CHAPTER 12

PAKISTAN's STRATEGIC CULTURE

Hasan-Askari Rizvi

Strategic culture is a collectivity of the beliefs, norms, values, and historical experiences of the dominant elite in a polity that influences their understanding and interpretation of security issues and environment, and shapes their responses to these. It is a perceptual framework of orientations, values, and beliefs that serves as a screen through which the policymakers observe the dynamics of the external security environment, interpret the available in formation and decide about the policy options in a given situation.

Strategic culture establishes "pervasive and long-lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions with such an aura of actuality that the strategic prefer- ences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious."[1] It comprises certain assumptions about the strategic environment, especially the nature of the adversary and the threat it poses. It also offers definite ideas about the ways to deal with an adversary or to cope with an adverse environment.[2]

The advocates of strategic culture argue that security management decisions are shaped by "different cultural influences on the decisionmakers and not by the rational pursuit of similar national security or functional organizational interests."[3] The historical narratives created by the dominant elite, their notions of war and peace, the dynamics of power politics in a polity and the decisionmaking patterns have a profound impact on the defense and security-related disposition of a state. These norms, beliefs, and

perceptions of history are often self -justifying and do not easily change. The information relating to security issues and problems is interpreted against the backdrop of strategic culture, which in turn influences the selection of options to cope with a situation. In other words, as Jack Snyder puts it, strategic culture represents "the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other."[4] It offers a better understanding of a state's military and security strategies. Another perspective finds an analogy between the concept of political culture and strategic culture. The former is a "short-hand expression of a mind-set which has the effect of limiting attention to less than the full range of alternative behaviors, prob-lems and solutions which are logically possible." The latter has the same characteristics but it applies to security and defense policy-makers. It includes "the beliefs and assumptions that frame their choices about international military behavior, particularly those concerning decisions to go war, preference for offensive, expan-sionist or defensive modes of warfare, and the levels of wartime casualties that would be acceptable."[5]

The underlying assumption is that the political-military policymakers do not always respond to reality. They do not make a dispassionate and realistic assessment of the options and are not invariably restrained by organizational dynamics. Their security disposition is shaped by "their image of the situation." Their behavior is determined by what they "think the world is like, not what it is really like."[6]

Historical narratives, perceptions of the adversary's intentions and capabilities, and the beliefs, values, and norms of the policy-makers are useful to understand the strategic disposition of a state and the choices the security managers make. However, it may be difficult to explain each and every decision only with reference to strategic culture. The role of careful analysis of the situation based

306

on realism and the impact of organizational imperatives cannot be totally excluded.

Historical experiences, perceptions of the adversary and a conception of self—the determinants of strategic culture—are relatively permanent, but each crisis situation may be totally or partly different; this calls for a thorough review of the "facts" of a situation. Such a review is no doubt done against the backdrop of the relatively permanent strategic culture, but the new or unique features of a situation may compel the policymakers to look elsewhere—to the dynamics of international politics, the role of technology, and the constraints of diplomacy. At times, the strategic cultural perspective and the dictates of realism may lead to the same or similar policy measures. Pakistan's decision to seek U.S. military assistance in the mid-1950s and the early 1980s can be explained with reference to Pakistan's strategic culture as well as realism (keeping in view the regional power imbalance to the advantage of India's and Pakistan's resource constraints).

A professional and disciplined military supported by sufficiently advanced technology and trained human power (e.g., the Indian and Pakistani militaries) can override the impact of strategic culture in favor of other considerations—technological, scientific and power political—in a given situation. There may be a debate among the policymakers as to the weight to be given to different factors imping-ing on a security issue. Furthermore, if a military maintains distance from the society, its top brass have a greater probability of acting professionally, that is, going for a comprehensive review of a situa-tion. Who makes the major input to security policy is also important in determining the role of societal factors and the ability of the policymakers to balance the impact of strategic culture and other considerations. Civilian leaders who are always concerned about popular support in order to sustain themselves in power may be motivated more by considerations of political gains than by profes-sional defense imperatives. If the top brass make the major input,

there is a greater probability of the professional and organizational considerations playing an important role in security-related decisions.

Notwithstanding these comments, strategic culture is an important concept to understand the disposition, responses, and decisions of the security policymakers. It offers a better understanding of how the leaders are likely to react to a security situation and what type of options they are likely to go for. Knowledge of strategic culture helps us to understand the sensitivities of a state and how to meaningfully engage in a dialogue with its leaders in a given situation. Many of the policy options or behavior patterns can be understood with reference to strategic culture. For example, the role of *mujahideen* or *jihadis* in Afghanistan, Kashmir or Palestine cannot be fully understood without reference to their historical narratives, orientations, beliefs, and values. Similarly, reaction to killings in a war, insurgency, or the capacity to face hardships for a cause may not be appreciated by a rational choice approach. Ideological factors, historical narratives, and perception of the self as well as identification with the cause have better explanatory potential.

The study of strategic culture focuses on the historical experiences and narratives of the policymakers, their perceptions of the adversary's intentions and capabilities, and the challenges they encounter in their interaction with the rest of the world, especially the immediate neighbors. It takes into account the beliefs, values, and orientations of the policymakers concerning these security issues.

The Prism of the Policymakers and Strategic Culture.

The fact that Pakistan was a new state, carved out of India on the basis of Muslim separatism, has contributed to its insecurity. Most Indians, especially the policymakers, viewed the establishment of Pakistan as a negation of the principles they stood for during the

struggle for independence. Their disposition towards Pakistan ranged from reluctant acceptance to a hope that the new state might collapse, making it possible for the separated territories to return to India. Pakistani leaders overemphasized their "separateness" and "distinct identity," reacting sharply to what they perceived as India's attempts to strangle the new state in its infancy. Their greatest fear was the collapse of the state due to either internal disorder caused by the process of partition, killings, and mass migrations, or India's noncooperative, if not hostile, attitude toward Pakistan in the early years of independence.

It is interesting to note that the top leaders of the Muslim League who played a decisive role in the movement for the establishment of Pakistan expected cordial relations between independent India and independent Pakistan. As early as 1930, while proposing the idea of a Muslim state in India during his presidential address to the Muslim League session, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal said that the establishment of a "consolidated Muslim state" meant peace and security for India "resulting from an internal balance of power."[7] In the early 1940s, Mohammed Ali Jinnah argued that a separate Muslim state would ensure security in the northwestern zone, and India would guard the southern and western India. He continued, "We join together as good friends and neighbors and say to the world, 'Hands off India'." In October 1944 and November 1946, Jinnah said that India and Pakistan would "proclaim a 'Monroe Doctrine' of their own for the defense of the subcontinent against all outsiders."[8] The leaders of India and Pakistan toyed with the idea of common defense immediately before and after independence in August 1947.[9] However, the situation changed rapidly soon after independence, although the echo of joint defense or shared security was heard occasionally thereafter.

In security and a Hostile India. Three major developments changed the perspective of Pakistani leaders towards India and caused serious security problems for them. First, the communal riots that accompanied the partition of India and the massive influx of

309

refugees shocked them. Hardly any part of Pakistan escaped the adverse impact of the refugee problem or the killings. A large number of civil servants and military personnel found their family members trapped in communal riots and mass migrations. Second, the disputes over the distribution of assets of the government of British India (civil and military) also caused much bitterness. Pakistan was more in need of resources for establishing the administrative and military structures of the new state, but it did not receive its due share, especially of military stores, weapons, and equipment. Pakistan had to set up a new federal government in Karachi and a new provincial administration in Dhaka. Both cities, especially Dhaka, lacked physical resources and other requirements for creating the infrastructure of the administration, not to speak of the shortage of experienced civil servants and military officers. Third, the dispute on the accession of the princely states of Junagadh and especially Jammu and Kashmir caused much bitterness. On top of all this was the first Kashmir war, in 1947-48, that brought the two armies face to face with each other at a time when the Pakistani military, the smaller of the two armies, was in the process of reorganization. These three factors shaped Pakistan's perception of India as an adversary.

It was not difficult to evolve a historical narrative to justify what Pakistan's policymakers perceived as India's "hostile" attitude. They viewed the antagonism between India and Pakistan as an extension of the distrust and conflict of goals between the Congress Party and the Muslim League in the pre-independence period as the latter demanded the establishment of a separate state for the Muslims. Pakistan's official and unofficial circles argued that having failed to stop the creation of Pakistan, the Indian leaders (the Congress Party) were creating maximum problems for Pakistan. The major disputes that spoiled their relations in the early years of independence included, *inter alia*, the problems of religious minorities, the river water dispute, the evacuee property issue, the concentration of Indian troops on the Punjab border in 1950, and the unilateral

suspension of trade by India in 1950. It was generally believed in Pakistan that India did not want to solve these problems amicably in order to purposefully jeopardize the survival of the new state of Pakistan. The negative statements of Indian leaders strengthened these perceptions. Pakistan's policymakers were thus convinced that Pakistan was externally vulnerable and the search for security loomed large in their strategic considerations.

Afghanistan's irredentist claims on Pakistan's territory intensified the latter's insecurity. When the Afghan government came to know in 1947 that the British had finally decided to wind up their rule over India and that the state of Pakistan would come into existence, it laid claims on North Western Frontier Province and parts of Balochistan. The Afghan government adopted divergent positions on its irredentist claim ranging from independence for the claimed territory or maximum autonomy within Pakistan to their absorption into Afghanistan.[10] On the pretext of this territorial claim, Afghanistan opposed Pakistan's admission to the United Nations (UN) in September 1947. Intermittent border clashes between the two countries in the 1950s and the 1960s caused much concern to Pakistan, and their diplomatic relations were severed twice, in 1955 and 1962.[11] Afghanistan was a weaker military power, but what perturbed Pakistan most was India's support of Afghanistan's claims on Pakistani territory. In 1955, the Soviet Union endorsed Afghanistan's demands on Pakistan.[12] A large section of public opinion and the government in Pakistan feared a two-front war: armed clashes erupting simultaneously on the Pakistan-India and Pakistan-Afghanistan borders.

A host of security handicaps accentuated Pakistan's insecurity. Pakistan's territory lacks depth and the main railroad link from south to north (Karachi to Peshawar) runs parallel to the India-Pakistan border; at several points it is within 60 miles of the Indian border or the Line of Control in Kashmir. Three Pakistani cities (Lahore, Sialkot, Kasur) are situated very close to the border, and

there are hardly any natural barriers like rivers and mountains on the India-Pakistan border, especially in the Punjab area. No Pakistani military airfield with the exception of Quetta is more than 150 miles from the Indian border. Such A situation creates serious handicaps for the security managers because an adequate defense of these population centers and communication lines calls for confronting the troops of the adversary right on the border or in the adversary's territory. This requires a well-equipped, highly mobile and hard-hitting army. Pakistan lacked such a defensive capability in the early years of independence.

Opposition to India's Regional Ambitions. Pakistan's civilian and military leaders have often expressed strong reservations about India's efforts to assume a leadership and commanding role in South Asia because of its size, population, industrial and technological advancement, and military power. This is a long-cherished and often unstated goal whose roots go back to the days of Nehru. Indian leaders emphasized India's commanding role in a more forceful manner after Pakistan's military debacle in the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war.

India's leadership model asserts that a strong and powerful India capable of projecting its power in the region and outside is a guarantee of security and stability of the whole of South Asia.[13] India's policymakers argue that India's growing military power is no threat to any state in South Asia because it has nothing against them. They should coordinate their foreign and security policies with New Delhi so that India plays its role as the guarantor of regional security and stability in an effective manner. This strategy has two "core perceptions." First, the neighboring states must coordinate their foreign policy with the imperatives of India's centrality and security. Second, India does not favor any outside power supplying weaponry to or establishing a military presence in any neighboring state.[14] Regional states should establish ties with other states within the parameters acceptable to New Delhi. In case a South Asian state

is confronted with some internal problem, it must first approach India before seeking support from elsewhere. In addition to insulating the region from external penetration, India insists that the bilateral problems between it and any other South Asian state should be dealt with strictly at the bilateral level without involving any other state or international organization. India has always raised serious objections to the efforts of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal to raise their problems with India (i.e., Kashmir, river water, and trade and transit respectively) at the international level. Indian government circles and some scholars periodically argue that India reserves the right to intervene in the domestic problems of the bordering states if these have implications for India's security, including internal consolidation.[15] These policy orientations indicate that India's security boundaries extend beyond its territorial boundaries; these coincide with the outer territorial boundaries of the adjacent states of South Asia.[16]

Search for Security.

The search for security emerged as the cardinal concern of Pakistan's policymakers that not only shaped their worldview and disposition towards regional and international politics but also served as an instrument of policy. It manifested itself in four major policy options: 1) opposition to India's regional dominance agenda, 2) augmentation of security by assigning the highest priority to defense needs, 3) weapons procurements from abroad, and 4) reliance on diplomacy, including military alignment, to overcome its military weakness vis-à-vis militarily powerful India.

Pakistan's policymakers and security managers strongly believe that a New Delhi-managed security model cannot serve as a basis for durable peace in South Asia. Such a power arrangement comes in conflict with the national aspirations of other states of South Asia. It also lacks flexibility to accommodate the divergent perceptions of peace and security held by the smaller states of the region. Pakistan

advocates a pluralist power model, which emphasizes the principle of sovereign equality of all states, respect for each other's national sensitivities and recognition of the right of each state to freely conduct its foreign and domestic affairs. Regional security parameters should evolve through dialogue and mutual accommodation rather than one state imposing its national priorities.[17]

Indian leaders dismiss the fears of the neighboring states as baseless. They argue that the major cause of the problems between India and its neighbors, especially Pakistan, is their unwillingness to acknowledge India's status. If they, especially Pakistan, abandon their efforts to mobilize support from the states situated outside of South Asia, the security situation in South Asia will improve. Pakistan's abhorrence to India's commanding role in view of its historical experiences and the distrust of the latter is deeply ingrained into Pakistan's strategic culture. Pakistan's determination to protect its national identity and policy autonomy did not decline after the 1971 military debacle at the hands of India. If anything, its disposition stiffened.

Defense requirements have enjoyed the top priority in Pakistan. No matter whether the government was being run by civilians or generals, defense was allocated the major share of the national budget. Pakistan's defense expenditure has ranged from about 73 percent in 1949-50 to 24-25 percent of the total federal expenditure in 2000-01. Its current ratio to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ranges between 5 and 6 percent. This does not include covert expenditure on defense-related projects as well as weapons and equipment Pakistan obtained as grants from the United States in the mid-1950s. Pakistan can be described as a country where poverty of resources for human needs contrasts with the affluence under which military programs operate.

Pakistan began weapons procurement from abroad soon after independence because of the acute sense of insecurity and a lack of

indigenous defense industry. Pakistan purchased small weapons and equipment from Great Britain and other Commonwealth countries in the early years of independence. It was not until Pakistan joined U.S.- sponsored alliances in 1954-55 that Pakistan began to obtain weapons and military equipment for the three services in large quantity. Pakistan and the United States signed the Mutual Defense Assistance Treaty in May 1954, which facilitated U.S. arms transfers to Pakistan and military training of its personnel by U.S. experts. Pakistan was admitted to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in September 1954 and the Baghdad Pact (later renamed the Central Treaty Organization, CENTO) in September 1955. The fourth security-related arrangement with the United States was signed in March 1959; called the Bilateral Agreement of Cooperation, this was an executive arrangement not confirmed by the U.S. Senate. A separate agreement was signed in July 1959 allowing the United States to set up a communication facility, i.e., an air base, near Peshawar.[18]

Pakistan's policymakers decided to join the American alliance system to overcome its security problems. As early as 1951, Pakistan's military authorities realized that Pakistan lacked the resources to upgrade its defense and obtain modern weapons from abroad. Therefore they were convinced that Pakistan must have "a strong and reliable friend" who was willing to contribute to Pakistan's efforts to strengthen its defense.[19] By joining the alliance system they were able to get the weapons, military equipment, and training facilities which they could not obtain otherwise. As they perceived an acute security problem for Pakistan, realism dictated a policy of alignment to cope with the immediate security problems, disregarding the diplomatic cost of aligning with the United States. Pakistan's policymakers were clear in their mind that they were working towards strengthening their security vis-à-vis India and Afghanistan, rather than the Soviet Union, which was the American concern.

Pakistan again leaned towards the West, especially the United States, in the aftermath of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. The United States pledged to underwrite Pakistan's security vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, although no new defense treaty was signed. Despite the differences over Pakistan's nuclear program, the two countries developed a close security and diplomatic relationship with reference to the Afghan conflict. The first 6-year economic assistance and military sales package (1981-87) offered by the United States to Pakistan amounted to $3.2 billion. It was equally divided between economic assistance and a military sales credit facility. About 55 percent of economic assistance was provided as grants while the rest was in the form of soft-term loans. Military assistance was in the form of a credit facility, repayable at a 10-14 percent rate of interest. Pakistan also obtained 40 F-16 aircraft during 1983-86 through cash payments outside of the credit facility. The second assistance package (1987-93) amounted to $4.02 billion at concessional rates of interest. Out of this, $2.28 billion was allocated for economic assistance and $1.74 billion was in the form of military sale credits. (The United States terminated this assistance package in October 1990.) [20] The United States and Pakistan contributed significantly to building and strengthening resistance to the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan spearheaded by militant Islamic-Afghan groups. This relationship began to lose its momentum after Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 and came to an end in October 1990 when the Bush administration invoked the Pressler Amendment (1985) against Pakistan's nuclear weapons program and halted all military sales and economic assistance.

In the early 1970s, Pakistan adopted a different strategy to strengthen its security. It avoided alignment with the West and pursued nonalignment as a foreign policy strategy. The civilian leadership that assumed power after Pakistan lost the Bangladesh war to India (December 1971) had enough popular support to pursue a nonaligned foreign policy.

Pakistan always attached importance to diplomacy for building international support for its policies, especially the Kashmir issue and other problems with India. It has traditionally given much attention to cultivating active ties with the Muslim countries. This relationship, especially with the oil-rich Arab states like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Libya, and Iran, contributed significantly to rehabilitating Pakistan economically and diplomatically after the 1971 breakup of Pakistan.

Strategic Doctrine.

While mobilizing internal resources, procuring weapons from abroad and relying on astute diplomacy in order to ensure security, Pakistan's policymakers never aimed at military parity with India, which was neither possible nor desirable. They wanted to develop enough military capability to let India know that Pakistan could not only withstand India's military pressures but also increase the cost of an armed conflict for that country.

A conventional war with India in Kashmir or on the international border was considered a strong possibility. The strategy was to confront the opposing troops right on the borders or to take the war into the adversary's territory because some of the Pakistani cities were situated close to the border. However, Pakistan could not carry on war for a long period of time due to the paucity of economic resources and a weak industrial base, especially the limited capacity of its weapons industry.

Pakistan's policymakers believe that Pakistan must have the capability to raise the cost of the war to unacceptable limits for the adversary so as to deter the latter from engaging in military adventurism. A prerequisite for such a strategy is the maintenance of a highly professional, trained, and well-equipped military with strong fire-power and mobility. An effective air cover is much

317

needed for such operations. Similarly, effective communication and transport systems are needed to quickly transfer troops from one sector to another sector. Pakistan's preferred option is to build pressure on India in Kashmir by engaging in limited military operations there or by extending clandestine military support to Kashmiri activists fighting against India. The latter strategy is less costly for Pakistan and ties a large number of Indian troops in Kashmir.

Pakistan cannot pursue its strategic doctrine without external cooperation as it lacks sufficient domestic resources to develop the required capability. Therefore, it is not surprising that the military planners attached such importance to Pakistan's security relations with the United States. Pakistan's relations with the People's Republic of China are no less significant because China is an important source for building Pakistan's defense capability. Pakistan began to obtain weapons and military equipment from China towards the end of 1965 (after the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war) or in early 1966. Since then this relationship has expanded. China has supplied weapons and equipment for the three services and contributes significantly to building Pakistan's defense industry. It has also extended technical support to Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs.

The deterrence approach developed for conventional defense applies equally to Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. Had India not gone for nuclear explosions in May 1998, Pakistan would have continued with the policy of "nuclear ambiguity," i.e., admitting to having a nuclear weapons capability but not going so far as to explode or make a bomb. Nuclear ambiguity served Pakistan's security goals as both India and Pakistan knew that each could make nuclear weapons and that if one country went ahead with weaponization, the other would do the same. This policy lost its operational relevance after India resorted to nuclear explosions in May 1998. Pakistan conducted nuclear explosions after 17 days to rectify the strategic imbalance in South Asia.[21] Pakistan's nuclear explosions

were neither meant to strengthen its claims for a global role nor to produce an "Islamic bomb." These nuclear explosions were reactive and were meant to counter what the policymakers described as India's nuclear blackmail and its potential to engage in military action across the Line of Control in Kashmir. As a matter of fact, Pakistan's nuclear explosions have neutralized India's superiority in conventional defense. Pakistan is not expected to accept any nuclear weapons restraint regime unless it takes into account its security concerns and offers a restraint framework that applies equally to conventional security arrangements. Pakistan does not accept India's "no first use" offer. Such a restraint is a disadvantage to the weaker power, i.e., Pakistan in South Asia. Therefore, Pakistan will welcome a comprehensive restraint regime that applies to conventional and nonconventional armaments.

Islam and Strategic Culture.

Islam is integral to Pakistan's strategic culture because it contributes to shaping societal dispositions and the orientations of the policymakers. Islam is closely associated with the establishment of the state and the constitution designates the state as an "Islamic Republic," with an emphasis on the Islamic character of Pakistani identity and a stipulation that no law can be enacted that violates the basic principles and teachings of Islam. Islam figures prominently in political and military discourse. All political parties with some popular standing recognize the centrality of Islam to the political process and highlight their commitment to Islam in their election manifestos and policy statements. Education at the primary, secondary, and college levels (the first 14 years of education) includes Islamic studies (principles and teachings of Islam) as a compulsory course of study at all levels for Muslim students. The historical narratives highlight the advent of Islam in India, glorify Muslim rule there, and define Pakistani identity with reference to Islam and the Muslim rule. These narratives also maintain that the Muslim interests and rights were threatened by an unsympathetic Hindu

majority during the British rule, forcing the Muslims to first seek constitutional safeguards and then a separate state. If Islamic orientations and values are so deeply rooted in the society and the state, these are bound to influence the strategic culture of Pakistan.

The Pakistani military emphasizes Islam in conjunction with professionalism, hierarchy, discipline, and service-pride as the cardinal principles of military organization. Islamic principles and teachings and Islamic history, especially Islamic battles and the Muslim generals, are included in the courses of study and training of military personnel. The Islamic notions *shaheed* (martyr), *ghazi* (victorious), and *Jihad-e-fi-sibilallah* (holy war in the name of God) are emphasized as the major sources of inspiration for the Pakistani military in war and peace. As Islam is closely associated with the establishment of Pakistan, its defense, especially vis-à-vis India, is projected by civilian and military leaders as the defense of Islam. These notions and Islamic symbols were repeatedly invoked during the wars in 1965 and 1971 to galvanize the military personnel and to mobilize popular support for the war efforts.

Islamic conservatism has increased in the military since the 1970s as the number of officers from the middle and lower-middle classes has risen. Invariably, they have come from conservative religious backgrounds. A number of other factors reinforced this trend in the 1980s.

First, the emphasis on Islam increased in the military during the period of General Zia-ul-Haq's rule (1977-88) . Facing a crisis of legitimacy, General Zia-ul-Haq's military regime invoked orthodox Islamic injunctions and mobilized orthodox Islamic groups in order to build support for his rule. This fit well with the changes in the orientation of the officers recruited in the 1970s and 1980s. The Zia regime encouraged the public display of religious orientation in the Army and allowed some of the orthodox religious groups to penetrate the Army.

Second, the experience of the Afghanistan conflict (1979-89) reinforced Islamic conservatism among Army personnel. A good number of them worked in collaboration with the Islamic parties and Afghan resistance groups that were fighting against Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Some of the Pakistani Army personnel, especially those serving with the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), were convinced that the Afghanistan experience could be replicated elsewhere, and that it offered an option to bring an end to non-Muslim domination of the Muslims.

However, the top commanders draw a line between religious conservatism and activism in the name of Islam. The latter is disallowed because the top brass think that it undermines professional excellence, discipline, and the service ethos. They emphasize the age-old tradition of keeping Islam and military professionalism together, treating the former as a component of the latter.

The Afghanistan experience created a nexus between Islamic militancy and Pakistan's foreign policy. An Islam-oriented Afghan resistance movement, often labeled as Afghan Mujahideen, cropped up as the Soviet troops marched into Afghanistan in December 1979, although its roots could be traced to an earlier period. They were ideologically inspired and viewed their resistance activities as a holy war against the occupying forces of a Godless Communist country (i.e., the Soviet Union). Pakistan's ISI and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) transferred weapons to Afghan resistance groups and advised them on strategy against Soviet troops in Afghanistan. The West, the conservative Arab rulers in the Middle East, and Pakistan glorified these Afghan "holy" warriors as the heroes of the cause of freedom. Two other developments strengthened their position. First, most Muslim states and movements supported their cause. Some oil-rich Arab states (e.g., Saudi Arabia, the UAE) as well as some wealthy Arab individuals extended

321

financial assistance to Afghan resistance groups. Egypt transferred an undisclosed quantity of Soviet weapons to these groups. Second, within a short span of time, the Afghan resistance movement turned transnational. A large number of Arabs and other Muslims joined them to fight the "holy war" in Afghanistan. Some of these Arabs engaged in welfare activities for Afghan refugees in Pakistan while others got military training from different Afghan groups and fought against Soviet troops in Afghanistan. By the time Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, several thousand Muslim volunteers from Arab and non-Arab countries were attached to Afghan resistance groups.

The courage and valor shown by Islam-inspired volunteers (Afghans and others) in Afghanistan impressed Pakistan's foreign policymakers. As already noted, some of the military and intelligence personnel associated with the Afghan resistance were so captivated by the Afghanistan experience that they felt this could be replicated elsewhere for advancing Muslims causes. The resistance groups were also elated by their success in Afghanistan and felt that they must carry forward the spirit of the Afghan *Jihad* (holy war) and help Muslims fight anti-Muslim forces anywhere in the world. They found a new cause in Indian-administered Kashmir where an insurgency had erupted in 1989. The initial links with the Kashmir insurgency were established in 1990 but their active involvement began after the collapse of the pro-Moscow Najib government in Kabul in April 1992. Their Pakistani counterparts joined them in this struggle.

These developments were in line with the Islamic content of Pakistan's strategic culture and, therefore, Pakistan's policymakers were happy to find ideologically motivated Muslim volunteers who were prepared to facilitate the achievement of Pakistan's goals in Kashmir — the building of military pressure on India — without incurring heavy material and manpower losses for the military. Recognizing the instrumental relevance of militant Islamic groups, the

322

Pakistan military patronized them through its intelligence agency, the ISI. The ISI provided them funding and weapons and facilitated their induction into Indian-administered Kashmir. These militant groups engaged a large number of Indian military and paramilitary personnel as well as police and intelligence agencies. Pakistan's decision to support the operations of the Islamic militants in Indian-administered Kashmir reflects a combination of beliefs , values, and historical experience as well as expediency and a down-to-earth assessment of military disparity between India and Pakistan.

The stepped up activities of militant Islamic groups created a host of problems for Pakistan's management of foreign policy and domestic affairs. These activities caused strains in Pakistan's relations with the West, especially the United States, because these Islamic groups were extremely anti-West, and often demanded that Pakistan delink itself from the United States. Domestically, the rise of militant Islamic groups increased religious and cultural intolerance, resulting in religious-sectarian killings and law and order problems. These developments undermined Pakistan's image abroad, discour-aged foreign investment, and marred the prospects for Pakistan's early economic recovery, raising doubts about the capacity of the Pakistani state to continue performing its basic duties towards the citizenry.

Pakistan found itself in an extremely difficult situation. It supported the militants' role in Indian-administered Kashmir but wanted to control the adverse effects of their activities on Pakistan's domestic political scene and on its interactions with the United States and other Western countries. This dilemma was accentuated after the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, DC, on September 11, 2001. U.S. President George W. Bush delivered a virtual ultimatum to Pakistan to join hands with the international community for containing the transnational terrorism spearheaded by Afghanistan-based al Qaeda. A realistic assessment of the situa-tion led the government of Pakistan to cooperate with the United

323

States for military action against al Qaeda and the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Pakistan also took action against some of the Pakistan-based militant Islamic groups.

However, the military government allowed the militant Islamic groups active in Kashmir to carry on their activities in a low-keyed manner. These groups overplayed their hand by launching terrorist attacks on high-profile targets, such as the Indian parliament and an Indian military camp in Kashmir, placing Pakistan in an embarrassing situation in view of the assertion by its leaders that they had contained the activities of these groups.

Availing itself of the post-9/11 global consensus for controlling terrorism, India moved its troops to the Line of Control in Kashmir and to the Pakistan borders in order to put an end to "cross-border terrorism" from Pakistani territory. Pakistan responded by mobilizing its troops and threatened war if Indian troops entered Pakistan-administered Kashmir or Pakistani territory under the pretext of destroying the alleged terrorist camps. The United States and other Western countries advised restraint by both countries and applied strong diplomatic pressures on Pakistan to control the infiltration of Islamic groups into Indian-administered Kashmir. In another manifestation of realism, Pakistan agreed to take measures to cut off the infiltration, at least for the time being.

Concluding Observations.

Strategic culture is a useful concept for explaining the profile and behavior of the security policymakers of a state. It conditions their worldview, interpretation of political and military developments, perception of the adversary, and selection of policy options. The disposition of Pakistan's security managers is influenced by historical experiences, especially in the early years of independence, their perception of the regional security environment and Pakistan's security handicaps, and their threat perceptions. The major features

324

of Pakistan's strategic culture can be summed up as follows: (a) An acute insecurity developed in the early years of independence due to troubled relations with India and problems with Afghanistan. (b) A strong distrust of India and a history of acrimonious Indo-Pakistani relations reinforced by the historical narratives of the pre-independence period and the troubled bilateral interaction in the post-independence period. (c) Aversion to an India-dominated regional power arrangement for South Asia. (d) An active search for security to maintain its independence in deciding about foreign policy options and domestic policies. (e) A close nexus between Islam and strategic thinking, leading to connections between Islamic militancy and foreign policy.

These attributes of Pakistan's strategic culture shaped Pakistan's security and foreign policy options. These included an advocacy of a pluralist power arrangement for South Asia, greater attention to external security, acquisition of military capacity to raise the cost of war for the adversary, liberal allocation of resources to defense, weapons procurement from abroad, and the use of diplomacy and alliance-building with other states, especially with the United States, for strengthening its position in the region. Other important strategies were the acquisition of an overt nuclear status in response to India's nuclear explosions and the use of Islamic militancy to pursue foreign policy goals.

However, the emphasis on strategic culture does not totally exclude the role of other considerations, such as realism, profession-alism, and organizational imperatives. Many of Pakistan's security-related decisions involve the elements of more than one approach. As a professional and disciplined institution, the Pakistani military cannot be oblivious to realities on the ground. Realism and organiza-tional imperatives have influenced their outlook and decisions on many occasions. At times, the dictates of different approaches conflict with each other and the policymakers may be unwilling or unable to make a clear-cut choice. This is the case with the approach

325

of Pakistan's security managers towards the militant Islamic groups in the post-9/11 period.

The strategic culture approach helps us understand the historical and psychological dynamics of decisionmaking. It highlights the impact of ideological and other societal variables on policymaking and offers a better understanding of the socio-cultural and political context within which the policymakers function. Any study of a state's strategic profile and the possible reaction to security pressures requires, *inter ali*a, a good appreciation of the strategic culture of the country concerned. This facilitates communication between the security policymakers and the outside actors, i.e., individuals, states, and organizations, on security-related issues and helps to identify ways and means to change their policy outputs. This is quite important for promoting arms control in conventional and nonconventional fields.

ENDNOTES

1. Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4, Spring 1995, p. 46.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Scott D. Sagan, "The Origins of Military Doctrine and Command and Control systems," in Peter R. Lavoy, Scott D. Sagan and James J. Wirtz, eds., *Planning the Unthinkable*, Ithaca: Cornell University press, 2000, p. 30.

4. For Jack Snyder's narration of strategic culture, see Michael C. Desch, "Culture Clash," *International Security*, Vol. 23, No. 1, Summer 1998, pp. 141-170.

5. Stephen P. Rosen, "Military Effectiveness," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4, Spring 1995, pp. 5-31.

6. Kenneth Boulding, "National Images and International Systems," in Worlfram F. Hannrieder, ed., *Comparative Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essay*s, New York: David McKay Co., 1971, p. 91.

7. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's presidential address to the Muslim League at