders of both countries to help avert major wars for, what T. V. Paul calls, a "sustainable" peaceful change.

The nuclear future of South Asia will depend on the political psychology of the leadership, the dynamics of state structures, domestic politics, and personal rapport between political leaders. Moreover, it is the onerous obligation of the leadership on both sides to decide and determine what kind of nuclear future emerges in South Asia. If leaderships cannot liberate themselves from past prejudices against one another, the nuclear threat would continue to loom large over the region. Hypothetically, if either of them exercises the first-use option, it would be tantamount to inviting the self-imposed disaster.

In the current political scenario, both governments find it hard to navigate the complex "cultural and psychological" terrain of their fractured bilateral relationship. Both the countries are the victim of a classic case of rival geopsychology. Pakistan's nightmare is that India poses the existential threat to its national security while India uses the Pakistan bogey to blame Pakistan for any communal riots or domestic problems. This is further complicated by the paranoid psychology of New Delhi and Pakistan that are relentlessly engaged in mutual blame game for gnawing problems in the region. Admittedly, unless political leaders and religious fundamentalists stop demonizing one another, there would be no political and social space to contain the radical religiosity. The Hindu and Muslim fundamentalists are brazenly employing religion as a political weapon to enlist the community members in support of their agenda. In realpolitik terms, Pakistan has psychological stakes in instigating the Kashmiri youth into taking arms up against India to disturb the communal harmony and to destabilize India politically and economically. India is also not free from blame. Some of its court and committed intellectuals and the pro-establishment TV channels are spurring provocative debates by lashing out at Pakistan for "glorifying terrorists" and threatening to destroy it. In realpolitik terms, fundamentalist forces have been mounting pressure on their governments to adopt "the toughest possible" stance on bilateral issues ranging from attacks on minority religious groups to the crossborder terrorism.¹¹⁹ As a result, the geopsychology of mutual hate makes it harder for ruling leaders of India and Pakistan to proceed with peace dialogue to address legitimate grievances of each side.¹²⁰

Instead of "reputational stakes," New Delhi and Islamabad have more of psychological stakes. This is evident from their megalomania to humiliate each other on international issues such as Pakistan's opposition to India's membership to the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the UN Security Council (UNSC), or the India-bashing activities such as the China-induced closed-door UNSC special meeting on Kashmir. It shows that Pakistan would leave no stone unturned to condemn India and expose the Modi government's "anti-Muslim biases." And India would not stop bringing Pakistan's state-sponsored terrorism at the center stage of various platforms such as the UN General Assembly, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, G-20, and G-7, including bilateral interactions with the governments of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and the EU.

Both India and Pakistan must wake up to the geopsychological realism that mutual threat perceptions are not exaggerated. Both countries are called upon to shun their deeply entrenched predilection and prejudices structured on the psychology of inevitable "mutual enemy." If India needs to abandon its hegemonic aspirations, Pakistan's military establishment and social media will need to stop spewing venom against India.¹²¹ Both need to stop magnifying the contrived threat perceptions.

Overall, the study suggests that the future of South Asia lies in the hands of ordinary men and women. They are fully aware of what their political masters are doing. The information revolution has educated and sensitized them that instead of allowing their self-serving ruling elites to play up their sentiments, they would write and shape their own destiny.

NOTES

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4. See Paul F. Diehl, Gary Goertz, and Daniel Saeedi, "Theoretical Specification of Enduring Rivalries: Applications to the India-Pakistan Case," in *The India-Pakistan Conflict*, ed. T. V. Paul (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 30.

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12. FPRC Journal, "India-Nepal Relations," 7.

13. FPRC Journal, "India-Nepal Relations," 13.

14. FPRC Journal, "India-Nepal Relations," 29.

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16. See Stephen Cohen, *Shooting for a Century: The India-Pakistan Conundrum* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013).

17. Stephen P. Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 107.

18. Opinion Poll International India, November 3, 2017, http://gallup.com.pk /wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Nov-3-1.pdf. See Sannia Abdullah, "Nuclear Ethics? Why Pakistan Has Not Used Nuclear Weapons ... Yet," *The Washington Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (2018): 162–63.

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24. Bipin Chandra, et al., *India's Struggle for Independence* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1989), 415.

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27. T. V. Paul, "Causes of the India-Pakistan Enduring Rivalry," in *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry*, ed. T. V. Paul (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3–24.

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29. Cited in G. W. Choudhary, *Pakistan, Transition from Military to Civilian Rule* (Essex, England: Scorpion Publishing Ltd., 1988), 7. On August 24, 1946, the first interim Government of India was announced. Viceroy Wavell wanted to include the Muslim League in the government. For a further interpretation of this part and of the role of Viceroy Wavell pertaining to the roots of communalism, see Abdul Wali Khan, *Facts are Facts, The Untold Story of India's Partition* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1987), Chapters I, 1–2, 28–51.

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Chapter 3

India-Pakistan Engagement with the Greater Middle East¹

India and Pakistan are the two major powers in South Asia with a de facto nuclear weapons power status. They have been interlocked in a deep-seated mutual hostility ever since becoming independent from the British colonialism in August 1947. Driven by the strong pulls and pressures of history and culture, reinforced by the deeply entrenched psychology of mutual mistrust and hatred, both countries have hardly been free from tension and rivalry to concentrate on economic development and public well-being. Realistically enough, born on a platter of clashing political ideologies and religious faiths, their security and strategic interests have been at cross purposes, resulting in four bloody wars: 1947–1948, 1965, 1971, and the Kargil conflict in May–July 1999.

In the aftermath of nuclear weapons tests conducted by India and Pakistan in May 1998, New Delhi-Islamabad relations underwent a metamorphosis. It was characterized by a strange medley of convergence and dissonance on their geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic interests in the Middle East. Needless to stress, security, and strategic complexes have played a major role in shaping and articulating their policy stance toward the region in which they have rival stakes and interests. Undoubtedly, Pakistan's geographical contiguity and ideological and religious affinity with the countries of this region are bound to have both short and long-term political, economic, and security implications for India. Also, it is a patent fact that India's multiplex relations with Middle Eastern countries will always figure prominently in Pakistan's psyche as well as in its foreign policy toward India and vice versa.

This chapter aims to examine the engagement of India and Pakistan with the Greater Middle East (GME) from the geopsychological perspective to assess its implications for the regional peace and stability. It seeks to find out how they are engaged in wooing the ruling class whether in Iran or Afghanistan or

the Gulf and Central Asian states (CAS) with intent to ensure their political and security influence and deny the strategic space to each other. This is why, there is an apparent rivalry between New Delhi and Islamabad for enhancing the level of friendship and cooperation with the regional actors, especially in internal security and political stability. The historic hostility between India and Pakistan has produced a peculiar geopsychology among ruling elites to outmaneuver the other by containing each country's political, economic, and strategic influences in the GME. The chapter also intends to explore interaction and interconnectedness between the three core concepts—geopolitics, geoeconomics, and geopsychology—in a new global balance of power system to understand the functionality of state relations at bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels.

GEOPOLITICS, GEOECONOMICS, AND GEOPSYCHOLOGY

International relations (IR) theorists are still grappling with the problem of establishing the validity of contemporary theories such as "balance of power," "unipolarity" versus "multipolarity," and "neorealism" versus "neo-liberalism." John Mearsheimer holds the view that international anarchy—the driving force behind great power behavior—did not change with the end of the Cold War.² Brown and Studemeister characterize the emerging paradigm as a "profusion of asymmetrical relationships between state and non-state actors."³ Nevertheless, the information age-fostered "hard power" versus "soft power" debate has propelled major powers into rethinking whether "hard-ball coercion" is an easy sale to nation-states in the rapidly growing global interdependence.⁴

It may be mentioned that modern communications technology has added a new dimension to IR as well as to nation-states' security concerns. On the one hand, the profound impact of information and communications technology (ICT) has necessarily led both state and non-state actors into sharing information across the globe, consequent upon minimizing the intensity of coercive diplomacy. On the other hand, ICT has contributed to creating vast awareness among citizenry about what is good or bad for the country's national interest. Without exaggeration, the ruling elites' decision about transferring a nation's valuable strategic assets to other countries is within the gaze of the people in today's age of faster interconnectivity. In other words, people's perceptions about the critical national issues provide important feedback to decision-making at the ruling elite level. Henry A. Kissinger has brought forth a new thesis that the emerging trends in great power politics will likely be based on a "geological survey of the world," which will aim at locating new sources of oil, natural gas, and minerals, for instance, in Central Eurasia and the South China Sea region. This is bound to produce a geopsychological contest between major powers, such as India and China, over energy sources indispensable for their energy security. The middle-ranking powers such as Pakistan and Turkey will also compete with one another to ensure uninterrupted access to energy resources, vitally important for their resurgent economies. In this respect, the GME and the South China Sea are probably the emerging theatres of an intensive geopsychological conflict over natural resources.

According to the "psychiatric school" of thought, the thirst for energy might help generate geopsychological impulses among political leaders and the local people to protest the drift of their regions' natural resources to foreign powers. Henry Kissinger in his reply to a question, during an interview with Nermeen Sheikh, February 22, 2006, said that "local conditions are paramount"⁵ in judging the psychology of a particular region. For example, Pakistan's psychology that India is bent upon decimating its "self-preservation" and "self-esteem" as a nation has been one of the core reasons for its deeply entrenched hostility toward India. Over a while, ruling leaders' sustained efforts at casting their adversary into an enemy image in their people's psyche strain ties between neighbors. Such examples abound in the GME between Arabs and Israel, between Iran and Iraq, between Iran and Saudi Arabia, between Lebanon and Syria.

Energy security is another area that has dominated national actors' psyche. For example, China's focus is on safeguarding its energy security interests by establishing a network of protocols, memoranda of understanding, and agreements with major energy suppliers. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and bilateral projects in Central Asia number over 260, with the highest number of 102 projects in Kazakhstan. China's increasing economic engagement with the Central Asian region has triggered a great power contest with Russia and the United States over CAS' raw materials. To recall, China had initialed an agreement with Kazakhstan in 2006 to build a 3,000-km oil pipeline across their borders.

The above instances and evidences show a "cyclical change" from the Cold War geopolitics through the post–Cold War period of the primacy of geoeconomics to the fast emerging primacy of geopsychology when national elites of the global South appear to be fascinated by the growing importance of economic globalization.⁶ On the contrary, the incremental wave of globalization has contributed to widening the economic disparity between developed and developing nations. Besides, the emergence of the United States as a "lone superpower" prodded it to make unilateral decisions like invading Iraq without the international community's approval. Joseph Nye forewarned the United States that its "unilateralism" and "arrogance" might

prove counterproductive given the altered geopolitical and geopsychological environment.⁷

Describing power in hard and soft terms, Nye prescribes that the United States should opt for soft power (openness and persuasion) rather than hard power (the use of overwhelming military and economic resources) to realize its policy objectives. Employment of hard power, he asserts, is incompatible with the nation-states' psychological impulses. Such an assessment is rooted in a dramatic geopsychological change among relatively medium and small powers, which are vigorously opposed to the U.S. unilateral policy of regime change through military means, for instance, in Iraq and Syria. In the case of India and Pakistan, the two nuclear-armed states, exercising maximum restraint is essential to maintain security and stability in the region. Instead of treading the path of nuclear confrontation, New Delhi and Islamabad ought to develop negotiating skills and mechanisms in public diplomacy to overcome the real problem of profound delusions.

From the standpoint of the geopsychological approach, both India and Pakistan are perpetually interlocked in the mutual blame game that obstructs the process of normalizing relations between them. It has been further fuelled following a "perceptional shift" that Islamabad has acquired nuclear parity vis-à-vis India. Pakistani policymakers realized that Pakistan needed to vigorously pursue its political, economic, and security interests in the changing contours of the Gulf and Middle Eastern region. As one might recall, General Musharraf initiated hectic diplomatic efforts to strengthen his country's geopolitical and geostrategic linkages with the GME and South East Asia. First, his visits to China, Southeast Asian countries, and the Persian Gulf region were intended not only to legitimize his military rule in Pakistan by winning their sympathy and support but also to seek their moral and diplomatic succor on the Kashmir issue to besmirch India's image in the Muslim world. Second, Musharraf reiterated on numerous occasions that Pakistan's nuclear power status had enhanced Pakistan's image, prestige, and influence as a powerful leader among Muslim countries. This message was primarily intended to exploit the Muslim communities' psychology that Pakistan's "Islamic Bomb, coined by Z.A. Bhutto," might act as deterrence against the enemies of Islam. In other words, Pakistani ruling elites indulged in projecting the country's nuclear deterrence capability to both challenge Indian hegemony in South Asia and erode its influence in the "extended neighborhood."

The "thrust for role elevation" of India, as an emerging global player, will remain a cause of rivalry and confrontation been the two historic adversaries. Nayar and Paul observe, "The enduring and protracted conflict between India and Pakistan has considerably undermined India's strategic significance because, in the perceptions of the West and developing nations, India's asymmetric conflict with a smaller neighbor made Pakistan into an equal of India."⁸ This idea is embedded in the region's geopolitical structure in which India and Pakistan are located.⁹

THE GREATER MIDDLE EAST

The idea of a GME was presented by President George W. Bush at the G-8 summit meeting in Sea Island, Georgia, in 2004 for expansion of "political participation in the Muslim world . . . meant to combat the appeal of Islamist extremism."¹⁰ He realized that "the enforced regime change" without structural changes would not be enough to bring about permanent peace and stability in the region. But this grandiose "pro-reform agenda" did not fit in with the reforms vision articulated by "Arab liberals." Rather, the GME initiative carried the seeds of producing misgivings among Arab countries that American efforts to democratize the Arab society in conjunction with European powers were aimed at weakening Iran which America had described as a "rogue state." The GME initiative, from Morocco to Pakistan, and from Central Asia and Afghanistan to the Gulf and Middle Eastern countries, was a quest for building the partnership in reforms between the West and the Arab states. But it also opened the floodgates to "greater tension and confrontation" with Arab regimes.

Given the above framework of analysis, the chapter examines both the short- and the long-term implications of Indo-Pakistan engagement with the GME from a geopsychological perspective. What are the prospects for India and Pakistan to accommodate or oppose each other's concerns and national interests in the region? Would the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline agreement be feasible, especially in light of the warmongering statements of Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan and his cabinet member Sheikh Rasheed over India's decision to revoke the special status of Kashmir in August 2019? Answers to these questions will be addressed in the following sections.

The GME has always remained psychologically combative for both India and Pakistan from geopolitical and geostrategic standpoints. In demographic terms, India has the largest Muslim population after Indonesia. Its core interests in the GME include (1) curtailing Pakistan's influence in the region; (2) counteracting Pakistani propaganda projecting India as anti-Muslim; (3) ensuring uninterrupted supply of petroleum products and natural gas from the GME, especially from the Gulf countries that fulfill more than three-quarters of India's needs; and (4) safeguarding the interests of the Indian diaspora, totaling 8.9 million,¹¹ working in the Gulf and Middle Eastern countries.

In light of the aforementioned perspective, India's sustained pro-Arab policy and its consistent support to the Arab states were rooted in India's geopolitical and geopsychological considerations.¹² In realistic terms, India's Middle East policy was crafted and articulated in a broad politico-strategic spectrum for myriad reasons. First, India imports two-thirds of its oil from the Gulf countries since it has emerged as the third-largest energy consumer after China and America. Second, according to the World Bank, Indian migrants working in the Gulf countries contributed remittances worth \$80 billion in 2018.¹³ Indian nationals form the largest expatriate community in Saudi Arabia. Besides, India's trade and investment ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE have been upgraded with the Modi government's launch of "Link West" policy, a new nomenclature for the UPA government's "Look West" policy toward the Middle East. India's strategic analyst observes:

[Modi's "Link West" policy will have] to navigate the new fractures within the Middle East—between Saudi Arabia and Iran as well as the Sunni and the Shia . . . More broadly the region has entered a period of profound turbulence and traditional alliances and partnerships are breaking down. All these demand more and not less Indian engagement in the Middle East will all key countries in the region—from Turkey to Iran and Egypt to Saudi Arabia.¹⁴

With its proactive engagement with the GME, India has been able to enhance its strategic partnership with Saudi Arabia when Prime Minister Modi visited Riyadh in 2018. The two countries signed five agreements, "ranging from anti-money laundering to drug trafficking. Both the countries also agreed on the need to strengthen bilateral defense cooperation primarily through the exchange of visits by experts and military officials and suggested conducting joint military exercises and supplying arms and ammunition."¹⁵ In 2019, the first joint naval exercise was conducted between India and Saudi Arabia. Also, security cooperation "on counterterrorism, cyber security, terror financing, money laundering, and securing sea lines of communication" is on agenda.¹⁶ Further, the UAE and India carried out the bilateral naval exercises in 2018. In brief, security and defense cooperation between India and the Gulf countries has produced a powerful impact on the Pakistani psyche that India's singular motivation is to scuttle Islamabad's role in the region. Furthermore, Pakistani civilian elites are not happy with the Gulf states' investments in India. For example, in 2019, Dubai's DP World agreed to invest \$10 billion in the construction of the Mumbai-Pune hyperloop project that would facilitate a 150 km long journey between Mumbai and Pune in less than half an hour.¹⁷

Undoubtedly, Modi's flurry of visits to Middle Eastern countries since 2014 has heralded a new era of India's increasing strategic engagement with "regional powerhouses"—Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. Modi was honored with the highest civilian awards by the governments of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, and Bahrain.¹⁸ Indeed, Pakistani civilian and military

elites were awed by and angry over those rare honors.¹⁹ It should not be construed that Pakistan's leverage over the Gulf countries has been completely eroded. Saudi Arabia pledged \$10 billion to build a refinery in Pakistan's Gwadar port. Also, it acknowledged Pakistan's constructive contribution to building and training Saudi forces.

India's growing psychological edge over Middle Eastern countries in terms of investment, energy, and security cooperation is generally attributed to the changing geopsychological dynamics in the region in the age of globalization. George K. Tanham, an expert on strategic culture, holds a similar view on India's Middle East policy: "India has cultivated the Islamic States in the Middle East in order to weaken Pakistan's economic and diplomatic links with these countries. India was able to form a close relationship with Iraq that worked reasonably well until the recent crisis because the two countries had close economic ties, and Iraq supported India on Kashmir."20 Nevertheless, a strange mix of ambiguity, reticence, and ill-conceived pragmatism characterizes India's Middle East policy. If viewed with hindsight, Indian policy elites were virtually caught up in a perilous dilemma whenever geopolitical and strategic upheavals occurred across volatile regions, for example, the Soviet attack over Afghanistan in December 1979, the U.S.-led Gulf War against Iraq in 1991, and the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in October 2001 and March 2003, respectively. Given this, India and Pakistan have closely chased each other's diplomatic maneuvers to ensure safeguarding their national interests in the GME.

It may be recalled that India's strategic imperatives impelled New Delhi to adopt a pragmatic policy toward Israel by granting the latter a full diplomatic recognition in 1992 to advance the country's national interests.²¹ At the same time, New Delhi was perturbed lest Arab countries should get antagonized with India given its growing strategic engagement with Israel since the installation of the Modi government in May 2014. Exchanges of official visits between Indian prime minister Narendra Modi and his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu are not looked upon favorably by Arab states. It merits a mention that over the past couple of years Israel has emerged as the thirdlargest arms exporter to India after Russia and America. To Pakistani civilian and military leaders, Israeli state-of-the-art weapons supplied to India are meant to be used against Pakistan. Intending to spoil Indian image amid the Arab world, Pakistan has been exploiting their psyche that India is no longer a genuine friend of the Muslim community, as it used to be during the past regimes.

The increasing bonhomie between India and Israel, reflecting from a highlevel exchange of political visits, has raised eyebrows in the Muslim world that considers it a turnabout in India's traditional Middle East policy. In an attempt to disprove this perception, Prime Minister Modi visited the West Bank city of Ramallah in February 2018, which Palestine leaders hailed as a "historic visit." During his meeting with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, Modi told him that India was keen to see an "independent Palestinian state living in an environment of peace."²² In realistic terms, it should be seen as Modi's efforts at preventing Pakistan from enjoying a greater political and psychological space in the region as well as blunting its propaganda against India's heavy tilt toward Israel.

Furthermore, in pursuit of reimagining its role in the GME, India has seriously embarked on reaching out to as many regional actors as possible. Modi has paid visits to nearly one dozen Middle Eastern countries since 2014. These visits are primarily aimed at incentivizing Middle Eastern countries, especially the Gulf states, to invest in India. Modi has tried to convince them that India has a hassle-free business environment. Saudi ambassador Saud bin Mohammed Al Sati agreed that India was "an attractive investment destination" for the Kingdom and was interested in "long-term partnerships" with India in key sectors such as oil and gas. He said, "Saudi Arabia is looking at making investments in India potentially worth \$100 billion in the areas of energy, refining, petrochemicals, infrastructure, agriculture, minerals and mining."²³ Al Sati further emphasized the importance of a partnership between Saudi's oil giant Aramco and Reliance industries that "reflected the strategic nature of the growing energy ties between the two countries."²⁴

So far as Iraq is concerned, India has consistently maintained that its fate and future should be left to its people without an outside intervention. India's oblique reference was that the United States should no longer intervene in Iraq's domestic and external policies. Thus, the Indian stance was identical with Pakistan's for the reason that Islamabad might not derive any psychological mileage from New Delhi's close strategic partnership with the United States. This reinforces how geopsychological considerations hang heavily in Indian and Pakistani foreign policy behavior. Viewed from a realistic angle, India and Pakistan have scarcely contributed to help resolve territorial conflicts, for instance, between Israel and Arab countries since both New Delhi and Islamabad continue to be at loggerheads.

With economic liberalization, India and the Middle East have enormous opportunities to develop solid economic and political ties. The Cold War psychology of India and Arab countries has undergone a major shift, reflecting their desire to cooperate in combating terrorism and drug-trafficking in their larger national interest. During his visit to Saudi Arabia in January 2001, India's then Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh impressed upon the royal regime that Pakistan sponsored cross-border terrorism in the Kashmir Valley contributed to destabilizing the South Asian region. Although the Saudi government expressed its sympathy for India, it maintained silence on what concrete measures Riyadh would undertake to force Pakistan to abstain from fomenting the cross-border terrorism against India in Jammu and Kashmir. Saudi Arabia wanted to avoid antagonizing Pakistan with whom it had longstanding ideological, religious, strategic, and military ties. One must not gloss over this fact that Pakistan had come to the Royal Saudi government's rescue by deploying ten thousand armed personnel against the misadventure of the authoritarian leader Saddam Hussein during the Gulf crisis of 1990–1991. Nevertheless, in the changing dynamics of IR, India's relations with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries have undergone a qualitative change. It merits a special mention that during King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz's visit to New Delhi in January 2006, he stated in an interview to an Indian newspaper that "India should have an observer status in the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) similar to that held by Russia."²⁵ Pakistan was somewhat shaken up by Abdulaziz's support to India. It felt that an observer status might enhance India's position in the Islamic world, and might enable India to scuttle Islamabad's "natural influence" over Muslim countries.

This apart, India and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement in 2014 pertaining to the recruitment and social needs of more than 2 million Indian workers in the Kingdom.²⁶ Saudi's Aramco oil company is going to establish a strong foothold in South Asia through investment agreements with Reliance Industries—India's oil giant. As reported, "Bilateral trade between Riyadh and New Delhi currently stands at \$28 billion, the linchpin of which is the roughly 800,000 barrels of crude India imports from Saudi Arabia every day."²⁷ Despite these positive indicators in Saudi-India relations, the Riyadh government cannot write off Pakistan. In the most difficult hours of Pakistan's foreign currency crisis, Saudi Arabia came forward with a \$ 6 billion bailout during Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to Saudi Arabia in 2019. Interestingly, Saudi Arabia did not support Pakistan on the Kashmir issue following the Modi government's revocation of Article 370 and 35A of the Indian constitution in August 2019.²⁸ It was a big blow to Islamabad.

India's recent strategic and defense tie-ups with Israel, in Riyadh's perception, mark a deviation from India's past pro-Arab policy. The Indian government has tried to convince Saudi Arabia that the Indo-Israeli strategic partnership was not directed against any Arab country.

India and Iraq

India has had a close traditional friendship with Iraq, which was once the source of 30 percent of India's oil needs and home to 90,000 Indians working in that country until the Gulf War in 1990–1991. From a geopolitical point of view, Iraq, as an exception among the Gulf states, had always extended its unqualified diplomatic succor to India on the Kashmir issue unhesitatingly. In addition, Iraq came to India's rescue when it was faced with an oil crunch

following the 1973–1974 oil crisis, supplying oil to India at a much cheaper price. It was, therefore, quite natural on the part of Iraq to expect India's open support at the most difficult time when the Bush administration was firming up its decision to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime by military means, brazenly flouting all canons of morality and international law. It was too well known to the world community that war unleashed on Iraq by the American and British forces in March 2003 was an open defiance of the United Nations (UN) Charter. The Indian government was found in a quandary. All the opposition political parties in India put mounting pressure on the Vajpayee government to immediately pass a unanimous resolution condemning the U.S.-led war against Iraq. After a lot of persuasions and heated discussions in the Indian Parliament, the Lok Sabha (the lower house of Parliament) passed a resolution calling upon the United States and Britain to halt the aggression immediately. In realistic terms, the resolution had lost both its importance and relevance since it was passed by the parliament at a time when the coalitionled war was virtually coming to an end.

Deviating from its known independent policy, India adopted a middle path policy toward Iraq. There were reasons for this. First, New Delhi's options were limited. India realized that it could practically do little to restrain America when the Security Council's permanent members like France, Russia, and China were found hapless and helpless spectators to stop America from attacking Iraq to effect "regime change." Second, Indian policy elites, dictated by pragmatic considerations, realized that India would not gain substantially by opposing the United States with which New Delhi had been cementing its defense and security ties. Third, India preferred to choose a cautious path by not committing to dispatch its troops to Iraq at the behest of the United States, given the fact that Pakistan had already declined to oblige Washington to send its troops to Iraq to fight against the latter. Fourth, there was a broad national consensus that India should play a positive role in the economic reconstruction of Iraq, and must continue with the policy of expanding trade and commercial ties with the new Iraqi regime. However, in recent years, Pakistan, intending to dilute India's role in Iraq, came forward with military assistance and intelligence inputs on terrorists to Iraq in the latter's war against the militant Islamic State (IS) group to facilitate its eviction from Mosul-Iraq's second largest city. Besides, Iraqi forces were trained by Pakistan to fight the IS militant group.²⁹

Iran

Pakistan and Iran share a 909-km long border. Tehran has been close to Islamabad since 1947 in terms of geography and religion, describing themselves as "natural allies" and their friendship as a "role model." It may be recalled that Iran had extended "moral and material support" to Pakistan in the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistan wars. In return, Pakistan collaborated with Iran in the defense sector by transferring nuclear technology. Further, both the countries jointly manufactured Al-Khalid tanks. Ironically, whenever geopolitical upheavals occurred in the Middle East, political and strategic equations between Iran and Pakistan changed dramatically, especially because of Washington's conferment of a status of "frontline state" on Pakistan. A scholar observes:

Pakistan was a frontline U.S. ally during the Afghan-Soviet War (1979–88) and this affected Pakistan-Iran relations. . . . The Iranian media perception of Pakistan as a proxy for U.S. interests in the region. . . . The U.S.-led "War on Terror," which brought Pakistan and the United States together, added to the trust deficit between Islamabad and Tehran. . . . The 2001 U.S.-led action in Afghanistan created new tension between Iran and Pakistan, as Tehran saw Pakistan's support for the military operation as facilitating the presence of U.S. forces in the region. In subsequent years, Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan met to address areas of potential conflict, but the tripartite summits have failed to generate convergence among the stakeholders.³⁰

Moreover, Iran perceives Pakistan's support to the Taliban as "re-Talibanization" of Afghanistan and as a "ploy" to maintain Islamabad's sphere of influence. In a broad spectrum, Pakistan's relations with Middle Eastern countries may be characterized as a "mixed bag of warmth and tension," depending on how the geostrategic situation in this part might emerge. But one thing is clear that though Pakistan remains an important player in the Middle East, its political and strategic ties with the Middle East countries and Afghanistan have scarcely remained stable over the past fifty years. Rather, they have quite often fluctuated due to a variety of reasons. During the Cold War period, Pakistan was in a better position to develop its solid ties with Muslim states of the region, which had also sided with Pakistan during the 1965 and 1971 India-Pakistan wars.

But geopolitical dynamics in the region have undergone a major transformation. The OIC has been soft toward India since its rise as an emerging global power. It has recognized India's growing economic profile in global affairs, manifest from India's status as a summit partner with ASEAN, EU, G-20, and as a special invitee to G-7 summits. Interestingly, the OIC invited India's late foreign minister Sushma Swaraj as a "guest of honor" at its forty-sixth meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in Abu Dhabi in 2019. She had a rare privilege to address the meeting. Pakistan boycotted the meeting on grounds of giving India the status of the guest of honor. It may be recalled that Qatar had proposed the observer status for India at the OIC foreign ministers' meet as back as 2002 "in recognition of India's significant Muslim population, but Pakistan had consistently blocked the move."³¹ In this context, it is important to recall that when India was offered the membership of the OIC in its meeting in 1969, Pakistani president Yahya Khan had "locked himself up in his room and threatened to boycott the summit if the Indian delegation was present. Jordon, Turkey, and Iran also supported Pakistan."³² From a geopsychological perspective, there is an inbred competitive political game between India and Pakistan as to who wins. Naturally, Pakistan could not psychologically stomach India's presence at the OIC. Perhaps, plumbing the Pakistani mood, the OIC member states supported Pakistan on the Kashmir issue: "In a resolution, the OIC member states reiterated that Jammu and Kashmir remains the core dispute between Pakistan and India and its resolution is indispensable for the dream for peace in South Asia."33 It was embarrassing for India, although Indian external affairs ministry's spokesperson maintained that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. However, the underlying idea is that OIC member nations displayed solidarity with Pakistan as a Muslim nation on the Kashmir issue.

So far as relations between Iran and Pakistan are concerned, a sudden u-turn took place following U.S. attacks on Afghanistan in October 2001. Pakistan's strategic alliance with the United States' global war on terrorism adversely affected Islamabad-Tehran relations since America, a close ally of Pakistan, named Iran as "an axis of evil." Furthermore, the Trump administration made an extraordinary decision to impose crippling economic sanctions against Iran with the United States pulling out of the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran. In light of the worsening relations with America, Iran is fast gravitating toward Russia and China. For example, Russia has been helping Iran to build up its nuclear program despite the U.S. strident opposition. Similarly, India is assisting Iran to develop its Chabahar port to "frustrate Pakistan's ambition" to make its Gwadar port a hub of international maritime trade. While pointing out the importance of the Iranian port for New Delhi, Indian ambassador to Tehran Gaddam Dharmendra said India would fulfill all its commitments for Iran's Chabahar port despite slashing fund allocation for the Chabahar port from 150 crores to 45 crores for the financial year 2019–2020. To counteract Pakistan's Gwadar port, India undertook the Chabahar project that connects India with Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan and providing "connectivity for India to Central Asia and the wider Eurasian landmass."34 But it has been reported that Iran dropped India from the Chabahar railway project in July 2020. This decision is perhaps an offshoot of China's \$ 400 million-worth strategic partnership deals with Iran for a period of twenty-five years,³⁵ causing a big shock to India.

India and Pakistan are vying for improving and consolidating their relationship with Iran, though with divergent motivations. So far as India is concerned, it looks upon Iran as a golden gate to Afghanistan to safeguard its economic, trade, and security interests in the region, apart from its oildependence on Iran. India's close ties with Iran reflect from the latter's acquiescence to giving Chabahar port to India on the lease, which New Delhi perceives as a counterweight to China's strategic control over Pakistan's Gwadar port. But for Pakistan, its religious ties and renewed friendship with Iran are categorically important in myriad ways. First, Pakistan is geared to diluting India's growing influence in Iran. Psychologically, Islamabad cannot brook New Delhi's seamless connectivity with Tehran that the Modi government has recently expanded. The Modi factor hangs heavily in Islamabad's psyche so far its relations with Iran are concerned. Meanwhile, Pakistanbased terrorists' killing of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in February 2019 worsened their bilateral relations. For Iran, the terror threat remains at the center stage of its policy toward Pakistan. Meanwhile, Pakistan strove to pacify Iran, reassuring the latter to bring the terrorist outfits to justice. Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan underlined that the issue of terrorism might adversely affect their ties. He assured President Hassan Rouhani that there was consensus within the entire political spectrum in Pakistan that terrorism should no longer be allowed to operate from Pakistani soil. Khan said Pakistan "probably suffered more from terrorism than any other country, with over 70,000 lives lost in the past 12-13 years."³⁶

At the same time, India tried to cash in on Iran's ire against Pakistan, arguing that New Delhi and Tehran have heavily suffered from terrorist activities operating from Pakistani soil. Thus, the geopsychological contest between India and Pakistan in the region is driven by not allowing a room to either country for dominance in regional affairs. Much to India's chagrin, Prime Minister Khan did not miss the opportunity to bring the Kashmir issue before Rouhani. He added that the "whole subcontinent can move forward once Kashmir was settled. Justice will bring peace."³⁷ It should be underlined that Khan has been proactive in revitalizing Pakistan's connections with the region by reaching out to Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and many other important states in this connection.³⁸

To refurbish Pakistan's image and to repair its ties with the power corridor in Tehran, Prime Minister Khan visited Iran in April 2019. President Rouhani and Prime Minister Khan signed an accord on Border Security and pledged not to allow terrorists or extremist forces to operate from their lands. Iran also threw hints that it was prepared to strengthen bilateral trade ties with Pakistan to boost the trade sector, which provided a big relief to Pakistan. Apart from this, Pakistan supported Iran on its right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. However, because of America's mounting pressure, Pakistan could neither complete the oil pipeline project nor could it afford to antagonize the White House by flouting the Trump administration's appeal not to import oil

Chapter 3

from Iran under its latest sanctions against Iran. But India refused to oblige the United States to snap the oil deal with Iran. Further, as part of its political subterfuge in a nuanced strategic move, Pakistan expressed its willingness to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Khan tweeted, "Pakistan is ready to play its role for peace but it can never again be part of any war"³⁹ between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Prime Minister Khan reiterated that there is "the imperative of avoiding any further escalation in the conflict"⁴⁰ in the region. He gave a clear message that Pakistani diplomacy was based on maintaining neutrality between warring parties and staying away from the conflict in the Middle East.

Prime Minister Khan during his meeting with Iranian president Rouhani discussed Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline projects. But it was feared that Pakistan might halt them in the face of American sanctions against Iran. From the Pakistani side, pipeline construction began in 2013. Iran had completed its pipeline and complained that Pakistan must pay \$200 million per month for its inability to take the delivery of natural gas from Iran since 2014. Khan reassured Iran to resolve the issue amicably. Rouhani reportedly stated that "Iran was also interested in establishing links between the Gwadar and Chabahar ports to strengthen commercial relations."⁴¹ He said that Iran was ready to meet Pakistan's oil and gas requirements and that Iran had already taken measures to construct a pipeline near the Pakistani border. Rouhani added that Iran was ready to increase the export of electricity to Pakistan.⁴²

It may be mentioned here that in an altered geopolitical environment, tensions in Iran-Pakistan relations, earlier marked by bonhomie due to Pakistan's assistance to develop Iran's nuclear program, have started brewing over the mutual accusation of supporting insurgency and terrorism. Pakistan has been accusing Iran of inciting "ethnic-led insurgency" in Balochistan, and Iran has accused Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism on its soil. Also, Pakistan has blamed India for propping up ethnic riots in Balochistan. Both Tehran and New Delhi have brushed aside such charges as false and purely imaginary. Nevertheless, the fact remains that India and Iran have come much closer over the plight of Shiite Muslims in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

A rapid growth in the understanding between New Delhi and Tehran was symbolized in India's designation of President Seyyed Mohammed Khatami as its chief guest at its Republic Day (RD) Parade in 2003. His grand reception at the RD facilitated blossoming of the bilateral ties. India's former central minister Kapil Sibbal noted:

Both countries are interested in forging a long term strategic relationship built around security and transit arrangements. Iran is ready to work with India to provide viable and rapid access to Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia and some projects have already been agreed upon. India and Iran have shared geopolitical interests in pursuit of this part of Asia can be knit into networks of economic cooperation with increased stability as a consequence.⁴³

Despite the "strategic rationale" dictating India-Iran relations, both countries have been unable to harness enormous opportunities to advance the shared interests like promoting bilateral trade and implementing the gas pipeline project. India remains apprehensive that Pakistan might be a stumbling block in cementing closer ties with Iran on account of Islamabad's religious affinity and geopolitical proximity with Tehran.

Israel as a Factor

Another area of Indo-Pak conflict is New Delhi's deepening ties with Tel Aviv, especially in defense and military sectors. To some strategic pundits, Indo-Israeli political and defense cooperation is antithetical to India's long-standing pro-Arab policy and marks a major departure from its nonaligned policy. While rebutting critics' charges, the Modi government argued that India's vital national interests were involved rather than the primacy of "ideological overtones" that had dictated Indian foreign policy during the Cold War period. At the same time, the Indian government maintained that its commitment to the Palestinian cause was impeccable. At the UN General Assembly, India refrained from voting in favor of the United States over its recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. It manifests India's consistent support to Palestine.

In response to New Delhi's increasing strategic overtures to Tel Aviv, Pakistan has also started normalizing its political relations with Israel to boost its image as a "moderate Islamic State. The logic behind the perceptible shift in Islamabad's Israel policy is grounded in a host of reasons. First, the United States played the role of a facilitator to help improve Pakistan-Israel ties. Second, India's proactive diplomacy in the Middle East has exhorted the Imran Khan-led government in Islamabad not only to chase India in the region but also to scuttle India's diplomatic moves and options in dealing with the Middle East and Gulf states. Third, the Modi government's increasing political rapprochement with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries prompted Islamabad to review and renew its fractured ties with Iran and other Muslim countries. What does it show? It reinforces how geopsychology is important in foreign policy decision-making processes while competing for geopolitical and geoeconomic interests in the Gulf region.

THE IRAN-PAKISTAN-INDIA GAS PIPELINE

The Indo-Iran gas pipeline was originally conceived in 1989. A 2700-km pipeline, it "would run 1100 km in Iran and 1000 km to Pakistan and in

case of agreement with India it will continue 600 km in Indian Territory."⁴⁴ The project is expected to benefit both India and Pakistan by fulfilling their increasing "domestic demand" for energy. The inordinate delay in translating the project into reality is rooted in the fear that the pipeline passing through Pakistani territory might not be safe and secure because of the terrorist threat emanating from Pakistan.

Over the years of diplomatic confabulations, Tehran, Islamabad, and New Delhi had agreed in principle to go ahead with the project. Meanwhile, the United States' tense relations with Iran complicated the deal, with America mounting pressure on India and Pakistan to cancel the so-called "peace pipeline" project, worth US\$ 4.5 billion. The underlying motivation behind America's fierce opposition to the proposed project is to deny any economic benefits to Iran. So far as India is concerned, "New Delhi withdrew from the agreement because of security issues and high costs."45 Though Islamabad is, in principle, interested in resuming the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline project, it has been hampered by U.S. sanctions on Iran. And Islamabad is faced with a serious dilemma. On the one hand, it is afraid of U.S. sanctions. On the other hand, Pakistan "could be subject to billions of dollars in penalties [under the pipeline agreement] if it abandons the project."⁴⁶ Iran has already written to Pakistan that if it backs out of the project, Iran will have to seek "legal recourse." In this complex scenario, Pakistan has diversified its oil sources-Oatar and Saudi Arabia. The latter is interested in supplying oil to Pakistan to replace Iran as its energy supplier in view of the persisting irritants between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The above scenario clarifies that psychologically India is placed in a better position in its relationship with Iran vis-à-vis Pakistan. But, however, India will have to be continually watchful lest it should provide an opportunity to Pakistan to create political ripples in the New Delhi-Tehran relationship by whipping up the nuclear issue on which India and Iran are at the crossroads. But the Tehranian regime has been spurred into striking political rapprochement with India to secure its diplomatic succor in the face of continuing American sanctions.

THE INDIA-IRAN NUCLEAR ROW

The controversy over Iran's Nuclear Energy Project following India's diplomatic stance synchronizing with that of the United States caused a deep alarm in Tehran's politics. One might recall that along with the United States and EU-3 (European Union—Britain, France, and Germany), India supported the September 2005 IAEA resolution on "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran,"⁴⁷ calling upon Iran to abide by the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) obligations. Leaders of India's mainstream left parties criticized the stand of the UPA government led by Manmohan Singh. Prakash Karat, Secretary of the Communist Party of India, and Sitaram Yechuri, leader of the Communist Party of India-Marxist, had asked the UPA government to abstain from voting on Iran's nuclear program if no consensus was reached at the IAEA meeting. In response, then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated that India could not be pressured by any country, including America. Singh gave them complete assurance that the "Left's concerns in this regard would be adequately addressed."⁴⁸ He reiterated, "Our approach will be to safeguard India's enlightened national interest."⁴⁹ This controversy was generated following U.S. Ambassador David Mulford's remarks that if India did not support the United States on Iran's nuclear project, the Indo–U.S. Nuclear Agreement of July 2005 could be in jeopardy, negatively impacting Indo–U.S. relations. However, the Bush administration later tried to assuage Indian fears.

It may be recalled that India's siding with the United States on the nuclear issue had buffeted the New Delhi-Tehran relationship, which Pakistan exploited to trigger irritants between India and Iran. To stave off mutual misunderstanding, then Prime Minister Singh made a statement in the *Lok Sabha* on February 17, 2006: "India's vote on the IAEA resolution does not, in any way, detract from the traditionally close and friendly relations we are privileged to enjoy with Iran."⁵⁰ India sent out clear signals to Iran that India was neither pro America nor against Iran but pro-India's enlightened national interests. The Indian government made it unambiguously clear to the Tehran regime that its vote should not be interpreted as anti-Iran. However, such political rhetoric did not cut much ice with Iran. Also, some strategic analysts alleged that India was deviating from its independent and nonaligned policy.

A positive turn occurred in India-Iran ties with the conclusion of the nuclear deal with Iran by the United States and European powers in 2015. Under the deal, sanctions against Iran were lifted. Further, the new government in New Delhi under Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened up new frontiers of understanding and cooperation between the two countries. Modi visited Tehran in May 2016 "with an aim to craft a strategic relationship with Iran and expand India's ties with the West Asia. During the visit, India and Iran signed nearly a dozen agreements, centerpiece of which was a deal on development of the strategic Chabahar port."⁵¹ President Hassan Rouhani paid a return visit to India in 2018, and a couple of important agreements were signed between the two countries. More important, a pact on connectivity was initialed under which Iran agreed to lease the Shahid Beheshti Port, Phase 1 of Chabahar to India Ports Global Ltd. "to take over the interim operations of the port at Chabahar."⁵² This apart, Modi and Rouhani agreed to "look at concluding a preferential trade agreement and a bilateral investment

treaty to improve trade and commercial links."⁵³ Also, both sides expressed their willingness to further enhance energy cooperation, in particular, to develop Iran's Farzad-B gas field. These agreements psychologically shook up Pakistan, thinking that India had managed to repair its tethered ties with Iran as well as taking their bilateral relationship to new heights.

Although the Modi government endeavored to dispel Iran's misgivings that India was under the U.S. duress on Iran's nuclear deal or on American sanctions against Iran, India made it clear that it would be guided by the country's enlightened national interests. New Delhi clarified that it always remained firm and committed to its stance that Iran had a legitimate right to pursue its nuclear activities within the framework of the NPT regime, albeit with a caveat that Iran must comply with NPT guidelines. Indirectly, India wants Iran to avoid confrontation with the United States. In September 2019, Prime Minister Modi and President Rouhani met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session. Both the leaders discussed regional issues of mutual interest, including the Chabahar project on which India agreed to speed up completing the work that has been dragging on. Interestingly, America gave the "green signal" to India to go ahead with the strategically vital Chabahar project.⁵⁴ India was earlier forced to "cut back on trade and buying much cheaper oil from Iran due to fear of annoying Washington."55 Whatever may be the dynamics of the India-US strategic partnership, it is more than certain that both India and Iran live in "a tough neighborhood"-Pakistan. The latter has not addressed Iran's concerns over the killing of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards by Pakistan-based extremist groups. Since New Delhi and Tehran share the terrorist threat emanating from the identical source, they are opposed to a peace dialogue with the Taliban, consistently supported by Pakistan. Both New Delhi and Tehran have been in favor of "the Afghan-owned" and the Afghan-led peace process. However, Indian diplomacy squandered the opportunity to convert common interests into scuttling Pakistan's interventionist role in Afghanistan.

CLASH OF STRATEGIC INTERESTS IN CAS

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, CAS has once again come into the sharp focus with an emerging energy contest between major powers such as India and China, and between middle-ranking states such as Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan. India and Pakistan entertain contrary perceptions and conflicting interests in CAS. At the same time, both India and Pakistan claim commonality with the region in terms of history, geography, and culture. Both are also keen to play a vital role in domestic and external affairs of CAS. This attitude suggests that both New Delhi and Islamabad are bound to be each other's rival for a potential role in the region per their capabilities, resources, and diplomatic niceties.

India has already started boosting its military, trade, and economic cooperation with the countries in CAS, especially to set up joint ventures in the oil sector. Pakistan, being geographically and ideologically more proximate to CAS than India, seems to be determined to deny India a larger political and strategic space in the region. One can ill-afford to gloss over this ground reality that Pakistan is an important gateway to CAS from the south via Iran, and from the southwest via Turkey. During the British colonial rule, India had cultivated close historical, cultural, and trade ties with CAS. After its partition in August 1947, India lost the natural geographical advantage to Pakistan, which shared direct land borders with Afghanistan and Iran through which it could easily operate its economic and trade linkages with CAS. During the Cold War era, India used to conduct its relations with CAS mainly through the Soviet Union—India's "time-tested friend."

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of CAS as independent and sovereign entities, it was a sheer accident that Pakistan emerged as an influential political player in the region with its ideological and religious affinity with member countries of Central Asia. Besides, Pakistan can provide dependable supply routes to them. Despite that, the Pakistan-CAS economic and trade cooperation could not move forward mainly due to the persisting mercurial political and security environment in Afghanistan and Iran. As a result, Pakistani businessmen do not have much élan for setting up new businesses in CAS. Nor do they perceive an immediate financial gain since the region is wading through the unprecedented political upheavals, including the rise of Islamic radicalism. Also, Pakistan's "overplay" of the "Islamic card" to win the special favor of CAS did not work. Nonetheless, Pakistan took a momentous initiative to help set up the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) of ten member states, comprising Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The initiative is aimed at expanding economic and trade linkages among ECO's member nations. But ECO did not take off except for holding summit meetings. Pakistan, therefore, stressed the need for a "result-oriented approach" to ECO rather than paying it "lip service."

As the situation unfolds, Pakistan is engaged in working out multifarious projects such as developing new road and rail links with CAS, which would not only give Pakistan greater economic advantages over India but would also increase the people-to-people contacts between Pakistan and CAS. More significantly, Pakistan is making its best endeavors to bring electricity from Tajikistan and gas from Turkmenistan. In December 2002, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Turkmenistan signed an agreement to lay a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan via Afghanistan to Pakistan. The project did not gather momentum due to the worsening internal security situation in Afghanistan. However, Pakistan could facilitate export of goods to CAS through the Gwadar port, developed with Chinese assistance.

India is wary of these developments. But its performance in the energy sector has been dismal. It has failed to achieve a breakthrough in obtaining a major oil project from CAS, whereas China managed to clinch the oil bid. Further, because Pakistan is a close and old strategic partner of China, Islamabad has better leverage to undercut India's influence as well as to undermine India's economic and trade cooperation with CAS in the future. The prevailing scenario is likely to intensify trade and investment competition and confrontation between India and Pakistan, and between India and China. Although India might try to counter Pakistan's diplomatic and strategic initiatives in CAS, its main hurdle is that of connectivity with CAS. To tide over it, India is making every effort to gain transit routes through Iran to funnel oil and gas from Turkmenistan.

Given its increasing political contacts with the leadership of the CAS region, India has good prospects to upgrade and enhance its manifold ties with the region for a host of reasons. First, the CAS states have respect for India's liberal and tolerant values while they are wary of the Islamic terrorism emanating from across the borders of Pakistan and Afghanistan. This naturally makes CAS suspicious about Pakistan's role in aiding and abetting religious fundamentalism. Prime Minister Modi in his visit to Kyrgyzstan emphasized that the two countries' have "shared concerns" about terrorism. He said, "We both seek a peaceful and secure neighborhood at a time of challenges in our region. And, we have [a] shared interest in combating extremism and terrorism that has become a threat without borders."56 Second, India has invested its capital and technology in CAS to help develop its economic, service, and social infrastructure building sectors. Third, India's close strategic ties with Russia and the latter's past connections with CAS do not augur well for Pakistan's ambition to play a leading role in the region.

Strategically, India has enhanced the level of defense ties with Tajikistan, as manifest from the setting up of its first overseas military base in Tajikistan and providing military training to the latter. Both countries signed the defense cooperation agreement in 2002. Also, India and Kyrgyzstan conducted a series of joint military exercises: Khanjar-I in 2011, Khanjar-II (Tokmok in Kyrgyzstan) in March 2015, Khanjar-III (Gwalior in India) in March–April 2016, and Khanjar-IV (Kyrgyzstan's Kok Jhangak military base) in February 2017. The motive behind these modest joint military exercises is India's interest in checkmating Pakistan [including China] while that of Kyrgyzstan's is to blunt "the influence of its giant neighbor to the east."⁵⁷ Besides, India and Kazakhstan signed an agreement for the supply of 2,100 tons of uranium

to India till 2014, and they signed a new agreement for the purchase of 5,000 tones of Kazakh Uranium until the end of 2019.⁵⁸

But in the energy sector, the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline project has not yet materialized. It is attributable to the worsening security scenario in Afghanistan, and to the nadir in India-Pakistan relations following India's Balakot surgical strike in 2019, destroying Pakistani terrorist camps across the Line of Control.

Be that as it may, a new thrust in India's relationship with CAS came about with India's "Connect Central Asia Policy" launched in 2015. Prime Minister Modi was the first Indian prime minister to visit all the five nations between July 6 and 13 [, 2015]. A strategic analyst observes, "Since then there has been significant progress in cooperation, particularly in the fields of defense, energy and, connectivity. This renewed focus on the region can be attributed to the changing geopolitics of the region, particularly the formation of China's BRI and the external security threats to the region."⁵⁹ Besides, India's full membership to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has provided it with a better political opportunity to develop the robust strategic partnership with CAS, enabling India to play a much bigger role in Eurasia.

At the same time, Pakistan's role as a "bridge state" is indispensable for linking South Asia and Central Asia by way of providing a passage to CAS. The reemergence of the silk route has opened up fresh opportunities for connectivity between the two regions. In this context, Pakistan can act as an "energy corridor" to CAS for the export of its oil and gas reserves through the Gwadar and Karachi ports. If it materializes, it would enable Pakistan to have access to CAS's vast energy reserves and abundant mineral resources as well as to beef up its economic and trade ties with CAS. Because of its geographical proximity and religious-ethnic affinity with Central Asia, Pakistan has a natural advantage over India. Nevertheless, Islamabad has not been able to restrict Indian influence in Central Asia. Rather, India has well managed to forge strong economic, trade, and defense cooperation with CAS at the expense of Pakistan. One of the core reasons behind it is Pakistan's overt support to the Taliban and its alleged involvement in destabilizing Afghanistan, including Pakistani ISI's moral and material support to various domestic terror groups and jihadi elements.60

THE AFGHANISTAN IMBROGLIO

Geopsychology is a major factor in shaping the contours and content of Indo-Pakistan engagement with Afghanistan. The India-Pakistan rivalry⁶¹ in Afghanistan has been conspicuous especially since the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan when Pakistan emerged as a dominant regional actor

influencing Afghanistan's domestic and foreign policies. Because of its strategic location, America conferred on Islamabad the status of a frontline state in its global strategy that qualified Pakistan to acquire massive military assistance from America. Besides, Islamabad's political clout with Afghanistan and its military support to the Taliban in capturing power in Kabul in 1996 contributed to enhancing Pakistan's geopolitical influence in the region, whereas India was largely marginalized in the Afghan politics.

A sea change occurred in Afghanistan's political scenario with the ouster of the Taliban regime by U.S. forces through military offensive launched in October 2001. Pakistan's strategic stranglehold over Afghanistan was considerably undermined with the fall of the Taliban regime. The changing geostrategic environment in the region facilitated India's reemergence as an influential actor in Afghanistan's nation-building process. India tried to avail itself of every opportunity to refashion and revitalize its ties on a positive note with the new regime. It was among the first countries to recognize Kabul's new government by setting up its embassy in Kabul and undertook the onerous task of Afghanistan's economic reconstruction by channeling economic assistance. The Indian government also implemented several humanitarian relief measures, such as supplying wheat, tents, and blankets, proving medical services, reviving Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital, and extending rehabilitation assistance.

Especially with the onset of the regime led by Hamid Karzai, who received higher education in India, Indo-Afghan relations got a big upstart. Then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Afghanistan visit in August 2005 was a watershed in taking the bilateral ties to "a new stage of partnership."⁶² Singh said that India was "fully supportive of the goal of a sovereign, stable, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan."⁶³ He also promised to provide every possible economic and technological assistance to Kabul for transforming it into a peaceful and stable democratic regime. As in January 2019, India has committed \$ 3 billion in official assistance for key infrastructure development projects in Afghanistan since 2001.

A new turn came about when India and the United States joined hands to support Afghanistan's young democracy and to ensure its political stability and internal security. Islamabad apprehended that the growing Indo-U.S. collaboration might curtail Pakistan's geopolitical and diplomatic options in Afghanistan—its closest geographical neighbor. Nevertheless, the geopolitical imperative compelled Pakistan to rethink its Afghan policy to patch up its strained ties with the Afghan government to balance off India's increasing influence over a new Afghanistan. Toward that end, President Hamid Karzai's visit to Pakistan in February 2006 was a historic one. President Karzai and his Pakistani counterpart Musharraf underlined the need for strategic cooperation between the two countries to usher in peace and prosperity. Karzai appealed to Pakistan to be a partner in making his country strong and stable. He cautioned Pakistan that an unstable Afghanistan would not be in the long-term interest of economic progress and the political stability of Pakistan as well. Karzai remarked that an unstable Afghanistan would feed terrorism, which both countries were trying to battle.⁶⁴ He proposed abolishing visa requirements between the two countries to increase the people-to-people contact on the pattern of the E.U. At the same time, Karzai expressed his opposition to the border fencing between the two countries, arguing that the fencing was against his concept of closeness.⁶⁵ But Pakistan did not subscribe to this view, primarily due to the internal security threats emanating from the Taliban and fundamentalist elements.

President Karzai's another area of priority was the expansion of trade and economic cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan. He reminded Pakistani leaders that during the Taliban regime, trade between Islamabad and Kabul was around US\$25 million, touching over US\$1.2 billion. He emphatically stated that there was a propitious opportunity for Pakistani markets to secure business in CAS to the tune of US\$5 billion with transit of its goods through Afghanistan.⁶⁶

It is a truism that India's overarching political, economic, and strategic engagement with Afghanistan is likely to remain a major source of tension between India and Pakistan. On the other hand, India's policy approach has been not only to prevent the reemergence of the Taliban but also to oppose any negotiation with it unless it abandons extremist activities. In 2016, the Extradition Treaty was signed between Indian and Afghan governments during President Ashraf Ghani's visit to New Delhi. In November 2019, the Treaty became operational with the exchange of Instruments of Ratification. This would "enable extradition of Pakistani terrorists operating out of Afghan territory."⁶⁷

President Ghani's visit to Pakistan in June 2019 was aimed at improving bilateral relations at a critical juncture when the Kabul regime's anti-Islamabad psychology was prominent in light of Pakistan's unabated moral and material support to extremist groups indulged in destabilizing Afghanistan. On the contrary, Pakistan maintained that it wanted to "help the Afghan peace process."⁶⁸ It was visibly evident from Pakistan's hosting of a meeting between Afghan politicians and the Taliban to facilitate peace dialogue, whereas India is against engaging the Taliban in peace negotiations so long as it fights the Afghan government. But the Trump administration, because of its strategic dictates, engaged the Taliban in peace talks to end the American war in Afghanistan. As a result, America and the Taliban signed a "historic peace deal" on February 29, 2020.⁶⁹ Soon after clinching the deal, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi reacted that his country was not in favor of assigning "any security role" to India in Afghanistan. Instead, he accused India of playing a spoiler's role in the war-ravaged country.⁷⁰ After U.S. troops' withdrawal from Afghanistan, a tug of psychological war is very much likely to ensue between India and Pakistan. Psychologically, it would be Pakistan's turn to see that India abandon its economic and security activism in Afghan affairs, though it is not likely to happen.

CONCLUSION

In the transformed strategic environment at the global and regional level, India and Pakistan minimally internalized that their economic and security interests would be better served in the region's peaceful and stable conditions. The ruling sections in both countries did publicly acknowledge that mutual tensions would serve neither their national interests nor those of the Middle Eastern countries and CAS. But in practice, India and Pakistan have failed to translate their promises into practice. The mutual enemy image in the power corridors of New Delhi and Islamabad comes in the way of fostering friendly relations as well as in boosting the conditions of peace and stability in the GME. A large majority of the countries in the region look upon New Delhi and Islamabad as promoters of U.S. interests for realizing their narrow national interests. For example, Middle Eastern countries suspect that India and Pakistan cannot be counted as reliable friends in light of India's solid strategic partnership with the United States and Pakistan's tacit consent to U.S. forces to use its territory against terrorist outfits in Afghanistan.

Another implication is that the Indo-Pak rivalry in the GME deals a severe blow to nation-building projects in Iraq and Afghanistan. New Delhi and Islamabad, instead of undertaking concrete measures to help promote regional peace, stability, and economic reconstruction, are engaged in maligning and outmaneuvering one another.

On the nuclear issue, India and Pakistan have not substantially contributed to saving Iran from the punches of "Anglo-American cousins" who slapped harsh economic sanctions on Tehran and launched military offensive against it. Further, instead of jointly addressing internal security threats and economic challenges facing Afghanistan, both India and Pakistan appear to have revived the Cold War politics.

The study suggests that mutual threat perceptions structured on conjectural notions have become things of the past. Both New Delhi and Islamabad are called upon to abandon the mutual enemy image through cognitive learning and to recognize the imperative of their obligation to focus on the well-being of the common masses afflicted with poverty and privation. The available evidence suggests that the Indo-Pakistan rivalry psychology has complicated the security environment in the GME. Their divergent strategic postures on

120

Iran, Afghanistan, and Syria have led to external powers' intervention in transforming the region into a political chaos and civil wars. This does not serve strategic interests of the GME. On the contrary, clashing diplomatic strategies of India and Pakistan have jeopardized the peace discourse and political reconciliation. Rather, it has spurred serious challenges to bringing about internal security and stability in the region. Despite that, both the countries can promise a better future for the region by crafting a long-term pragmatic strategy provided they shed off the persisting mutual prejudices.

Keeping the centrality of the "functional enemy image," New Delhi needs to reconceptualize its GME policy to respond to an "uncertain security environment" in the region. More important, India will need to address the sensitivities of regional actors in the context of New Delhi's burgeoning strategic hobnobbing with Washington and Tel Aviv. Besides, India's ruling elites are called upon to redefine foreign policy goals to discourage Pakistan from exploiting the Modi government's staunch pro-Hindu image in India and abroad, as it reflects from India's controversial decisions such as revoking Jammu and Kashmir's special status, enacting the Citizenship Amendment Act, and introducing the National Population Register. These measures are likely to undermine India's past image as a secular and tolerant democratic nation in the Islamic world. To reverse its anti-Muslim image under the current regime, India will need to recraft its domestic and foreign policies in a broader perspective.

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Chapter 4

China's Foreign Policy Behavior

Understanding through the Lens of Geopsychology¹

China's spectacular rise as an economic and military power during the past couple of decades has been primarily driven by its nationalistic determination and political ambition to play an assertive and influential role in shaping the contours of the international system. It is all set to compete with America for power and dominance as a global actor, perhaps "to push the United States out of the Indo-Pacific and rival it on the global stage."2 Under President Xi Jinping's leadership, for instance, China has marched ahead by launching the most ambitious and gargantuan project-the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)and by setting up new institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and the New Development Bank (NDB) under its aegis, though under the BRICS banner. These initiatives are in sync with fulfilling the China Dream of national rejuvenation. Similarly, China is vigorously modernizing its "offensive" military systems to secure for it a world-class status by 2050.3 Toward that goal, China is prepared to take on wider "international responsibility" within Xi Jinping's concept of a "community with a shared future for humankind."⁴ In principle, it implies a rejection of an "unjust" and "anachronistic" order.

Paradoxically enough, China advocates anti-hegemonism but practices hegemonism in dealing with its neighbors and peripheries. Several examples show China's bellicose postures in affirming its position as an unchallenged regional hegemon, while being repugnant to a modicum of intervention by extra-regional powers, for instance, in the South China and the East China Sea. Fired by nationalism and the historical ambition to rule the roost, China is determined to become a regional hegemon regardless of United States' attempts to encircle it through the balancing coalitions. Also, China is firm to change the rules of the game in pursuit of advancing and calcifying its core national interests. So far as America is concerned, China has blueprints in place to counter its bullying tactics.

Realistically enough, China's domestic politics and internal security concerns are singularly important in redefining its foreign policy and shaping its perception of the world order, characterized by the "complex interdependence."⁵ Against this background, the chapter attempts to examine China's foreign policy and diplomacy through the perspective of geopsychology. Accordingly, it seeks to illuminate the key components that have gone into framing China's geopsychology over the past centuries as well as influencing its foreign policy behavior.

COMPONENTS OF CHINA'S GEOPSYCHOLOGY

The geopsychology of China's ruling elites and masses, undergirding the country's foreign policy behavior and practices, has been constructed by intermeshing factors: the past national humiliation, cultural pride, nationalism, the Middle Kingdom syndrome, strategic culture, and the anti-hegemony discourse.⁶

The Sting of Humiliation

China's geopsychology is primarily rooted in its historical experience of humiliation⁷ at the hands of imperialists and Western powers in the nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries before the establishment of the People's Republic of China in October 1949. Slighted by the ignominy of "unequal treaties," Chinese leaderships have harbored the perception of victimization by alien powers right from the Opium Wars (1839–1842)—a profound psychological setback to Qing emperors—through numerous European invasions over China to the Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1945.⁸ In this context, Kerry Brown observes:

For much of the modern era, Chinese lost out in the battle for modernity. The era from 1839 onwards was so disastrous in this respect that it had come to be referred to in more recent historiography as the "century of humiliation." The wounds from this history and the sense of victimhood it gave have been profound on the modern Chinese national psyche. This at least explains the particular shrillness of contemporary Chinese nationalism—it is built on narratives around finally righting this history and the injustice that many Chinese people see in it.⁹

Zheng Wang, a professor at Seton Hall University's School of Diplomacy and International Relations, comments that the national disgrace provided "the all-consuming fire needed for China to rise like a phoenix from the ashes and overcome the West on its quest for glory."¹⁰ Moreover, Chinese leadership harnesses it as a historical narrative, branding the spectacle of national resistance and triumph as a source of shared esteem. For instance, President Xi Jinping's speech at the commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of war victory in September 2015 was a well-calculated strategy to revive and sustain the mass memory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. Xi stated, "Today is a day that will forever be etched in the memory of people all over the world. Seventy years ago today, the Chinese people, having fought tenaciously for 14 years, won the great victory of their War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, marking the full victory of the World Anti-Fascist War. On that day, the world was once again blessed by the sunshine of peace."¹¹ Xi's emphasis was on China's triumph against imperialists to boost the psychological confidence of the nation:

The victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression is the first complete victory won by China in its resistance against foreign aggression in modern times. This great triumph crushed the plot of the Japanese militarists to colonize and enslave China and put an end to China's national humiliation of suffering successive defeats at the hands of foreign aggressors in modern times. This great triumph re-established China as a major country in the world and won the Chinese people respect of all peace-loving people around the world. This great triumph opened up bright prospects for the great renewal of the Chinese nation and set our ancient country on a new journey after gaining rebirth.¹²

The above statement clearly mirrors the Chinese leadership's mindset, soaked in the historical layers of dishonor, defiance, and triumph, contributing to the construction of China's geopsychology toward the outside world, especially the past aggressors like Japan whom China perceives as its geopolitical rival in East and Southeast Asia. No wonder the anti-Japanese sentiments permeate the Chinese society to this day. The Beijing leadership is also concerned about the Japan-U.S. geostrategic collaboration to restrict China's influence in the Indo-Pacific region. Thomas J. Christensen supports this view, "historical legacies and ethnic hatred exacerbate the security dilemma in Sino-Japanese relations."¹³ However, "China's historically rooted and visceral distrust of Japan"¹⁴ has spawned irritants in their relationship. China is extremely sensitive about Japan's past aggression; as Christensen elaborates, "Japan's refusal to respond satisfactorily to Chinese requests that Tokyo recognize and apologize for its imperial past—for example, by revising history textbooks in the public schools—has helped to preserve China's natural aversion to Japan."¹⁵

Chapter 4

At this critical juncture, the Xi regime is determined to appease the domestic constituency by giving it the "China's superpower" promise, an imperative for dealing with new geopolitical predicaments in the Indo-Pacific region. For this, President Xi has been exhorting the Chinese citizenry to keep alive the bitter memories of the past when Western colonial powers, including Japan, insulted and humiliated China. He stated, "No matter how much stronger it may become, China will never seek hegemony or expansion. It will never inflict its past suffering on any other nation. The Chinese people are resolved to pursue friendly relations with all other countries, uphold the outcomes of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War, and make greater contribution to mankind."¹⁶ This rhetoric carries a political message to the masses that China is capable of reestablishing itself as a great nation to ensure a hegemony-free world order.¹⁷

Further, in a complex interdependent world order, the U.S. hegemony is infeasible, exposed by its colossal failure to contain the coronavirus pandemic. The United States registered the highest record of coronavirus deaths, surpassing the death toll in "the Korean War, Vietnam War, Afghanistan War and Iraq War combined."¹⁸ America, Australia, and European powers are blaming China for the COVID-19 global outbreak. As a result, the Cold War between America and China and between China and Australia has ensued. Interestingly, Western powers are not showing solidarity against fighting the common enemy in the virus but appear to be more eager to punish and humiliate China. They are standing by Trump as if he is their sovereign leader showing them the right path for the right cause. But China's backlash might be disastrous for the world community. It would be tantamount to provoking China into fostering and sustaining the spirit of revenge.

Notably, Alistair Nicholas, a former Australian Trade Commissioner, has forewarned Australia to keep away from confrontation with China and advised it to be pragmatic. He reminded as to what happened when European powers ill-treated China in the past. He writes, "Make no mistake, Xi Jinping's China is a bully that has taken its lessons in diplomacy from textbooks written by Europe's past colonial powers."¹⁹ He further stressed that Australia should avoid "angering our [Australia's] biggest trading partner when we most need its support to rebuild our economy as we emerge from the coronavirus."²⁰ This statement clearly shows that any anti-China policy behavior on the part of great powers would backfire by provoking China's retaliation and by undermining trade and investment interests of the stakeholders. In brief, the more China is humiliated, the more aggressively it will respond.

Strategic analysts argue that major powers have come out openly against China in an attempt to weaken its resolve to replace the United States' status as a "lone superpower." On the contrary, President Xi is all set to challenge the U.S. naval power deployed in the South China Sea. President Xi has made it clear that China will not abandon its territorial claims in "the East and South China Seas"²¹ under the duress of a hegemon, namely the United States. Also, China is psychologically prepared for military confrontation with America in Taiwan. In reality, the Sino-US conflict is a tug of psychological war. For China, the principal issue is to make itself the "great global power" with a motivation to reshape the global order with Chinese characteristics.

The Middle Kingdom Syndrome

In the distant past, Shi Jie (1005–45) defined the *Middle Kingdom* majestically, "Heaven is above, earth is below, and that in between heaven and earth is called China [zhongguo]. Those on the peripheries are the foreign [si yi]. The foreign belongs to the outer [wai] whilst China belongs to the inner [nei]. Heaven and earth thus make it possible to differentiate the outer from the inner."²² What gave rise to this lofty perception? Robert Gamer explains that for most of its history, Chinese leaders had little contact or interaction with regions outside of China's western borders, with the isolation fueling their belief in being situated in the "'Middle Kingdom' in the universe."²³ Similarly, Samuel King explains:

China is guarded on the west by almost endless deserts, on the southwest by the Himalayan range, and on the east by vast oceans. Admired but often attacked by the "barbarians" of the semiarid plateau lands on the north and west, and cut off from the other centers of civilization by oceans, deserts, and mountains, China gradually developed a unique sense of its place under heaven.²⁴

However, to this day, the Chinese leaders' psyche appears tenaciously imbued with the "Middle Kingdom" mentality. First, though caught up between the domestic constraints on economic development and the increasing integration with the global economic order, China's worldview is essentially based on Chinese characteristics.²⁵ It is fired by the self-image that China is bound to play a critical role in shaping the global architecture rather than playing second fiddle to any power whatsoever. Second, China's perception of its role in the world politics is determined, among other factors, by its history that has substantially influenced the Chinese thought process and its behavioral pattern on the issues of war and peace. In China's worldview, the "territorial sovereign mode" of world order was imposed on it by the West and Japan.²⁶ In effect, China asserts that its concept of sovereignty cannot be properly understood through Western lenses or concepts.

Indeed, the past has been very important for China to interpret the world order through a blend of tradition and modernity.²⁷ From the traditional viewpoint, Tianxia, a system of governance, is still relevant to understanding its

current worldview. Chinese scholar Zhao Ting Yang "argues that although Tianxia is a broader and more complex concept, encompassing natural, social, and political elements, the Western understanding of the world is essentially 'thin' (danbo)."²⁸ The Tianxian system, with its emphasis on order, hierarchy, and stability, is "represented as an inward-looking system of values and governance that look to Confucianism and the emperor as the highest authority in running the internal order."²⁹

But, however, Tianxia's mythological and spiritual values that Heaven grants the "exclusive right of rule" to the emperor are divorced from the realities of today's interdependent world order. Not a single Sinologist in the West has advanced the convincing logic to explain the relevance of Tianxia in a complex global order. How could Tianxia's underlying concepts and injunctions be applied to the fragile concept of sovereignty? One cannot dispute the stability of China's monolithic political structure, but the Chinese leadership's real motivation in fostering Tianxia and Confucianism is to legitimize the one-party rule to ensure political stability, people's welfare, and social harmony. According to Meissner, "Confucianism served a dual function for authorities in the 1990s. Its 'authoritarian' aspects helped contribute to 'socialist, spiritual civilization' and social cohesion while it offered a cultural antidote to the threat of Westernization."³⁰ Paradoxically, China has been employing the concept of state sovereignty as an expedient political weapon to oppose any intervention by great powers in its internal and external affairs.

Cultural Pride

A noted Chinese scholar Qin Yaqing highlights the significance of culture for a foreign policy, arguing that it constitutes "shared values, which go beyond ideological divisions and the calculation of interest. Culture matters because histories matter, practices matter, and discourses matter. Culture plays an important role in human life, in the way of thinking, and therefore in policymaking."³¹ China as a nation is considered especially proud of and vocal about its cultural heritage and civilizational values. For the Chinese, culture is an integral part of day-to-day life and social interaction, which creates a strong sense of cultural identity. In this context, Elena Barabantseva writes that China's priority is to:

protect the national culture [which has been] transformed into the active promotion of Chinese culture around the world. As for the thesis that China's world order has been relatively stable, its images of the world and its role in it are subject to constant negotiation and dispute at different levels. The very fashion whereby China attempts to protect and promote its culture blurs the distinctions between traditional and universal elements, and fusing and blending them. Through these practices, China's visions of the world and engagement with it are constructed, contested, and negotiated.³²

Zheng Wang of Seton Hall University, New Jersey, links Chinese cultural pride to the Tianxia system. He writes, "Ancient Chinese believed that their Central Kingdom was the center of high culture and superior morality. More importantly, under the tianxia system, outsiders could be culturally absorbed and become Chinese by adopting Chinese culture and customs."³³ Zheng adds that the notion of "equal states" was repugnant to the tianxia system that posited China as "the only true civilization, its cultural superiority unchallenged."34 The vestigial belief in cultural superiority emanates from the perception of Chinese emperors who not only regarded China as the "center of world civilizations"35 but also considered foreign emissaries as "barbarians." Remarkably, in his March 2014 speech at the UNESCO Headquarters, President Xi Jinping said, "Having gone through over 5,000 years of vicissitudes, the Chinese civilization has always kept to its original root. As the unique cultural identity of the Chinese nation, it contains our most profound cultural pursuits and provides us with abundant nourishment for existence and development."36

Not surprisingly, Henry Kissinger, an avid student of Chinese history and astute practitioner of the U.S. policy toward China, recommended that America exercise prudence while hedging and engaging China. He advised American policymakers to avoid exhibiting their superiority, arguing that China would never tolerate the U.S. hegemony. At the same time, Kissinger expressed a serious concern about the negative fallout of China's heroic and "assertive national culture" on the world order.³⁷ Philip Bowring sounds a similar note in his op-ed column "Beware an Angry China" in the *New York Times*, April 13, 2008. He writes that the "China-bashing" would only "increase nationalism in China."³⁸ In effect, China's cultural aversions to aliens produce negativism about the West. Chinese people and political leaders believe that this attitude can be diluted, to some degree, provided foreign powers accord full respect to and demonstrate admiration for their culture and civilization.³⁹

Nationalism

The sinified version of Chinese nationalism is rooted in the belief that China was treated as "the object of international relations and was known in the world as the sick man of East Asia, bullied, humiliated, and violated by more than 10 foreign powers."⁴⁰ Chinese scholars share the view that China has been a victim of the zero-sum game of the "rapacious world" and suggest that China must be militarily and economically strong and ever "vigilant."

The experience of seeing the world through the Darwinian paradigm made Chinese conscious of making the nation strong for survival.

In view of the earlier background, Chinese nationalism has been a potent and cementing force for the Communist Party of China (CCP) to gain political legitimacy for the monolithic party structure. The CCP views Japanese imperialism as a convenient weapon to "feed" Chinese citizens "a steady diet of patriotic, anti-Japanese media programming designed to glorify the CCP's role in World War II."⁴¹ Liang Quichao, "one of the earliest and most prominent Chinese nationalists, declared the first Sino-Japanese War in 1894–95, effectively awoke his nation 'from the dream of 4,000 years."⁴² As mentioned, the Opium Wars catalyzed the development of nationalism in China, driving Chinese people to fight against imperialists and invaders.⁴³ Bill Hillman elaborates:

[the imperialist] "aggressions and unequal treaties that followed inspired China's first nationalists to challenge the Dragon Throne in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Versailles decision of 1919 that granted Japan Germany's former concessionary rights in Shandong sparked the May Fourth demonstrations [May 1919] that today's Chinese claim as the birth of the modern Chinese nation. In the 1930s and 1940s, Japanese aggressions, beginning with the Manchurian Incident of 1931, excited the nationalism of both communists and nationalists."⁴⁴

If one traces the nationalist discourse in the historical context, Sun Yat-sen, a revolutionary nationalist leader, gave a "passionate call" for a united action to liberate the country from imperial forces.⁴⁵ His successors, especially Mao Tse-tung, carried forward the unfinished nationalist revolution by instilling patriotism and loyalty into the mass psyche. Mao was adept in channeling the organizational power of nationalism in stemming external threats to China's Communist state. Glorifying the virtues of the Han, Mao wrote that

"[the] Chinese nation is known throughout the world not only for its industriousness and stamina, but also for its ardent love of freedom and its rich revolutionary traditions. The history of the Han people . . . demonstrates that Chinese never submit to tyrannical rule but invariably use revolutionary means to overthrow or change it . . . thus the Chinese nation has a glorious revolutionary tradition and splendid historical heritage."⁴⁶

At the same time, Mao perceived "all of China's nationalities . . . as collective victims of imperialism and equal in their striving to shake off foreign oppression."⁴⁷ Chinese scholars opine that Chinese leaders favor the "resurgence of nationalism" for various reasons, including the use of Marxist, Maoist, and

Dengist paradigms to legitimize the one-party rule. Liu and Smith are of the view that in the age of economic globalization, nationalism has been blended with marketization. They write:

For, while nationalism has contributed to China's success in economic reform, these successes are [sic] in turn have lubricated the emergence of a type of nationalism that has promoted China's international status. China is recognized today as a "rising economic and military power" with, importantly, a set of historically accumulated grievances against the West. These grievances are "a profound sense of humiliation" the people had suffered in the past.⁴⁸

Exercising "a hyper-nationalist, hardcore- realpolitik,"⁴⁹ Chinese foreign policymakers assign priority to national identity, in the "quest for territorial greatness and a 'Greater China.'"⁵⁰

Basically, the academic and political discourse involves two main categories of Chinese nationalism—cultural nationalism, and modern nationalism. In common parlance, Chinese nationalism has been interpreted as a "reactive nationalism" to international events or incidents rather than a "domestic political manipulation."51 The political discourse on China's new nationalism52 ensued in the post-Cold War era with a view to understanding nationalism's impact on China's foreign policy. Undeniably, China emerged as a major beneficiary from the ashes of the Soviet Union in the U.S.-led unipolar world. Naturally, the "conflict propensity" of Chinese nationalism, stirred by cultural nationalism, propelled its leadership to pursue more aggressive and assertive foreign policy and diplomacy.⁵³ In realpolitik terms, China perceives the United States as its main rival, hindering its role in shaping the world order. Yongnian Zheng argues, "what the [Chinese] leadership wants is not to overthrow the existing system, but the recognition of Chinese power and its rightful place in the world system by other major world powers."⁵⁴ From this perspective, the chapter argues that Chinese nationalism has been amalgamated into the geopolitical thought, categorized as "geopolitik nationalism."55 It means that geopolitical nationalism is an offshoot of China's assertive behavior to take a strong position against the United States-its principal competitor and political rival.

It is believed that China's assertive nationalism is a response to popular nationalism that favors a "confrontational position" against the West on complex issues such as maritime territorial disputes.⁵⁶ Feng Zhang provides a balanced perspective on the nature of Chinese nationalism:

Although assertive nationalism does not yet seem to command the mainstream opinion in China today, it nevertheless grows more vocal and vociferous with the rise of Chinese power. Although it does not have the xenophobic quality of extreme nationalism, nor does it show the restraint and moderation of defensive realism and liberalism. What it asserts, in essence, is that China should actively prepare for struggle and conflict with other states, especially against Western hegemony.⁵⁷

The past history has contributed to the rise of the Han-centric nationalism in China, whereas China's modern nationalism has been fueled by international events and accidents, involving the question of China's sovereignty. Interestingly, Chinese nationalism is quite often manipulated by CCP leaders to project as if Western powers hold China in low esteem. For instance, if the United States does not treat China on an equal footing, the latter might turn more aggressive, more xenophobic, and "more nationalistic." Echoing this view, some Chinese scholars consider Chinese nationalism as simply "a reaction to external pressure."58 They believe that nationalism fosters the national dignity abroad. The underlying logic is that China's national dignity epitomizes the respect for individual dignity. This reasoning is deeply ingrained in the psyche of Chinese people, their leadership, their academia and intellectuals. This is how China's foreign and security policies are formulated, shaped, and articulated while dealing with the outside world. For example, Chinese leaders have been quick to respond to the international incidents impinging on China, whether it was the NATO's bombing of Chinese Embassy in Belgrade in May 1999, or China's inability to clinch the Olympic bid in 1992, or the U.S. intervention in the South China Sea.

Indeed, China's reaction to the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy is one of the classic examples of Chinese nationalism. It is reported that "Chinese movie theaters banned American films and radio stations refused to play American music in protest."59 Moreover, the adamant Chinese government succeeded in securing the public apology from President Bill Clinton who assured that the Chinese side would be reported on the outcome of investigation into the incident. Perhaps, no other country would have taken up such incidents to the logical conclusion by invoking its nationalistic fervor. The NATO bombing was described as a version of "new gun boat diplomacy" rather than a humanitarian enterprise to save the Bosnian Muslims against the barbarity of the Yugoslav Serbs, a majority ethnicity in Belgrade. But the Chinese reaction, according to scholars, suggests that "a more cultural form of nationalism has actually been entrenched in top-level policy making."60 In other words, the bombing incident fueled China's assertive nationalism and "informs us that for China, the choice between nationalism and globalism is not a zero-sum exercise rather, neither should come at the expense of the other."61

However, the Chinese government is cautious about the demand of the rising popular nationalism on not being soft on those who hurt the Chinese pride. At the same time, the government manages to manipulate popular nationalism to advance state and party interests. In other words, nationalism is a "doubled-edged" weapon to cater to popular demand and, more importantly, to consolidate authoritarian regime by sponsoring "state-controlled nationalism." Besides, overseas Chinese diaspora, imbued with "nationalistic feelings," are vigilant about promoting the country's multiple interests (for instance, in trade, cyber, and educational fields), especially with the information globalization and their felicity in English language.

Another striking example of nationalism pertains to China's sovereignty concerns over the South China Sea. China perceives the deployment of U.S. naval and nuclear forces in the South China Sea as a direct intervention in its internal affairs. It is driven by "maritime nationalism," "aimed at securing strategic space in the maritime domain."⁶² This is manifest from Beijing's overt or covert challenge to Washington on the South China Sea issue, apparent from its deployment of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy warships and air power projection to take on any threat emanating from U.S. B-52 bomber flights over the region. Virtually, they came closer to a direct confrontation in the region.⁶³ Earlier, China refused to comply with the July 2016 ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration. At times, the Chinese leadership pampers to the popular nationalism as a political necessity for giving a matching rejoinder to the United States and other Western powers. The Chinese people call upon the government to embrace a "muscular" foreign policy to safeguard the national honor.⁶⁴

A compelling reason for U.S. policymakers to showcase the "China threat" in public domain is to constrict China's expanding foothold in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere. U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Christopher Wray stated that China was "the greatest long-term threat to our nation's [America's] information and intellectual property, and to our economic vitality."65 It may be recalled that China's containment was a major plank of the U.S. policy throughout the Cold War. The label has changed today but the content remains the same. The new nomenclature is engaging China on global issues, such as respecting human rights and ensuring the freedom of navigation in the high seas, so that it fits in the rule-based liberal international order. Undeniably, it is well-nigh impossible to contain a militarily and economically strong and powerful China. The point I wish to hammer out is that China's anti-West and anti-U.S. geopsychology got further hardened upon its numerous strategic encounters with the United States whether it was the U.S. spy plane's collision with a Chinese fighter jet (April 2001) or the NATO bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade (May 1999) or the U.S. denunciation of the 1989 Tiananmen tragedy in which pro-democracy students were massacred. In fact, Henry Kissinger had forewarned American administrations: "A prudent American leadership should balance the risks of stocking Chinese nationalism against the gains from short-term pressures."⁶⁶ Similarly, Susan Shirk, a close inside watcher of Chinese affairs, suggests that America lavish respect on China. She writes, "After a century of sitting on the sidelines, the Chinese leaders and public crave respect and approval from the world community, especially from the United States."⁶⁷

Strategic Culture

China's strategic culture has evolved over hundreds of years ranging from Confucianism to Mao's military thought. Its approach to the use of force has been mainly guided by Mao's palm theory which posits that China would regain its lost territories either through negotiation or through force as the last resort. This strategic military theory was carried forward by Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping who injected a new vision and vigor into China's strategic doctrine.

China's unprovoked War against India and Vietnam are the classic examples of its strategic culture-a mix of surprise, expansionism, deceit, and aggressiveness. If one peeps into the history, China's Great Wall appears to be a symbol of its pacifist approach, reflecting the primacy of "defensive realism" for protection against alien and nomadic attacks. But how far does the Great Wall theory reinforce China's peaceful intentions? Bordering a large number of countries, China felt psychologically insecure and took all necessary measures to ward off threats from any quarter. But the reality behind the "magnificent fortification" is still a figment of imagination.⁶⁸ Or, are there "two faces of strategic culture?"69 The Great Wall represents the "first face" of "being defensive and non-threatening to others,"70 and the second face of viewing other states (America and Japan) as "belligerent and threatening because they are believed to possess violent and aggressive strategic culture."71 Undoubtedly, the "two faces of China's strategic culture" compound and complicate the problem of discerning China's real motives. That is why, Japan and the United States, in particular, do not subscribe to China's peaceful intentions.72

As a matter of fact, Feng Zhang of Australian National University questions the "myth of Confucian pacifism" in "imperial Chinese foreign policy behavior" by referring to historians' contention that "Chinese history 'has in fact been at least as violent as Europe's,' a total of 3131 wars having taken place from the first Qin dynasty to the last Qing dynasty, an average of almost 1.5 wars each year."⁷³ Victoria Hui corroborates this position, "War, not Confucian ideals, explains how China expanded from the Yellow River valley in the Warring States era to the continental empire in the Qing dynasty."⁷⁴ Zhang contends that Confucianism "never renounced force as a legitimate instrument of statecraft for waging 'appropriate wars' in the form of punitive expedition. . . . In the Analects, Confucius himself endorsed Guan Zhong's

136

aggressive and militaristic foreign policy by virtue of its having saved the Chinese from foreign subjugation."⁷⁵

In view of these perspectives, China's strategic culture, rooted in the doctrine of "offensive realism,"⁷⁶ suggests that the Chinese PLA is fundamentally trained to be on 24-hour alert with the capability to undertake a strategic offensive against its identifiable foes. In addition, the PLA receives training in testing the adversary's morale and stamina. India has experienced this strategy: Chinese forces deploy provocative tactics, although with the prior approval of their top political leadership, by encroaching upon its territory to gauge whether its reaction is that of resistance or tolerance. It might be recalled that upon his India visit in September 2014, President Xi Jinping received a warm welcome from Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his home state of Gujarat. Showing off their personal rapport, Modi and Xi shared a traditional swing ride on the banks of Sabarmati River in Ahmadabad. But at that opportune time, the PLA, under President Xi's direct command and control, had the effrontery to infiltrate into Indian borders and it remained there for three weeks. The Sino-Indian military standoff could have snowballed into a major conflict were it not for Xi's personal intervention at the eleventh hour. Could the military infiltration take place without Xi's blessings? Similarly, in June 2020, the clash between Chinese and Indian armies resulted in the deaths of twenty Indian soldiers in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh.⁷⁷ This issue was temporarily shelved off following long diplomatic and military confabulations on both sides. It may be added that Modi and Xi met over a dozen times demonstrating political bonhomie but the Wuhan spirit (2018 meeting) soon dissipated. What do these incidents show? If we recall, China had launched an unprovoked aggression against India in 1962, a classic case of China's "offensive realism" or a symbol of its offensive strategic culture.78 Without understanding China's strategic culture, rooted in its "historical and cultural factors, India, including the United States, will be unable to make "an impassionate assessment of China's goals and intentions."79

Anti-Hegemony Plank in China's Foreign Policy

The anti-hegemony stance predominates in the Chinese foreign policy discourse,⁸⁰ especially in view of China's phenomenal strength in economic and military domains. Its foreign policy behavior reveals a vitriolic and aggressive propaganda against the dictates of the world hegemon—the United States—and other principal rivals. On numerous occasions, President Xi Jinping's speeches and statements have lent credence to this observation. For instance, Xi stated in June 2014 that any attempt to "monopolize international affairs will not succeed."⁸¹ Furthermore, the *AP News* cited Xi, "No one is in a position to dictate to the Chinese people what should or should not be done . . . We will resolutely reform what can and needs to be reformed, and we will resolutely uphold what cannot and does not need to be changed."⁸² In effect, the following developments are conspicuous indicators of China's anti-hegemony stance.

First, in response to President Trump's imposition of heavy duties on Chinese goods, China retaliated with a similar measure against American goods and also took up the matter to the WTO, complaining about the United States' breach of the WTO's trade norms and regulations. China's tit-for-tat diplomacy on the trade issue triggered the Cold War with the United States. It reflects Beijing's psychology of zero-tolerance on bullying tactics, further sensed from the pungent smell in the editorial of the Chinese Communist Party's journal *Quishi*: "China will not be afraid of any threats or pressure the United States is making that may escalate economic and trade frictions. China has no choice, nor escape route, and will just have to fight it out till the end . . . No one, no force should underestimate and belittle the steel will of the Chinese people and its strength and tenacity to fight a war."⁸³

Second, China's rise as a global power has whipped up its aspirations to dominate the global trade and investment portfolio and reshape the world order in accordance with Chinese characteristics. China's one trillion-dollar BRI flagship project has fascinated developing countries aspiring for infrastructure development. Its leadership has sensed the economic compulsions of poor developing nations, especially in the African continent. The BRI envisages China's "continental connectivity" with the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, Europe, and Africa, and it is animated by a vision bigger than that of the U.S. Marshall Plan that was confined to rebuilding Europe's war-ravaged economies. Strategic analysts⁸⁴ interpret China's motivation as being driven by its imperial designs to establish its hegemony in Asia, thereby subverting the U.S. supremacy that has been entrenched since the end of the Second World War, Also, the U.S.-led multilateralism at the World Bank and the IMF has been weakened with the China-led NDB, established in 2014 and headquartered in Shanghai. It is perceived as Xi's double-edged weapon to create alternative institutions of economic aid and support for poor developing nations and to undercut the U.S.-led economic world order. Hence, China has clearly signaled that the United States is no longer an unchallenged economic hegemon.

Third, in the multilateral institutions such as the UN and the WTO, the United States stands to lose its leverage over its past allies and strategic partners in the Asia-Pacific region. For example, the United States experienced a monumental defeat at the UN General Assembly on the issue of President Trump's recognition to Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia—traditionally U.S. allies—were among the 128 member-states that approved the resolution "asking nations not to locate diplomatic missions in

Jerusalem." Only nine states supported Trump's decision, with two of them being the United States itself and Israel, and the other seven states—with a population of less than 10 million—being dependent on American aid. Further, the United States was marginalized at the eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December 2017 when it failed to include new issues such as e-governance, trade facilitation, and gender equality in the agenda. Moreover, at the insistence of developing nations, especially India and China, not even a formal declaration was issued.

The above instances confirm the primacy of geopsychology in China's foreign policy and diplomacy, guided by opposition to hegemons intervening in its internal issues and compelling China to follow the so-called rule-based international order, virtually controlled by "a single hegemon." Ironically, China is engaged in achieving a "hegemonic status"⁸⁵ in the international system.

CONCLUSION

The GT captures China's foreign policy behavior based on Chinese characteristics.⁸⁶ Its past history, the Middle Kingdom mentality, and strategic culture⁸⁷ have gone into shaping and articulating the Chinese leadership's perception of and approach to international politics. It may be noted that China does not subscribe to the Weberian model of state system that is bureaucratic, legalistic, and institutional, whereas the Chinese state is structured on its "cultural symbols," civilizational norms and values, and historical narratives.⁸⁸ Still alive, for example, in the Chinese mental spectrum are the memories of humiliation they endured at the hands of alien powers-British and Japanese. Their bitter experience continues to prod them into suspecting colonial powers as China's enemies.⁸⁹ As such, Chinese foreign policy, in principle, is against "power politics" and hegemony, though it defies the rule-based international order, especially on the sovereignty issue, as evident from its exclusive claim over the South China Sea. Several examples show China's aggressive postures in reaffirming its territorial claims, whether it be India or Bhutan, and its firm opposition to the outside intervention in its sphere of influence. Further, the current leadership under President Xi Jinping appears to fuel a countrywide anti-Japan sentiment, demanding that Japan tender an apology for its historical atrocities against China. But Japan's refusal inflamed China's antagonism toward Japan.

A competitive hegemonism has surfaced between the United States and China, especially in view of America's declining global power. It ought to be remembered that change is the law of nature. The mightiest of the empires could not permanently hold on to the pinnacle of power. Fired by nationalism and the historical ambition to rule the roost, China is set to become a regional hegemon regardless of U.S. attempts to encircle it through the balancing coalitions involving major powers such as India, Japan, South Korea, and Australia.

The findings of the study suggest that interventionist powers ought to be sufficiently knowledgeable about Chinese history, nationalism and its sociocultural values derived from its 5,000-year-old civilization. This will help prevent committing unwarranted follies and inadvertent aberrations in dealing with China on global and regional issues.

It is important to make a special mention of India to understand China's regional psychology. It is a well-known fact that the United States and India, close strategic partners, are collaborating to restrict China's expanding influence in the Indo-Pacific region. To recall, India became party to thenpresident Obama's Asia pivot or rebalancing policy that aimed at refurbishing the U.S. image and retrieving its credibility among allies in the Asia-Pacific region. Given this, China is skeptical about India's oft-repeated rhetoric to strengthen and deepen New Delhi's relations with Beijing, which widened the trust deficit between them. It has been further triggered by contradictions in statements of Indian policymakers, describing India and the United States as "natural allies" and simultaneously talking of the India-China-centric Asia (impliedly, minus America). As such, the two Asian giants are likely to remain psychologically poles apart. And China's strategy would remain centered on constricting Indian influence in South Asia and beyond, with India's strategic encirclement in South Asia through its aid diplomacy for weaning smaller nations (such as Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives) away from the Indian orbit.

NOTES

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29. Barabantseva, "Beyond the World Order," 189.

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31. Qin Yaqing, "Chinese Culture and Its Implications for Foreign Policy-Making," China International Studies, September/October 2011: 45. Yaqing points out that four "C"s-contextuality, correlativity, complementarity, and changeability-operate in the Chinese people's daily lives and reflect in their mentality, impacting "Chinese behavior as well as foreign policy-making" (Yaqing, "Chinese Culture and Its Implications," 45). In particular, while contextuality deals with the "environment; wherein decisions are made," correlativity signifies that "all elements in the universe are related" with nothing being "isolated" (47). In this context, Yaqing underlines the critical role of the "geography of culture" in shaping people's thoughts, with inhabitants from "different geographic areas or communities think[ing] in different ways" (48). Citing an experiment on the difference in thought patterns of Chinese and American students in relating objects, he writes that "living in a different culture can change one's behavior and outlook" and affirms that the "most important influence of culture is perhaps the gradual formation of one's way of thinking, which has a strong impact on one's perception of the outside world and interpretation of oneself and others. This is exactly why culture plays an important role in the making of foreign policy" (64).

32. Barabantseva, "Beyond World Order," 189-90.

33. Wang, Never Forget National Humiliation, 72.

34. Wang, Never Forget National Humiliation, 72.

35. See Gamer, "Chapter 7: International Relations," 180; for an excellent background to China's cultural history in the modern context, see the classic work by Cho-Yun Hsu, *China: A New Cultural History* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006).

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Chapter 5

The Nuclear Conundrum on the Korean Peninsula

North Korea's heightened recalcitrance to freeze its nuclear and missile program and its open defiance of the international community's dictates have turned the worldwide media spotlight on the Korean Peninsula. Led by Kim Jong-un, one of "the world's most feared dictators," Pyongyang conducted a series of nuclear and missile tests and upgraded the associated program, sending tremors to the nebulous global and regional security architecture. By carrying out the sixth nuclear test in September 2017, Kim showed political audacity to ignore China's advice to exercise nuclear restraint. It dealt a severe blow to the global community and posed a security threat to the United States. Deeply enraged, President Donald Trump tweeted, "North Korea is a rogue nation which has become a great threat and embarrassment to China, which is trying to help but with little success."1 This statement shows helplessness on the part of the United States and China in holding Kim in check. Rather, a brand of nuclear jingoism seems to have surfaced following Kim's asymmetrical threat to hit the U.S. military base in Guam and to wipe out South Korea and Japan from the world map.

The alarming security environment has impelled the Trump administration to prioritize North Korea's complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization. Toward that end, Trump embraced the strategy of applying "maximum pressure" through issuing threats to screw up global sanctions and diplomatic offensive at the United Nations. At the same time, Trump trod the middle path of diplomacy by opening a one-on-one dialogue with Kim, realizing that bullying tactics against North Korea might boomerang. Resultantly, the historic maiden summit between President Donald Trump and Chairman Kim Jong-un at Singapore's Sentosa Island on June 12, 2018 heralded a renewed hope for peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. The summit's significance can be gauged from the fact that since the 1953 ceasefire agreement between the two Koreas, American and North Korean leaders had neither spoken on the phone nor ever met in person. Trump dubbed the summit meeting as a "great day" and as "one of the greatest moments" in the "history of the world." He said, "Today [June 12] is the beginning of an arduous process . . . Kim Jong-un has the chance to seize a better future for his country. Anyone can make war, but only the most courageous can make peace. . . . We are prepared for the new history. We are ready to write new chapters. The past does not have to define the future."² Both the leaders signed a "comprehensive document" on a complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It generated a fresh hope and optimism in Washington and Pyongyang in resolving the long-standing nuclear standoff.

However, the euphoria dissipated when the February 2019 summit between Trump and Kim at Hanoi in Vietnam ended in a fiasco, mainly because both the leaders stuck to their diametrically opposed positions. Kim wanted lifting of all sanctions on North Korea in exchange for destroying the nuclear facilities at the Yongbyon complex, whereas Trump demanded complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Some political analysts opine that this failure was rooted in the misperception and mistrust on both sides. Jervis and Hooper comment, "The problems of perception and misperception afflict all policymakers that deal with foreign adversaries. But when it comes to relations between Washington and Pyongyang, those problems are especially profound, and the consequences of a miscalculation are uniquely grave."³ After the failure of the Hanoi summit talks, North Korea resumed "shortrange ballistic missile tests" in May 2019.

Against the above backdrop, the chapter investigates the long-standing nuclear standoff in the peninsula to better understand the psychic forces prompting the Pyongyang's authoritarian leadership to develop and upgrade the nuclear arsenal even though the country's economy is wading through an unprecedented crisis in food, oil, and energy sectors. In this context, the North Korean regime's geopsychology provides a missing link to understand the regime's attitudinal and behavioral patterns, rooted in collective experiences, historical memories, societal structures, and cultural constructs.⁴ The chapter illuminates a host of factors such as North Korean ethno-nationalism, Kim's psychological makeup, China's role, and the anti-U.S. sentiment pervading the North Korean Society, with implications for the peace, security, and stability in the Korean Peninsula.

THE NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR CRISIS

The North Korean peninsula turned out to be a flashpoint of conflict in the wake of a series of nuclear tests carried out by North Korea in 2006, 2009,

2013, 2016 (twice), and 2017, and the launch of medium-range ballistic missiles and long-range rockets as part of its well-calibrated strategy of power projection. After its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in January 2003, North Korea gave moral assurances to the world community that it would freeze its nuclear weapons-building program in exchange for the U.S. guarantee to its national security and the aid to bail out from its "floundering economy."

North Korea agreed to participate in the Six-Party Talks tasked with denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula. The talks began in August 2003, involving North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China, Russia, and the United States. But the propitious beginning was watered down when North Korea detonated its first nuclear device in October 2006. In response, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1718 on October 14, 2006, demanding North Korea to refrain from "further nuclear tests" and return to the Six-Party Talks. It prohibited the member nations from transferring dual-use technology and military hardware to North Korea. However, the international community received a massive setback when the Pyongyang regime conducted a flurry of tests, crossing the nuclear threshold. It prompted the UN Security Council to adopt a series of resolutions against North Korea, including Resolution 1874 of June 2009 that slapped tighter trade and "enhanced financial restrictions" sanctions, but to no avail.

In November 2013, South Korea's former defense minister Kim Kwan-jin disclosed that North Korea was capable of building a nuclear weapon and that it aimed to become "a 'nuclear weapon state' to . . . consolidate power domestically."⁵ He conceded that Seoul was "keeping a close eye on the full-scale operation"⁶ of North Korea's reactivated 5-megawatt reactor at the Yongbyon complex. South Korea and Japan registered the strongest protest over Pyongyang's launch of Rodong missiles in March 2014, complaining that it was an open violation of the UN Security Council resolutions. As a provocative measure, North Korea conducted a fourth nuclear weapons test in January 2016, claiming that it was a first "successful hydrogen bomb test" in self-defense against the United States.⁷ There was a mood of "jubilation and pride" in Pyongyang. Its state media highlighted that the H-bomb test had elevated the country's "nuclear might to the next level."⁸ It reinforces how the geopsychology of the North Korean regime is a core factor in the regime's defense and security decision-making.

Furthermore, North Korea's intermediate-range ballistic missiles Hwasong-10 test (2016) and the intercontinental ballistic missile test Hwasong-14 (2017) shook up the world community and left a deep "psychological impact" on the United States, as part of North Korean "asymmetric strategy."⁹ Mirko Tasik points to the West's misperception of North Korean leaders being irrational and unpredictable: "North Korea over the past several years has proved that it is in fact a rational actor."¹⁰ In realistic terms, the North Korean regime's motivation is to use "coercive diplomacy" and "asymmetric strategy" to achieve the strategic goal of the regime's security and internal political stability, which should not be construed as irrational behavior on its part. Kim has used this strategy on several occasions while dealing with America to tell the North Korean public that he is fully capable of meeting any challenge from the United States. This enhances his personal popularity and strengthens his stranglehold over power.

As such, Jong Un has reiterated that international sanctions will not deter North Korea from developing and upgrading the nuclear weapons and missile program. John Friend observes, "Past events suggest that North Korea will most likely remain defiant of the NPT and refuse to abandon its nuclear weapons program completely. In fact, Pyongyang has responded to such pressure with hostile rhetoric and displays of aggression on numerous occasions."¹¹

INSECURITY SYNDROME

East Asia is faced with a myriad of security challenges at global and regional levels. The United States and China are competing for power and influence in the region. On the one hand, the United States has given assurances to its old allies-Japan and South Korea-that it would not allow China to "become the regional hegemon or to supplant the United States as the region's preeminent actor."¹² On the other hand, both are trying to accommodate each other to avoid a direct confrontation. At the global level, the U.S. withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty prodded Russia and China to give a call for "strict compliance" with the ABM. Russia and China opposed the idea of revising the ABM Treaty, evident from their joint press communiqué issued in December 1999 during President Putin's visit to Beijing. Further, in July 2000, the "Shanghai Five," consisting of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, issued a joint communiqué, calling for a "strict compliance" with the ABM. In that scenario, strategic differences between the United States, Russia, and China had erupted sharply. At the regional level, the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) deployment provoked an offensive and defensive arms race in Asia.

While setting aside the Moscow-Beijing appeal, America went ahead with developing the TMD system in the region, primarily aimed at safeguarding security and territorial integrity of its allies in North-East Asia. However, North Korea's increasingly threatening postures, in the U.S. perception, constitutes a potential threat not only to regional security but also to global nuclear disarmament efforts. This is likely to alter "security dynamics" in East Asia. As noted by Evans Revere, "as regional threat perceptions evolve,

and as the region's political, diplomatic, and security dynamics shift,"¹³ there is an increasing concern about easing the grave security situation.

Security cooperation between the United States and Japan on deployment of the TMD has not only compounded the hitherto security tension in the peninsula but also adversely affected the inter-Korean peace dialogue process. Since the hostility between the two Koreas dating as back as the 1950s, differing belief systems and threat perceptions at the leadership level in both countries have further fueled the nuclear crisis. Moreover, the gargantuan challenge to the possibility of reunification of Korea mainly stems from America that does not favor a united Korea because of its multiple strategic interests in East Asia—to maintain its regional hegemony and to ensure South Korea's and Japan's security dependence on the United States.

ETHNO-NATIONALISM

Ethno-nationalism in North Korea is a potent binding force with its populace believing that "the Korean nation is the greatest nation in the world."¹⁴ Essentially, it means that "ethnic-racial identity" precedes North Korea's communist ideology. In this context, David-West explains, "North Korean group narcissism is, however, a form of chauvinistic, clannish, and xenophobic race-thinking, fearful of the strange and foreign. The narcissistic pathology is not something that emerges from psychology alone, but has a basis in economic, social, and political conditions."¹⁵ If viewed from the political perspective, North Korean nationalism is rooted in anti-Japanese imperialism, which got strengthened over time.¹⁶

In the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of East European nations, North Korea was faced with the food and oil crisis, further worsened by the imposition of international sanctions against the Pyongyang regime. Therefore, it made the latter more intransigent to "rely on pathological group narcissism"¹⁷ that fueled the "cult of nation and destiny (minjok kwa unmyŏng)." David-West of Aichi Perfectural University in Japan aptly explains:

The North Korean regime, in its self-interest, mobilizes cults that intersect with pathological phenomena (nationalism, incestuous fixation, and group narcissism) that are historically and socioeconomically conditioned. Here, the trauma of colonialism, the Korean War (1950–53) . . . and US-led economic sanctions are significant factors.¹⁸

Therefore, psychological interoperations of the North Korean regime and its society should be analyzed in the backdrop of its "father-centered patricentric society" for better diagnosing Pyongyang's policy toward the outside world. David-West cryptically explains:

North Korean ideology and nationalism, exemplified in the *Juche* (independent stand or spirit of self-reliance) and *Songun* (military-first) ideologies, exhibit this pathological nationalism in the ideas that the society is a family, the leader is the father, the party is the mother, and the people are filial sons and daughters . . . North Korea is a highly gendered, male-dominated, patriarchal society centered on the image and authority of the father . . . Kim Jong Un's inheritance of paternal authority in the national-Stalinist leader cult is, to be sure, documented in the North Korean state press.¹⁹

It is true that Kim Jong-un has successfully exploited the Korean society's "patricentric" sentiments by creating an "emotional attachment to the state."²⁰ Kongdan Oh, a long-time inside watcher of North Korean politics and foreign policy, writes, "he[Kim] has devoted most of his attention to preparing his people psychologically for another Korean War."²¹ In terms of the inferiority-superiority syndrome, a South Korean scholar Jihwan Hwang, professor of international relations, University of Seoul, is of the view that "Koreans [South Koreans] emphasize that they are one nation, but do not normally argue for its [Korea's] superiority over other nations. North Korea's claim [as being 'the greatest nation'] is largely rhetoric" (email response to the author, June 26, 2020). A famous North Korea propaganda slogan is: "Without Pyongyang Korea would not exist, and without Korea there would be no earth."²²

Regardless of Hwang's viewpoint, North Korea's strategic culture is qualitatively different from that of South Korea. Unlike the latter, North Korea is relentlessly battling against varied odds, ranging from America's mounting pressures to the world community's tough financial and trade sanctions as if treating Pyongyang as a pariah state. Remarkably, North Korea has surrendered neither to U.S. punitive measures nor to the world community's dictates. The underlying fact is that North Korean regime's hyper-nationalism, its belief systems, and its sociocultural values have made it a "fiercely proud nation."²³ Its perception of being a superior nation is structured on its strategic culture informed by historical experiences, past sacrifices, and its tenacity in the face of persisting economic hardship. In addition, the North Koreans claim having a "great political legitimacy" because they take the name of their people (Choson saram) and their country (Choson Minjujuui *Inmin Konghwaguk*) from the "Old Choson Dynasty" (fourth and third BC) unlike the South Koreans who "refer to themselves as Hangsuk saram, from the Chinese name for the Han or Korean people."24

THE ANTI-U.S. PSYCHOLOGY

The bitterest experience of the North Korean people during the 1950–1953 Korean War exhibits the Pyongyang regime's anti-U.S. psychology. David-West observes, "Bearing in mind the historical trauma in North Korean social psychology, one should underline the fact that U.S. aerial bombardment during the Korean War—which targeted civilian population centers—was so massive and destructive that North Korea had been virtually destroyed "as an industrial society."²⁵ In brief, the North Korean political regime and its people have not yet forgotten U.S. acts of barbarity against their country, which intensified North Korean "group narcissism."

Robert A. Koehler explains why North Koreans' disdain for the United States is still ingrained into their psyche: "North Korea was carpet-bombed to the edge of existence." He further says:

Dean Rusk, a supporter of the war and later the secretary of state, said the United States bombed "everything that moved in North Korea, every brick standing on top of another." After running low on urban targets, U.S. bombers destroyed hydroelectric and irrigation dams in the later stages of the war, flooding farm-land and destroying crops . . . Specifically, the U.S. dropped 635,000 tons of explosives on North Korea, including 32,557 tons of napalm, an incendiary liquid that can clear forested areas and cause devastating burns to human skin.²⁶

Not surprisingly, an anti-U.S. sentiment has not yet vanished even in today's world of interdependence; rather it got deeply sharpened when President George W. Bush, under his "axis of evil" doctrine, described North Korea as one of "rogue states." During his visit to Seoul in February 2002, Bush criticized the DPRK for the lack of "food and freedom" which provoked Kim Jong-il to describe Bush as "a typical rogue and a kingpin of terrorism."²⁷ The DPRK rejected Bush's call for talks and described him as a "politically backward child" who was bent on using arms and money to change North Korea's political system.²⁸

Unsurprisingly, the widening psychological chasm between America and North Korea is grounded in their deep-seated mistrust²⁹ as well as in Pyongyang's perception that America intends to completely disarm North Korea by using dialogue as a "leverage of pressure." Essentially, North Korea's geo-psychological perception of America, as its die-hard enemy, is antithetical to peace and stability on the peninsula. Robert Jervis and Mira Rapp-Hooper comment, "Misperception afflicts all policy options, with different risks in each case. . . . Each side views the other's behavior in a different light. The United States sees North Korea as an insincere actor that has reneged on countless commitments in the past, whereas North Korea sees the United States as intent on threatening its existence."³⁰ This statement aptly sums up how geopsychology is crucial to the understanding of gaps in perceptions and belief systems of state or authoritarian actors.

From the standpoint of U.S. administrations' long-persisting hardline approach toward the North Korean regime, America is saddled with a strenuous task to end military confrontation on the Korean Peninsula. On the one hand, the United States lacks a credible strategy to persuade or pressurize North Korea to freeze its nuclear program. On the other hand, it is ambivalent in providing a blanket security guarantee to its key allies—South Korea and Japan—against North Korea's potential threat to their national security and survival. More problematic for the United States is its blatant neglect of North Korea's psyche of deriving pleasure from bypassing UN resolutions. Why? Basically, the North Korean regime's obstinacy appears to be rooted in its historical narrative, national pride, and the leadership egoism. This explains that North Korea's morale is unshakable despite mind-boggling asymmetries between Washington and Pyongyang in terms of military and offensive capabilities.

Moreover, North Korea psychologically feels humbled down by the United States. As pointed out before, former U.S. President George W. Bush had nicknamed North Korea as one of the "rogue states." More importantly, Pyongyang's sensitivity was bruised when U.S. administrations linked peace dialogue with North Korea's fulfillment of certain conditions like freezing its nuclear weapons building program. The latter flatly refused to comply with them. Rather, the Pyongyang regime demanded that North Korea should be treated on an equal footing by the United States. The fact is that the more the United States turns offensive against North Korea, the more obdurate the latter becomes.

Be that as it may, a major challenge facing the United States is how to ensure North Korea's complete denuclearization once and for all. The administration's pressure and punitive approach toward North Korea as well as its strategy of engaging North Korea paid off some dividends. The inter-Korean dialogue, for example, was resumed at the summit level after a lapse of more than four decades. It also raised a glimmer of hope when North Korea announced renouncing its nuclear program through reconciliation and peaceful dialogue. But, unfortunately, the United States' TMD system in the region, in collaboration with Japan, dealt a serious blow to bilateral and multilateral security talks. Also, China apprehends that this system is intended to be deployed against it under an alibi of providing a security umbrella to Japan and South Korea. In China's strategic assessment, the deployment of TMD might render its nuclear deterrent capability redundant. In light of this scenario, China desires America to enter into a no-first-use of nuclear weapons agreement. But this possibility is a farfetched dream. It might be recalled that U.S. President Obama disapproved of a belligerent policy. He advocated keeping the dialogue open with the Pyongyang regime. The North Korean leadership under Chairman Kim Jong-un has also sent out clear signals that it is prepared to have peaceful negotiations with America to end the nuclear stalemate. Further, North Korea's ambassador to the United Kingdom Hyun Hak-bong urged South Korea to cancel conducting joint military exercises with the United States to foster peace and stability on the Peninsula. He said, "It is high time for South Korea to cancel or to stop the military exercises. And the international community should try hard to prevent such a kind of dangerous military exercises."³¹ He further clarified:

It is not helpful for the United States to remain in South Korea. The US makes the situation tense all the time by bringing in military equipment and disrupts peace on the peninsula by pursuing hostile policies and threatening the DPRK with nuclear weapons.³²

KIM JONG-UN'S PERSONALITY

The North Korean regime has had the history of an autocratic rule for over seventy years. Kim Jong-un inherited the "family dictatorship" at an early age after his father Kim Jong-il's death in December 2011. Because of his lack of political experience and maturity, the speculation was rife that North Korea might plunge into the state of uncertainty and political instability. The assessment proved wrong when Kim took the country's reins in his hands. In view of his exposure to the liberal Western values, inherited from his Swiss education, it was believed that he would conduct the country's policies like a liberal political reformer. On the contrary, Kim declared state emergency in the country and sealed off its borders. This unprecedented action should not have surprised close watchers of North Korean politics and society. In fact, Kim inherited the legacy of projecting the national power—building nuclear arsenals and carrying out ICBMs tests—with the motivation to threaten adversaries, including challenging the United States.³³

Furthermore, to consolidate his power, Kim displayed ruthlessness, purging hundreds of his "senior personnel," including assassination of his close family members. Jung H. Pak, Senior Fellow and the SK-Korea Foundation Chair in Korea Studies at Brookings Institution, notes that Kim made it clear that he "will not tolerate any potential challengers. And his rule through terror and repression—against the backdrop of that pastel wonderland of waterparks—means that the terrorized and repressed will continue to feed Kim's illusions and expectations, his grandiose visions of himself and North Korea's destiny."³⁴ In fact, Kim's aggressive and domineering personality emboldened him into threatening South Korea and Japan—America's close allies—and upgrading nuclear capabilities to deter America's security threat to his regime.

Pak observes, "Perhaps he thinks he can out-bully and out-maneuver President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping as well."³⁵ That is why, President Trump's tactic of mounting maximum pressure on North Korea for denuclearization did not work. Interestingly, Trump's senior aides and advisors' emphasis on cutting economic aid to and slapping sanctions on North Korea could not weaken Kim's resolve to negotiate with America on his terms.

Writing about the personality characteristics of Kim Jong-un, Aubrey Immelman observes, "Framed in terms of heuristic leadership models in political psychology, Kim appears to be temperamentally active-positive, with an active-independent orientation to foreign affairs and high-dominance extraversion as his preferred operating style in the international system."³⁶ He further elaborates:

The study of personality in politics offers a window to anticipating political outcomes. That is because personality—a person's ingrained behavior patterns—partially dictates how an individual will act over time across a broad range of situations. In short, accurate personality assessment enables political prognosticators to formulate general expectancies for leadership behavior in a variety of contingencies.³⁷

If perceived from the personality prism, Kim Jong-un considers nuclear weapons as a bargaining chip for the regime's security.³⁸ For this, he has "shown the ability to co-opt military and security elites with his ambitious development of the DPRK's nuclear weapons program, defying predictions of the international community."³⁹ As such, North Korea's nuclear warning deserves attention. Kissinger writes, "the danger of war, after all, resides less in the existence of the weapons of mass destruction than in the minds of the men who are in a position to order their use."⁴⁰ This warning is relevant in the present context of North Korea's lingering nuclear threat. It has been observed that Kim's perception is guided by America's existential threat to his country—being highly skeptical of American promises of a "security guarantee."⁴¹ He drew the lesson from "the fates of Iraq, Libya, and Ukraine—that nuclear weapons are the only logical course of development regarding both his and the regime's survival."⁴²

THE OLYMPIC GAMES: "CHARM OFFENSIVE"

North Korea participated in the February 2018 Winter Olympics that were held at Pyeongchang in South Korea. Kim's "bravura performance" reflected

from dispatching his sister Kim Yo-jong to the event. South Korean President Moon Jae-in extended a warm welcome, shaking hands with her—a rare gesture of goodwill toward North Korea. The Olympic Games opened a new window of opportunity for both countries to rewrite history when they agreed on holding a dialogue between two Koreas. It was not approved by the Trump administration. Rather, Vice President Mike Pence walked out of the ceremony, missing the opportunity to utilize the occasion to defuse tension with North Korea. Not only this, Pence did not like to interact with the North Korean delegation. His stoic and stiff attitude demonstrated clearly that the administration was not in a mood to have any dialogue with the North Korean contingent at PyeongChang. John Kelly, while reacting to Pence's remark that there was no "day-light" between the United States and allies on North Korea, told the CNN, February 11, 2018, that Pence's remark represented a kind of "megalomania" on the administration's part. He further added that North Korea was not going to abandon its nuclear program.

Nevertheless, the Olympics diplomacy paved the way for building a bridge between North Korea and South Korea and between the United States and North Korea. At the same time, Pence made it clear that though America was prepared for a peaceful talk with North Korea, the "maximum pressure campaign" to persuade it to denuclearize would continue. As reported, "That dissonance showed just before their first meeting, when Moon said he wanted Olympic engagement to lead to real negotiations while Pence talked only about the pressure track."43 This clearly shows how deep-seated prejudices of the United States against North Korea flared up Pyongyang's anti-American geopsychology. It reinforces that deep psychological imperatives govern the attitude of North Korean supreme leader Kim Jong-un. As such, the Trump or the succeeding administration needs to adopt a soft stance toward the psychologically bruised North Korean regime rather than issue the threat of "destroying" it. Truly speaking, American vice president Pence did not give diplomacy a chance to heal up the wounds of a bellicose North Korea whose political complaint has been that America is least sensitive to its national pride. Pressure and engagement in the case of North Korea are less likely to work unless the United States continues with its diplomatic efforts to engage North Korea.

TRUMP'S COUNTER-OFFENSIVE STRATEGY

There is a tug of war between President Trump and his North Korean counterpart Kim Jong-un.

Trump has been chasing him on the wordy warfare. The president, coming across as a novice in foreign policy and diplomacy, did not display the common sense while threatening North Korea to wipe it out from the world

Chapter 5

map. Trump stated, "The United States has great strength and patience, but if it is forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea."⁴⁴ In this context, Posen commented:

Although it is difficult to tell if Pyongyang takes such threats seriously, Washington's foreign policy elite certainly does, and many fear that war by accident or design is now much more likely. The Pentagon has backed up these threats with more frequent military maneuvers, including sending long-range strategic bombers on sorties over the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, the administration has tried to put economic pressure on North Korea, attempting to convince China to cut off the flow of critical materials to the country, especially oil.⁴⁵

From the above quote, it is clear that Trump cannot shy away from owning the responsibility of flaring up the North Korean leader's anti-U.S. psychology. Besides, he ordered the dispatch of aircraft carriers off the Korean Peninsula during his first Asia visit in November 2017. It did not shake up Kim Jong-un. His political willpower and nationalistic fervor offer an enough evidence of why the study of the geopsychology of authoritarian leaders is important in foreign and security policy domains.⁴⁶ Jung H. Pak writes,

An effective special envoy would be able to explore the range of actions that the international community is prepared to take if North Korea continues on its current path or if, in the less likely scenario, there are credible signs that Pyongyang is willing to have a meaningful discussion on relinquishing its nuclear weapons program. . . At a minimum, in any engagement scenario, the envoy would reduce the potential for miscommunication and miscalculation that could spiral into a military confrontation. This envoy might also be able to puncture the groupthink within Kim's circle and present the North Korea leader with what's really at stake.⁴⁷

As mentioned before, a complete denuclearization by North Korea is a pipedream at this stage when a wide chasm of trust persists between Washington and Pyongyang. In this scenario, normalization of their relationship is a pragmatic necessity. The Tokyo Colloquium Report 2018 suggests:

The relationship-building initiated at the winter Olympics, for example, needs to be continued and deepened. This will only be possible, however, if the United States and its allies are willing to mute their antagonistic relationships with the North to create and respond to opportunities for constructive dialogue. If there is a genuine commitment to no regime change, then it is important that the US, Japan, and the ROK generate confidence rather than fear between all parties with interests in the region.⁴⁸

The trust building between the United States and North Korea is a major psychological challenge. But the mistrust is further hardened with the hurling of accusations and counter-accusations on both sides. Indeed, the cat-dog animosity has caused an immeasurable loss to each side. The Colloquium report further points out:

North Korea is paranoid because it has been labeled a pariah state; George Bush even included it as one of the countries in his "axis of evil." This demonization results in the North Korean regime becoming more solitary and "hermitic" with relatively impenetrable borders and high levels of internal secrecy. This makes "normal" negotiations somewhat problematic.⁴⁹

In brief, the harsher tone and more bitter political rhetoric of President Trump against North Korea escalated the hostility between Washington and Pyongyang. Steven E. Miller observes in this respect that Trump has "more explicitly proclaimed that he will 'totally destroy' North Korea if war comes. Trump, the self-proclaimed dealmaker, has pursued a coercive strategy of maximum pressure designed to intimidate rivals into backing down and making better deals; saber-rattling appears to be an integral component of the Trump approach, despite concerns that it increases the risk of war."⁵⁰ This observation underpins the psychological roadblock on both sides.

In the situation of uncertainty, a better option is to keep the dialogue with North Korea alive. Its initial outcome may not be encouraging. But it is important to bear in mind that Chairman Kim Jung-un was initially prepared to abandon the nuclear program in exchange for the food guarantee by the United States. This opportunity should not have been frittered away by the United States when North Korea was psychologically prepared to freeze its nuclear program provided its basic demands were met by America.

The problem has been further compounded because of an obstinate stance of both parties. On the one hand, America insists on a verifiable complete dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear program. On the other hand, North Korea demands that America stop all kinds of hostile activities like stationing of its troops on the peninsula and conducting joint military exercises with South Korean troops. How to break this political impasse is the most difficult question to answer. But prudence demands that negotiations must continue with North Korea. For there is no alternative to peace, peace is the only alternative. Dialogue should no longer be stymied as an important component of proactive diplomacy.

159

CHINA'S ROLE

China played a major role in facilitating the Six-Party Talks⁵¹ to help defuse the nuclear stalemate. Because of Beijing's strategic leverage over Pyongyang in terms of food and energy aid, America gave a green signal to Beijing to go ahead in its role as a chief mediator⁵² in the nuclear crisis management on the peninsula. It resulted in a framework agreement in February 2007 under which North Korea agrees to abandon its nuclear weapons program with certain conditions such as mutual "diplomatic recognition and legitimization," ensuring Pyongyang's national security and providing economic aid without political strings. Henry A. Kissinger takes note of the progress made, "for example, the mothballing of Pyongyang's plutonium-producing plant in return for American political concessions, such as removing North Korea from the list designating states supporting terrorism."53 Despite several rounds of the Six-Party Talks between 2003 and 2009, the member nations of multilateral talks failed to stop North Korea's nuclear momentum. This was because of conflicting national interests of the parties, which virtually stifled negotiations to a grinding halt. As a result, North Korea boycotted the talks in April 2009 and went ahead with detonating the nuclear device.⁵⁴ Furthermore, North Korea's nuclear shenanigan confirmed that it did not respect any commitment or treaty obligations. Rather, a "protracted spat" with the Pyongyang regime further hardened its resolve to be more offensive in its tone and action.55

The worsening security environment on the Korean Peninsula poses a grave threat to the peace and stability there.⁵⁶ China apprehends that if North Korea collapsed for internal or external reasons, it might trigger a massive influx of refugees into its territory.⁵⁷ Given North Korea's track record of defying international norms, China faces a tougher challenge while dealing with North Korea,⁵⁸ although the U.S. administration believes that China enjoys economic leverage over North Korea. What worries China is Kim Jong-un's provocatively offensive public statements against President Trump, which might trigger an offensive verbal warfare between Kim and Trump. At the same time, China is unhappy over Trump's penchant for strengthening and stabilizing the U.S. strategic presence in the region. As noted, "China's path to dominance requires an American withdrawal and a message to American allies that they cannot count on the United States for protection. But North Korea threatens to draw the United States more deeply into the region and complicate China's effort to diminish its influence and persuade countries to live without its nuclear umbrella."59

It should be recalled that the former U.S. special envoy Glyn Davies during his Beijing visit in November 2013 suggested that Pyongyang offer a "hard core proof" of its willingness to denuclearize its program permanently. There is a widely held perception amid the strategic community that China could not dissuade North Korea from reactivating its dismantled plutoniumproduction reactors. Although Chinese leaders asked North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program in the interest of the region's peace, security, and stability, the Pyongyang regime was adamant. The latter issued an open threat to deploy nuclear weapons against the United States and its allies (South Korea and Japan), including the UK and Australia. Though there is no potential security threat to America, North Korea's obdurate approach might prove disastrous for the region's peace and tranquility.

Given this scenario, Zhang Tuosheng, Director of Research and Senior Fellow at the China Foundation for International and Strategic Studies in Beijing, argues that China's policy toward North Korea should keep pace with time and should take into account not only China's national interests but also the well-being of the people of the Korean Peninsula. He opines:

Facing grim situations on the North Korean nuclear issue and on the Peninsula itself, China's policy toward North Korea should be adjusted to advance with the times: One, actively engage to resolve the North Korean nuclear problem; two effectively grasp or take control of the denuclearization process to ensure peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula; three resolutely avoid letting "certain countries" lead other countries by the nose and avoid engaging in wrong practices; four fully prepare to react to emergencies and unexpected events. By sticking to (China's) national interests and combining with the world's common long-term interests as well as the interests of the people of the Korean Peninsula, China will certainly be invincibly positioned.⁶⁰

Further, Tuosheng spells out three scenarios of the North Korean nuclear issue: "Taking an irreversible path to forever possess nuclear weapons; triggering a military conflict and even war; or returning to the path of dialogue to resolve the issue."61 It is patently clear that Chairman Kim Jong-un is determined to continue to build and upgrade the nuclear missile program for the psychological reason that if it abandons the program, he would not only jeopardize his country's security but also mortgage the national honor by surrendering to America. Besides, Kim might use Japan and South Korea as a bargaining chip to seek more concessions from the Trump administration to consolidate his unchallenged power over the peninsula, both domestically and regionally. Tuosheng's argument does not sound plausible that "if North Korea continues to conduct nuclear tests, and even become a de facto nuclear state, then North Korea's military confrontation with the United States, Japan, and, South Korea will be even more serious."62 He has not provided substantial evidence to support his contention. Its reason is that the fulcrum of Kim's psychology is structured on increasing and upgrading military strength to gain respect, national honor, and prestige, and to seek world attention that North Korea is not going to knuckle down to "any power whatsoever." As Oh and Hassig write, "North Korea is a land of illusions. . . . A military that boasts of being the mightiest in the world . . . And a foreign policy based on a premise that by threatening other nations North Korea can become a respected member of the international community."⁶³ It provides an important clue that inheriting this dynastic trait, Kim is impervious to his mentor China's counsel even though North Korea is dependent on Chinese economic and energy aid. In Kim's estimation, at the same time, in the case of a war between America and China, the latter would want to use Pyongyang's nuclear and missile prowess as a psychological shield against the United States. And China also knows it well that North Korea's nuclear capability to threaten the survival of South Korea and Japan could serve as a hedge against America, especially in the current scenario when President Trump has ordered deployment of the United States' state-of-the art naval power in the South China Sea. In this situation, China is not in a mood to antagonize Kim when the Trump administration has been urging Beijing to use its strategic leverage to persuade him to abandon the nuclear program. This is a kind of psychological game played by Kim Jong-un and Xi Jinping to derive the maximum mileage without resorting to military offensive.

Undeniably, China desires a peaceful and stable North Korea as a buffer state along its border "rather than to push for denuclearization at the risk of the regime's collapse."64 John M. Friend comments, "China has little incentive to aggressively intervene and surely does not want regime change to occur, as North Korea serves as a geostrategic buffer between Beijing and the US sphere of influence."65 Nevertheless, China is concerned about Kim's defiance of its pragmatic counsel for exercising a maximum restraint to help foster peace conditions. At a Shanghai academic seminar held in August 2017, China's strategic experts offered a critique of North Korea's value to Beijing as "a strategic buffer" against South Korea and Japan. This is because North Korea is provoking them to develop their nuclear arsenal, which might further create problems for China to help bring peace and stability in the hitherto volatile region. Perlez writes in the New York Times, "If Japan and South Korea feel forced to go for radical options like nuclear weapons, it will badly affect regional diplomacy."66 Another implication could be that with the proliferation of nuclear weapons, China might plunge itself into "a new Cold War' in Asia, perhaps with a beefed-up American military presence . . . [offsetting] Beijing's ambitions for regional supremacy."67

CONCLUSIONS

The study suggests that provocations accelerate the hardening of the attitudes of authoritarian regimes. It is clear from preceding sections that the North Korean

regime is gripped by psychological complexes in terms of projecting the country as invincible—"superior" to others. Indeed, Kim Jong-un's psychology is attuned to having a dialogue with the United States from a position of strength which, in his perception, will protect the national honor, lead to his personal victory, and raise his popularity among North Korean masses. The current leadership under Kim is guided by an assessment that North Korea would garner the world's attention upon defiantly carrying out nuclear and missile tests. Kim intends to give the political message to the international community that the tough international sanctions only emboldened him to upgrade the weapons systems. In this apocalyptic situation, America has an onerous obligation not to scupper a pragmatic solution to facilitate ending the nuclear standoff.

The chapter suggests that America desist from making it a prestige issue in the larger interest of the regional peace, security, and stability. In view of the "never-to-surrender" psychology of an "eccentric" and obdurate North Korean leader, the Trump administration needs to address this issue psychologically instead of applying the strategy of "maximum pressure" to bring him on track on American terms and conditions. As mentioned before, America's ratcheting up of sanctions against North Korea did not unnerve Kim. On the contrary, the North Korean nuclear issue became more intractable. U.S. administrations could neither muster the courage to humble it down nor could force Kim to abandon his seamless pursuit of upgrading ICBMs as a rejoinder to America's insistence on a complete denuclearization of the Peninsula. Instead, the U.S. stick policy contributed to producing a "collective sense of anxiety" among North Koreans who came to look upon the foreign threat as disgraceful to their national pride. The public support has firmed up Kim's resolve to embrace a tougher approach to deal with the United States. Therefore, the question of mutual credibility would remain a decisive factor in the Pyongyang-Washington relationship.

The study attributes the perceptional gap between the United States and North Korea to their psychological divergences in historical, cultural, and nationalistic perspectives. By logical implication, they interpret each other's intentions differently. For instance, Kim perceives nuclear weapons as a blanket guarantee to his regime's security and the national esteem, drawing the lesson from the United States' brazen record of invading Iraq, Libya, and Afghanistan, for instance. On the other hand, Trump perceives Kim as the most irresponsible regional actor. The breadth of their perceptional dichotomy renders it hard to alter their fixed mindsets. In this situation, a proactive diplomatic engagement is an imperative to help melt down the persisting mistrust on both sides. The chapter suggests setting up an institutional mechanism to resolve this ticklish issue.

Despite a strong anti-American sentiment lingering within the North Korean society, the Trump administration can derive maximum benefits

from the shifting dynamics of political environment in the peninsula. This is in view of Pyongyang's extending an official invitation to South Korean president Moon to visit North Korea for dialogue following the North Korean team's participation in the 2018 Winter Olympics held in South Korea.

In my past writings on the geopsychology of North Korean leaders, I argued that had the past U.S. administrations agreed on one-on-one talks with North Korea on an equal footing, the nuclear crisis could have been resolved much earlier. The broad conclusion is that George W. Bush's refusal to hold direct talks with North Korea led America to pay a heavy price by provoking North Korea into building its missile sinews. However, the credit goes to Trump's political courage to hold direct summit talks with Kim. The summit dialogue paved the way for preventing nuclear confrontation between Washington and Pyongyang. The findings of the study indicate that to nip conflicts in the bud, an in-depth knowledge of regimes' geopsychology is indispensable. Indeed, Kim's psychological tactics forced President Donald Trump to enter into one-on-one dialogue that really helped avert the nuclear cataclysm.

My thesis reinforces the importance of learning from North Korean dictators' psychology which is structured on surviving the hardest possible sanctions rather than surrendering to the dictates of the hegemon or tolerating its national humiliation. The drivers of North Koreans' aspirations, coupled with the national resolve, went a long way in solidifying the regime's popular base as well as and justifying its political legitimacy in its sustained fight against foreign powers. The chapter concludes that Kim Jong-un, a smart strategist, is capable of foreseeing U.S. tactical moves in advancing America's national interests. The ball is now in the American court whether or not to offer multiple incentives to Pyongyang such as lifting sanctions, ensuring energy aid, and the regime's security in exchange for a complete denuclearization of North Korea.

NOTES

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4. This view is supported by John M. Friend. See John M. Friend, "A Cultural Neuroscience Perspective on North Korean Strategic Culture Implications for Tailored Deterrence," *Politics and Life Sciences* 37, no. 2 (Fall 2018): 155–79.

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8. *The Hindu*, January 6, 2016, https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/N orth-Korea-claims-to-have-tested-hydrogen-bomb/article13984559.ece.

9. Mirko Tasic defines an asymmetric strategy as "one that state and nonstate actors engage in to oppose an adversary of greater military power and capabilities and that targets key vulnerabilities or dependencies of that adversary to create a major psychological impact that affects initiatives, actions, or will." See "Exploring North Korea's Asymmetric Military Strategy," *Naval War College Review* 72, no. 4 (Autumn 2019): 54.

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12. Evans J. R. Revere, "US Policy and Asian Security: Challenge and Response," *Brookings*, January 25, 2016, https://www.brookings.edu/on-the-record/u-s-policy -and-east-asian-security-challenge-and-response/.

13. Revere, "US Policy."

14. Alzo David-West, "Erich Fromm and North Korea: Social Psychology and the Political Regime," *Critical Sociology* 40, no. 4 (2014): 581. "Rather, the defensive narcissistic psychology, in its more pathological form, promotes belief in the national and cultural superiority of the Korean ethnic-racial group (minjok), as in the 'nation-first policy' (minjok cheiljuŭi), the conception of the 'homogenous nation' (tanil minjok), and in the deployment of sacred symbols and emotionally charged images that embody group narcissism. 'Our nation is the best in the world' goes one 6 January 2003 North Korean slogan in official translation, or 'Our ethnic race is number one in the world" (David-West, "Erich Fromm").

15. David-West, "Erich Fromm," 582.

16. Bruce Cumings writes, "Korea had most of the prerequisites for nationhood long before most other countries: common ethnicity, language, and culture, and well-recognized national boundaries since the tenth century. So, the Japanese engaged in substitutions after 1910: exchanging a Japanese ruling elite for aristocratic Korean scholar-officials . . . instituting a strong central state in place of the old government administration; exchanging Japanese modern education for the Confucian classics; eventually they even replaced the Korean language with Japanese. Koreans never thanked the Japanese for these substitutions . . . and instead saw Japan as snatching away their ancien régime, Korea's sovereignty and independence, its indigenous if incipient modernization, and above all its national dignity. Unlike some other colonized peoples, therefore, most Koreans never saw imperial rules as anything but illegitimate and humiliating" (xvi).

17. David-West, "Erich Fromm," 582.

18. David-West, "Erich Fromm," 583.

19. David-West, "Erich Fromm," 579.

20. David-West, "Erich Fromm," 580.

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22. Suk-Young Kim, *Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 60.

23. Kongdan Oh and Ralph C. Hassig, *North Korea Through the Looking Glass* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2000), 1.

24. Oh and Hassig, North Korea.

25. See Charles K. Armstrong, "The Destruction and Reconstruction of North Korea, 1950–1960," *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 7 (March 16, 2009), https://apjjf.org/-Charles-K.-Armstrong/3460/article.html.

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30. Jervis and Rapp-Hooper, "Perception and Misperception."

31. *The Korea Herald*, January 31, 2014, http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20140131000031.

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33. For a brilliant study of this part, see Anna Fifield, *The Great Successor: The Secret Rise and Rule of Kim Jong-un* (London: John Murray Publisher, 2019).

34. Jung H. Pak, "The Education of Kim Jong-un," *The Brookings Institution*, February 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/essay/the-education-of-kim-Jong Un.

35. Pak, "The Education."

36. Aubrey Immelman, *The Leadership Style of North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un (Working Paper No. 1.1)* (Collegeville, PA and St. Joseph, MN: St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict, Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics, June 11, 2018), https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/psychology_pubs/120/.

37. Immelman adds, "The materials for constructing Kim Jong-un's personality profile consisted of biographical sources and the personality inventory employed to systematize and synthesize diagnostically relevant information collected from the literature on Kim . . . Diagnostic information pertaining to Kim was collected from a broad array of more than 100 media reports that offered useful, diagnostically relevant psychobiographical information." See Brian C. Rathbun, et al., "Taking Foreign Policy Personally: Personal Values and Foreign Policy Attitudes," *International Studies Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (March 2016): 124–37.

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40. Kissinger, Observations, 185.

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1950, Mao sent more than one million Chinese soldiers, including his own son, into the Korean War to help the North fight the United States. By the time the armistice was signed three years later, more than 400,000 Chinese troops had been killed and wounded, a sacrifice in blood that one might have expected to forge a lasting loyalty between the two countries."

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Chapter 6

U.S. Strategic Misadventures in the Middle East

A Victim of Its Own Logic?

INTRODUCTION

The Middle East is at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and Europe. It has witnessed a series of unprecedented political upheavals over the past two decades, ranging from intra-regional feuds and civil wars, following the 2011 Arab Spring, to great powers' intervention. To maintain its global supremacy, the United States is serious about redefining its "global position" as a hegemon in a fast altering strategic environment in the Middle East. If seen in hindsight, U.S. policymakers drafted Israel as a most reliable regional ally into the U.S. global schema to establish a strategic foothold in the Middle East to serve and secure its manifold national interests. Its consistently heavy tilt toward Israel backfired, creating a long list of foes in the Middle East. For instance, the Arab states were disillusioned with the United States for its failure to play the role of an honest broker to help promote peace and stability in the Middle East. Rather, Washington extended blind support to Tel Aviv, exercising its veto power in Israel's favor at the UN Security Council, much less on the basis of merit. This flared up the anti-U.S. wave in the region. Especially, since the 9/11, the U.S.-Arab relationship has become tougher and more complex, "blackening the reputation" of the other.

Often described as a region of "death and sand," the Middle East has proved to be a curse to the United States ever since it launched wars in the "four failed states"—Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen—"in its broader struggle with terrorism and extremism, and its dealings with Iran."¹ Notably, representing a change in the geopolitical structure, the rise of new regional actors such as Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey is likely to re-shape the future of the Middle Eastern politics. A scholar notes, "There are also concerns that American retrenchment would open the door for hostile actors—Iran and Russia—to exert dominant influence in a region that still matters."²

In an eye-opening piece "The Self-Destruction of American Power," Fareed Zakaria, a well-known columnist, vividly narrates how and why American hegemony has collapsed. He raises a hard-hitting question whether "the death of the United States' extraordinary status [was] a result of external causes, or did Washington accelerate its own demise through bad habits and bad behavior?"³ From Zakaria's observation, it can be inferred that the United States has not only "mishandled" its status as a world hegemon but also mismanaged its relations with European allies who always stood like a firm rock behind America on global and regional issues.⁴ America overlooked the reality that the European support was its real strength. Perhaps, President Donald Trump mistakenly believed that America commanded Europe's respect because of its enviable position in the global political architecture.

More so, American policymakers committed one folly after another in policy strategies without learning an appropriate lesson from President George W. Bush's "insane," absurd, and ill-advised invasion of Iraq in 2003. Nor did Bush and his close strategic advisors derive a lesson from the Soviet Union's military presence in Afghanistan for nearly one decade that led to its economic devastation. In the long run, the decade-long nerve-wracking war in Afghanistan (1979–1989) resulted in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' (USSR's) disintegration in December 1991.⁵

Throughout the human history, it has been found that political leaders who recklessly plunged their nations into unnecessary wars could scarcely achieve anything substantive except inviting misery and economic ruin. In this context, strategic analysts lament that America has always used "military means to produce unachievable outcomes in the Middle East."⁶ Richard Falk, an avid peace champion, told the author that "the militarization of the American state . . . has undermined its capacity to learn from mistakes . . . while the US continues to rely on outmoded, yet highly destructive militarism, which not only doesn't work, but magnifies the problems it is trying to solve." In a similar tone, William J. Astore, a retired lieutenant colonel, wonders, "Why have all the American wars of this century gone down in flames and what in the world have those leaders learned from such repetitive failures."⁷

Instead of revising and clarifying its policy strategies to play a "stabilizing role," America ended up contributing to the region's destabilization.⁸ John Glaser observes, "The Iraq War upended the Middle East, empowered Iran, and fueled a new generation of jihadist terrorists. Washington bungled a series of changes in the Egyptian regime and helped (along with other external actors) fuel Syria's civil war."⁹ These developments reflected the Iraq War's psychological impact, with Behrouzan writing in *Foreign* *Policy*: "War conditions create memories and wounds that outlive the wars themselves. Their images and sounds persist in art, economics, politics, and private lives through multiple generations."¹⁰

Without grasping the nuances and intricacies of domestic structures, cultural underpinnings, geographical terrain, and mindsets of local leaders of the Middle Eastern region, America's hasty and flawed strategic decisions fostered anarchical conditions in Libya, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. For example, U.S. military operations in Libya alone cost it over \$1 billion and also stimulated "religious extremist movements" in the Middle East and North Africa, opening the door to the ISIS. Robert M. Gates, former U.S. secretary of defense, wrote, "Washington has become overly dependent on military tools and has seriously neglected its nonmilitary instruments of power, which have withered and weakened as a result."¹¹ Gates favored "nonmilitary instruments" toward contributing to a remarkable "symphony of power."

More important, political community in the Middle East deeply resented¹² foreign powers' plunder of their natural resources. To some extent, the region's authoritarian leaders, foisted by America (for instance, in Egypt and Afghanistan) are also responsible for the abysmal economic plight of their peoples. But America played a dangerous political game by allowing a free hand to Saudi Arabia, its close ally, to wreak havoc on Yemen, triggering an unending political chaos there. Further, the Trump administration botched the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal. Such reckless and impulsive acts laid the ground for jeopardizing the region's internal security and political stability.

President Donald Trump conceded that the United States got "nothing" in return for spending \$ 7 trillion on wars in the Middle East. Whatever be the exact figures,¹³ the United States squandered trillions of dollars on worthless wars, which were avoidable had U.S. policy hawks first cared to learn about the Middle Eastern region's history, its geographical terrain, its cultural ethos, its nationalism, and its ruling leadership's political resolve. It is pertinent to recall that the first war [led by USSR] was transformed into a Holy War (jihad) "under the US patronage."¹⁴ The Afghan war proved to be the costliest one in terms of blood and money, likely to end up as the Waterloo for America. According to an annual report from the Costs of War project at Brown University's Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs, the total cost of the war on terror will be approximately \$5.9 trillion through the fiscal year 2019. Though the mind-boggling military expenditure is ascribed to the 9/11 tragedy, no one from top aides and advisors in the White House ever heeded saner voices that America was fighting blind wars. Rather, America jumped into the fray without ensuring its "overwhelming victory."15 Partly, the U.S. failure to accomplish "strategic breakthrough" in Afghanistan, as emphasized in preceding sections, can be ascribed to its limited knowledge about as well as the "inherent complexity" of Afghanistan.¹⁶

Similarly, without anticipating the long-term consequences of imposing the war on Iraq (2003-2011), U.S. coffers were drained to the tune of \$1.06 trillion, next to the \$4.1 trillion spent during the Second World War.¹⁷ According to the casualty status released by the U.S. Department of Defense (March 30, 2020), the total U.S. casualties in the Operation Iragi Freedom between March 19, 2003, and August 31, 2010, were: 4,431 total deaths (military and civilian), and 31,994 wounded in action.¹⁸ The U.S. casualties in the Operation Enduring Freedom between October 7, 2001, and December 31, 2014, were: total deaths (military and civilian): 2,353 (worldwide total); and wounded in action: 20,149.19 Kimberly Amadeo notes, "More than 320,000 soldiers from Afghanistan and Iraq have traumatic brain injuries that cause disorientation and confusion, as of 2018. Of those, more than 8,000 suffered severe or invasive brain injuries, and more than 1,600 soldiers lost all or part of a limb. More than 138,000 have post-traumatic stress disorder. They experience flashbacks, hypervigilance, and difficulty sleeping."²⁰ Further, it is estimated that "the U.S. incurred an extra \$453 billion in interest on the debt to pay for the wars in the Middle East. Over the next 40 years, these costs will add \$7.9 trillion to the debt."²¹

As realists argue, a crescendo of threats to American supremacy is already in the offing. At the same time, they are optimistic that America's decline can be reversed by restoring realism in its foreign policy. If viewed from this perspective, the Trump administration's "America first" foreign policy strategy is focused on ensuring the U.S. "national security and prosperity." On the flip side, it heralds an era of the U.S. global retreat from multilateralism, upsetting its Western allies and strategic partners in Northeast, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Moreover, the administration's "full-scale tilt"²² toward Israel vis-à-vis Palestinians, as manifest from recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's new capital, stoked anti-American sentiments in the Muslim world. It not only hurt Arabs' national pride and honor but also exposed America in the eyes of the world community as the "biggest defaulter" of the well-established international norms and rules. Besides, Trump's revival of stringent oil sanctions against Iran further intensified anti-American mood throughout the Middle East.²³ Such suicidal measures are primarily an offshoot of the neglect of psychological predispositions of the Middle Eastern society and its disparate ethnic groups.²⁴

The chapter takes stock of U.S. policy strategies, especially in the context of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran. Though colossal literature²⁵ is available on the U.S. Middle East policy, the chapter weaves the nuances of its application into the geopsychology framework to offer a diagnosis of U.S. miscalculations and misadventures.

Brief Survey of the Region

The Middle East has remained a strategic fulcrum in the U.S. foreign policy to safeguard its primary national interests in terms of energy security, global war on terrorism, building a stable Afghanistan, and fostering democracy and human rights in the region. For this, U.S. policy hawks favor American hegemony in the region.²⁶ At the same time, the United States' relations with Middle Eastern countries have quite often oscillated between a deep politico-strategic engagement, marked by its shuttle diplomacy as well as its splendid victory in the 1990–1991 Gulf War, and a great frustration caused by its whopping failure to help resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Undoubtedly, the Middle East has been a turbulent region since the Cold War period. Great powers' interests were driven by the region's vast oil, natural gas, and mineral resources in the quest of which the region turned into a great power gamble.

It ought to be remembered that the Middle East is home to an array of cultures, ethnicities, religions, sects, beliefs, and faiths. Being a confluence of three great religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—it was likely to face gargantuan challenges to maintain ethnic, cultural, and religious harmony. In the wake of the Islamic Revolution, led by Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, America not only drifted into a fierce confrontation with the Iranian regime but also grew unpopular within Afghanistan. To safeguard its oil, economic, and security interests in the region, America established strong military and security ties with Middle Eastern countries such as Israel, Egypt and GCC member countries, especially with Saudi Arabia.

It merits a mention that the U.S.-Middle East relationship is primarily shaped by psycho-cultural perceptions of the region's autocratic rulers rather than by sheer geopolitics. The Arab "anti-Americanism" steadily grew with hatred for and hostility toward America because of its staunch anti-Arab policies.²⁷ Lewis writes, "The instinct of the masses is not false in locating the ultimate source of these cataclysmic changes in the West and in attributing the disruption of their old ways of life to the impact of Western domination, Western influence, or Western precept and example."²⁸ He explains that Middle Eastern peoples feel that their sociocultural structures and "traditional values and loyalties" have been devalued as Western forces "robbed them of their beliefs their aspirations, their dignity, and to an increasing extent even their livelihood."²⁹ He adds, "There is something in the religious culture of Islam, which inspired, in even the humblest peasant or peddler, a dignity and a courtesy toward others never exceeded and rarely equaled in other civilizations."³⁰

Furthermore, America has not properly addressed and identified the major root causes of Islamist radicalism. It reflects from the views of political analysts such as Stanley Hoffman, Anthony Pagden, and Daniel W. Drezner. According to Hoffman, "One of the major causes of terrorism is humiliation, particularly strong in the Muslim world and among the oppressed and those who see themselves as victims of globalization, attributed to the West and especially to the United States."³¹ Hoffman also suggests that there is a need to "respect cultural diversity and the dignity of others." To Pagden, the ongoing conflict in the Middle East is attributable to America's inherent desire to impose its political values on the rest of the world. The United States' former Secretary of State Madeline Albright justified spreading liberalism and democratic values as the "American mission."³² But Pagden does not subscribe to her viewpoint as he observes, "Today, for instance, Iraq and Afghanistan look remarkably like British protectorates. Whatever the administration may claim publicly about the autonomy of the current Iraqi and Afghan leadership, the United States in fact shares sovereignty with the civilian governments of both places, since it retains control over the country's armed forces."33 On a similar note, Drezner argues that "The genesis of the new realism is, of course, America's problems creating democracy in Iraq. But today's problems in Iraq do not derive from failures of democracy. They derive from failures of security, which have made democracy difficult to achieve."34

The above-mentioned political analysts support the major themes of geopsychology which include culture, national pride, dignity, and local values of Middle Eastern societies.

AFGHANISTAN

In its history, America has been fighting one of the longest and toughest wars in Afghanistan. Much of the mess is a direct outcome of U.S. policymakers' poor knowledge and understanding of Afghan history, its geographical terrain, its local cultural values, and its diverse ethnic compositions. There are perhaps a few parallels in human history given the fact that Afghanistan, a landlocked multiethnic country, has been in the throes of one crisis after another ever since Alexander the Great invaded it in 330 BC. In much of the nineteenth century, Afghanistan became an enigmatic victim of the "Great Game" in Central Asia between Russian and British empires, fiercely engaged in thwarting one another's regional influence.³⁵ If seen retrospectively, the British-Afghan Wars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were primarily aimed at defending the British Empire in India to checkmate an impending expansion of Russia into India. But the British ambition to subdue Afghanistan was never fulfilled. However, the British managed to create an artificial Durand Line (1895-1896) between Afghanistan and Pakistan-the root cause of "countless conflicts" in the region. Struck by turbulent conditions at home, the Afghan ruler Abdur Rahman (1880–1901) pursued the policy of independence, neutrality, and nonalignment to maintain peace and stability in the country. Though conscious of a strong and powerful northern neighbor, Russia, Rahman crafted a pragmatic policy of keeping Russians at arm's length by expanding Afghanistan's ties with the West.³⁶

In a quest for the "Great Game," a term "popularized" by the British poet and novelist Joseph Rudyard Kipling in reference to the struggle for "dominance" between the United Kingdom and Russia, neither of them was able to establish "a sovereign control" over Afghanistan. Both had to eat humble pie. Without learning a proper lesson from the follies of imperial powers, the Soviet Union and the United States blundered into a "hasty and ill-considered decision" to invade Afghanistan in December 1979 and October 2001, respectively. Before jumping into a suicidal war in Afghanistan, the United States should have practically learned about Afghanistan's rugged terrain, its ancient history, and its cultural heritage that has taught the Afghan people to be firm, resilient, and resolute to resist "more powerful forces."³⁷

In this context, Meredith L. Runion, author of The History of Afghanistan (2017), describes geography, people, and Islam as the "three pillars" of Afghanistan that have "shaped the present-day environment, outlook, and political stance. These factors are the backbone of the country and are the geographical characteristics, the diverse ethnic and tribal values of the Afghan culture, and a nearly 1500-old belief in Islam."38 Runion reinforces the thesis that before contemplating invasion, great powers ought to have undertaken an intensive survey of manifold aspects of Afghanistan's history, geography,³⁹ and culture to avoid entrapment in unnecessary wars. Importantly, Afghanistan's geography has been a critical factor in shaping the Afghans' perception, behavior, and attitude toward the outside world in terms of the "distinctive Afghan character" of resistance. Afghanistan's geographical terrain serves as a "paradox of enticement due to harsh Hindu Kush Mountain ranges."40 Runion observes, "This difficult terrain is one of the reasons why Afghanistan has been invaded and conquered for centuries without any enduring grip of control."41 Clearly, geographical features of the country or region ought to be seriously considered in the policy framing and decision-making. Abdul Rashid elaborates:

The difficult living conditions have created a decentralized tribal culture that fiercely protects itself through a tribal social code. . . . The individual Afghan is as rugged as the terrain he inhabits, fiercely independent in his personal and community life. Beyond the battle for survival, he is governed by a social code based on honor (*nang*), revenge (*badal*), and hospitality (*malmastia*). While this

178

code has its origin among Pushtuns, it has permeated the culture of the other ethnic communities in Afghanistan as well.⁴²

The Afghan resistance against the erstwhile Soviet Union was aimed at foiling Moscow's attempt to impose its political system that Afghans viewed against their "social code" as well as against the "religious code of Islam." Rashid makes it clear that the Afghan code, not confined to family or clan or tribe, extends to nation and religion. He emphasizes that "the code of revenge is basic to Afghan (and especially *Pushtun*) society. Any harm to an Afghan's family or its honor is avenged, often violently, on a scale at least commensurate with the offence. Failure to seek revenge is tantamount to the loss of honor, and honor is at the very core of Afghan self-identity."⁴³ In the words of Amir Abdur Rahman, "[the Afghans] would all sacrifice every drop of blood till the last man was killed, in fighting for their God, their Prophet, their religion, their homes, their families, their nation . . . their liberty and independence."⁴⁴ These societal values manifest Afghans' geopsychological make-up.

Commenting on the Afghan resilience, Grant M. Farr and John G. Merriam, witnesses to the Afghan scenario during the Soviet military presence, write: "Afghans are a proud people who are willing to fight for what they believe in and to die if necessary."45 Grit and determination have empowered Afghans to resist foreign aggression and make supreme sacrifices for the motherland. As noted, "Yet, during the past 200 years of their modern history, Afghans have always managed eventually to outwit anyone with the impudence to try controlling their fate. The grim and brutal recollections that Afghans hoard in their national memory in turn produced a strategic culture, which has remained unique to this day."⁴⁶ In effect, foreign invaders ignored the tribal culture and its code of revenge and honor, and they had to meet with fierce revenge from Afghans.⁴⁷ In the contextual interpretation, Runion comments, "This proclivity for invasion has not only resulted in the diverse ethnic culture which exists today in Afghanistan, but it has also molded the current emotional standpoint and hardened mental attitude of many Afghans against foreign control and policy in the country."48 It is important to take cognizance of the role of the complex ethnic composition in Afghanistan's domestic and foreign policies. Pashtuns, the largest ethnic group, are regarded as, what the social anthropologist Fredrik Barth says, "the historical founders of the Afghan state, its rulers, and its backbone . . . Pushtun culture has exerted a powerful influence on all of them [other ethnic groups], giving them in one degree or another the characteristics one can call 'Afghan.""49 Barth illuminates three major concepts in defining the Pashtun culture: "honor, selfrespect, and personal identity and value."⁵⁰ These traits reflect in Pashtuns'

dealing with outside forces as well: it reinforces the geopsychology theory of linkages between geopsyche and foreign policy conduct. For example, anti-American sentiments run high among Pashtuns who perceive U.S. boots on their soil as the darkest spot on their national honor.⁵¹ The United States Institute for Peace (USIP) Special Report 2003 observes that "political reconstruction cannot take place without addressing the genuine concerns of the Pashtuns: concerns about security, participation, and representation. Pashtuns believe that other ethnic minorities have a greater voice at the table, not because of their political standing within the country, but because of international support."52 It further underlines "the continuing adherence of the Afghan people, by and large, to an 'Afghan identity' despite the past assaults on the country's society and polity."53 In other words, outside powers' invasion generates "a strong backlash" among Afghans⁵⁴ who tend to rise above factional feuds for the sake of freedom, independence, and honor. A political analyst observes, "two Afghan tribes might fight each other to death for control of power or resources, but the mere presence of an external force in their frontier would weld them together in a common cause i.e. the protection of the Afghan state and its *izzat* or honor."55

Another issue that concerns Pashtuns is the question of the legitimacy of the Durand Line. According to Robert Boggs, the U.S. policy in Afghanistan has failed mainly because of its "inadequate understanding of historic tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan and of recent shifts in the demography and political economy of transnational Pashtun community. Remedies for contagion of extremist violence that afflicts both Afghanistan and Pakistan are complicated by historic grievances [and] ethnic prejudices."56 It may be noted that Pashtuns are a major ethnic group in northern and western parts of Pakistan.⁵⁷ America has perhaps glossed over the dynamics of strained ties between Islamabad and Kabul since the birth of Pakistan as an independent nation in August 1947. It is important to note that Afghanistan had voted against Pakistan's membership to the United Nations.⁵⁸ Boggs elaborates that in 1949, the Afghan Assembly "voted unanimously to reject the internationally recognized Pakistan-Afghanistan border (the so-called Durand Line) on the grounds that it was imposed by Great Britain in 1893 as part of the accord that ended a series of bloody Anglo-Afghan wars."59 In effect, Afghanistan never accepted the Durand Line's legitimacy—a bone of contention between Islamabad and Kabul. While assigning primacy to its strategic interests in Afghanistan, America remained neutral on the persisting hostile relationship between Kabul and Islamabad. Nor did U.S. military strategists and White House officials pay much attention to its fallout on America's long-term interests. At the same time, Pakistan's indispensable role in ensuring Afghanistan's internal security and political stability cannot be wished

away. A major challenge to the U.S. emanates from militant groups operating from Afghan and Pakistani soils. But for the reason of the current impasse in the Islamabad- Kabul relationship, peace dialogue between the Afghan government and the Taliban has been stymied, delaying U.S. troops' total withdrawal from Afghanistan. As such, it would be in American interests to focus on fostering friendly ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan—the key to internal peace, security, and stability in the region.

The War on Terror

In view of the above background, the prime demand of the Taliban, "a predominantly Pashtun, Islamic fundamentalist group,"60 has been the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan. The Taliban have had spurned having a dialogue with "the U.S. backed-Afghan government, denouncing it as foreign 'puppet."⁶¹ So far, direct talks between the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad and the Taliban in Qatar and Moscow in April 2019 have not produced tangible outcomes. This phenomenon is rooted in the Taliban's perception that U.S. assurances are not reliable, whereas the United States is skeptical that the Taliban would cease carrying out terror operations or stop supporting militant outfits following the withdrawal of 14,000 U.S. troops. Though talks on a peace deal between America and the Taliban progressed well over months in 2019, mutual mistrust remained a major stumbling block to ending the prolonged civil war in Afghanistan. Roya Rahmani, the first female Afghan ambassador to the United States, said: "When we are talking about peace, and a peaceful environment for all of us, we are not only talking about the absence of guns and bullets and bombs. . . . We are talking about an environment where human security is present, where people will live free of all forms of violence-not only physical, but emotional, too."62

After a protracted negotiation since 2018, the peace agreement was signed in Doha on February 29, 2020, between the Taliban and the United States, signaling an end to the longest war in Afghanistan with a complete withdrawal of U.S. troops in 14 months.⁶³ It was marked by the presence of the leaders from Pakistan, Qatar, Turkey, India, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan.⁶⁴ In exchange, the Taliban will sever its ties to terrorist or extremist organizations that pose security threats to the United States and its allies and deny such groups the ability to operate in Afghan territory.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, soon after the deal was clinched, the Taliban reportedly resumed attacks on Afghan national forces with the United States responding with an airstrike against the Taliban fighters in Nahr-e Saraj, Helmand province, on March 4, 2020.⁶⁶ In brief, peace remains elusive unless the Taliban psychology is transformed

180

into the philosophy of "Give Peace a Chance" for ensuring a stable, secure, and prosperous Afghanistan. In this context, the Taliban's narratives merit attention:

The Taliban uses the prototypical figure of Mahmud of Ghazni to construct "us vs them" narratives that define a psychological in-group and target outsiders. This in-group consists of Sunni Muslims committed to militant jihad against Muslims and non-Muslims alike who are deemed to be infidels. The Taliban's narratives acknowledge that Mahmud of Ghazni is a source of inspiration, and the publication of such narratives [by the Taliban] well after Mullah Omar's death in 2013 indicates that the Taliban continues to draw upon the figure of Mahmud of Ghazni to incite others.⁶⁷

Not surprisingly, Afghanistan presents a classic case in illuminating the relevance and usefulness of geopsychology. It may be recalled that President George W. Bush, while declaring the global war on terror, took a botched-up hasty decision of attacking Afghanistan in October 2001. An overly selfassured America was caught off guard when the Al Qaeda terrorist group dared attack the "impregnable United States." President Bush, though immeasurably shaken up psychologically, announced Operation Enduring Freedom on October 7, 2001, to decimate the Taliban and the Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden—the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. The Bush administration was upbeat over U.S. forces' swift victory over the Taliban, dislodging it from power in Kabul. Also, it was able to galvanize an unconditional succor of the international community against the Taliban and al-Oaeda. However, as fate would have it, the U.S. mission of ending the terror remains unfulfilled as yet, even though its troops shed much blood in the Afghan war, with a total cost of the war in Afghanistan to the United States being \$1.07 trillion from FY2001 to 2018.68

Ironically enough, the Bush administration (January 2001–January 2009) and its senior aides and advisors scarcely considered the past experiences of British and Soviet empires that had inestimably suffered on account of their foolhardy efforts to conquer Afghanistan. Nor did the administration prepare a well-defined roadmap to wrap up its military mission in Afghanistan. More shockingly, it failed to locate safe havens of terrorist groups targeting American and NATO forces in Afghanistan, even though equipped with a slew of intelligence agencies. Similarly, U.S. intelligence agencies were nonplussed when the 9/11 terrorist attack was carried out. Micah Zenko observes in the *New York Times* that there was a fundamental misunderstanding "about the Sept.[ember] 11 attacks, where the hijackers passed undetected through border checkpoints 33 times and enjoyed the safe havens of southern

Maryland, San Diego and Oklahoma City."⁶⁹ This apart, the Bush administration did not have a precise strategy to fulfill its mission in Afghanistan.

After the exit of the Bush administration, American role in Afghanistan continued to be marginalized. The Obama administration inherited the legacy of an undefined war strategy in Afghanistan. In line with his top priority, President Barack Obama announced that American troops would leave Iraq in 2011. The U.S. forces withdrew accordingly. But Obama's angst was that despite losing more than 2,000 U.S. troops, the administration failed to restore peace and internal stability in Afghanistan. President Donald Trump inherited the intractable Afghan imbroglio. Rather than fulfilling his election promise to withdraw U.S. troops, he committed 4,000 additional American troops to win the war in Afghanistan, arguing that it was necessary so that terrorists might not fill the power vacuum.

However, in an official document, the State Department noted, "President Trump was clear that military power alone will not end the war."⁷⁰ The Pentagon, too, accepts the subordinate role of military force, stating in March 2018 that its aim was "to achieve a political reconciliation, not a military victory."¹¹ The underlying point is that the U.S. "military-centric approach" in the Middle East, in the absence of a proactive diplomacy to reach political rapprochement with regional leaders, had hugely cost America. In Trump's perception, America "got nothing" in return for spending \$ 7 trillion in the Middle East.⁷² Reinforcing his assessment, General Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reiterated that "our [the US] Army must understand the type of war we are engaged with in order to adapt as necessary; that decisions in war occur on the ground in the mud and dirt; and that timeless factors such as human agency, chance, and an enemy's conviction, all shape a war's outcome."⁷³

But President Trump's abrupt decision in December 2018 to withdraw half of U.S. troops from Afghanistan sent chills to the Pentagon and Kabul, fearing disastrous consequences for Afghanistan's internal security and political stability.⁷⁴ As reported, Afghan forces have suffered heavily, "including the 45,000 Afghan National Security Forces that have been killed since 2014."⁷⁵ It is not a small gain for the Taliban that it controls half of the geographical area of the country. The Taliban's morale is very high. By contrast, warweariness appears to have dampened the spirit of U.S. troops to fight and win. Daniel Byman, senior fellow, Center for Middle East Policy, observes, "the Taliban and their Pakistani backers recognize the U.S. public's growing weariness regarding the war in Afghanistan, believing—perhaps correctly that time is on their side."⁷⁶ Therefore, it is in the U.S. interest to wind down everything from Afghanistan as early as possible.⁷⁷

Trump's interest in the U.S. disengagement from war zones is understandable. In pragmatic terms, he is result-oriented in cost-effective terms. During a cabinet meeting on January 2, 2019, President Trump raised a question as to why America did not win in Afghanistan. He put across the problem frankly: "You can talk about our generals. I gave our generals all the money they wanted. They didn't do such a great job in Afghanistan. They've been fighting in Afghanistan for 19 years . . . I want results."⁷⁸ But how can there be results in the face of the gargantuan structural challenges facing the Afghan governance landscape?⁷⁹ Failure of the government to function effectively, the absence of rule of law, and rampant corruption among government officials leave no choice for the people but to turn to the Taliban and local leaders. In the people's perception, the Taliban is just, fair and reliable in dispensing justice. In this context, Byman further observes:

The Taliban's commitment and perseverance warrant recognition. After the U.S. invasion in late 2001, the Taliban were on the ropes. Many Taliban fighters and leaders were dead or had scattered to remote areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Those forces steadily gained strength and fought several successful major military operations in 2017. In contrast to the Afghan government, the Taliban offer a form of justice with less corruption, which also entices locals to rely on the Taliban rather than the regime in Kabul.⁸⁰

Despite the Taliban's past barbaric acts against its own people, the latter believe that the Taliban is fighting a just war against the foreign occupier. This made it a tough task for the United States to win the sympathy and support of the local Afghans. The Middle Eastern people's perception is that America has never invested in their economic development and well-being and has rather concentrated on extracting its natural resources. As a consequence, the United States met with a more deadly fate in Afghanistan. Further, it lacked a clear and coherent strategy as well as a well-defined roadmap to come out of the Afghan quagmire on the one hand, and to deal with the rising power of Russia on the other. In this context, U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders suggests "And we [U.S.] must seriously reinvest in diplomacy."⁸¹ This is all the more important when Russia has occupied "essentially an American protectorate before."⁸² In this scenario, Trump's "disengagement philosophy" appears to be unworkable.

IRAQ: A SORDID STORY

Steadily but surely, ruling leaders' geopsychology matters at large for practical purposes. The psychology of the Iraqi people—nurtured along religious beliefs, cultural and sectarian values, and ethnic affinities—turned them resentful and intolerant of the presence of alien forces on their land, even though they had

Chapter 6

grievously suffered at the hands of Saddam Hussein's oppressive regime.⁸³ If viewed from this angle, the Bush administration's decision to wage war against Iraq was based on a flawed judgment that American forces would be welcomed by Iraqis as their saviors. American policymakers were optimistic that Iraq would be transformed into a "bridgehead of democracy." President George W. Bush appeared overenthusiastic when he stated, "A new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region."⁸⁴

Bush's perception was proved wrong. It was because his policy aides and strategic advisors lacked a sound understanding of Iraqis' psychology rooted in staunch nationalism, Islamic ideology, and cultural affinity. Toby Dodge testifies that the Iraqi people, fueled "both by nationalism and religion," had inbred hatred for American occupation. He further writes that American policymakers had "insufficient planning and misperception about the Iraqi state and society."⁸⁵ As a result, the post-regime change period in Iraq proved much more disturbing, marked by "criminality," "violence," and instability. Insurgency against U.S. occupation escalated, and U.S. troops failed to curb and control loot and lawlessness in Iraq.

America did not realize that the war against terrorism was unsustainable in terms of "blood and treasure." Its "70-year troop commitments to NATO and South Korea as reasonable models"86 did not guarantee success in the wars it fought in the Middle East. There are ample shreds of evidence to prove that countless sorties of U.S. drone strikes, resulting in huge civilian deaths, contributed to intensifying extremism and insurgency in Afghanistan.⁸⁷ While sharing his personal experiences in the Middle Eastern region, Charles W. Freeman, former U.S. ambassador, writes that "instead of formulating a strategy to combat Islamist violence, the Obama administration executed a campaign plan involving the promiscuous use of drone warfare. This multiplied America's enemies and spread terrorism to ever more parts of West Asia and North Africa. One result: the so-called "Islamic State"—Daesh—now has more foreign recruits than it can induct or train."88 Undoubtedly, U.S. forces in Iraq failed before a small band of ISIS militants. Unfortunately, there is no peace concept in the U.S. lexicon of diplomacy when it comes to defeating terror or extremism. Frum writes in The Atlantic, "We were ignorant, arrogant, and unprepared, and we unleashed human suffering that did no good for anyone: not for Americans, not for Iraqis, not for the region. Almost two decades later, the damage to America's standing in the world from the Iraq War has still not been repaired, let alone that war's economic and human costs to the United States and the Middle East."89

John Glaser explains how the U.S.-inspired Iraqi imbroglio contributed to expanding and precipitating regional conflicts. He observes:

The Iraq War upended the Middle East, empowered Iran, and fueled a new generation of jihadist terrorists. Washington bungled a series of changes in the

Egyptian regime and helped (along with other external actors) fuel Syria's civil war. The Obama administration's Libya war created anarchy and new refugee flows. And our longstanding support for Saudi Arabia as a balance to Iran has not only failed to roll back Iran's regional activity, but it has also emboldened Riyadh to act aggressively and pick fights with several of its neighbors.⁹⁰

The overthrow of the autocratic regime of Saddam Hussein did not usher in peace and stability in Iraq. It was the Bush administration's misplaced optimism that with the end of Saddam Hussein's repressive regime the Iraqi people would welcome America's role in providing a new lease of life to them. This unique phenomenon could be explained within the framework of the anti-U.S. geopsychology of the people who hailed Saddam Hussein as their hero, even though his regime was incredibly barbaric, exploitative and repressive. No other theory could better explain the peculiar mindset of the people who preferred to undergo torture, penury, and abject poverty rather than tolerate American presence on the Iraqi soil. The point I wish to hammer out is that the U.S. thrust itself into the riskiest adventure of invasion prior to understanding the Iraqi psyche and regional dynamics. Many strategic pundits cautioned that in the face of Iraqis' dogged determination to make supreme sacrifices, America could not win the war in Iraq, but U.S. administrations ignored their assessment. Also, realist thinkers failed to explain why the 2003 Iraq War proved abortive, without tangible gains for America.

Paradoxically, the U.S. war on Iraq created a mess in the country and fostered chaos and instability in the Middle East. America failed to comprehend the psychology of the people and ruling leaders in the Middle East who never aspired for a liberal democratic order in the region, imposed from outside. Rather, Iraqi people protested the continuing presence of American troops in their country and viewed them as a scourge on their national pride and an insult to the Islamic ummah.⁹¹ U.S. troops were ultimately forced to withdraw from Iraq in 2011, without palpable gains. Rather, a strategic vacuum left over by the United States compounded more complex problems of internal security and political stability in Iraq. It provided incentives to the ISIS, led by Abu al-Bakr Baghdadi, to raise its ugly head in Iraq and Syria. Glaser writes, "Much of what we provided to Iraq ended up in the hands of ISIS. American made weapons have been used to ruthlessly suppress peaceful protesters, from Egypt to Bahrain. And U.S. military support for Saudi Arabia is currently enabling unspeakable war crimes in Yemen, in a conflict that has actually bolstered the position of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)."92 After a long hunt, Baghdadi was ultimately killed by U.S. special operation forces in Syria in October 2019. However, as noted by many political and strategic analysts, the killing of Baghdadi did not end the ISIS's "next generation of jihad." Clint Watts of the Foreign Policy Institute wrote, "Islamic State-trained foreign fighters will be a future terrorism problem for

the decade to come."⁹³ Barbara A. Leaf and Bilal Wahab also reinforce the importance of how geopsychology works in the Middle East. They hold the view that one of its potential drivers is "the rising sense of nationalism . . . among the Iraqi political class," with "the hypersensitive strain of nationalism blooming within Iraq's body politic."⁹⁴

Minimally, America needs to realize that it is none of its business to change the regime nor is it morally defensible to transform the Middle Eastern societies on the lines of Western values. The point to be underscored is that U.S. administrations did never realize that it was their foolhardy attempt to change the "orientation and structure" of Muslim society in Iraq and Afghanistan. In other words, the administrations right from the Bush to the Trump administration failed to change the behavior of sectarian leaders in whose psyche Islamic ideology was deeply entrenched. Instead, President Trump's "demonization of the Islamic world" proved a self-suicidal act on his part.⁹⁵

The U.S. mission to foster democracy throughout the globe has certain built-in handicaps. First, local conditions may not necessarily be favorable to promote democracy. Second, in the forcibly imposed democracy on authoritarian regimes, there cannot be a secure, peaceful and stable international order. Third, new democracies thrust upon inhospitable societal terrains do produce internal security problems. It has been amply proven in the case of Iraq that democracy alone cannot automatically bring security, stability, and prosperity in the country, though it may have brought "some degree of freedom." Kaplan argues that a lack of realistic alternatives to democracy in Iraq applies equally to the Middle East as a whole.⁹⁶ In effect, it is a futile exercise on the part of the United States to impose its political values on the Middle Eastern nations.⁹⁷ As Peter Beinart writes in *The Atlantic*, "The president [Trump] fixates on America's sovereignty but refuses to acknowledge that Iraqis and Iranians have their own aspirations.⁹⁹⁸

IRAN'S CONUNDRUM

Iran, one of preeminent states in the Middle East, is the "largest geopolitical power" in the Gulf. Its strategic importance derives from its proximity to the Strait of Hormuz—"the world's single most important oil passageway, forming a chokepoint between the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman."⁹⁹ After the death of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi—the Shah of Iran and close ally of the United States—in July 1980, the anti-Americanism grew widespread with Iran's command being held by supreme leader Ayatollah Khomeini. Tensions between Washington and Tehran escalated, rooted in Khomeini's perception of America as "the Great Satan" and in President George W. Bush's labeling of Iran as an "axis of evil."

While Iran perceived America as an implacable enemy of the Islamic Republic, America regarded it as an arch supporter of terrorism and a potential security threat to Israel in view of Tehran's ramping up its nuclear and missile program. These conflicting perceptions and incompatible national interests hardened policy approaches of both the governments. Washington-Tehran relations reached their nadir when President Trump took a U-turn in the U.S. Iran policy with his May 2018 announcement of the U.S. withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action-a "landmark 2015 nuclear deal" with Iran. In November 2018, America "reimposed a raft of economic sanctions squeezing Iranian oil exports and curtailing the country's access to the international financial system."100 Iranian President Hassan Rouhani termed U.S. sanctions a well-calibrated "psychological warfare" against Iran. Rouhani said, "Negotiations with sanctions do not make sense. We are always in favor of diplomacy and talks . . . but talks need honesty."¹⁰¹ With the ripping up of the nuclear deal, America lost credibility in the eyes of its European partners since the deal had been clinched under UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and endorsed by P5+1 (the United States, United Kingdom, France, China, Russia, and Germany). The unilateral breach of the agreement was tantamount to undermining the authority of the international community.

Furthermore, the harsh U.S. sanctions against Iran deteriorated security environment in the Gulf region, worsened by the deployment of USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group in the region in June 2019. This unwarranted provocative U.S. action invited Iran's wrath. The Trump administration did not stop here. Iran was taken aback by the Trump administration's psychological warfare when in April 2019, the U.S. State Department designated Iran's "most powerful political and economic institution-the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)-a terrorist organization, further rendering that group an international pariah."102 It was the first time the United States had placed "the designation on part of another country's government. The designation categorizes Iran's military alongside groups like ISIS, Al Qaeda, Hezbollah and Hamas."103 Instead of fostering peace conditions in the region, Trump's ill-conceived moves complicated the fragile security scenario. In realpolitik terms, President Trump is all set to increase his bargaining chips vis-à-vis Iran by mounting pressure on it. This strategy may not work unless he "retracts his superior and provocative rhetoric against Iran.... In other words, the Trump administration aims to rob Iran of its independence."¹⁰⁴ This lends credence to the geopsychology theory's assumption that military force is ineffective in changing the behavior of theocratic/ authoritarian regimes.

Similarly on the nuclear deal, a wide psychological chasm exists between Washington and Tehran. Though Iran favors an early solution to the Middle Eastern crisis, it views its missile program as imperative for psychological deterrence against the potential threat to its national security, mainly from Israel. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei unambiguously stated, "There is no conscious and patriotic Iranian who would agree to negotiate over his strengths and sources of power."¹⁰⁵ Similarly, President Hassan Rouhani stated, "Surrendering is not compatible with our culture and religion, and people do not accept it, so we must not surrender and we must find solutions."¹⁰⁶ It clearly suggests that Iran would not negotiate under any pressure. Rouhani went to the extent of asserting that "Iran will not surrender [to US political and economic pressures] even if it is bombed."¹⁰⁷ Such outbursts are revelatory of Iran's psycho-cultural predisposition to resist Trump's coercive diplomacy of applying "maximum pressure" on it.

Trump's lumpish harshness and insensitivity accentuated Iran's economic woes because of which the Tehranian regime toughened its stance on the nuclear issue. The Trump administration's zero-sum approach might make it harder to bring Iran back to the negotiating table. Iranian President Rouhani has made it unambiguously clear that his country's national pride would never be compromised, even though Iran might have to suffer on economic and trade fronts. In hindsight, Persian nationalism is deeply entrenched in Iran's national psyche—a source of its pride and inspiration.¹⁰⁸ It has been observed that since "the days of the Shah, Iranian leaders have believed that Iran's size, historical importance, and self-professed cultural superiority merit a significant role for the country in the region."¹⁰⁹

United States-Iran relations reached at the lowest ebb with America's assassination of Qassim Soleimani, a major general in the IRGC. Samah Ibrahim observes that the compulsion for Iran to "retaliate" was to protect its image as a regional power and save the credibility of the Iranian regime in responding to such future attacks.¹¹⁰ Trump tweeted on January 4, 2020, "targeted 52 Iranian sites (representing the 52 American hostages taken by Iran many years ago), some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and those targets, and Iran itself, WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD. The USA wants no more threats!"111 Peter Beinart, a professor of journalism at the City University of New York, underscores President Trump's approach to "non-Western nationalism." "To be fair, Trump sometimes bullies European governments too. But he doesn't call them 'shithole countries.' He doesn't threaten to bomb the Eiffel Tower or Big Ben or, for that matter, the Hermitage. He accords white, Christian countries a degree of deference-respect for their sovereignty and national pride-that he doesn't offer to countries like Iraq and Iran."112

Furthermore, Iran's "self-professed" cultural superiority and "militarized theocracy" are driving factors in conducting its foreign affairs and relations, which have been blatantly glossed over by U.S. hardliners like Secretary

of State Mike Pompeo and National Security Adviser John Bolton. There are apparent "divisions and competition within the administration over Iran policy."113 It reflects from Trump's disinclination to take a war-like action against Iran nor did he favor "regime change,"¹¹⁴ interpreted "as an invitation to talk" [to Iran]. However, Bolton for long advocated "bombing Iran" which besmirched America's reputation in the Middle East. Trump's policy was aimed to subdue Iran by slapping stringent economic sanctions on it. Indisputably, the inconsistency in the U.S. Middle East policy produced a mess, inviting "rapturous flood of criticism" in the media and the Congress. It may be further mentioned that Pompeo presented a list of twelve demands (including human rights and release of dual nationals held in Iranian prisons) that "Iran had to meet for the Trump administration to consider new negotiations with the Islamic Republic."115 This conditionality aroused the ire of Iran that became more intransigent in dealing with America. Indeed, the latter's sanctions were unable to change Tehran's behavior or make it concede to any of U.S. demands.¹¹⁶ It was the administration's miscalculation that its "coercive power of sanctions" would bring Iran to U.S. knees. Essentially, the U.S. administration's purported aim to alter Iran's behavior is neither feasible nor morally defensible. At the June 2018 teleconference of the Tennessee World Affairs Council, Rick Barton, former U.S. ambassador to the UN, said that the United States needed to "maintain its focus on people. Since a country's greatest resource is often the ingenuity of its local citizens, it is counterproductive to ignore them while planning an intervention."¹¹⁷ Barton's view clearly reflects that America, instead of flexing its military muscles, ought to win the locals' goodwill and support. The peoples' perception is an integral component of the region's psychology. Graham E. Fuller observes, "Both sides [America and Iran] are weary of demonization. Even more important, Tehran and Washington both now recognize that each side is paying an ever steeper price for prolonging the alienation. . . . The United States in turn has lost the support of most of its allies on its Iran policy, while punitive U.S. sanctions upon allies now hinder cooperation in many other areas of broad strategic interest in the region."118

Because of its inconsistent and incoherent policy toward Iran, the United States has failed to bring about peace and stability in the region.¹¹⁹ In an unprecedented policy move, the Trump administration took a momentous decision in May 2019 to dispatch aircraft carrier Strike Group to the U.S. Central Command region to meet "the credible threat" from Iran to U.S. forces. This move might make it tough for the administration to extricate America from the quagmire of the Middle Eastern geopolitics.¹²⁰ The U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders commented that the United States committed "a series of blunders" in the Middle East by picking quarrels with Iran without a tangible ground. He warned that "a war with Iran would be many times worse

than the Iraq War. U.S. military leaders and security experts have repeatedly told us that. If the United States were to attack Iran, Tehran could use its proxies to retaliate against U.S. troops and partners in Iraq, Syria, Israel, and the Persian Gulf area. The result would be the further, unimaginable destabilization of the Middle East."¹²¹ In realpolitik terms, America did not realize limitations of "purely military solutions." Instead, military power should have been accompanied by the diplomacy of healing religious and cultural wounds of the Middle Eastern peoples inflicted by America.

CONCLUSION

The United States' disastrous failure in curbing and controlling extremist forces in Afghanistan and the Middle East is attributable to a host of intermeshing factors that include its inadequate knowledge about behavioral patterns and mindsets of non-state actors such as the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and ISIS. These extremist groups perceive America as a spoiler of their religious beliefs and practices, ethnic, and cultural norms and values. Besides, the United States has oscillated between its overseas over-commitments and an inescapable predicament whether or not to stay in the region. On top of it, it lacked strategic focus in light of an upswing in the increasing security role of Russia and Iran. Undoubtedly, Tehran, Moscow, and Beijing are firm on filling the strategic void following U.S. troops' "complete drawdown" from the region.

Given the Middle East's distinctiveness in terms of geography, history, culture, and ethnic composition, the region has experienced political upheavals, fueled by the U.S. interventionist role in the region. Cumulatively, it culminated into a kind of psycho-cultural warfare of the "axis of evil" (labeled by President G.W. Bush) versus the "axis of resistance." Further, the U.S. and NATO forces misused their military and technological power, killing innocent civilians in drone attacks. As such, mass psychology turned trenchantly hostile to the United States.¹²² The U.S. failure to secure stability in the region was exposed in the public eyes when hawks sitting in the Trump administration began flirting with the so-called good Taliban.

The U.S. coercive diplomacy has not worked in Iran, Turkey, and Syria. For example, the United States dispatched an aircraft carrier to intimidate Iran in disregard of the fact that unlike such conservative governments as Saudi Arabia or Israel in the region, Iran is more liberal and more democratic. America should have availed itself of Iran's pragmatic and flexible foreign policy and diplomacy to facilitate resolving the long-standing nuclear tangle. Rather, Iran felt compelled to join Russia as a counterweight to America's power projection in the region. In other words, the United States' bad behavior coupled with punitive threats to ruin the Iranian economy has not yielded the desired outcome.

The widespread antipathy of Muslim leaders against the United States has not subsided. As such, America needs to reorient its policy strategies to deal with regional security issues that jeopardize American national interests. Moreover, the U.S. intolerance and disrespect for indigenous cultures, local values, and religious faith of the people in Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey largely contributed to the deepening enmity against the United States in Greater Middle East. Apart from it, the United States' overstretched military presence in the region has exacerbated the people's social and economic pangs as evident from indiscriminate aerial bombardments that destroyed their houses, shops, and factories, and left them without food and medical aid. Naturally, it precipitated the anguish and hatred among the masses against foreign occupiers. Any further attempt by the United States at foisting liberal political values on Middle Eastern societies would backfire. In effect, it will be a daunting task for America to heal their psychological wounds. For the United States, no respite is in the offing.¹²³

While geopolitical vacuum may occur following U.S. forces' complete withdrawal from Afghanistan, a let-up in the anti-US geopsychology among extremist forces is unlikely. Rather, there is a strong possibility that the Taliban might turn more aggressive. It is further exemplified by "murder-ous undertakings" of bin Laden and Al Qaeda who invoked hatred against the United States as a "defensive reaction to American killings of ordinary Muslims in their occupation of Muslim lands."¹²⁴ Laden's psychology was centered on forcing U.S. troops to leave Saudi Arabia—his native home. He defended jihad (as "defensive jihad") to protect the Arab land and its people by highlighting Muslim killings in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, and Bosnia. Laden reiterated that "peaceful co-existence" between Muslims and Christians could materialize if the United States stopped killing Muslims and occupying their land.

America needs to resist the temptation of transforming societies and the cultural base of the Middle East along Western values. It needs to realize that its hegemonic aspirations are no longer valid in the wake of nationalistic resurgence and the upsurge of extremist forces in the region. Overall, what America needs is a better understanding of the regimes' psychology rather than engaging in a futile exercise of fostering a geopolitical balance of power. The Independent Task Force Report 65 (2010) on U.S. Strategy for Pakistan and Afghanistan by the Council on Foreign Relations observes, "Americans will be less safe if a network of like-minded terrorist groups, including Al Qaeda, can operate freely in large portions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. These groups have over and again showed their willingness and ability to

conduct deadly attacks on the United States, India, and U.S. allies. Their anti-American fervor is undiminished."¹²⁵

Indeed, America has been found a captive of its own ignorance-trap. It is hardly surprising that the United States would have continued to enjoy its status as a superpower till the end of the twenty-first century had it avoided a mismatch between its capabilities and its ignorance of local realities in the Middle East, specifically in terms of the code of honor and the code of revenge. The study concludes that strategies and resources alone do not guarantee the victory in foreign interventions. The time has come for America and the rest of the global actors to realize that with the decline of geopolitics, it makes an absolute sense to experiment with the analytical framework of geopsychology in their decision-making in foreign policy and security domains to avoid the avoidable conflicts and civil wars occurring in various parts of the world.

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192

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Conclusion

The international relations (IR) discipline is not only becoming popular among students but also expanding fast with the changing contours of world politics. This naturally warrants fresh approaches to identify and understand novel challenges and nontraditional security threats. For this, geopsychology is very likely to emerge as a new frontier of knowledge for both diagnosis and prognosis of conflicts and civil wars that have engulfed the world. The forces of culture and nationalism that shape psychological dispositions of non-state and authoritarian actors have been ignored so far by Western IR scholars. The geopsychology theory (GT) questions the relevance and utility of mainstream IR paradigms and offers easy pathways to comprehend and resolve complex problems. In practical terms, geopsychology offers a reliable analytical tool to better understand the functionality of state governance in volatile regions—the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia. Moreover, the intensifying wave of mutual conflict and animosity between nation-states has made the geopsychological paradigm more relevant today.

A major transformation occurred in international politics following the tragic events of 9/11. Its inevitable impact on IR theory's "research agenda" was undeniably conjoined with an interdependent world order. However, theorists of structural realism, neoliberalism, and constructivism have failed to explain how non-state actors can be more threatening and more damaging to the regional and global order than the supposedly rational state actors. Therefore, the GT provides much clarity about the precise nature of strategy to be adopted to manage long-standing conflicts and civil wars. As Keohane and Nye observe, "We believe that several approaches are needed, but to different degrees in different situations. We need both traditional and new insights."¹

IR theorists such as Barry Buzan and Michael E. Cox do not consider 9/11's "intellectual consequences" as "revolutionary," instead describing it as one of the events in world politics. It may not spring surprise if they christen the COVID-19 pandemic as one of the events in the world history. Regardless of their logic, the extraordinary events cannot be outright dismissed. At least, it is a good beginning that the research agenda in IR in many world-renowned universities has shifted to understanding psychological dispositions and "cognitive behavioral system" of non-state actors and authoritarian leaders. There is hardly an exaggeration that both the real and the abstract worlds are inextricably intermeshed. Both need each other to craft a better world order. Keeping this centrality in view, I have ventured into offering an innovative approach—the geopsychological framework of analysis.

Based on studying "weaknesses and biases" of individual, non-state and dictatorial actors, geopsychology can offer scientific explanations about their behavioral patterns and strategic choices. Alexander Wendt, a constructivist theorist, has argued that "the realist conception of anarchy does not adequately explain why conflict occurs between states."² And Stephen M. Walt points out that constructivist theories "do not offer a unified set of predictions" on contemporary issues.

Overall, the GT is a reliable guidepost for public policymakers and foreign policy practitioners. From this perspective, it ought to be remembered that India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, with a strong sense of history, framed India's foreign policy toward the Middle East based on psychological predispositions of the region's monarchs and authoritarian leaders rather than purely on the geopolitical basis. Though often charged with "soaring idealism," Nehru better understood the psychology of Arab leaders. It reflected from his perception that India's national interests in the Middle East would be better served by taking up the causes of the Arab world by extending moral and diplomatic succor to the Palestinians' right to establish an independent nation. Nehru was aware of India's historical and cultural ties with Middle Eastern countries whose oil resources were indispensable for fulfillment of India's energy needs as well as for remittances of Indian immigrants working in the Gulf and the Middle East.

In comparison, the U.S. appeasement policy toward Israel produced a strong anti-American sentiment in the region. Without exaggeration, the United States pursued a self-suicidal policy of blindly supporting Israel, for example, by exercising its veto power in the latter's favor on numerous occasions while bypassing UN Security Council Resolutions against Israel. Indeed, U.S. policymakers under the spell of arrogance of power neglected understanding the Arab nationalism, its history, its political culture, its socio-cultural values, and its grand old civilization.

So far as the Modi government's Middle East policy is concerned, it is poised toward cultivating political bonhomie with Israel, raising misgivings among Arab countries about Indian friendship. If the Indian government continues to overlook the mental makeup and political sensitivities of the region's leadership, India's economic and strategic interests would be jeopardized. Also, India needs to be mindful of the possible fallout of its heavy tilt toward America on its long historic ties with Iran and Russia. In brief, India needs to pursue its relations with Israel and Arab countries as well as with the United States and Iran with prudence and pragmatism.

THE INDIA-PAKISTAN CASE STUDY

The GT validates how the rival psychology of India and Pakistan led to four wars since August 1947. It might be recalled that Pakistani ruling leaders exploit the religious card to hobnob with the Muslim brethren on a psychological rhetoric that Pakistan possesses an Islamic bomb versus the Hindu bomb. It is an attempt to win the support and sympathy of Muslim organizations such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the African Union to malign India's image as a Hindu threat to Islam.

History bears the testimony that Z.A. Bhutto was the brain behind Pakistan's nuclear program to "bleed" India. And Pervez Musharraf hailed Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan as his "national hero" and regarded the Pakistani nuclear bomb as the greatest pride of the global Muslim community. Furthermore, Pakistani civilian and military elites have reiterated that Pakistan's nuclear bomb would serve as a psychological deterrent against the enemies of the Muslim world. This stance reinforces how geopsychology impacts foreign policy and security decision-making in both the countries.

Pakistan's and India's current ruling leaders and media harbor incorrigible hatred for each other. This is manifest from the vitriolic hate speeches made by Prime Minister Imran Khan and his cabinet colleagues in the wake of India's revocation of the Indian Constitution's Article 370, which undermined Jammu and Kashmir's autonomy and special status. Similarly, the anti-Pakistan rhetoric is voiced by their counterparts in India, including TV channels, the RSS, and the BJP. On this issue, Pakistan's anti-India campaign became fiercer.

If the GT were to apply to the question of Pakistan's national security, Pakistan might be psychologically prepared to undertake the riskiest enterprise—exercising the nuclear first-use option. I have consistently maintained in the book that religion, culture and self-pride have been prime determinants in shaping and articulating psychological dispositions of the masses, media, and policymakers in India and Pakistan. The GT has been further tested on the nuclear issue that shows how Pakistan's rival psychology versus India led it to increase its nuclear arsenal, even though it is worst hit by abysmal poverty with a poor infrastructural base to support economic development.

Is there a shortcut route to creating conductive conditions for arms control negotiations between India and Pakistan for no-first use? The basic psychological hurdle remains as it is. By projecting India as an existential threat to Pakistan, a handful of top brass in civil and military bureaucracy, especially in Pakistan, have derived a strong popular support for Islamabad's nuclear weapons and missile program. An absurd notion circulated by these elites, including court intellectuals, is that nuclear deterrence would prevent the nuclear exchange. But nuclear deterrence is dysfunctional in the case of India and Pakistan where security decisions are primarily psycho-cultural centric, and where the rational choice model is overshadowed by past prejudices and leaders' idiosyncrasies. Because of their lack of the knowledge of ground realities of the Indian subcontinent, ruling sections often impose horrendous decisions on the people by projecting their decisions as centralized decisions, representative of the national consensus.

The study finds that the security of South Asia can neither be guaranteed by nuclear weapons nor by inviting the strategic presence of extra-regional forces, which have a poor understanding of South Asia's domestic politics, its internal contradictions, its religious and cultural complexities, and its historical narratives. It is, therefore, important to conclude that the region's security emanates essentially from within the region. Unless internal contradictions are addressed within the geopsychological framework, a consensual security framework cannot be thought of.

Furthermore, the leadership in New Delhi and Islamabad will need to improve cognitive processes in light of new facts, objective information and open-mindedness so as to obviate the impact of the deeply jangled thinking of ruling sections, including intellectuals and commoners. This mode of analysis insists on "recapturing the value of perceptional change" through the improved cognitive learning. As this paradigm suggests, there is a primacy of psychology and culture in explaining the historical hostility between India and Pakistan. In particular, the Hindu-Muslim syndrome in South Asia reactivates ethnoreligious complexes to emotive issues like cross-border terrorism,³ which are often exploited by the ruling class to derive maximum political mileage.

THE 1962 SINO-INDIAN WAR

The chapter on China's foreign policy behavior argues that the 1962 war could have been averted had India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru

understood or taken Mao's palm theory seriously. How? Nehru had two options. First, he could have attempted to address Mao's egoistic predisposition. Second, Nehru could use diplomatic channels to engage China to buy sufficient time to strengthen the country's defense sinews through indigenous and external sources as an effective deterrent against Mao's military mindset. The potency of the second option reflects in the fact that Mao made a unilateral ceasefire declaration in November 1962 when he learned that America was coming to India's rescue. Had America not provided instant military assistance, Mao and his PLA's top military commanders, as they had planned, would have attacked India again in the chilly winter of December to wrest further territory. This classic example reinforces the practical utility of the geopsychological approach in planning, formulating, and coordinating foreign, defense, and security policies and strategies.

AFGHANISTAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST

While incorporating discussions on Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq, the book illuminates the underlying logic how asymmetrical powers in the region could summon up the courage to confront America. How could a beleaguered Iraq cope with the U.S. onslaught that ultimately led to the first Gulf War against it in January 1991? No sensible power could entertain the idea of fighting the combined forces of America and allied nations under the UN banner. Fundamentally, because of its political culture and the authoritarian leadership's deeply ingrained perceptions and belief systems, the Iraqi leadership remained undeterred by U.S. threats, its intimidation, and UN resolutions.

Another classic case is related to Afghanistan in which the Taliban's resurgence and tenacity forced the Trump administration to hold peace talks with the Taliban at Doha in Qatar. Though initially the Taliban and the Al Qaeda were swiftly deracinated by U.S. forces, their morale was neither defeated nor weakened. Rather, their sturdy mindset and unshakable resolve prompted them never to surrender before America. As a result, the Taliban rejuvenated itself to stage a comeback. As mentioned, the Trump administration's policy of retreat from "endless wars" forced it to reopen dialogue with the Taliban to wrap up the American war in Afghanistan. Moreover, the administration has acknowledged its moral defeat in Afghanistan, realizing that the Taliban's invincibility and perseverance were rooted in their cultural upbringing and socialization along local values, traditions, norms, and harrowing past experiences. Though militarily and technologically the Taliban is no match to the United States, its indefatigable psychological weaponry enabled it to defeat the mightiest mortal power on the planet. Disapproval of U.S. policies by Middle Eastern countries is attributable to its military-centric approach and crass ignorance of the Arab nationalism, its history, cultural values, and its ancient civilization. Given this, America will need to reevaluate its inane policies in today's world descending into a paroxysm of religious extremism, cultural megalomania, and psychological nightmare. This has been amply proved in the case of Osama bin Laden, to whom American occupation of his native Saudi Arabia was a powerful geopsychological narrative.⁴ In the context of the Arab-Israel relationship, the study suggests that America scarcely realized that the real issue was not the territorial conflict. Rather, it was an emotionally induced psychology of the Arab countries that Muslims were not fairly treated by America as an "honest broker."

My theory of geopsychology underscores the fact that great powers involved in the Middle Eastern politics could have saved their coffers, energy and resources had they cared to improve the knowledge and understanding of the basics of Afghan culture, nationalism, religious faith, and injunctions of the people. Most of the conflicts were avoidable. But the ignorance and deliberate neglect of those areas' cultural sensitivities and historical narratives landed great powers like the United States in morass. The latter's track record of undermining the importance of the psychology of religious groups and ruling leaders, for example, in Afghanistan and Iraq, is tantamount to its underestimating the severity of COVID-19 virus pandemic.⁵ Before making meticulous preparations to undertake the riskiest enterprise, the United States thrust its troops into the dark terrain without anticipating the worst possible consequences.

THE KOREAN PUZZLE

In the case of the Korean Peninsula as well, the peace and stability cannot be envisioned without taking into account North Korea's nationalism, its culture, and its supreme leader Kim Jong-un's strongly embedded psychology of never to compromise when it comes to the question of national pride and honor. As mentioned in this book, North Korea could be dissuaded from building nuclear weapons and missiles at an early stage had President George W. Bush agreed to hold direct talks with Chairman Kim Jong-il. To recognize North Korea as an equal sovereign nation, the latter insisted on holding a oneon-one dialogue with President Bush to amicably settle the nuclear tangle. At that time, it was possible to cap and dismantle North Korea's nuclear program since Kim Jong-il was comparatively flexible in his policy approach. But Bush lost a great opportunity under the illusion that it was below his dignity to establish a direct political dialogue with the weak and "impoverished" North Korea. It may be clarified that even though individual dispositions of Kim Jong-il and Kim Jong-un could matter in foreign policy responses, their overarching national pride and honor underlay their psychological repugnance to unequal treatment meted out by America. The GT suggests that so long as Kim Jong-un is engaged in a win-win discourse, the warlike situation can be temporarily averted. This assumption has been validated by empirical evidence that since Kim and Trump stuck to the win-win dialogue, a nuclear truce prevailed on the peninsula. Though Trump is denounced for his mercurial temperament and erratic policy decisions, he displayed an exemplary quality as a geo-psychologist in the case of North Korea. Instead of testing Kim's patience and political resolve to harm U.S. allies, President Trump intelligently addressed Kim's psychological disposition by showering epithets, calling him "talented," a "very good guy," "a very mature person," and so forth. At the same time, Trump kept the political dialogue open with Kim. Julian Ku, a law professor at Hofstra University, remarked that if North Korea behaves like a "normal country" and embraces economic liberalism, Trump would be a "hero."⁶

Finally, I should clarify that the GT is not recommending that the United States pursue an appeasement policy toward totalitarian regimes. Regardless of the themes appearing in the case studies, such as regime change, foreign intervention, disregard of foreign cultures, and imposition of wars, the GT is not simplistic in terms of coming up with a list of do's or don'ts for state foreign policies. The purpose of the case studies is to demonstrate the effect of geopsychology on non-state actors' behavior (or that of totalitarian regimes) and to make out a case for designing foreign policies accordingly. The GT serves as a mirror that exposes gaps, loopholes, and flaws in foreign policies disconnected from cultural moorings, urges, narratives, and dispositions of external powers. Importantly, a sheer understanding of geopsychology will not help unless foreign policy practitioners tailor their policies accordingly. Otherwise, it would be just like understanding a foreign language without putting it to use in communication with native speakers. Similarly, the mere understanding of geopsychology will be futile should arrogance or selfassuredness cloud the thinking of policymakers that they could have their way by bending and mending others' psychologies.

LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

I concede that the GT has limitations as an approach to understanding and evaluating foreign and security policies. It is fair to say that human intentions

Conclusion

cannot be accurately predicted. Nevertheless, it does not dilute the GT's utility as an analytical framework at a time when the world confronts new threats and challenges whose roots lie in the geopsychology of state and non-state actors, especially in volatile regions such as South Asia and the Middle East. Undeniably, whether to tread a terror-path or to embrace peace is embedded in the mental makeup of these actors. Without this understanding, threat perceptions and security challenges—military and non-military—cannot be effectively dealt with in the age of globalization.⁷

As such, the GT establishes the connection between causes and effects pertaining to myriad conflicts. To validate the associated assumptions, both primary and secondary data were used, including interviews, surveys, informal discussions with strategic analysts, and public statements of ruling leaders. Future research may be conducted using the content analysis methodology in a more comprehensive way to draw logical inferences from public speeches and statements of policymakers, bureaucratic elites, and violent non-state actors, and authoritarian rulers. Further, there is much scope to extend the GT's spatial range covering more geographical areas.

The study suggests that a systematic approach through an interdisciplinary team will render this enterprise more effective and fruitful. In view of the GT's interdisciplinary character, there is a scope for undertaking further research on each individual component of this theory as laid out in chapter 1.

In brief, the time has come for the "research agenda" in IR to take cognizance of the psychological preponderance in the thinking and behavioral patterns of non-state and dictatorial actors. As such, the GT's role and place in the global political and security order can be neither devalued nor neglected. Without being prejudiced to the worth of old IR theories, I strongly argue that there is an imperative need for developing new concepts and paradigms in the face of an apparent primacy of geopsychology over geopolitics.

NOTES

1. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 4th edition (Boston, MA: Longman, 2012).

2. Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy* 110 (Spring 1998): 41.

3. See B. M. Jain, "Ethno-religious Conflicts and Civilian Intervention in South Asia in the Context of India and Pakistan," *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs* 18, no. 1 (June 2005): 1–16.

4. See Nahum Goldman, "The Psychology of Middle East Peace," *Foreign Affairs* 54 (October 1975): 116–26.

Conclusion

5. "China is moving quickly and adeptly to take advantage of the opening created by U.S. mistakes, filling the vacuum to position itself as the global leader in pandemic response. While Europe declined to help Italy, China committed to sending '1,000 ventilators, two million masks, 100,000 respirators, 20,000 protective suits, and 50,000 test kits,' sending medical teams and masks to Iran, too." Kurt M. Campbell and Rush Doshi, "The Coronavirus Could Reshape Global Order," *Foreign Affairs*, March 18, 2020, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-03-18/coronavirus-could-reshape-global-order.

6. *Quartz*, April 27, 2018, https://qz.com/1261636/chinas-nuclear-path-may-offer -a-lesson-to-trump-on-how-to-deal-with-north-koreas-kim-jong-un/.

7. B.M. Jain, India in the New South Asia: Strategic, Military and Economic Concerns in the Age of Nuclear Diplomacy (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), xvii.

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Appendix A

Interview with Madhukar S. J. B. Rana August 7, 2011

Professor Madhukar S. J. B. Rana, former finance minister of Nepal, shares his candid and insightful views on myriad aspects of India-Nepal relations with Romi Jain, Indian Journal of Asian Affairs.¹

- *RJ:* Indo-Nepal relations have been punctuated by recent political developments in Nepal if we trace them to the capture of power by CPN Maoists and then to the formation of the current government under CPN (UML). How do you assess the impact of these developments on the Indo-Nepal relations?
- *MSJB:* I would like to say that somehow the Indo-Nepal relations are at a lower point because I think somehow India has lost its paddle in dealing with Nepal. *RJ:* Can you please elaborate on it?
- *MSJB:* The rise of the Maoists in Nepal is not that the Indians were supporting. Their rise is an indigenous phenomenon. However, in my view, it was later on used by the Indian government to destabilize the then regime led by the King of Nepal, which resulted in the signing of the 12-point in New Delhi. Indian government maneuvered the unity between the two parties, namely the Congress Party and the United Marxist-Leninist Party along with the Communist Maoist Party to sign this 12-point agreement. The agreement ushered in the revolutionary changes in Nepal, resulting in its destabilization with the renunciation of its traditional institutions such as the monarchy, the Hindu State, and also the unitary state moving toward an unknown destination—ethnic federalism.
- *RJ:* India-Nepal relations have been conducted in accordance with the 1950 Bilateral Treaty of Peace and Friendship. But after the installation of CPNled governments in Nepal, the Indian government agreed to their demand for the review of the Treaty and that was during the visit of then Prime Minister

Prachanda to India in 2008 and that of M.K. Nepal in 2009. What do you think about the review of the treaty?

- *MSJB:* The question of the review of the 1950 Treaty is a perennial affair. It has gone on and gone, as far as I remember from 1975. It is just rhetoric because somehow in all honesty India does not want a change in the treaty. As a matter of fact, rather than negotiating a new treaty, it uses its power to say: well, you can always have the choice of renouncing this treaty and then moving on to a new [one]. So, I don't believe that India really desires a change in this treaty.
- *RJ:* Coming to the 1996 Mahakali Treaty between India and Nepal, what are the problems inherent in this Accord that led Nepal to demand review?
- *MSJB*: It was a landmark treaty in many respects because somehow we had hoped with that treaty we would be having not just the export of power but also the development of the very backward region, which was fueling the Maoist insurgency, through greater economic regional balance, and so forth, through the utilization of water. But somehow nothing has progressed in so many years. India was to come up with the detailed project report in six months, and nothing has happened since 1996 when two-thirds of the Parliament endorsed this treaty. Nepal is caught in a bind as to whether we should follow the Bhutan model which is basically to export its power to India and give water for free, and there is the other school of thought that says that more valuable to the nation is the water that should be charged for, and not the electricity, and this is the debate that is going on in Nepal.
- *RJ:* I would like to know your viewpoint on China's increasing geopolitical and geoeconomic proximity with Nepal. What do you think is its fallout on Indo-Nepal relations?
- *MSJB*: I think it has immense fallout on Indo-Nepal relations because already we are seeing it daily in the press: the expected arrival of the National Security Council on the 16th of August [2011] with a fourteen-member delegation that is going to take up the relationship between Nepal and China very comprehensively, which may even involve the proposal to sign a new treaty of Peace and Friendship, and also something that India was also interested in—to sign a treaty of extradition. So I think the fallout is immense geopolitically, geoeconomically, and geopsychologically.
- *RJ*: So what could be the pragmatic strategies for India to wean Nepal away from China's increasing influence?
- *MSJB:* The fact of the matter is that India and Nepal are very close: 85 percent of the Nepalese are Hindus, 85 percent of the Indians are Hindus, and this relationship is an everlasting relationship through a common religion, and nothing can destroy that between people to people. The problem is between states to states; somehow the equilibrium has not arrived. It [Nepal] still is dominated upon and, of late, it's feeling that it's being micro-managed in all aspects of its polity.

Coming to what we should do, I would say that we should have a new treaty . . . seeking economic integration that allows for the maximum utilization of our resources which are water, tourism, natural beauty, and agriculture. I would go so far to [suggest] an integrated commodity arrangement where we are given the opportunities for value addition through niche products that are not in competition with India, such as tea or coffee, herbs, floriculture, sericulture, and so forth.

I look upon Nepal as not just one economy; for us what matters is the economy of UP, the economy of Bengal, the economy of Uttarakhand, and the economy of Bihar. We have to be integrated to these economies.

RJ: What do you say about the impact of the WTO on Nepal's economy?

MSJB: We have negotiated our agreement with the WTO and we are respecting it. We are reducing our custom duty in line [with WTO provisions] and we are opening our banks, allowing for branch banking. In fact, in my latest article, I wrote that the Chinese should also come up with branch banking to help foreign investment.

To me, the importance of the WTO was not so much for trade as it was for the opportunities mobilized for foreign direct investment. That we have not been able to do.

- *RJ:* Prof. Rana, Nepal has been reeling under the energy crisis. The World Bank recently approved a \$99 million package for Indo-Nepal cross-border energy cooperation. What is your comment on the potential of Indo-Nepal hydropower cooperation as a win-win proposition?
- *MSJB:* The debate is about whether we go for mega projects or small projects. The mega projects would require huge stations and huge investments, and the costs are also highly escalated. But it fails to utilize water through adequate storage unless one creates multipurpose schemes such as the Mahakali with benefits for irrigation and transportation. Just exporting hydroelectricity is not a win-win situation for Nepal. The other alternative is to go for small projects, small micro mini hydro projects that will eliminate the local communities, and by the way at one point [in time] we had our own project which was discontinued by the World Bank, which was expected to develop 450 megawatts of hydroelectricity, but somehow it was discontinued because of the controversy over small versus big, export versus import substitution.
- *RJ:* Professor Rana, you referred to geopsychology. Do you think the geopsychology of Nepalese people and ruling elites is based on a perception that Nepal has not been fairly treated by India in respect of foreign, defense and security affairs?
- *MSJB:* Well, yes! I might say that this concept of geopsychology is the wisdom endowed upon me by Prof. B.M. Jain of Rajasthan University, Jaipur. And I think it is a most valuable concept in understanding our relationship because Nepalese have a sense of inferiority with India—that's no doubt. But it [Nepal]

Appendix A

does also have the feeling that it has been done unfairly in terms of not getting its due share. We are not interested in aid, we want mutual beneficial projects, but somehow India has still stuck on to the old paradigm of the Panikkar Doctrine of a hegemonistic asymmetrical relationship which was discontinued with the Gujral Doctrine in 1996, which was a huge breakthrough in Nepal-Indo relations. The Mahakali Treaty was signed as a result of the Gujral Doctrine, and then with Vajpayee we go back to something called "regionalism through enlightened bilateralism" which is opposed to the concept of regionalism.

- *RJ:* In 2009, India and Nepal signed a treaty of Trade and Agreement on Cooperation to control unauthorized trade. That was an improvement on the 1996 Trade Treaty. In light of this, where do you think Indo-Nepal trade relationship is headed? Do you see any improvement or what?
- *MSJB:* The breakthrough in Indo-Nepal trade relationship came in 1978 when a new treaty was signed with the separation of the Treaty of Transit with the Treaty of Trade: two treaties instead of one, and concessions were given and then the next bigger breakthrough came in 1996 and the benefits were immense, unbelievable. But then the next turnaround: it's all withdrawn. So there's no stability in the Indian policy toward Nepal. Other than that, what is happening is that India is giving concessions, whether giving tax concessions or subsidizing industries, to the mountainous areas of India such as Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and the northeast. So why will people come to Nepal? They would rather go to Uttarakhand, to Darjeeling, to Sikkim, to Northeast, to benefit from the fiscal incentives. According to the 1950 treaty, we are supposed to get national treatment, but somehow we are not getting that.
- *RJ*: What is your perception about the imperative of fostering strong and stable relations between India and Nepal?
- *MSJB*: For a strong and stable relationship between India and Nepal, I believe that it should have a strong relationship on the economic front. It should have a new treaty that demarcates our borders once and for all. We don't want dependency. We want inter-dependence with Indian economy through the utilization of our resources for mutual benefit. We have to settle our river boundary problem; we have to get to understand that somehow, as a upper riparian state, we have our rights and we should not be disallowed from building dams and so forth ... [make the] best utilization of our natural resources, be they forests, be they water, be they the beauty of our land through tourism, exploration of minerals, agriculture, and [achieve] integration of our economy.

The other thing I would like to emphasis is this that we are caught in a bind of having a fixed exchange rate system with India. And this to me, as an economist, is not helping our economy. If we devalue, the political implications are severe because we are going to import massive inflation, so this will not be tolerated politically. But if we don't devalue, what we are doing is: subsidizing the Indian exports to Nepal and harming our own agriculture exports to India. So I'm suggesting that India should be generous enough to endow us with funds, a soft loan to allow us to move to a managed flexible exchange rate system where our currency can be in the basket with other currencies to have one exchange rate for the world, including India. This will help us to promote import substitution on a competitive advantage or comparative advantage basis. I think this should be the greatest gift to Nepal.

The other thing is that and this is very important for the security—no country can be said to be sovereign if it cannot have its own defense policy. India does not allow, according to the 1950 Treaty, the import of arms from third countries. Nepal [should be allowed] to have its own defense policy and we can have a security agreement with India.

RJ: Thank you very much Professor Rana for your time and for sharing your views.

MSJB: Thank you very much.

NOTE

1. The interview appeared in the *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs* 24, no. 1–2 (June–December 2011): 89–93.

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217

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9/11, 1, 19, 21, 171, 173, 181, 201 26/11, terror attacks on Mumbai, 74 Abbas, Mahmoud, 104 Abdulaziz, Abdullah Bin, support to India's membership to OIC, 105 ABM Treaty (1972), 80, 150 Acevedo, Hubert Arturo, warning to President Trump, 28 Acharya, Amitav, 4, 13 Afghanistan, 10, 21–22, 33, 34, 37, 107, 163; ancient history of, 177; cultural heritage of, 177; local cultural values of, 176; Muslim society of, 186; the US war on, 31 Afghans, social code of, 178 Afghan-Soviet War (1979-88), 107 African Union (AU), 4 al-Aqsa Mosque, 21 al-Assad, Bashar, xii, 7, 25 Albright, Madeline, 176 Alighieri, Dante, 37 Al-Khalid tanks, 107 Al Qaeda, 18, 22–24, 31, 34, 41, 181, 185, 187 Amadeo, Kimberly, 174 America, neglect of cultural values, 34; historic peace deal with Taliban (2020), 119

anarchy, the creation of states, 1 Anglo-American cousins, 120 anti-Japan psychology, xiv APEC. 4 Arabian Peninsula, 185 Arab nationalism, 32, 37 Arabs, 37, 99 Arab society, 101 Arab Spring (2011), 171 Aristotle, 2 Art, Robert, xii Articles 370 and 35A, 73 ASEAN, 8, 107 Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, 125 Asia-Pacific region, 140 Astore, William J., 172 Auchinleck. Sir Claude, 70 authoritarian regimes, mindset of, 40 axis of evil, 108; labeling of Iran as, 186.190 Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, 63 Azerbaijan, 115 B-52 bomber, 135 Babri mosque, demolition of (December 1992), 66 Baghdadi, Abu al-Bakr, 185 Bahrain, 102, 185

240

Index

Bajwa, Qamar Javed, 68 Bangladesh, 32, 38-39, 56 Barabantseva, Elena, 130 Barth, Fredrik, Pushtun culture on, 178 Barton, Rick, 189 Behrouzan, Orkideh, 172 Beijing, 60, 84, 127, 135; psychology of zero-tolerance, 138; role as a chief mediator of, 160; strategic leverage over Pyongyang, 160 Beinart, Peter, 186, 188 belief systems, civilian and military elites of, x, 152 Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), 99 Bengali nationalism, 32 Bhutan, 34, 56-57, 139-40 Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali, 78, 85, 100, 203 BJP, the Hindutva card of, 8, 65 Boggs, Robert, 179 Boko Haram, 24 Bolton, John, 189 Bosnia, 36 Bosnian Muslims, 134 Bowring, Philip, 131 Bretton Woods institutions, 16 BRI, 117, 125, 138 BRICS, 4 Britain, 31 British-Afghan Wars, 176 British East India Company, 63 Brown, Kerry, 126 Brzezinski, Zbigniew, 3 Buddhists, 38 Bull, Hedley, the founder of the English school of thought, 6 Bush, George W., 154, 159, 163, 172, 181, 184; GME idea of, 101 Bush administration, war against Iraq, 184 Buzan, Barry, 8; security complex on, 6 Byman, Daniel, 33, 182-83 Carr, E. H., 3 CENTO, 8, 61

Central African states, 36 Central Asia, 108 Central Asian countries, 33, 36, 57 Central Asian states (CAS), 98, 115-17, 120Central Eurasia, 99 Chabahar port, 108, 110, 113-14 China, 7, 13, 27, 30, 36, 106; agreement (oil pipeline) with Kazakhstan, 99; components of geopsychology of, 126; economic leverage over North Korea, 160; energy security interests of, 99; monolithic political structure of, 23; offensive military systems of, 125; regional psychology of, 140; spectacular rise of, 125; strategic partnership with Iran, 108; strategic presence in South Asia of, 55 China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project, 84 Chinese characteristics and foreign policy, 16 Chinese diaspora, 135 Chinese history, 131, 136, 140 Chinese nationalism, 131, 133-34 Christensen, Thomas J., 127 Christianity, 175 Chua, Amy, describing humans as "tribals", 5 Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 66, 121 civilizational norms, 139 Clary, Christopher, 79 Classical realism, 3, 5, 12, 16–17 Clinton, Bill, 134 Code of Honor, 67, 178 code of revenge, 178 Cohen, Stephen P., 62, 67 Cold War, x, 8, 13, 16, 61, 111, 135, 138 collective memories, 55 Colombo, perception of New Delhi, 60 committed intellectuals, 88 Communist Party of China (CCP), 132 Confucianism, 130, 136

constructivism, 3, 5, 12-14, 17-18, 23, 201 cooperative security, 7 Copeland, Dale C., 5 Cordesman, Anthony H., 192n1 COVID-19 pandemic, ix, 57, 128, 202, 206 Cox, Michael, 41-42n1, 202 cross-border terrorism, 82 cultural and psychological terrain, 88 cultural identity, 130 cultural nationalism, 133 cultural pride, 126, 131 cultural superiority, 131 cultural symbols, 139 Cumings, Bruce, 166n16 Dahal, Pushpa Kamal, 35 David-West, Alzo, 151, 153 Davies Glyn, 160 defensive realism, 4, 136 Deng, Yong, 143n40 Dhungel, Dwarika Nath, 36, 51n163, 60 Diamond, Julia, 83 Diehl, Paul F., 56 Dodge, Toby, 184 Doha, 180, 205 DPRK, 153, 156 Dragon Throne, 132 Drezner, Daniel W., genesis of the new realism on, 176 drone strikes, 184 Durand Line (1895-1896), 176, 179 East Asia. 37, 131, 150 East China Sea, 125 Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), 115 economic embargo (2015), against Nepal, 35 end of history, 21 Europe, 138, 172 European Union, 24 ethnic Albanians, 36

ethnic card, 39 ethnic composition, 178 EU, 89, 107, 119 EU-3, 112 Eurasia, 117 Eurasian landmass, 108 extremist groups, 15, 20, 22, 31, 114 extremist organizations, 180 Falk, Richard, 172 Farr. Grant M., 178 Farzad-B gas field, 114 Federal Bureau of Investigation, 135 Fierke, K. M., 46n76 first-use option, 88 Freeman, Charles W., use of drone warfare on, 184 Freud, psychology of human nature on, 2 Friend, John, 150, 162 frontline state, status to Pakistan, 107 Frum, David, 184 Fukuyama, Francis," End of History" on, 43n27 Fuller, Graham E., 189 G-7, 4, 89, 107 G-8, 101 G-20, 4, 89, 107 Gallup & Gilani Pakistani Poll, 62 Galwan Valley, 137 Gamer, Robert, 129 Gandhi, Indira, peaceful uses of nuclear energy on, 86 Gates, Robert M., 173 GCC, 175 Geller, Daniel S., 78 geoeconomics, 12; primacy of, 21 geopolitics, 12, 21 geopsychology, 1; defined, 9; mutual hate of, 84; primacy of, 39; why matters?, 20-23 geopsychology theory (GT), xii, xiii, 2, 12-18, 20, 22-23, 25-26,

29-30, 32, 40-41, 62, 88, 179, 187, 201; assumptions of, 23-24; characteristics of, 14-15; nature and scope of, 12 Ghani, Ashraf, 119 Ghazni, 181 Glaser, John, 172, 184, 198n123 global community, 147 global jihad, 22 Global South, influence of in the emerging global economic architecture, 4 GME, 97, 99, 101-4, 120 Goswami, Arnab, 77 Gottlieb, Gidon, 36 Greater Middle East (GME), xiv, 97, 99-100, 120-21 Great Game, 176-77 great power battle, 57 Great Wall theory, 136 Grieco, Joseph M., 43n24 GT. See Geopsychology Theory (GT) Guam, U.S. military base at, 147 Gujarat mayhem (2002), 68 Gujral Doctrine (1996), 58 Gulf region, 6, 61, 98, 100 Gulf states, investment in India, 102 Gulf War (1991), 103, 174 Gwadar port, 103, 108-10 Hak-bong, Hyun, 155 Hall. Ian. xi Hamas, 187 Han. 132 Han-centric nationalism, 134 Hanoi, 148 Haq, Zia-ul (1977-1988), 74, 76 Haqqani, Husain, Pakistani nationalism on, 70 Hayes, Peter, 144n52 Hegel, ideal state, 2 hegemonic stability theory, 5 Hellpach, Willy, 10-11 Hemraj, 74

Herring, George C., culture and community values of the local people, 28-29 Hezbollah, 187 Himalayas, 57 Hindu bomb, 82 Hindu chauvinism, 67 Hindu ideologues, 67 Hindu Kush mountain ranges, 34, 177 Hindu migrants, from Pakistan, 39 Hindutva, brand of Indian nationalism, 65 Hindu zealots, 39, 66 historical ambition, 125 historical experience, 126 historical narratives, x, 127 Hobbes, state absolutism, 2 Hoffman, Stanley, causes of terrorism, 176 Hui, Victoria, 136 Huntington, "clash of civilizations" of, 27 Hussein, Saddam, 106; oppressive regime of, 184; overthrow of, 185 Hwang, Jihwan, 152 Hwasong-10 missile test, 149 Hwasong-14 missile test, 149 hypernationalism, 74 IAEA, 112-13 Ibrahim, Samah, 188 ICBMs, 155, 163 Ikenberry, G. John, 22 illegal migrants, 66 IMF, 138 Immelman, Aubrey, 156, 167n36 The Independent Task Force Report 65 (2010), 191

India, 6, 7, 27, 30, 36; China card of, 60; close ties with Iran, 109; Extradition Treaty (2016), Indian and Afghan governments between, 119; Middle East policy of, 102–4; rise as a global power of, 55; strategic engagement with Israel,

103; strategic partnership with Saudi Arabia, 102; support to Palestine, 111 India-China-centric Asia, 140 Indian hegemony, 79 Indian National Congress (INC), 63 Indian Ocean, 57 Indian Parliament, attack on (2001), 85 Indian Peace-Keeping Forces (IPKF), 57,60 Indian TV channels, 77 India Ports Global Ltd., 113 Indo-Nepalese relations, 35 Indo-Pacific region, 128 Indo-Pak conflict, Israel factor, 111, 140 Indo-Pakistan wars (1965 and 1971), 107 Indo-U.S. Nuclear Agreement, 113 influx of refugees, 160 INF Treaty (1987), 80 Instrument of Accession, 70 insurgency movements, 83 inter-Korean peace dialogue, 151 International Monetary Fund's (IMF), 4 Iqbal, Mohammed, 63, 67 Iran, 22, 33, 34, 36, 38, 61, 99, 102, 106 Iranian nuclear deal (2015), 79 Iran-Iraq war (1980–1990), 38; gravitating, 108; Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline projects, 110; toward Russia and China, 108 Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, 101 Iraq, 22, 24, 33, 36, 61, 99, 102, 106, 163; American military presence in, 37; US attack (2003) against, 106 Iraqi people, psychology of, 183; ethnic affinities of, 183; Muslim society in, 186; psyche of, 185; sectarian values of. 183 IR scholars, 1, 21, 40 IR theories, ix, xii-xiv, 1-4, 9, 13, 15-16, 40, 208 ISIS, xii, 15, 20–21, 173, 185, 187 Islam, 37-38, 100, 174 Islamabad, 57; ruling elites of, 55

Islamabad-Tehran relations, 108; Islamabad-Kabul relationship, 179 Islamic bomb, 79, 82, 100 Islamic community, 38 Islamic empire, 33 Islamic ideology, 184, 186 Islamic nationalism, 33 Islamic Revolution, 175 Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, 109, 187 Islamic State (IS), 15, 106, 184-85 Islamic ummah, 185 Islamist zealots, 38 Israel, 32, 61, 99, 102, 111, 138, 171 Jae-in, Moon, 157 Jain, Romi, Interview with Madhukar S.J.B. Rana, 90n9 Jaish-e-Mohammad, 76 Jammu and Kashmir, 62, 71, 105, 108 Japan, 127, 129 Japan-U.S. geostrategic collaboration, 127 Jerusalem, 21, 23, 111, 139 Jervis, Robert, xii, 3, 153 Jie, Shi (1005-45), 129 Jihad, 27, 41, 69 Jihadists, 15, 55, 83 Jinnah, Mohammad Ali, 63-64, 70-71 Jinping, Xi, 125, 127–28, 131, 136–37, 139, 156, 162 Jintao, Hu, 136 Johnston, Alastair Ian, 143n43 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action92015), 187 Jong-il, Kim, 155, 207 Jong-un, Kim, 15, 25, 147-48, 150, 152, 155-56, 159-60, 206; aggressive and domineering personality of, 155; Japan and South Korea as a bargaining chip on, 161; nationalistic fervor of, 158; personality prism of, 156; psychological makeup of, 148; a smart strategist, 163 Jordon, 108

Juche, 152 Judaism, 175

Kabul, 179, 181; Taliban capturing power in (1996), 118 Kagan, Robert, 47n92 Kalapani, 36 Kant, contribution to moral philosophy, and understanding of human mind and human behavioral patterns, 2 Kaplan, Lawrence, 186 Kaplan, Robert D., geographical bases of identity, 34 Karat, Prakash, 113 Kargil conflict (1999), 56, 74, 96 Karzai, Hamid, 118-19 Kashmir, 20, 36, 69-70, 74, 76, 109; special status of, 56, 71-72, 104 Kashmiri youth, 20, 88 Kathmandu, 36 Katzenstein, Peter, J.N., 1; binary approach to IR theory opposed to, 5 Kazakhstan, 115 Kelly, John, 157 Kennedy, John F., 80 Kennedy, Paul, 42n15 Keohane, Robert, 3, 17, 41, 201 Keohane, Robert and Joseph Nye, 43nn20-21 Kertzer, Joshua, role of political psychology, 16 Khalilzad, Zalmay, 180 Khamenei, Ayatollah, 188 Khan, Aga, 63 Khan, A. Q., 79, 203 Khan, Gohar Ayub, 82 Khan, Imran, 56, 65, 68, 85, 105, 109-10; address to joint session of the National Assembly (August 6, 2019), 71, 73; Kashmir issue on, 72 Khan, Mohammad Ayub (1958–1969), 74-75 Khan, Yahya (1969-1977), 74-75, 108 Khanjar-I exercise (2011), 116 Khanjar-II exercise (2015), 116

Khanjar III exercise (2016), 116 Khanjar-IV exercise (2017), 116 Khatami, Seyyed Mohammed, 110 Khomeini, Ayatollah Ruhollah, 38, 175, 186 Khrushchev, Nikita, 80 King, Samuel, 129 Kipling, Joseph Rudyard, 177 Kissinger, Henry A., 3, 20, 29, 131, 135-36; views on North Korea, 160 Koehler, Robert A., 153 Korean Peninsula, 23, 40, 147, 154, 158 Kosovo, 36 Kristensen, Hans M., 83 Kurdish groups, 9 Kurds, 9, 32, 36 Kyrgyzstan, 115–16 Ladakh, 137 Laden, Osama bin, xii, 36, 181, 191, 206 Leaf, Barbara A., 186 Lebanon, 99, 173 Leng, Russell J., 82 Lewis, Bernard, 175 liberal international order (LIO), 22, 32 Liberalism, 2, 5, 23, 32, 40, 134 Libya, 37, 163; U.S. military operations in, 173 Limpiyadhura, controversy over, 36 Lipulekh, controversy over, 36 Locke, John, 37; theory of consent, 2 low-intensity conflicts, 20 LTTE, 60 Madhesi leaders, 60 Mahakali Treaty, 58 Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS), 69 Maldives, 56-57, 140 Mander, Harsh, 38 Mao, palm theory of, 136, 205 Maoists, 41, 132

- market forces, 5
- Marshall Plan, 138

244

Marx, historical materialism on, 2 Mazumdar, A., xi Mearsheimer, John J., 1, 3, 5, 25, 32, 41 Medvedev, Dmitry, 80 Menon, Anand, xi Merriam, John G., 178 Middle East, 6, 13, 23, 32-33, 37; anti-U.S. wave in, 171; geopolitical upheavals in, 107; U.S. militarycentric approach in, 182; wave of anger in, 20 Middle Eastern societies, 186, 191 Middle Kingdom, 129, 139 Miller, Rebecca M., inclusion of psychology in IR on, 10 Miller, Steven E., 159 minimal nuclear deterrence, 87 MNCs. 20 Modi, Narendra, 38, 68, 71, 73, 113; Link West policy of, 102; "neighborhood first" policy of, 60; nuclear retaliation on, 86; visits to Middle Eastern countries of, 102; visit to Kyrgyzstan, 116 Molinsky, Andy, cultural differences on, 28 Morgenthau, Hans J., 3; classical realism of, 5 Morton, Katherine, 145n62 Moscow, 178, 180, 190 Most Favored Nation status, 76 Mountbatten, Lord, 70 Mufti, Mehbooba, 71 Mughal Empire (1526–1857), 62 Mulford, David, 113 multiethnic groups, societal beliefs of, 5 Musharraf, Pervez (1999-2008), 74-75, 79, 82, 85, 118 Muslim League, 63 Muslim nationalism, 32, 63 Muslim phobia, 68 Myanmar, 57; Rohingya Muslims in, 31, 39

national humiliation, 126

national honor, 161 nationalism, 125-26 national pride, 163 National Register, northeastern state of Assam for, 39 nation-states. 55 NATO, 22, 40, 181, 184; bombing of Chinese Embassy in Belgrade (1999), 134; forces in Afghanistan, 181 National Registration of Citizens (NRC), 66 Nehru, Jawaharlal, 61, 72, 202, 204; non-alignment on, 86 neoliberalism, 1, 3-4, 12, 17-18, 98, 201 neorealism, 1, 12, 16-17, 41, 98 neo-structuralism, 4 Nepal, 34, 140; anti-India wave in, 35, 56; economic blockade of (2015), 60 Nepalese psychology, 58 Netanyahu, Benjamin, 103 New Delhi, 8, 36, 66, 204; confrontation with Islamabad, 8, 97-98, 100; relationship with Kathmandu, 35-36, 60; relationship with Tehran, 112; ruling elites in, 55 New Development Bank (NDB), 4, 125new gun boat diplomacy, 134 Nicholas, Alistair, 128 no-first-use policy, 101 nonaligned movement (NAM), 4 Non-state actors, xii, xiv, 1, 17-18, 55, 81, 98, 190, 201-2, 207-8 Non-Western states, 1 Norris, Robert S., 83 Northeast Asia, 8, 15, 20, 23, 26 Northeast Asia security complex, 8 North Korea, 15, 21, 25–26, 29, 33, 37, 152, 162; anti-U.S. sentiment of, 153; ethno-nationalism in, 151; nuclear conundrum in, 26; strategic culture of, 152

North Korean, group narcissism of, 153; verifiable complete dismantlement of. 159 North Korean nationalism, rooted in anti-Japanese imperialism, 151 North Korean regime, 40, 151, 154; hyper-nationalism of, 152 NPT, 113-14, 149 NSA, 20-23, 25, 29 nuclear deal with Iran (2015), 108 nuclear deterrence, 77, 79-83, 203 nuclear doctrine (1999), India's, 80-81 nuclear jingoism, 147 Nuclear parity doctrine, 81-82 nuclear weapons tests (May 1998), 97 Nye, Joseph, 3, 17, 99-100, 201 Obama, Barack, 80, 182; Asia pivot of, 140 Obama administration, 182; Libya war of. 185 Offensive realism, 4 Oh, Kongdan, 152 Oh, Kongdan and Ralph C. Hassig, 162, 166n23 OIC, 107-8 Oli, KP Sharma, 36 Olympics diplomacy, 157 Operation Enduring Freedom, 173, 181 Operation Iraqi Freedom, 173 **Opinion Poll International India**, 90n18 Opium Wars (1839-1842), 126 Owen, Robert, 3 P5+1 (the United States, United Kingdom, France, China, Russia, and Germany), 187 Pagden, Anthony, 176 Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza, 186; a close U.S. ally, 38 Pak, Jung H., 155, 158 Pakistan, 6, 7, 30, 34, 39, 57, 119; dismemberment of, 32, 78; Pakistan-Israel ties, 111; perception of India, 31; sponsoring terrorism of, 110;

state-sponsored terrorism of, 84; strategic ties with the Middle East, 107 Pakistani Mujahedeen, 72 Palestine, 36, 102 Panikkar Doctrine, 36, 58 pariah state, 152 partition theory, 30 Pashtuns, 178-79 Paul, T. V., 2, 5, 65, 79, 83 peaceful coexistence, 61 Pence, Mike, 157 People's Liberation Army (PLA), 135-37 People's Republic of China, 126 Perlez, Jane, 162 Permanent Court of Arbitration, ruling of (2016), 135 Persian Gulf, 100, 190 Persian nationalism, 188 Pew Research Center, findings of, 62, 65 Plato, 2 PoK, 56, 74, 84 Pol, Enric, role of geographical environment, 12 political Islam, 37 political psychology, 88 Pompeo, Mike, 189 Posen, Barry R., 158 Poudel, Surendra, 60 pre-Westphalian system of IR, 3 principle of self-determination, 72 proactive diplomacy, 159 Pryke, Sam, nationalism on, 36-37 psycho-cultural peculiarities, x psychology, authoritarian leaders of, 40 Pulwama attack, (February 2019), 74 Pushtuns, 178 Pyongyang, 15, 148-49, 151, 153; perception of America, 153-54; psychological shield against the United States of, 162 Pyongyang-Washington relationship, 163; national security of, 160

Qatar, 112, 180 Qin dynasty, 136 Quichao, Liang, 132 Qureshi, Shah Mahmood, 119 Rahman (1880–1901), Abdur, policy of neutrality, 177-78 Rajpaksa, Gotabaya, 60 Ram Temple, Ayodhya, 66 Rana, S. J. B, xi, 35; interview with Indian Journal of Asian Affairs, 58 Rapp-Hooper, Mira, 153 Rasheed, Sheikh, 68, 73, 101 Rashid, Abdul, 177 Rashid, Ahmed, 47n97 rational-choice model, x, 24 Ratzel, Friedrich, importance of geographical features, 34 regional hegemony, 151 regional security complex (RSC), 6 Reliance Industries, 105 religious fundamentalists, 88 Rentfrow, Peter, geographical psychology on, 33 repressive regimes, 1 reputational stakes, India-Pakistan of, 89 reunification of Korea, 151 Reus-Smit, Christian, 26; role of culture in world politics on, 10 Revere, Evans, 150 ROK, 159 Robock, Alan, 83 Rodong missiles, 149 rogue state, 101 Rohingya Muslims, 39 Rose, Gideon, 41n16 Rosenau, James, x Rousseau, theory of general will, 2 RSS, 65, 69, 72 Rouhani, Hassan, 109-10, 114, 187-88 Roya, Rahmani, 180 Rozman, Gilbert, 143n39 rugged terrain, 177 Runion, Meredith L., three pillars of Afghanistan on, 177

Rusk, Dean, 153 Russia, 7, 84 Rwanda, genocide in, 31 Sagan, Scott, 78 SALT-1 (1972), 80 SALT-2 (1979), 80 Sanders, Bernie, 183, 189 Sartre, Jean-Paul, Europe-centric whiteness on, 27 Saudi Arabia, 21, 36, 61, 104, 109 Scholtz, Ronald W., humanenvironment interactions on, 11 SEATO. 8, 61 Sentosa Island, 147 Serbia, Bosnian Muslims of, 31 Shahid Beheshti Port, 113 Shah regime, 38 Shambaugh, David, 168n58 Shanghai Cooperation Organization, 117 Shankar, Mahesh, 83 Sharif, Nawaz, 85 Sharif, Shehbaz, 71 Sheikh, Nermeen, interview with Henry Kissinger, 99 Shia, 102 Shiite Muslims, 110 Shimla Agreement (1972), 72 Shirk, Susan, 136 Shiva Sena, 69 Shrestha, Bihari Krishna, 36, 51n163 Sibbal, Kapil, on Iran, 110–11 Siegman, Henry, Arab Nationalism on, 33 Singh, Hari Singh, Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, 70 Singh, Manmohan, 113, 118 Sinhalese-Tamil ethnic conflict, 60 Sino-Indian military standoff, 137 Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), 126, 132 Sinologist, 130 Sino-US conflict, 129 Six-Party Talks, 149, 160

Snyder, Jack, 43n17 Social constructivism, 3, 5, 12-14, 17-18, 23, 201 societal terrain, importance of, 186 Socrates, 2 Soleimani, Qassim, 188 Songun (military-first), 152 Soros, George, 66 South Asia, 23, 27, 32, 39; geopolitical and geostrategic profile of, 55; Hindu-Muslim syndrome in, 204 Soviet Union, 5, 8, 31, 34, 84, 114, 133, 151, 178; India's time-tested friend, 115; military presence in Afghanistan, 172 Special Report 2003 (USIP), 179 Strait of Hormuz, 186; nuclear crisis in, 84; nuclear future of, 88; nuclear security order of, 88; strategic balance in, 82 South China Sea, 99, 125, 128, 134-35 Southeast Asia, 23, 100 South Korea, 15, 151 Southwest Asia, 33 Soviet Union, 31, 34, 114-15, 151; demise of, 5 Sri Lanka, 31, 36, 38, 56–57 START-3, 80 strategic culture, 136 strategic pundits, x Structural realism, 4 Sudan, 37 Sultan, Tipu, 71 Sunni Muslims, 102, 181 Suzuki, Shogo, China's national identity on, 141n12 Syria, 6, 15, 21, 33, 36, 99, 173 Taiwan, 129 Tajikistan, 115, 180 Takahashi, Sugio, 7 Taliban, 12, 22-23, 118, 183; morale of, 182; psychology of, 180 Tanham, George K., 103

248

Tasik, Mirko, West's misperception of North Korean leaders, 149 Tehran, 112 Tel Aviv, 111, 121 Teymoori, Ali, 2 Theater Missile Defense (TMD), 150-51, 154 Third World, 4, 6 Tiananmen tragedy, 135 Tianxia, a system of governance, 129-31 Tingley, Dustin, role of political psychology, 16 Tokyo Colloquium Report (2018), 158 totalitarian regimes, 20 transnational actors, 23 Trappes, Rose, 2 Trump, Donald, 79, 138, 147, 156, 172-73, 182; "America first" policy, 23; coercive strategy of, 159; concerns in Afghanistan, 183; "demonization of the Islamic world", 186; deployment of naval power in the South China Sea by, 162; recognition to Jerusalem, 138; the self-proclaimed dealmaker, 159 Trump administration, 173; economic sanctions against Iran, 108; zero-sum approach of, 188 Tse-tung, Mao, 132 tug of war, between Trump and Un, 157 Tuosheng, Zhang, three scenarios of the North Korean nuclear issue, 161 Turkey, 6, 15, 36, 99, 108-9, 115 Turkmenistan, 115 TV news anchors, Pakistan of, 77 UAE, 89, 102, 109 UNESCO, 131 UN General Assembly, 72, 111, 114 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), 80, 173 United States, 4, 13, 15, 21, 29, 37-38, 40, 80, 84, 100, 118, 125, 128, 133, 135, 139, 146, 150, 157-58, 161,

171; geopolitics in South Asia, 8; strategic partnership with India, 120; tension with Iran, 112-13 UN Security Council, 171; Resolution 1373 to combat terrorism, 22; Resolution 1718 (2006), 149Upadhya, Sanjay, 60 UPA government, 113 UPA government, Look West policy of, 102 Uri, Indian army base at, 69, 84 U.S. coercive diplomacy, 190 U.S. Commission for International Human Rights, 39 U.S., invasion of Afghanistan, 103 U.S.-led unipolar world, 133 U.S. Middle East policy, 189 USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, 187 U.S. strategic planners, 22 U.S. troops, in Iraq, 21 Uzbekistan, 115, 180 Vajpayee, Atal Bihari, deterrent value of nuclear weapons on, 86 Vietnam, 5, 28–29, 136 Vietnam War, 29, 128 violent non-state actors (NSAs), 1, 24, 55, 81, 208 Wahab, Bilal, 186 Wallerstein, Immanuel M., worldsystem theory of, 27 Walt, Kenneth, structural realism on, 3, 5.16 Walt, Stephen M., xii, 8, 32 Wang, Zheng, 126, 131

Washington, 25, 38, 81, 106-7, 114, 121, 148, 158, 172 Wendt, Alexander, 17, 202; on constructivist paradigm, 1; social constructivism on, 5 Western hegemony, 134 Western lenses, 129 Western IR scholars, 4 West-Islam divide, 37 Wiarda, Howard J., 10, 27 Winter Olympics (2018), 156, 163 World Anti-Fascist War, 127-28 World Bank, 102 World War II, 132 Wray, Christopher, 135 Wuhan spirit (2018), 137 WTO, 40, 138-39 Yang, Zhao Ting, 130 Yaqing, Qin, 130 Yat-sen, Sun, 132 Yazidis, 31

at, 148 Yugoslav Serbs, 134 Zafar, Bahadur Shah, 71 Zakaria, Fareed, 172 Zee TV, 77 Zenko, Micah, 181 Zhang, Feng, 133, 136 Zhao, Suisheng, 145n64 Zheng, Yongnian, 133 Zhong, Guan, 136

Yechuri, Sitaram, 113

Yemen, 171, 173

Yo-jong, Kim, 157

Yellow River valley, 136

Yongbyon complex, nuclear facilities

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