
Conflict Transformation Approach & the Kashmir Issue: A New Perspective



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Introduction

This paper aims at exploring possible ways of resolving the India-Pakistan conflict through the conflict transformation approach. Before this approach was propounded, a number of conflict resolution theories had been applied to understand the nature of conflict between the two neighbours and to suggest alternatives for its resolution. The transformation approach is a relatively new addition to those theories. However, it is slightly different in the sense that it seeks avenues where conflict can be transformed; but totally different when it asserts that it has nothing to do with the resolution of a particular issue and goes beyond with promises of relationship change, by providing an environment where peaceful co-existence becomes possible for parties while still having outstanding issues. This approach is suitable in conflicts where the parties involved have complex and intractable differences and where there is need to transform the minds because even after the resolution of conflict/s the parties have to have future interactions. Thus the guarantee of good relationship, peaceful co-existence and conflict-free future lies in transforming the traditional mindsets. The paper discusses areas where conflict can be transformed, for instance: Actor Transformation, when there is a change in the parties concerned either internally or externally that have a direct positive impact on the whole resolution process. Similarly, Rule Transformation, when there is a principled change in the agenda which can roll over the deadlocks. And finally, Structural Transformation, when there is a big change in the entire structure of inter-party relations, or there has emerged a new power structure or there is a change in the existing structure. However, all these levels are not solely independent of each other. For instance, growing interdependence and economic compulsions

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can have a direct impact on the inter-party relations that in turn have direct impact upon rule transformation or actor transformation.

While applying the transformational approach to Indo-Pakistan relations, the paper argues that their conflicts can be transformed through one, two or a combination of all the above three ways. In line with this, the paper discusses how transformation had taken place in Indo-Pakistan conflict in the areas of Actor, Rule and Structure, and why it could not sustain. Furthermore, it discusses the prospects of transformation in the current situation. However, it does not provide solution to a particular issue but goes beyond while promising to provide an environment that would not only be conducive to resolution but also helpful for peaceful co-existence. Such an environment is facilitated by a fourth significant factor, the 'Relationship Transformation.' Relationship change is essential in regard to India-Pakistan conflict because 'image' and 'perception' has been a great hurdle in bilateral normalization. Thus without having transformed the nature of the conflict from destructive to constructive, any direct approach to the resolution of outstanding issues would be like groping in the dark. As witnessed, since the partition in 1947 there has been only limited success in the settlement of outstanding issues. Moreover, the sustainability of transformation that occurs at any of the three levels — Actor, Rule and Structural — lies in this fourth level, relationship.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first is theoretical and covers explanation of the conflict transformation theory and its relevance to India-Pakistan relations. The second is historical and deals with origins of India-Pakistan conflict and also explains the significance of transformative approach in India-Pakistan context. The third section applies the transformation approach and examines Actor, Rule, Structural and Relationship transformation. Finally there is the conclusion.

Defining Conflict Transformation

Theories of conflict resolution play an important role in understanding and guiding practical interventions. The theory of conflict transformation is unique and different from theories of conflict management and conflict resolution due to its emphasis on the need for systemic change in order to alter the social structures, conflict parties and institutions within which conflicts are embedded.⁽¹⁾

As stated earlier, the term 'conflict transformation' is a relatively new entrant in the broader field of peace and conflict studies. Being new it is still in a process of defining, shaping, and creating terminology. During the 1990s a number of theorists including Galtung, Rupesinghe, Schwerin, Spencer and Spencer, Väyrynen have assisted in solidifying

what John Paul Lederach called “a shift” towards conflict transformation in the language used in the field and practice of peace research and conflict resolution.⁽²⁾ Kriesberg makes a distinction between resolution and transformation: conflict resolution means solving the problems that led to the conflict, and transformation means changing the relationships between the parties to the conflict. For Miall, Ramsbotham, and Woodhouse the term “has particular salience in asymmetric conflicts, where the aim is to transform unjust social relationships,” hinting at the link between conflict transformation and social or systemic change.⁽³⁾ Galtung contends that underlying the conflict resolution perspective is an assumption that every conflict has a finite life and a clear end and can, therefore, be solved or declared intractable. From this argument — that conflicts are never-ending waxing and waning of social interactions — also flows the idea that the ongoing energy and behavioural contradictions that arise from this will not be amenable to resolution and thus would need to be transformed.

Lederach’s approach to Conflict Transformation

John Paul Lederach, the main proponent of this theory, explains that conflict transformation offers more than the mere elimination or control of conflict (as is promised by resolution or management of conflict). He points to the inherent dialectical process, the ability to transform the dynamics of the conflict and the relationship between the parties — indeed to transform the very creators of the conflict. For him transformation requires a long-term transformative process in which hostile relations are modified by education, advocacy (non-violent activism), and mediation.⁽⁴⁾ This theory represents a comprehensive set of lenses for examining and describing how conflict emerges from, evolves within and brings about changes in the personal, relational, structural and cultural dimensions, and for developing creative responses that promote peaceful change within those dimensions.⁽⁵⁾

Lederach in his book, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, states that a transformation approach begins with two proactive foundations: 1) a positive orientation towards conflict and 2) a willingness to tackle the conflict in an effort to produce constructive change of growth. The key to transformation is the capacity to *envision* conflict as having the potential for constructive change. *Response*, on the other hand, suggests a bias towards direct involvement and an increased understanding that comes from real life experience. Both *envisioning* and *response* represent the ways we orient ourselves towards the presence of conflict in our lives, in relationships and in communities.

Lederach further holds that 'conflict' is a natural part of relationships. While relationships are sometimes calm and predictable, at other times events and circumstances generate tensions and instability. Conflict transformation views peace as centred and rooted in the quality of relationships. This involves both face-to-face interaction and the ways in which we structure our social, political, economic and cultural relationships. According to the above statement, peace is a process-structure phenomenon that is dynamic, adaptive and changing. Therefore change in relationships is at the heart of the transformation approach. Once this change of attitude has taken place, the parties can begin to develop a sense of mutual understanding and trust. No matter they may still have contrasting interests or unmet needs; they can approach these issues through cooperation rather than by competing with or trying to destroy each other.

For Lederach there are four modes in which conflict impacts on situations and changes a given scenario: the personal, the relational, the structural and the cultural.

The *personal dimension* deals with transformation in individuals. From a descriptive perspective, transformation suggests that individuals are affected by conflict both negatively and positively. Prescriptively transformation intervenes to minimize the destructive effects of conflict and maximize its potential for individual growth at physical, spiritual and emotional levels.

The *relational dimension* deals with relations among individuals and highlights how to minimize poorly functioning communication and maximize understanding.

The *structural dimension* is the core area that distinguishes transformation from resolution, because of the former's explicit commitment to bringing about major structural change (in which resolution can easily be possible). Raimo Vayrynen defines "structure" as the pattern of relationships between the actors in conflict and the surrounding social and political forms and institutions which determine these relationships. In certain intractable conflicts such structural transformation may be a pre-condition for resolution (as is the case with India-Pakistan relationship).

In *cultural dimension*, transformation seeks to identify, understand and uncover the cultural patterns that contribute to violence in a given context and tries to build on existing cultural resources and mechanisms for handling conflict.

Lederach draws a comparison between transformation and resolution in a manner given below:

Resolution and Transformation: A Brief Comparison of Perspective

	Conflict Resolution perspective	Conflict Transformation perspective
The key question	How do we end something not desired?	How to end something destructive and build something desired?
The focus	It is content-centred	It is relationship-centred
The purpose	To achieve an agreement and solution to the present problem creating the crisis	To promote constructive change processes, inclusive of but not limited to immediate solutions.
The development of process	It is embedded and built around the immediacy of the relationship where the presenting problems appear	It is entered with responding to symptoms and engaging the systems within which relationships are embedded
Time frame	The horizon is short term	The horizon is mid to long range
View of conflict	It envisions the need to de-escalate conflict processes	It envisions conflict as a dynamic of ebb (conflict de-escalation to pursue constructive change) and flow (conflict escalation to pursue constructive change)

Source: John Paul Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, Good Books, USA, 2003.

Vayrynen's approach to Conflict Transformation

In contrast to Lederach's interpretation of the transformation approach, Vayrynen stresses the need for a dynamic basis for a theory of conflict transformation which would need to go beyond a theory of conflict settlement. The bulk of conflict theory regards the issues, actors and interests as given and on that basis makes effort to find a solution to mitigate or eliminate contradictions between them. Yet these issues, actors and interests change over time as a consequence of the social, economic and political dynamics of societies. Vayrynen argues that conflict could be transformed through four different types of change:

1. Actor Transformation, which involves either major internal changes within the original parties to the conflict or the addition (and presumably subtraction) of new parties to the conflict.
2. Issue Transformation involves an alteration of the political agenda of the conflict through a transformation of what the conflict is "about".

3. Rule Transformation involves a change in the norms involved in the conflict and limits within which the parties conduct their relations.
4. Structural Transformation, which involves changes in the whole structure of inter-party relations, a new power structure, or a change in the existing structure.⁽⁶⁾

Moreover, transformation is held to have a variety of major changes in the individuals involved, both at the level of leaders and followers. Bush and Folgers argue that it contains within it a unique potential for transforming people, engendering moral growth, by helping them wrestle with difficult circumstances and bridge human differences in the very midst of conflict. The transformative potential stems from mediation's capacity to generate two important effects, empowerment and recognition. Empowerment means the restoration to the individuals of a sense of their own value and strength and their own capacity to handle life's problems. Recognition means the evocation in individuals of acknowledgement and empathy for the situation and problems of others. The promise of mediation lies in its capacity to transform the character of both individual disputants and society as a whole, thus transformation of society is an indirect outcome of individual transformations, rather than of any direct agreements that are devised as solutions.⁽⁷⁾

Both approaches presented by Lederach and Vayrynen are not entirely but slightly different. Both share the very structure of transformation approach. However, Lederach's focus is on dealing with the conflict as a natural phenomenon. He interprets conflict as an opportunity to know each other's interests. In response, he suggests positive orientation towards conflict and willingness to tackle the conflict in order to bring constructive change and growth. According to him, the transformative approach is relationship oriented. His focus remains on ending something destructive and building something desired and not limited to immediate solutions, whereas Vayrynen shares the same but suggests areas where conflict can be transformed. These areas include actors, issues, rules and structure. He argues that conflict can be changed at any of the above mentioned levels. However, both authors agree that structural transformation is the core area that can dramatically change the whole inter-party relations. The approach discussed in the paper is a combination of the two.

Significance of Transformation Approach in India-Pakistan conflict

Before applying the transformation approach to India-Pakistan conflict, it is necessary to know its relevance to both countries' situation. The final resolution of the Kashmir dispute between the two adversaries does not guarantee a conflict-free future. Why? Because both countries have a long history of living together, have a history of war and peace, have a long history of ebbs and flows in their relations, of indulging in negative propaganda, and the list goes on and on. Both states can never be indifferent to each other's internal and external affairs. With the passage of time their relationship is becoming more and more complex and intractable with involvement of new actors and issues in the yet unsettled disputes.

Economic globalization and nuclear proliferation have dramatically changed the whole scenario. But even after more than 60 years to their emergence as two independent states, the question remains the same, the question of "image" and "perception." Both states still have reservations in their minds; still regard each other as the "archenemy." This has been a great hurdle in building consensus between the two adversaries. Resolution would not be the end of their long-stalled conflict, because resolution would simply be an agreement, an official settlement; for instance despite the Indus Waters Treaty or the Tashkent Declaration, we have witnessed sharp violations. Moreover, there are a number of examples since the partition that indicate short-sightedness and traditional mindsets. While keeping in mind the whole scenario, the paper argues that unless there is a relationship change — which the transformation theory promises — no resolution is possible. And even if resolution is achieved it does not provide a guarantee of conflict-free future. The ultimate goal of transformation is not the solution of a particular problem. However, it promises to provide a friendly environment in which both parties can understand each other's rationales, (means generating a capacity of empowerment and recognition that is explained above), can have peaceful coexistence and an environment where resolution can be achieved easily. Transformation does not roll back its function when resolution happens. Rather, it continues before, during, and after the conflict settlement, especially in a situation where parties have a long history of bitter relations as is the case with India and Pakistan, where causes of the conflict are deeply embedded in history, popular psyche and societies of the two states. The bitter historical memories have profoundly influenced the conflict. On the other hand, the conflict is the carry-over of the historical tussle, with political and strategic issues providing the drive to accelerate it further.

Historical memories — rather fantasised history — provide the backdrop to India-Pakistan relations.⁽⁸⁾

There is another dimension, the psychological dimension. The conflict between the two is also rendered intractable because of its psychological structure, and its interaction with the political, historical and strategic factors. As a result, much of the behaviour of the two states is influenced by the individual and collective psychological processes.⁽⁹⁾ In line with this, the conflict between India and Pakistan as it is interpreted, and the psychological processes their societies undergo, have a profound impact on the overall course of the conflict itself. The relationship between the two is largely influenced by emotions and sentiments; mutual sentiments and feelings of the past have solidified each other's perceptions to such an extent that any change in the status quo would be politically suicidal for the governing elite.⁽¹⁰⁾ Such an irrational enemy obsession has locked both India and Pakistan in a zero-sum conflict.⁽¹¹⁾ In this situation there is a grave need for transformation both at the individual/personal and structural levels of relationship. Both levels are interdependent; for instance, individual/personal transformation can help change the structure in which both sides have set an intractable relationship. As Bush and Folgers say, transformation of society is an indirect result of personal/individual transformation. Such personal/individual transformation is necessary because it is the people of India and Pakistan who can change the fate of both nations, leading either to unending war or long-lasting peace. The transformation potential seeks to get the people realize their own capacity to handle life problems and parallel to this recognize each other's needs as well. There are other tools that can be utilized in order to transform the relationship/structure, for instance civil society, the media, literature, people-to-people contacts, mediation and, most important, the regional economic forum, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). This forum has a great potential to reshape the relationship between the two adversaries in a constructive way (the problems and prospects of transformation through SAARC will be discussed later in detail). Although transformation has taken place at various levels randomly in both states' bilateral relations, the purpose of the study is to examine systematic application of the transformational approach while keeping in mind its theoretical pros and cons.

The following section proposes to discuss the complexity of India-Pakistan relationship, roots of their conflict and also examine how traditional mindsets have given rise to a number of contradictions that need to be dealt with effectively. This is essential for getting to the tools of transformation approach.

India-Pakistan conflict: A historical analysis

The root causes of Indo-Pakistani conflict can be traced back to the days before the division of the subcontinent, as Sisir Gupta argues that the origins of the conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir can be traced back before partition. On the eve of partition, both parties themselves created images which are the major elements of the entire conflict. The Congress maintained that the old India continued to exist as an entity, though the secession of some areas was agreed to in the conviction that what remained would be integrated into a strong, secular and unified state. On its part, the Muslim League stressed that the Muslim majority areas in the northwest and east India, constituted into a separate state, would grow into a strong, strategically vital, Islamic State. What was more, this latter state would become as important as India, which might well be balkanized into independent units, due to the 'sovereign rights' of the princely states; there was no finality about the political map of the subcontinent when India and Pakistan emerged as independent states in mid-August 1947.⁽¹²⁾ Gupta's argument is based on the images which both parties themselves created on the eve of partition. As it is, until today this image and perception has been a great hurdle in the way of bilateral normalization.

S.M. Burke discusses certain ideas that underlie the Indo-Pakistan conflict. According to him, there are two major reasons, one is the mutually antithetical nature of Hinduism and Islam and the other, the consequences of Britain's "cut and run" departure from the subcontinent. The Hindu masses of India and their leadership had always resented Muslim rule and had never reconciled themselves to the presence of the Muslims in India. Due to religious differences they never reached understanding between themselves. Burke sums up these religious differences in the following manner:

Among the universal religions there are no two more incompatible than Islam and Hinduism. Islam is the youngest of the great religions of the world. It is also the simplest and most explicit. The sole requirement is belief in one all-powerful God, in Mohammad as messenger and the Quran as the message. On the other hand, Hinduism is rooted in the ancient past and is not a religion in the usual sense of a faith having a prescribed dogma and scripture.⁽¹³⁾

Jawaharlal Nehru commented on religion in September 1932 in an essay entitled "What is Religion?" this way:

India is supposed to be a religious country above everything else. Hindu, Moslem and Sikh take pride in their faiths and testify to the truth by breaking their heads. The spectacle of what is called religion, in India and elsewhere, has filled me with horror, and I have frequently condemned it and wished to sweep clean of it. Almost always it seemed to stand for blind reaction, dogma and bigotry, superstition and exploitation and the preservation of vested interests.⁽¹⁴⁾

In contrast, Iqbal holds in *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* that “in Islam the spiritual and the temporal are not two distinct domains and the nature of an act, however secular in its import, is determined by the attitude of the mind in which the agent does it... The state, from Islamic standpoint, is an endeavour to transform these ideal principles into space-time forces, an aspiration to realize them in a definite human organization. It is in this sense alone that the state in Islam is a theocracy, not in the sense that it is headed by representative of God on earth who can always screen his despotic will behind his supposed infallibility... as the prophet so beautifully puts it ‘the whole of this earth is a mosque.’ The state according to Islam is only an effort to realize the spiritual in human organization.⁽¹⁵⁾ According to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan:

The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different philosophies, social customs, and literatures. They neither intermarry nor intertwine together and indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based on conflicting ideas and conceptions.⁽¹⁶⁾

India’s national identity construction as a secular state remains a fundamental threat to the religious identity of Pakistan. Both ideologies deny the validity of the other; secularism denies the legitimacy of religious identity, whereas religion is fundamental to Pakistan’s identity as a nation-state. The process of identity formation based on dichotomy necessitates the existence of a sense of historical differences between the two communities which plays a pivotal role in orienting the perception of “self” as different from the “others.”⁽¹⁷⁾

The deep-rooted animosity could be observed on the eve of the partition of the subcontinent in the statements of top leaders on both sides. For instance, prime minister Nehru, in his speech on 3 June 1947,

while conceding the demand for Pakistan, added that “it may be that in this way we shall reach united India sooner than otherwise”⁽¹⁸⁾ A close associate and chronicler of the Congress leaders, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, “was convinced that the new state of Pakistan was not viable and could not last. He thought the acceptance of Pakistan would teach the Muslim League a bitter lesson. Pakistan would collapse in a short time.”⁽¹⁹⁾ The logic of the Congress was that if the newly created and truncated state of Pakistan was set up in great haste, bordering on confusion and panic, without a proper government in the saddle, it would not survive its fiery birth.⁽²⁰⁾ In response to that, Jinnah stated, “it is very unfortunate that vigorous propaganda has been going on that Pakistan is merely a temporary madness and that Pakistan will have to come into Indian Union as a penitent, repentant, erring son. It is now clear beyond doubt that it was well-planned, well-organized and well-directed and the object of it all was to paralyse the new-born Dominion of Pakistan.”⁽²¹⁾

The deep-rooted hatred erupted in the tragic events following the partition. The subcontinent plunged into a bloodbath as trainloads of migrating Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs were mercilessly slaughtered like penned cattle. Women were raped, killed and their babies thrown on spear tips. Such was the frenzy at the dawn of the two nations.⁽²²⁾ The experience of independence and partition shaped the perceptions of the decision-makers on both sides. The mistrust with which the leaders view the actions of one another is rooted in their divergent conceptions and perceptions on a number of issues. Thus, since 1947 both states have enduring divergences over a number of issues in which “perception” and “image” still have been playing decisive role in shaping overall policies. Here the study proposes to discuss the Kashmir issue which is the main case of conflict.

Divergent Perceptions: The case of Kashmir

From the Pakistani perspective, Kashmir is the “core” issue and the root cause of bitterness in its relations with India. Pakistan maintains that Kashmir is a disputed territory and its accession to India in 1947 was invalid, so it constitutes the unfinished agenda of partition.⁽²³⁾ In Pakistan’s eyes the princely state’s accession to India without consulting the Muslim population of Kashmir was null and void because this decision ignored the partition principles: both demographic considerations and geographical location demanded that Kashmir should join Pakistan. What Pakistan wanted foremost was to press its claim on Kashmir. If left unresolved, Kashmir would draw blood from both sides. According to Pakistan, Kashmir’s territory is totally contiguous with Pakistan.⁽²⁴⁾ The entire road and communication network to Srinagar and

Jammu passed through Pakistan. Sixty per cent of the population of the state and 96 per cent of the valley were Muslims.⁽²⁵⁾ Muhammad Ali Jinnah had long held that Kashmir should belong to Pakistan. On the eve of partition he stated that the princely states were free to join either Dominion. Actually he fully expected Kashmir to join Pakistan.⁽²⁶⁾ In the words of Pakistan's first prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan, "Geographically, economically, culturally and religiously Kashmir is a part of Pakistan. The overwhelming Muslim character of its population, its strategic position in relation to Pakistan, the flow of its rivers, the direction of its roads, the channels of its trade, the continual and intimate association which binds it to the people of Pakistan from time immemorial, link Kashmir indissolubly with Pakistan."⁽²⁷⁾ He also pointed out that "the security of Pakistan is bound up with that of Kashmir, and ties of religion, cultural affinity and economic interdependence bind the two together still closer."⁽²⁸⁾ The government of Pakistan clearly stated in 1947 that it "has not accepted and cannot accept the accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to India. In its view the accession was based on violence and fraud. It was fraudulent inasmuch as it was achieved by deliberately creating a set of circumstances with the object of finding an excuse to stage the accession. It was based on violence because it furthered the plan of the Kashmir government to liquidate the Muslim population."⁽²⁹⁾ Pakistan maintains that the future status of the territory should be determined by allowing its people to exercise their right of self-determination in accordance with the UN resolutions. For Pakistan, the Kashmiris' freedom struggle is purely indigenous and it adamantly pledges moral, political and diplomatic support to their right of self-determination.⁽³⁰⁾

Viewing the matter in the light of Pakistan's security imperatives, Maj Gen Akbar Khan stated: "One glance at the map was enough to show that Pakistan's military security would be seriously jeopardized if Indian troops came to be stationed along Kashmir's western border. Once India got the chance she could establish such stations anywhere within a few miles of [the] 180 miles long vital road and rail route between Lahore and Pindi. In the event of war these stations would be [a] dangerous threat to our most important civil and military lines of communication... the possession of Kashmir would enable India, if she wished, to take the war to Hazara and Murree — more than 200 miles behind the front. This of course could happen (not) only in the event of war but in peace time too the situation could be just unacceptable because we would remain permanently exposed to a threat of such magnitude that our independence would never be [a] reality. Surely that was not the type of Pakistan we wanted."⁽³¹⁾

Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, then foreign minister of Pakistan, in an address to the plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on 11 October 1963 declared that “the people of Kashmir are our blood and we will struggle for their right because it is a right which cannot be denied. We are duty-bound to deliver this right to the people of Kashmir.”⁽³²⁾ On another occasion he expressed his strong commitment to this cause in these words: “Remember that...we shall fight, and we shall fight for 1000 years as we have fought for 1000 years in the past...we can continue!”⁽³³⁾

Prime minister Nawaz Sharif said in 1990, that relations with India could not be strengthened without resolving the Kashmir issue.⁽³⁴⁾

On the matter of international mediation to resolve the Kashmir dispute, Pakistan has always insisted on and campaigned for mediation and external involvement to persuade India to respect the UN resolutions. Pakistan also maintained that talk of bilateralism was an Indian ploy to steer clear of deliberation on uncomfortable facts and realities of the Kashmir problem and delay its resolution.⁽³⁵⁾ President Musharraf termed the Indian position that Kashmir was not an international issue as “hypocrisy.” “There is hypocrisy in this attitude. They just juggle around with the semantics of words like mediator, facilitator and interlocutor, but the reality is that Kashmir has already been internationalized.”⁽³⁶⁾

From Indian perspective, Kashmir is an *atoot ang* (integral part) of India. In a speech to the Constituent Assembly on 25 November 1947, prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru justified it in these words:

We were of course vitally interested in the decision that the state would take. Kashmir, because of her geographical position with her frontiers marching with three countries, namely the Soviet Union, China and Afghanistan, is intimately concerned with the security and international contacts of India. Economically also Kashmir is intimately related to India.⁽³⁷⁾

India has been adamant in hanging on to Kashmir as symbolizing its rejection of the philosophy of partition of the subcontinent on the basis of religion. India has argued that religion should not have been the basis for the ‘vivisection’ of the country in 1947. In legal context, India has contended that the princely ruler of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh, had duly opted for India by signing the ‘Instrument of Accession.’ A more personal reason, initially responsible for India’s hanging on to Kashmir, was the Kashmiri origin of prime minister

Nehru.⁽³⁸⁾ Given the political developments since Independence, a considerable segment of Indian elites does not see plebiscite as a solution to the Kashmir issue. Kashmir's 'accession' is described as absolute and final and the problem in Kashmir is interpreted as an issue of autonomy rather than an issue of plebiscite.⁽³⁹⁾ Indian analysts do not believe that Kashmir is a 'core issue.'

As for international mediation to resolve the Kashmir dispute, India repeatedly rejected the idea of mediatory efforts by a third party and even refused to let any third country use its good offices in the matter. The Indian resistance over international mediation stems from the fear that acceptance of such mediation constitutes an indirect admission that Kashmir is a disputed territory, a stance that India has challenged all through arguing that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral and constitutionally indissoluble part of India which has acceded to the Indian Union in the same fashion as the other Indian provinces have.⁽⁴⁰⁾ India insists on bilateral approach for tackling bilateral problems, even as embryonic efforts to evolve a regional framework for security issues have been made in some parts of the world.⁽⁴¹⁾ India holds that autonomy within the framework of the Indian Union would settle the problem of Kashmir. In an interview with Jonathan Power, in May 2004, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh responding to a question how far he would accept a compromise with Pakistan on Kashmir said: "(short) of secession, short of redrawing boundaries, the Indian establishment can live with anything as far as question of Kashmir is concerned." He added: "we need soft borders — then borders are not important, people on both sides of the border should be able to move freely." On the question of plebiscite promised by Nehru, he observed: "a plebiscite would take place on religious basis. It would unsettle everything. No GOI [government of India] could survive that. Autonomy we are prepared to consider. All these are negotiable. But an independent Kashmir would become a hotbed of fundamentalism."⁽⁴²⁾

Thus, Pakistan's nothing-except-Kashmir and India's everything-but-Kashmir is hampering progress towards normalization. The former asserts it as the *problem of Kashmir* while the latter insists it is the *problem in Kashmir*. Ashutosh Misra, an Indian analyst, explaining the difference says that for Pakistan, it still is the "problem of Kashmir" i.e. Kashmir a disputed territory and an unfinished agenda of partition; for India it is "the problem in Kashmir," suggesting that the accession of Kashmir to India is final and complete and the challenge now remains of addressing cross-border terrorism, development and the grievances of the people of Kashmir.⁽⁴³⁾

Applying Transformation Approach to India-Pakistan conflict

This section of the study discusses whether the inherent conflict in India-Pakistan relations can be resolved through taking the conflict transformation approach. Here we observe Indo-Pakistan conflict through three lenses: of Rule, Actor and Structural Transformation. The study covers both the past and current transformations taking place between them. It argues that the emergence of regionalism in South Asia brings about structural transformation. This transformation impacts on rules and actor changes.

Rules Transformation & Pak-India ties

Before analyzing and seeking transformation under this category, we must be familiar at first hand with the rules of both parties, India and Pakistan. As the rules are the limit or domain in which both parties conduct their relations and the rules vary from issue to issue, here we take only the Kashmir issue which is the root cause of their animosity. Any change in rules could dramatically change the whole game. The two countries have been dealing with the issue under the following rules:

Pakistan

- | | | |
|------|----|---|
| Rule | 1. | Kashmir is a disputed territory. |
| | 2. | Pakistan is a party to the dispute and thus has a role to play. |
| | 3. | India is in unlawful occupation of Jammu and Kashmir. |
| | 4. | Kashmir is a question of 'Identity' of Muslims in a country with a predominantly Hindu population. |
| | 5. | The Kashmir problem is due to the indigenous freedom movement. |
| | 6. | Pakistan would keep on pursuing the matter until a free and impartial plebiscite is held in the state. |
| | 7. | Pakistan welcomes third-party involvement in resolving the problem. |
| | 8. | Pakistan also supports bilateral dialogue in the context of dealing with the implementation of the right of self-determination. |

India

- | | | |
|------|----|---------------------------------------|
| Rule | 1. | Kashmir is not a territorial dispute. |
|------|----|---------------------------------------|

2. Kashmir legally belongs to India since its accession in 1947.
3. Plebiscite is not feasible.
4. The Kashmir problem is more exogenous than indigenous.
5. Kashmir is neither a religious nor an ethnic problem.
6. Bilateral negotiation is the only way to resolve this issue.
7. Less contentious issues should be taken up first.

Evidently India and Pakistan's rules regarding Kashmir differ sharply. There has been no significant shift in both countries' approach since 1947. This has been hampering progress since the rules seem to be stringent. Transformation of Rules occurs when there is a change in the priorities of the contending parties that have direct impact on the whole structure of the conflict. For instance, the Indian leadership comes up with sincerity and seriousness about holding a plebiscite in Kashmir. It shows flexibility in its stringent stand that Kashmir is an integral part of India. Alternatively, suppose the Pakistani leadership agrees to prioritise trade and investment relations with India over the Kashmir issue. Such a transformation could serve as a prelude to the final resolution of controversial issues. These rules transformations can be induced and influenced heavily by the onslaught of pressing problems such as energy demands and compulsions that have been disturbing the whole world and forcing them to compromise. The matter will be discussed in the section dealing with structural transformation to see how this has been happening in South Asia particularly with reference to India and Pakistan. Though no significant developments are to be found relating to rules transformation, yet some kind of shift can be observed. For instance: There have been dialogues underway on the matter of peace and security, including confidence-building measures (CBMs) and Jammu and Kashmir CBMs such as ceasefire on the Line of Control (LoC), opening of five cross-LoC points, the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot bus services, and a truck service for trade on Srinagar-Muzaffarabad route which have been put in place. Pakistan agreed not to permit any territory under its control to be used to support terrorism in any manner, while India agreed to a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue to the satisfaction of both sides. These steps fall under "management of conflict" category. However, their sustainability is highly at stake while keeping in mind the deep-rooted historical animosity.

Actor Transformation & Pak-India ties

Actor transformation is possible through two ways — internal transformation within the parties or external transformation. Internal transformation means change in the goals and priorities of the parties concerned that directly impact upon the resolution process, or sometime end the long-stalled conflict. External transformation means, adding or excluding the actors in the conflict, such as the involvement of a third party as mediator or withdrawing of one party in the conflict. Both ways heavily influence the process, and in both cases actors develop new interests and goals as circumstances change, so the conflict may be transformed as the leadership comes up with a new agenda.⁽⁴⁴⁾ But such actor transformation is directly dependent upon an overall structural transformation as the actors are continually changing with changes in the external conditions. For instance, potential international actor involvement can help determine the priorities, strong public opinion at home can influence the resolution process, and economic compulsions can force the parties back from their entrenched positions. Accordingly, regional economic settings can boost regional cooperation thus paving the way for actor transformation. This structural transformation will be discussed later; here the paper attempts to examine the actor transformation in Indo-Pakistan relations both internally (within the parties) and externally (with the involvement of a third party), besides analysing problems and prospects of such transformation.

Internal actor transformation

In 1988 the emergence of Benazir Bhutto as the elected leader of Pakistan created optimism among India's ruling elites regarding better relations. Prime ministers Benazir Bhutto and Rajiv Gandhi ushered in a new phase of Indo-Pakistan relationship when the latter visited Islamabad. Benazir said that Pakistan and India "must bury the hatchet; we have had enough of it. Let's start a new chapter. India has a new-generation leadership and Pakistan also has a new-generation of leadership. Rajiv and I belong to the new generation. We have some kinship; his mother was assassinated and so was my father; he has lost his brother and so have I. We both can start from a clean state."⁽⁴⁵⁾ This was their first meeting and it resulted in three bilateral agreements. One related to preventing attack on each other's nuclear installations. The second envisaged cultural cooperation while the third one pertained to avoidance of double taxation on incomes from international civil aviation transactions.

The developments in early 1999 promised optimism in Indo-Pakistan relations. In 1999, the Lahore Declaration came as the defining

moment in South Asian history. Prime ministers A.B Vajpayee of India and Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan met in Lahore in February and agreed on the resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir terming it as essential for the “environment of peace and security” and pledging to “intensify their efforts to resolve all issues, including J&K.” They also agreed to step up the composite and integrated dialogue process for an early and positive outcome of the agreed bilateral agenda.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Nawaz Sharif urged the parties to go beyond their stated positions to resolve the longstanding disputes.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Vajpayee termed this summit the “defining moment in South Asian history,”⁽⁴⁸⁾ and expressed solidarity with a stable, secure and prosperous Pakistan.⁽⁴⁹⁾

As time moved forward, Vajpayee in his speech on 18 April 2003 offered the “hand of friendship” to Pakistan and Zaffrullah Jamali, the then prime minister of Pakistan, responded positively. The sharp transformation can be sensed in the policies of Pakistan’s then president Pervez Musharraf, who showed remarkable flexibility and innovative thinking in offering different proposals that could fulfil the aspirations of Kashmiris while keeping in mind the sensitivities of both India and Pakistan. For instance, the Joint Statement signed on 6 January 2004 was a serious step towards the management of conflict pertaining to Kashmir. In this statement, India’s prime minister Vajpayee said that in order to take forward and sustain the dialogue process, violence, hostility and terrorism must be prevented. On his part, Musharraf reassured Vajpayee that he would not permit any territory under Pakistan’s control to be used to support terrorism in any manner. He further emphasized that a sustained and productive dialogue addressing all issues would lead to positive results.⁽⁵⁰⁾ In a press conference following release of the joint statement, president Musharraf said: “History has been made as Pakistan and India have reached an agreement to take the process of normalization of relations forward. We have never reached the point we have reached now”. L.K Advani, the then deputy prime minister of India, said: a breakthrough has been achieved in Indo-Pakistan relations during prime minister Vajpayee’s visit to Pakistan.⁽⁵¹⁾ Musharraf going beyond the stated positions offered to drop the demand for a UN-mandated plebiscite in Kashmir and meet India halfway to resolve the dispute.⁽⁵²⁾

Moreover, Musharraf advocated a four-stage formula for the resolution of Kashmir that included, recognition of Kashmir as a dispute, initiation of a dialogue, shedding of mutually unacceptable solutions, and securing a win-win situation for all parties to the dispute.⁽⁵³⁾ In October 2004, he proposed a three-phase formula. In the first phase seven regions of Kashmir along ethnic and geographic lines would be identified, which were Jammu, Rajouri-Poonch, Kashmir Valley, Kargil and Ladakh on

the IHK side of Kashmir, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Northern Areas on the Pakistan side. The above would be demilitarized in the second phase and their legal and constitutional status determined in the third and final phase.⁽⁵⁴⁾ In another proposal floated in 2005, Musharraf suggested demilitarization, maximum 'self-governance' and "joint management" for Kashmir.

The rationale behind these proposals was securing a creative resolution based on concessions by all sides, yet meeting the aspirations of the Kashmiris. India rejected Musharraf's seven-region proposal maintaining that the proposal envisaged a division of Kashmir on religious lines. Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh said: "Any proposal that smacks of a further division of our country on the basis of religion is not going to be acceptable to us." Moreover, India did not respond favourably to Pakistan's proposal on "self-governance" and "demilitarization" and reaffirmed that there would be no redeployment of security forces while violence, terrorism and "infiltration" continued. So the differences of opinion regarding any issue which one country considered a priority has underlined the basic dichotomy in their approaches that persists to date.

External actor transformation

As explained above, external transformation takes place when there is intervention by new parties in the conflict that have a direct impact on the nature of the conflict. Here it is pertinent to examine the role of parties such as the United Nations, World Bank's mediation in the Indus Waters dispute, Soviet mediation in the Tashkent Declaration, and arbitration in the Rann of Kutch dispute. As far as the UN is concerned it could not play a decisive role in finalizing a settlement between India and Pakistan. This international forum had also been a victim of both states' intransigence and divergent stances. The UN involvement began with Indian complaint to the president of the Security Council on 1 January 1948 against Pakistan's alleged military and logistic support to the tribal infiltrators invading Jammu and Kashmir. India urged the Security Council to stop the Pakistan government from supporting the tribals who carried out an invasion in an area which legally and constitutionally belonged to India. On the other hand, Pakistan's foreign minister Zafrullah Khan devoted his first speech in the UN to the implications and the background of the Kashmir dispute. As he told the Security Council that the case did not appear to him as simple or straightforward as the Indian representative had made it out to be. Grave issues were at stake and a fuller presentation of the background was

necessary for an understanding of the problem — the human background more than the legal and constitutional or political.

The Pakistani case was presented as follows: “Starting with Poonch, the whole of the state slowly got involved in an orgy of lust, murder and arson. Muslims in Jammu were killed, villages burnt down, and the officials of the state were participating in and encouraging acts of violence. As these events were going on, the government of Kashmir started the battle of complaints with Pakistan and went on complaining, while refusing to meet the representatives of Pakistan or holding an impartial inquiry into the various charges. The much planned for accession took place on 26 October and Indian troops landed in Kashmir on 27 October. The government of India never consulted or approached Pakistan till all this was complete.”⁽⁵⁵⁾ Pakistan questioned the legality of Indian actions against the princely states of Jammu and Kashmir, Junagadh, and Hyderabad. Following these complaints the United Nation Commission on India and Pakistan (UNCIP) was set up in June 1948, — comprising Argentina, Belgium, Colombia, Czechoslovakia and the United States of America — and assigned the task of visiting the subcontinent and holding discussions with the leadership of both countries. The first proposal of the UNCIP, attempted to bring about a cease-fire between the two warring parties.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Following the signing of a cease-fire agreement between India and Pakistan in July 1949 at Karachi, the establishment of UN Military Observers’ Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) was also authorized to monitor the observance of cease-fire and report to each party and to the UN Secretary General on any violations of the Ceasefire Line (CFL) or on any activity along the CFL that was detrimental to the maintenance of peace and stability. UNCIP made some further attempts at mediation all of which amounted to little. In August 1949, it suggested the possibility of arbitration by an international tribunal. Pakistan promptly agreed but India rejected it.⁽⁵⁷⁾

After the failure of arbitration attempt, UNCIP recommended a single mediator, for this purpose General McNaughton of Canada, president of UN Security Council, was chosen. He made a series of proposals in which prime focus was on demilitarization. Sumit Ganguly holds that the Indian leadership objected to the thrust of McNaughton proposals because they would have led to ceding parts of occupied Kashmir to Pakistan. At the Indian rejection of McNaughton proposals, the Security Council appointed Sir Owen Dixon, an Australian jurist, as the plebiscite administrator. He also conceived several plans, including the partition of the state. The dilemma was that his partition plan would have meant ceding the valley of Kashmir to Pakistan, an outcome which would have been unacceptable to India. On the eve of formation of the

Kashmir constituent assembly in 1951, Pakistan vehemently opposed the move and urged that the Security Council immediately appoint a representative to settle the dispute. On Pakistan's request the Council passed a resolution on 30 March 1951. The resolution appointed Dr. Frank Graham, president of the University of North Carolina, as UN representative for India and Pakistan. Graham negotiated with the representatives of India and Pakistan and made a number of recommendations to create a conducive environment for the implementation of UN resolutions. Pakistan accepted these recommendations, made in April 1958, but India repudiated; the reason of rejection was obvious as India's prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru said in a press conference, "any consideration which endeavours to put us on the same level as Pakistan, that is aggressor and the aggressed countries on the same level, is not negotiable to us and will not be acceptable for us."⁽⁵⁸⁾

UN involvement in and after the 1965 and 1971 wars has not been mediatory in nature, as the major concern was to maintain the ceasefire. In 1993 UN secretary general Boutros-Boutros Ghali offered India's external affairs Minister Dinesh Singh to provide any UN assistance to settle the problem, but India rejected it firmly. On the other hand, mediation is still a live affair and Pakistan continues urging the UN to implement its resolution on plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir.⁽⁵⁹⁾

The most significant and successful mediation was witnessed over the sharing of the Indus River waters. The three eastern rivers, the Ravi, the Beas and the Sutluj, enter Pakistan from India while the three western rivers, the Indus, the Jhelum and the Chenab, flow into Pakistan from the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Due to this fact, the distribution of waters of the rivers that flow from Jammu and Kashmir became an issue of contention between India and Pakistan. The Indian side cut off water supply from the Upper Bari Doab Canal to the Central Bari Doab Canal in Pakistan as the pre-partition agreement on allocation of water in the Indus irrigation system expired on 1 April 1948 and claimed that Pakistan had not paid India the water dues. This threatened the very basis of agriculture in Pakistan. However, as a result of World Bank mediation the two countries signed an agreement in 1960. The World Bank had also offered, earlier in 1952, its good offices and comprehensive support for the development of the Indus basin but the offer was rejected by India. After that World Bank-nominated experts put forward proposals in 1954. Their primary focus was that the waters of the eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutluj) should be used by India and that of the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) should be utilized by Pakistan. After a series of meetings held in Washington, Rome and London by engineers and

experts of the two countries the draft was finalized and signed by Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Pakistan's president Ayub Khan and vice-president of the World Bank, W.A.B. Illift, at Karachi in 1960.

Soviet Involvement and Tashkent Agreement: The second India-Pakistan war broke out on 6 September 1965 over Kashmir. UN intervention brought the war to a close on 22 September, but the Security Council remained unable to sort out their differences. The deadlock provided mediation opportunity to the Soviet Union. Soviet prime minister Kosygin had offered his good offices to both India and Pakistan. Both accepted this offer after the end of the war. Kosygin succeeded in brokering a peace agreement, when the two parties met in Tashkent in January 1966. Indian prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and president Ayub Khan held meetings from 4 to 10 January. Kosygin stayed away from discussions for the first two days, but intervened only when he saw the summit heading towards a deadlock. He held separate talks with both leaders and finally was able to remove their differences.⁽⁶⁰⁾ In an agreement signed on 10 January 1966, both India and Pakistan declared that "all armed personnel of the two countries shall be withdrawn not later than February 25, 1966, to positions they held prior to August 5, 1965 and both sides shall observe the ceasefire terms on ceasefire line."⁽⁶¹⁾

Rann of Kutch: International arbitration has been used in settling conflicting claims over the Rann of Kutch, which is around 8400 square miles and is situated between the Pakistani province of Sindh and Indian province of Gujarat. Originally an extension of the Arabian Sea, the Rann area was closed off and got converted into a salty marsh. The 1947 partition plan did not provide a clear division of the area. Pakistan claims the northern half of the Rann measuring about 3,500 square miles. For Pakistan, it is supposed to be a lake rather than a marsh so it holds that the international norms of boundary demarcation of lakes should apply to it. On the other hand, India rejected Pakistan's claim arguing that there had been a well-established boundary running along the northern edge of the Rann in the pre-partition maps thus claiming full title to the disputed area.⁽⁶²⁾ Up to 1960, the dispute remained unresolved but dormant. Later, in 1965, the dispute culminated in a military engagement. The boundary question was referred to the India-Pakistan Western Boundary Case Tribunal chaired by a Swedish judge, Gunnar Lagergren. Alec Bebler of Yugoslavia was appointed by India, and Nasrollah Entezam of Iran by Pakistan while the Swedish judge was jointly selected by the other two judges. Both sides agreed before the tribunal that their dispute should be limited to the boundary to the north. In February 1968, the tribunal awarded 350 square miles area to Pakistan. Prime minister Indira Gandhi

at first contended but later accepted the award in the spirit of arbitration.⁽⁶³⁾

The above analysis shows that historically external transformation (means, by adding external actors into the conflict) had limited success. For instance, UN involvement in the 1965 conflict was successful to the extent that it arranged the ceasefire between the warring parties, and the Soviet Union was temporarily able to transform both sides in Tashkent. Besides, the US involvement was very critical. To conclude, it might be said that such transformation was 'provisional' and could not change the traditional mindsets. Similarly, internal transformation has always been a victim of environment, the environment of distrust and apprehensions that has been prevailing in their relations since partition. Such environment is the 'core' and needs to be transformed. Change in the environment and the overall structure in which they have built intractable relations has a direct impact upon the decision makers because structural transformation is the most significant way of altering conflict. How this transformation can take place? The next section explores ways that have the potential to impact the environment.

Structural Transformation and Pak-India ties

If there is one area that can dramatically change the nature of the conflict between India and Pakistan, it is structural transformation. The "structure" comprises the environment of conflict, pattern of relationships between the actors and the surrounding social and political forms and institutions which determine these relationships. Transforming structure brings changes not only in overall environment of the conflict but also in the pattern of relationships. It also has a direct impact on the other components of transformation approach like actor transformation, goals and issues, and rules transformation. As observed above, actor transformation alone did not facilitate resolution of conflict because the existing environment was not conducive.

Historically, we can find structural transformation in India-Pakistan relations. In the Cold War era, the polarization of the world into two rival blocs further accentuated the differences between both adversaries. During that period, structural transformation had tilted more towards the negative (destructive) than the positive (constructive). But when the Cold War ended, the whole scenario changed dramatically, providing India and Pakistan opportunities to cultivate the concept of cooperative peace and security. The urge for peace and realization of futility of confrontation and utility of CBMs, the cumulative impact of track II diplomacy and the commitment to succeed in a dialogue process,

with the US encouraging both countries to stick to it, have all strengthened the peace process in recent years. Moreover, the growing trend of regionalism and the wave of globalization have brought tremendous changes throughout the world and emphasized the futility of seeking military solution to problems. The growing economic competition and interdependence are lending support to the spirit of compromise. According to an observer, the shift in Pakistan's attitude towards regionalism at the 12th SAARC summit, held in Islamabad on 1 January 2004, facilitated the South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) two years later. Under the agreement, a Committee of Experts was set up to prepare for the launch of the free trade area.⁽⁶⁴⁾ This new climate of peace resulted from domestic developments in both countries, including democratic governance and liberalization of the previously controlled and centralized economies. The post-cold war international environment is equally favourable because all major extra-regional actors, including the United States, Russia, and China, support a peaceful resolution of Indo-Pakistan differences.⁽⁶⁵⁾ In this changed scenario there is a push for Structural Transformation.

The emergence of regionalism in South Asia brought about Structural Transformation. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has a great potential for transforming the structure in such a way that relegates security concerns to a lower priority. As Miall in his study explains, the spirit of unity and powerful structures within the European Union (EU) have significantly transformed the conflicts in the region and made a profound impact on the actors, issues, goals, context and structures of the conflicting parties. Similarly, the largest regional cooperation organization in South Asia, SAARC, with a population of 1.47 billion which accounts for 22 per cent of the world population,⁽⁶⁶⁾ could play a vital role in the region. The inclusion of Iran, China, Japan, South Korea, European Union and the US as observers is a positive development in this regard. The EU has been interested in strengthening its links with SAARC because of its interest in crisis prevention in South Asia. In 1996, the European Commission and the SAARC Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation. In 1999 the two entities "agreed to cooperate on improving market access for SAARC products into the EU, working towards accumulation of rules of origin for SAARC products for exports to the EU, giving technical support for the establishment of South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) and supporting the harmonization of SAARC standards."⁽⁶⁷⁾

Similarly, involvement of the United States in SAARC would strongly influence regional security dynamics and hence the entire nature

of SAARC. About the US plans in this Association, Richard Boucher, US assistant secretary of state, said in an interview with CNN: “We have a lot of different programs with people in the region, including programs to support SAARC. We have worked with them before on free trade area, for example, and we are looking for more areas like that where we can be supportive on a regional basis.”⁽⁶⁸⁾ In March 2007, speaking before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in Washington, Boucher said the US was “working in close cooperation with our friends and partners to achieve important economic and trade linkages within the region. Our strategy includes collaboration with donors, the private sector and appropriate regional organizations in meeting our common regional integration goals. Our membership will give us the opportunity to assist SAARC members in realizing the full potential of SAFTA and address persistent impediments to the cross-border movement of goods that has stunted the economic growth of the region. Beyond trade, our membership in SAARC will allow us to leverage a broad range of our technical assistance efforts, including in the areas of education, the environment and humanitarian relief.”⁽⁶⁹⁾ Evolutionary changes in regional trading relations under the auspices of SAARC have accelerated the transition.

Energy security is another kind of security which is bound to be involved in the present dynamics of SAARC. Energy security is important to India because of its dependence on the import of fossil fuels and the physical proximity of the two energy-rich areas of the Gulf and Central Asia. India’s economic growth at the rate of nine per cent plus annually requires more energy. India’s Petroleum Minister Mani Shanker Aiyer predicted that “in a few years India would be the fourth largest net importer of energy in the world — after the US, Japan, and China”. India imports 70 per cent of the 115 million tons of crude oil it consumes annually. The dependence is expected to touch 85 per cent of the 368 million tons projected to be consumed in 2025. Pakistan is heavily dependent on petroleum product imports to meet its energy requirements. From January to November 2006, it had consumed approximately 350 thousand barrels of oil and various petroleum products, of which more than 80 per cent was imported. The natural gas reserves in India by 2004 were estimated at 923 billion cubic metres with an estimated life span of 29 years only.⁽⁷⁰⁾

In this ominous scenario, both India and Pakistan search for an environment-friendly and inexpensive fuel (natural gas). India’s current demand of 151 million cubic feet per day (mmcf/d) is likely to shoot up to 391mm by 2025.⁽⁷¹⁾ Pakistan is the shortest and most viable route through which India can access the Central and Western Asian markets

whether it is Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) or Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI). Today there are positive signs of the IPI gas pipeline project getting finalized at last. Pakistan's then petroleum minister Khawaja Asif and his Indian counterpart Shri Murki on 25 April 2008 agreed on the basic principles to finalize the bilateral agreement on the project within the next few weeks, adding "we are only dictated by our energy needs for economic development and prosperity." Khawaja Asif in a joint press conference stated that the recommencement of talks with India would help complete the project on schedule. He said the construction of pipeline would start by 2009 and would be complete by September 2012.⁽⁷²⁾

Interdependence of this kind is an important lever not only for normalization of relations between member countries but strengthening the SAARC itself. However, such structural transformation would depend on sustainability of good relations. The next section attempts to focus on a decisive component of the whole transformation theory, the "relationship change," that would bind and facilitate sustainability of the transformation process.

Relationship Transformation and India-Pakistan relations

Image and perception problem has been a great hurdle resulting in serious damage to relationships as it makes it difficult for the parties to recognize that they share common needs and goals. Fear, anger, lack of mutual trust and hostility has become the norm of interaction, causing both India and Pakistan to get distrustful and suspicious of each other's actions. The above analysis shows no considerable achievement has been made in any of the above-mentioned categories in relation to India and Pakistan. To some extent there has been progress at Actor level but that could not be sustained because of the deep-rooted ideological differences. For instance, UN efforts proved futile; Benazir Bhutto and Rajiv Gandhi's initiatives for normalization could not be sustained; Lahore Declaration could not survive and president Musharraf's flexibility over Kashmir could not shake the rigid mindsets. On the Structural level, there are strong indicators that could foster regional economic cooperation. But the deep-rooted mutual animosity questions the very basis of these giant structural changes. Thus the remedy lies in comprehensively dealing with the siege mentality and improving relations; human relationships have the power to defuse conflict and make settlement easier. While improving relations the theory facilitates the sustainability of the peace process and rapprochement. However, it does not provide resolution to a particular conflict as mentioned above

but goes beyond while reshaping the minds of both the peoples and the leaders in a constructive manner. It is supposed to be a continuous process that keeps running before, during, and after the resolution. India and Pakistan because of their intractable relationship require constructive mind-building that must be in line with resolution tactics. How to build a constructive mindset for improving the relationship? The following discussion will attempt to highlight the effective tools of transformation.

The media in conflict-ridden countries often play a significant role in creating and furthering both facilitating factors and triggering factors; for example, by utilizing 'oppositional metaphors' — 'us' vs. 'them' — linked to internal and external issues or 'threats' facing the nation.⁽⁷³⁾ We have seen that the media can provoke people towards violence. For instance, Hitler used the media to create an entire worldview of hatred for Jews and other minority groups. Rwanda's radio urged listeners to pick up machetes and take to the streets to kill what they called 'the cockroaches.' Broadcasters in the Balkans polarized local communities to the point where violence became an acceptable tool for addressing grievances. So the media's impact on escalation of conflict is more widely recognized than its impact on peace building.⁽⁷⁴⁾ Moreover, the behaviour of the states, policy priorities and foreign policy approaches are deeply embedded with the strong perceptions. In the case of India and Pakistan the role of the media has been even more crucial in of shaping and conducting overall relations. Hostile propaganda has been a great impediment in sustainability of the peace process and advocacy of peaceful co-existence.

In order to play upon the sensitivity of the people the media have an enormous potential for creating a common basis and cultivating conditions for conflict transformation through a variety of activities. For instance, the media can serve as an informing and educating function by maintaining free flow of accurate and constructive information, counteracting misperceptions, identifying the interests underlying the issues, and helping to build a consensus. This may include providing information about human rights as much as about the principles of good governance and parliamentary democracy and democratic election. It can further build confidence and mediate between conflicting parties by fostering communication, generating alternative options to violent conflict, reflecting the ordinary people's desire and need for peace, communicating the process of negotiations to the constituencies involved and providing a forum for ongoing dialogue. The media may act as a watchdog on leaders to help ensure long-term accountability, monitor human rights violations and, in a broader sense, provide some early warning on potential escalations of the conflict. The appropriateness and

effectiveness of these functions of the media will vary not only according to the type and phase of the conflict, but also according to the role that the media have played within the conflict dynamics. Since the essence of conflict transformation is the transformation of mentalities, both within the society and the individual, societies have to be involved from the top-down and the bottom-up. The media have the potential to be a gateway through which to reach the largest possible number of people.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Peace Journalism scholar Gadi Wolfsfeld notes there is a “fundamental contradiction between the nature of a peace process and news values, the media often play a destructive role in attempts at making peace.”⁽⁷⁶⁾ Those who run the media tend to favour four values: immediacy, drama, simplicity and ethnocentrism. These values make it difficult to use the media for peace. The chart below, adapted from Wolfsfeld’s work, illustrates the tendency for these values to favour violence rather than peace.

	Media Focus	No Media Focus
Immediacy	Specific actions and events	Long-term processes and policies (as in ongoing peace process, dialogue, or mediation)
Drama	Violence, crisis or conflict Extremist behaviours Outrageous acts	Calm, controlled, moderate people getting along with each other (such as those participating in a dialogue)
Simplicity	Clear-cut opinions, images, major personalities, two-sided conflicts	Complex opinions or explanations, institutions, root causes, multi-sided conflicts
Ethnocentrism	‘Our’ beliefs, myths and symbols ‘Our’ suffering The brutality of some ‘Other’	‘Their’ beliefs, myths, and symbols ‘Their’ suffering, ‘Our’ brutality to ‘Them’

Source: Gadi Wolfsfeld, *Media and the path to peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

Civil society can also play a vital role in bridging the gap between India and Pakistan. As the civil society comprises non-official groups such as intellectuals, artists, women, journalists, political parties, students, trade unions, groups opposed to child labour, and other

segments of public opinion which advocate decentralization of power, good governance, rule of law, transparency, empowerment, efficiency, accountability and participation,⁽⁷⁷⁾ their participation has a decisive role in de-hyphenation. In line with the India-Pakistan Friendship Society, Pakistan Soldiers Initiative for Peace, Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy, Women's Initiative for Peace in South Asia, The People's Asia Forum, Association of the Peoples of South Asia, the South Asian Human Rights Association and the South Asia Free Media Association, all these organizations are committed to helping bridge the gap between the people of the two neighbouring countries.

Conclusion

The paper discussed the Conflict Transformation approach and its application to India-Pakistan relations. While implementing this approach, the paper observed a little progress in the "actor," and "rules" levels. Besides, we see a great potential in the "structure" level that is paving the way for compromise. As for "relationship transformation," which is the most important part of the approach, it needs to be run independently — regardless of progress or otherwise in other areas — because it works as the facilitator of any transformation and resolution made. However, all these levels are interdependent, yet relationship transformation, even if pursued independently, has a direct impact upon "rules," and "actor" and structural transformation. Besides, the emergence of a single most powerful factor on international, regional or domestic levels might have a catalytic impact upon all levels of transformation. For instance, growing economic competition, energy insecurity and growing demand for basic needs at home can dramatically transform the "structure," "rule" and "actor" where resolution would become a matter of days. What is most significant in the transformation theory is its "promise of relationship change." As India and Pakistan have been locked in an intractable conflict for a very long time, it is essential to have continuous efforts that build a constructive change in relationship, which is not only helpful in conflict resolution but also in promoting prospects of peaceful co-existence.

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