THE GLOBAL IMPACT OF TERROR: 9/11 AND THE INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT

A Dissertation in
Mass Communications

by
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ABSTRACT

The events on 11, September 2001, have perceptibly transformed the conduct of international politics on several dimensions. While most nation-states rushed to clarify their position on the global terrorism debate some were re-evaluating public discourse in light of their own struggles against religious extremism. One such nation was India whose contentious relationship with Pakistan over the state of Jammu and Kashmir, raises concerns about Pakistani sponsored Islamist terrorism in this region. The Indian press coverage of September 2001 and its aftermath shows a concerted effort to position India in line with other global democracies on this war against terror, while simultaneously attempting to undermine its neighbor and political rival.

The global discourse on terrorism thus extends beyond a divide between democracy and authoritarianism in becoming a political opportunity for other nation states. By critically examining scholarly literature on ‘free flow’ and ‘dependency’ theories this study explores how the Indian press read global discourses on terrorism following the attacks in New York and the United States. Content and textual analyses were used to compare media discourses in India and United States; to determine if news frames on terrorism in both countries converged after the terrorist attacks. Results indicated a negotiated reading of terrorist discourses and localized constructions of terrorism in the Indian press.

Furthermore, an analysis of media texts also demonstrated that the Indian press were somewhat resistant to the notion of a global pan-Islamist threat post 9/11, and were more likely to consider terrorism a state sponsored rather than a fringe activity. Thus, while acknowledging the value of structural and dependency theories, this study additionally argues for a more complex understanding of ‘information flows,’ on the grounds that a nation’s readings of international events are localized to its own cultural history and political aspirations.
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Chapter I
The Global War on Terror

The September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States (henceforth US) have had tremendous implications for global politics. In addition to radically shaping US domestic and foreign policy, the ensuing global outrage cleaved the world into two ideological camps – a ‘coalition of willing’ democracies eager to maintain political ties with the United States against a medley of authoritarian regimes – the ‘axis of evil’ – harboring terrorists. A tacitly acknowledged factor among these democratic allies is of course the religious face of this new enemy – Islam.

This fear against Islamist networks is manifested at various levels. After extremist groups targeted their capital cities in India, Spain, and the United Kingdom, each developed new legislations to protect their borders; American diplomacy in turn has isolated Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq as enemy states. For victim citizens all over the world these events have increased an imminent but indistinct fear of the terrorist; ruthless shadowy individuals wreaking *jihadi* violence against the non-Muslim world.

That the US as a global superpower could be vulnerable to fringe groups shocked the entire world but especially outraged American citizens, for whom this was an attack of unprecedented scale. As President Bush himself remarked a few days after the tragedy, “Americans have known surprise attacks – but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day -- and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack,” (Bush, 2001). For the majority who were ignorant of their government’s controversial initiatives in the Middle East and South Asia the events on September 11, 2001 were also frighteningly incomprehensible, a sentiment echoed repeatedly in the vexed question, “Why us?”

The above observations clearly reveal that tragedies of such magnitude were new to the American experience – even the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 (to which September 11th was often compared), did not claim so many civilian lives. But terrorism as Jervis (2002) argues is itself not a new phenomenon – it was a term used by Jacobians in the late 1700s to “self-reflexively” describe their own actions during the French revolution, (Tuman, 2003:3). More recently, the activities of Palestinian suicide bombers in Israel are among the most publicized examples of large scale terrorist activity prior to September 2001. The Irish Republican Army
(IRA) frequently relied on terror tactics as a means of asserting an independent Irish identity against British dominion.

For some countries, terrorism has become part of a lived experience; a daily reality that citizens have long had to accept. India, for instance, has battled terrorism on several fronts, from separatist movements in Western Punjab and Eastern Assam to violent communist uprisings of Naxalites in central Chhattisgarh and southern Andhra Pradesh. But the international community is most familiar with India’s struggle against terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, a disputed territory on the Indo-Pakistan border. Since the 1989 insurgents allegedly abetted by Pakistan have actively waged *jihad* in Kashmir, with an estimated death toll of 50,000 lives.

While the Indian experience with terrorism is starkly different from that of the US, the September 2001 tragedy and its aftermath have definitely fostered a closer relationship between these two countries. When President Bush demanded universal support for American retaliation, several factors facilitated India’s position among the coalition of willing: its relatively recent venture into market deregulation, the administration’s barefaced embracing of western liberalist and free market ideologies; and its political affirmation as a secular democracy — a value so dear to the Bush administration’s counter-terrorism rhetoric. From the Indian perspective, the (former) ruling Bharatiya Janata Party’s (BJP) reaction to the September 11th tragedy suggests an attempt to situate Pakistan’s sponsorship terrorism in Kashmir, within the global anti-terror campaign championed by the United States (Chakravartty, 2002; see also Lankala, 2006).

This project is an attempt to understand how public discourse in India localized its understandings of what essentially became a global tragedy, on September 11, 2001 (henceforth

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1. In the late 1980s the Punjabi Sikh community began a violent separatist movement for Khalistan, (the land of the pure), a theocratic Sikh state. The movement was eventually discounted, but not before a group of Sikh militants successfully planned the assassination in 1984 of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

2. In Assam, a similar move towards separatism is orchestrated by militant groups such as the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NFDB). These groups have been waging a low intensity conflict against the Indian government since the 1980s and are still active today. The Naxalites were a revolutionary group with communist leanings, who waged guerrilla-like struggles against corrupt and elite landlords, timber merchants, and government officials in India. Although still active, the movement was predominantly successful during the 1970s.

3. In a joint address to the Congress and American public on September 20, 2001, President Bush declared: “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.” From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

**Deconstructing Terrorism**

Public response to the attacks in New York and Washington has traversed from attempts to articulate why the US was victimized, to comprehending the ‘mindset’ of a terrorist. More often than not an analysis dismisses terrorism as fanatic or fundamentalist expressions of a deprived (and depraved) community. Religion – specifically Islam – appears to be a visible component of terrorist identity since those who masterminded the Pentagon and World Trade Centre collapses were indeed Muslim extremists. But some scholars argue that this antagonism towards Islam extends beyond its association with terrorism: Said (1978) for instance demonstrates such discourses arise from an Orientalist mindset; a tendency to perceive the Muslim world as monolithic, barbaric and retrograde. Huntington (1993) on the other hand contends (along orientalist lines), that Western (that is European and American), and Muslim states (in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa) are locked in irreconcilable cultural differences between rational liberalism and cultural orthodoxy. For Barber (1993) the fault lines of this clash are in the oppositional ideologies of globally homogenizing capitalism and culturally divisive fundamentalism.

Whether Muslim and non-Muslim states are intrinsically different or are separated by a history of fear and misunderstanding is debatable. We cannot however ignore that ‘Islam’ and the Muslim world have traditionally been important constituents of US diplomacy, from its support for Israel in the Palestinian controversy to the recent (2004) war in Iraq. Subsequently, ‘Islam’ has also become entwined in elite rhetoric justifying the war against terror.

The word terrorism itself has interesting ideological connotations in international politics. According to Tuman (2003) the origins of terrorism can be traced back to its Latin root *terrere*, to tremble. The word *terrere* when attached to the French suffix *isme* (to practice) translates into the English phrase, ‘to cause or create trembling.’ The British philosopher and aristocrat Edmund
Burke first explicated the word ‘terrorism’ while commenting on the revolutionary struggles in France: for Burke who commented on the activities rather than causes of disenfranchised groups, a terrorist was a ‘fanatic,’ ‘assassin, ‘oppressor,’ and a ‘fraud,’ (p. 3). Contemporary uses of this phrase (particularly in western democracies) have largely followed this trend, describing terrorism as a violent attempt to seize control from those in power. Usually this discourse focuses on victims rather than perpetrators.

Laqueur (1987) and Crenshaw (2002), define terrorism as the use of violence by sub-state groups with the aim of inducing panic and bringing about political change. Both scholars consider terrorism a fringe activity rather than one sponsored by power elites. Olivero (1998) however contends that states themselves sponsor terrorist activity although the phrase ‘terrorism’ is used principally to describe groups using violence to challenge the authority of the state.

The questions ‘who is a terrorist?’ and ‘what constitutes terrorism?’ are vital in exploring the agendas governing state response to terrorist activity. For Mamdani (2004) and Chomsky (2002) some of the United States’ foreign policies – such has her support for Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, and of Indonesia’s invasion of East Timor; and her financing of guerilla forces in Nicaragua – fall within the rubric of state-sponsored terrorism. Governing bodies in the United States are still in disagreement over a conceptual definition of this term, although they are more inclined to consider terrorism a sub-state rather than a state sponsored activity. Thus, the federal government accepts the following definition:4

The term "terrorism" means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. The term "international terrorism" means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country. The term "terrorist group" means any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice, international terrorism (italics added).

For the US Department of Defense (DOD) too terrorism is a peripheral means of dispiriting the state by instilling fear in the public. It is, “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.” Since both definitions consider it as a fringe activity –what Tuman calls “terrorism from below” – one

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4 U.S Code Title 22, Chapter 38, paragraph 2656(d).
can only conclude that the US does not legitimately acknowledge terrorism as a practice “from above” – the direct or indirect sponsorship of coercive practices by a state, (Tuman, 2003: 5).

Scholarly literature suggests that western media have traditionally ignored incidents of state sponsored terror and regard terrorism as the “weapon of the weak,” (Kelly and Mitchell 1981: 271). Picard (1993) reasons that despite a higher incidence of state sponsored versus non-state terrorist activities, the former remain outside the purview of media coverage simply because information about them is not readily available. Governments engaging in state sponsored terrorism may also target journalist themselves thereby forcefully inducing self censorship patterns in the media. In the words of Picard:

> It has been observed that when terrorism strikes a society the press either apologizes for the current ruling groups or it becomes an advocate for oppositional groups whether elites or mass publics. If the former course is pursued state terrorism is ignored or excused. If the latter course is pursued the media become targets for that terrorism, (p. 76).

This distinction between state and non-state terrorism –from “above” or “below” – is significant in the context of this study, particularly since international definitions of this term differ widely from the American context. The United Nations for example, has accepted Schmid’s definition of terrorism which acknowledges both state and non-state actors:

> Terrorism is an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by (semi-) clandestine individual, group or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal or political reasons, whereby - in contrast to assassination - the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat- and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperiled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s)), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought" (Schmid, 1988).

In India, the government has not offered a specific definition of terrorism *per se*, but a 2001 legislation known as the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA)\(^5\) considers a terrorist as one

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\(^5\) The following is the POTA’s definition of a terrorist:

> Whoever, -

> (a) with intent to threaten the unity, integrity, security or sovereignty of India or to strike terror in the people or any section of the people does any act or thing by using bombs, dynamite or other explosive substances or inflammable substances or fire arms or other lethal weapons or poisons or noxious gases or other chemicals or by any other substances (whether biological or otherwise) of a hazardous nature or by any other means whatsoever, in such a
who deliberately uses violence to threaten the unity, integrity, security or sovereignty of India or to strike terror in the people.” While this definition does not distinguish between state-sponsored terrorism and the activity of fringe groups Chellany (2002) observes that the former is more applicable in the context of Kashmir:

Terrorism has become a way of life in some areas of southern Asia. The only thriving democracy in this vast region is India, wedged in an arc of authoritarian or totalitarian regimes engaged in covert actions in breach of international law…Pakistan indeed has been "waging a war by proxy in Indian-held Kashmir through Islamic militants." The future of the international campaign against terrorism hinges on success in this region to root out terrorist networks and deter regimes from encouraging or harboring armed extremists, (p. 97).

Along the same lines Indian officials have also problematized Kashmiri insurgency as an activity orchestrated by the Pakistani government. The press in turn has appropriated these discourses in their coverage of the Kashmir crisis. The following report in The Hindu, quoting a statement made by Home Minister L. K Advani affirming India’s support for the war on terror, is a telling example of how government agenda is typically transferred to the media:

We hope too that Islamabad wakes up to the fact that Pakistani society itself has had to pay a high cost because of its continuing support to terrorism. I wish to reiterate here that India has the requisite strength and determination to foil the campaign of cross-border terrorists sponsored by the Pakistani ruling dispensation… Our repeated assertion that forces supportive of terrorism are receiving assistance and sanctuaries in Pakistan is receiving corroboration, (in the United States), (Kumar 2003: 5).
Media Frames and Discursive Strategies

Scholars in communications have studied news framing as a theory (Entman, 1993; see also Scheufele, 1999), as means of analyzing media content (Smetko and Valekberg 1999; Deventer 2002; Entman 2003), and as a tool for examining the impact of news on audiences (McLeod and Deventer, 1999, Valkenburg, Semetko, De Vreese, 1999).

Entman (1993) explains framing as a journalistic means of highlighting salience for information to be easily processed into audience schemata. He writes:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described…frames…define problems – determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values, diagnose causes – identify the forces creating the problem; make moral judgments – evaluate causal agents and their effects, and suggest remedies – offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects (p. 52).

Entman’s (2003) examination of the White House’s response to the attacks on September 11, 2001, indicates that the emotional overtones in President Bush’s speeches were quickly framed into public agenda via a “cascading effect” – a hierarchical manner from administrators (the White House), to other elites (congress), the media, and then to the public.

Studies in framing have also examined the transnational nature of news media frames. With regard to the U.S war against terrorism for example, scholars have demonstrated that the news media in the third world attempted to appropriate (if not replicate) the frames used by the U.S media: Trivundza (2004), examines how Delo, a Slovenian daily, adopted dominant hegemonic readings of the 2004 war in Iraq, in order to align Slovenia with the economic super powers of Western Europe and the United States. Triundza observed that Iraqi citizens were framed as violent, aggressive, and emotional; the women in particular were presented as amorphous, passive entities in traditional garbs.

Along similar lines, Chakravartty (2002) demonstrated that the Indian media reproduced the war on terror discourse in light of India’s long drawn struggle with terrorism, (p. 106). Politicians – particularly in the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party\(^6\) (henceforth the BJP) and

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\(^6\) The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is one of the two largest political organizations in India (the other is the Indian Congress). As the ruling political party from 1998-2004 the BJP, under Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, initiated a number of neo-liberal economic reforms, while pursuing a stringent policy on Kashmir. Subsequently, it was during Vajpaeyee’s rule that India carried out the controversial nuclear tests in 1998. The BJP is also a well
conservative factions of the media soon began drawing parallels between the attacks in September 2001 and India’s own ‘Muslim problem’ in Pakistan, particularly in the disputed Kashmiri territory. As Chakravartty observes:

Experts and journalists have flooded the print and electronic media speculating about the connection between terrorists who attacked the United States and the so-called “freedom-fighters” or *jehadis* responsible for attacks in Kashmir and other Indian cities and the hijacking of flight IC-814 on 31 December 1999. A telling newspaper headline reads, “Mumbai to New York, the road passed through Kandahar,” (p. 207).

Although some elements of the media and government were eager to use this opportunity to publicize India’s own contentions in Kashmir, Chakravartty observes that the press in general was far from uniform in supporting this view. Most papers remained skeptical about an alliance between the United States and India, believing that the former was “following rules against terrorism only as it applies to its own interest,” (p. 209). Questions were also raised about the US’ war against Afghanistan and her former support of Bin Laden and the Taliban during the 1980s. Furthermore, a majority of the mainstream press was reluctant to adopt an increasingly obvious anti-Islamic slant used by the American press; fearing that it would exacerbate an already tenuous relationship between Hindus and Muslims in the domestic front.

The ability of news frames to transcend international borders thus depends on the extent to which two cultures share a perspective. Some scholars have demonstrated that India for strategic reasons, *desires* to share the American perspective on terrorism (Raja Mohan 2001; Raghavan 2004); but whether this can happen depends not only on the similarity of their experiences, but also on the values espoused by each nation’s media system.

**The Indian and American Press Systems**

Scholars examining domestic media have offered various classifications of their governing philosophies. The credit for pioneering research on media systems is often attributed to Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm (1965), who in their classic *Four Theories of the Press*, identify four categories of press: authoritarian, Soviet-Communist, libertarian, and social responsibility. The authoritarian dimension was perceived as the oldest and most pervasive of all models and the known advocate of Hindutva, a conservative ideology that seeks to create a unifying Hindu identity for all Indians. Hindutva politics has often been denounced for its jingoistic principles, and for furthering religious animosity in India. The politics of Hindutva, the BJP, and religious violence in India are explored more thoroughly in the second chapter.
libertarian one – in which the press remained outside the government’s purview – the most desired. The Soviet-Communist system on the other hand, was perceived as an extreme version of authoritarian model, one in which the “media are totally subordinated to the interests of the state,” (Ostini and Fung, 2002: 42). Nerone et al (1995) have critiqued Four Theories for being excessively reductionist and guided by anti-communist agenda rather than scholarly inquiry. While critiques of Four Theories clarify that socialism or communisms are indeed valid philosophical foundations for media systems, their focus remains on the first and second world states, and subsequently neglects third world experiences. Hachten (1993) fills this gap in literature by adding the ‘revolutionary’ and ‘development’ models to the original Four Theories classification. Both are viewed as intermediary stages before a state eventually developed enough to appropriate the western models of libertarianism and social responsibility.

It is clear from the above literature that media classifications are primarily normative in nature, articulating an ‘ideal’ model rather than describing its functional characteristics. As Chang et al (2001) observe no state can be categorized as uniquely authoritarian, libertarian, development, revolutionary, socially responsible, or Communist. Instead media systems are an amalgam of these classifications, appropriating different characteristics of each. This is evident in the following analysis of the Indian and American press.

In India the press is the oldest and perhaps the most active participant in national and regional politics. Newspapers were key players in the country’s struggle for independence and in nation building agendas thereafter. Prior to India’s independence from British rule in 1947 media practices were largely authoritarian; English and vernacular newspapers were privately owned but were subject to severe government censorship. While the British did manage to clamp down the English press they were less successful with vernacular print media as most went underground in order to continue voicing dissent against the colonial regime.

After independence India like other third world nations remained a closed economy and concentrated on strengthening its indigenous markets. Mass media followed the developmental philosophy during this period, with the press remained largely free of government control while receiving some amount of constitutional protection in promoting democracy, (Hachten, 1993: 64). Newspaper ownership remained in the hands of families or private corporations, but governments did manipulate the press by centrally rationing the distribution of raw materials, and denying newsprint to those that did not toe the line. Tensions between the press and government
eventually surfaced in 1975 when the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, fearing she would lose political control, declared a state of emergency in the country. The press rebelled as the government enforced a period of heavy media censorship, subsequently shutting down a few newspapers and imprisoning vociferous journalists. But periods like these have been few and the consequent defeat of that government restored press freedom in India.

From 1993 onwards the era of globalization brought on several media reforms in the country. In June 2002 the government agreed to open up its print media to foreign direct investment, remanding its forty-six year old policy of a closed economy. Foreign investors would now be permitted to own 26% of the shares in newspapers and periodicals, and 74% in other forms of print media; thus permitting them to influence its agenda setting patterns, (Business Standard, 26 June 2002).

Globalization has slowly changed the role of Indian media from being an activist and building national identity to generating entertainment. In this newly emerging libertarian system the news media too reflect the views of a different type of elite, as activists and government spokespeople are increasingly replaced by corporate entities that control the economy’s finances. Thus while Indian media have not traditionally functioned from a libertarian standpoint, they are now increasingly regarded as passive conduits of communication rather than activists for social change.

Mass media in the United States are perceived – within its libertarian market-driven principles – as commodities to be bought and sold. The US has one most autonomous media systems in the world, encouraging private ownership of both print and broadcast. Within this domain the term ‘information freedom’ in general and ‘freedom of the press’ in particular is a critical factor in determining American media philosophy. By necessitating that the press be free however, the United States essentially refers to freedom from government control, as determined in the first amendment.

An egalitarian system such as the one envisioned by the American constitution can exist only when all audiences are presented the opportunity to air their views. As Justice Wendell Holmes argued in the 1919 Abrams vs United States, the first amendment could foster an exchange of ideas only if “all groups were afforded the means to express their views broadly and forcefully,” (Patterson, 2000: 243). In the United States this ideal of absolute freedom of expression is still to be realized: Patterson argues that media outlets have selectively interpreted
the first amendment to ensure that only some voices are heard. Under the Fairness Doctrine for example, broadcast stations are required by the Federal Communications Commission (henceforth FCC) to air both sides of a debate, since radio waves are publicly owned and therefore the property of all citizens. But broadcast stations have largely neglected to comply with the FCC’s requirements by retaining their privilege to decide which opinions are (and are not) aired. Far from being a platform for discussion the media instead have become political participants, publicizing selective ideologies that support the status quo.

Scholars have long established that the American press is controlled by corporate organizations with profit maximizing objectives, (McChesney, 2000; Bagdikian 2004). In order to garner advertising support (and thereby maintain profits) the media need to ensure that news is ‘objective’; reaching the widest possible target audience. McChesney (2000) however, argues that objectivity is a relatively new concept in American journalism; that a traditionally partisan disseminated different views, expecting audiences to seek out these variegated opinions.

Industrialization, economies of scale, and new communication technologies changed news production habits from the early 1900s. In an effort to maximize advertising revenues newspapers began publishing non-partisan, sensationalist content that would ensure wide ranging (and sustained) readership. As journalistic quality declined politicians and media practitioners made some effort to instill a sense of social responsibility in the media, but with limited success7 (Altchull, 1995).

Radio and television eventually challenged the press’ monopoly over news (although television was at first perceived only as an entertainment medium). Keeping in line with the first amendment both broadcast and press remained under private ownership and looked to commercial organizations for revenue. In the long run however, this principle of private sponsorship has proved detrimental to American libertarian philosophy by compromising diversity in favor of ownership monopolies. An example from the broadcast industry illustrates how private ownership has only limited diversity in the public sphere: until the mid-1980s the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules permitted a single company to own up to seven AM and FM stations. In 1985 this limit was raised to twelve. By 1996 the FCC’s

7 In 1946 the Hutchins Commission issued a report titled a free and responsible press. The report concluded that the press in the United States should become a more socially responsible service attending to audiences needs, rather than maximizing profits through sensational journalism. It also condemned the oligopolistic nature of media businesses and suggested that as a libertarian society, the United States should ideally have more representative voices in public (media) debate. The Hutchins Commission was the first to acknowledge an urgent need for social responsibility in the press, but was dismissed (by journalists and government officials), as inaccurate and flawed.
Telecommunications Act had removed all barriers to entry and raised the ownership cap to 35% of market share. The act permitted a number of media mergers to take place through vertical and horizontal integration (ex: CBS and Viacom, ABC and Disney; CBS and UPN); so that the entire media industry today is little more than a myriad of inter-dependent organizations, (Bettig and Hall, 2003:16). Thus, while libertarian media still remain independent of government control, they now remain dependent on of giant (transnational) corporations, who indulge in similar, power-driven gate keeping functions.

The libertarian principles of private ownership, freedom from government control, and commercialization of media content laid the foundation for a new informational and cultural order; today globalization marks the undisputed triumph of capitalism, and a universal embrace of neo-liberal trade practices among first and third world states.

**Globalization and Cross-Border Movements**

The era of globalization has brought with it contentious debates on its socio-cultural implications for global society. For Ronaldson (1992) the post-modern framework of this era has intensified an awareness of the world as a whole, marked by increasing border fluidity and a consolidation of the global media system. For Mowlana (1993) globalization has created an ‘information society paradigm,’ a synergistic discourse which “portrays the ideals of…post-modernism or post-industrialism without abandoning the capitalist economic and social systems that continue to characterize its core,” (p. 12). Central to this discourse is the western-capitalistic ‘free flow of information’ philosophy, advocating the unfettered flow of media, message, and capital, across national borders. Such a perspective obviously favors nations already in positions of power, who with their superior infrastructure can offer cheap broadcast modules to developing countries at the expense of their indigenous programs. While ‘media rich’ nations argue that such ventures are only democratic there is no denying that the ‘free flow’ theory would profit them tremendously at the expense of eroding local culture in the third world (Thussu, 2004: 53).

Scholars have repeatedly demonstrated that structural imbalances between nation states affect the manner in which information is disseminated and received across borders. For instance, in a study examining patterns of cross-border information movements, Mowlana (1997) observed

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8 In 2003 Viacom-owned CBS was prevented from airing the film *Reagans* because it contained certain anti-republican overtones. According to Bauder (2003) Viacom was forced to withdraw the movie by Republican Party members, who otherwise threatened to refuse the company future favours in the White house.
that countries in control of media infrastructure – or ‘hardware’ – also determine the type content transmitted across cultures. Along these lines Boyd Barrett and Rantanen (1998) demonstrate that in the context of international news, foreign news agencies rather than the indigenous press act as media agenda setters so that local audiences receive information based on what a foreign gatekeeper defines as ‘news.’ This is particularly evident in India, where budgetary deficits and financial constraints have led news organizations to replace foreign correspondents with agency reports, thus generating an exclusively ‘first world’ perspective on international affairs.

Developments in communication technology have increasingly fostered a sense of social interconnectivity that transcends geographic divides through what Robertson (1991) calls ‘global citizenship’ values in the post-modern age. The 24/7 news cycle and the much debated CNN effect (Strobel, 1995) has added a further dimension to Giddens’ (1991) arguments on space-time compression by enabling political (and other) events to have a truly global appeal. Thus, the attacks on the United States in September 2001 were memorable not only for their political and ideological dimensions, but also for offering a classic media spectacle that immediately captured the attention of the international community. Public discourse on terrorism following 9/11 however remained rooted primarily in western experiences with fundamentalist violence, even though terrorism is by no means a phenomenon experienced solely in the first world. For Schiller (1991) this pattern of discourse only illustrates the impact of unequal patterns in infrastructural distribution favoring the west, further manifested in what he calls ‘soft power,’ “the ability to co-opt rather than command – (by relying on) intangible resources; culture, ideology, the ability to use international institutions to determine the framework of debate,” (as quoted in Nye, 1990: A-33).

For Nye and Schiller ‘soft power’ enables an institution to set the parameters of global discourse that is automatically appropriated by less powerful nation states. But this notion of ‘dominant’ discourse is challenged by Reese (2005) and Calusen (2004), who contend that journalistic patterns in the global age enable nation states to appropriate varied understandings of the same event. According to Reese this dominant discourse is challenged and even altered by multiple local perspectives that new technology offers in this interconnected world:

The entire world need not be tuned into the same news broadcast, or news products need not be homogenized, for us to say that the media system has become in tune with itself...Multiple perspectives and interpretations are in circulation at any given time...internet weblogs, discussion forums, emailing, and cell phone technology also
channel this global flow of news, expanding its reach, and even contributing to it, in ways never imagined within traditional community-based media, (2).

Along the same lines, Clausen (2004) argues that journalists localize international news to contextualize information within their audiences’ milieu. Thus, while technological developments and distribution of news through international agencies enable a “global distribution of news” and encourage a universal interpretation of events, national media often particularize news, that is, tailor events to the “framework of interpretations shared by local audiences,” (p. 27).

Questions and Methods

At this stage it is important to acknowledge two different theoretical explanations that raise interesting questions about the direction of this project. First, expanding upon Mowlana’s and Schiller’s arguments on global disparities in media infrastructure we may postulate that information movements across borders in a globalized world continue to be uni-directional, that is, from first world to third world states. In the context of this study we may expect to observe that discourses on terrorism seamlessly traverse national boundaries from the U.S to Indian media. An alternative perspective takes into account India’s own position as a player in global politics particularly in light of President Bush’s rhetoric after 9/11, which pressured states into joining the US-led anti-terror campaign, (Murphy, 2003). Studies have also indicated that India’s erstwhile BJP government was keen to strengthen ties with the US in an effort to enhance India’s international presence (Ganguly: 2001). Thus, drawing attention to Pakistani-funded terrorism in Kashmir would ensure India’s position among the ‘coalition of willing’ while undermining Pakistan as a potential ally to the United States.

This project will examine Indian press coverage of terrorism in Kashmir before and after the September 2001 terrorist attacks, in light of the above two arguments. It will provide a historical context to this conflict, tracing its development from a territorial dispute between two newly created states to its present status as an ideological battleground for India and Pakistan. Along these lines this project study will also reflect upon Islamist fundamentalism as a component of terrorist identity, and examine how the media themselves frame discourses on religion and terrorism.

Based on this frame work this study addresses the following questions: Have Indian press discourses on terrorism in Kashmir altered after the events of September 2001? Has there been a
subsequent convergence of media frames on terrorism in the Indian and American press? How are American press’ understandings of terrorism and terrorist identity – specifically in the context of political agency, religion, and nationality – negotiated within the Indian press?

The above questions are explored by comparing discourses on terrorism in the U.S and Indian press in the months immediately preceding and following the attacks on September 11, 2001. Following a content analysis comparing media frames in each state, this project will explore in greater detail via a textual analysis, the discourses used by the Indian press in framing terrorism before and after the September 2001 terrorist attacks.

Because an attack on such a scale was hitherto unprecedented in the west ‘terrorism’ became a topic for intensive news analysis both in the U.S and beyond. In a public lecture at the Institute of South Asian Studies at Singapore in 2003, former Indian Home Minister L. K Advani claimed that the attacks on the United States were only a recent development to the extant problem of global terrorism against which other countries have previously struggled:

It is the menace of religious extremism that has inspired international terrorism. The world saw it on September 11, 2001…However we have lived with it for close to two decades in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. In India it manifests itself in a unique way – as cross border terrorism supported and sponsored as a matter of state policy by our neighbor. It has claimed over 60,000 lives – innocent men, women, and security personnel,” (p. 16).

Similarly, after the attacks on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001, the Indian government actively tried to draw international attention to Kashmir as a breeding ground for Pakistani-sponsored terror, (Chakravartty, 2001; Chellany, 2002). The following hypothesis suggests that both the Indian and American press would pay more attention to terrorism after US terrorist attacks:

H₁: Both the Indian and American press will carry a significantly larger number of stories on terrorism after September 11, 2001, than before.

An important difference between the American and Indian perspective in this debate lies in their very understanding of terrorism. The attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon were organized by Al-Qaeda, a loosely connected international network of terrorist cells originally based in Afghanistan, under the leadership of the infamous Osama Bin Laden. Along with Al-Qaeda many other terrorist organizations targeted by the United States – such as the Abu Sayyaf Group in Philippines, the Kurdish Ansar al-Islam (AI), and the Al Jihad (or Islamic Jihad) in Egypt – would
classify as what Tuman (2003) ‘terrorism from below’ or fringe terrorism organized by groups outside the political mainstream. While the United States also battles against state sponsored terrorism in countries like Syria and Iran, the media after September 11, 2001, focused primarily on organizations like Al-Qaeda.

On the other hand, the Indian experience in Kashmir falls entirely under the rubric of state sponsored terrorism, since extremists operating in the valley are allegedly sponsored by Pakistan’s Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) with the approbation of its government. The following hypothesis determines the extent to which the two states acknowledge these differences:

H2: The Indian press is significantly more likely than the American press to consider terrorism a state sponsored activity.

H3: The American press is significantly more likely to describe terrorism as a state sponsored activity before September 11, 2001, than after.

Furthermore, in both countries the ethnicity of the terrorist varies. In the United States the threat of Islamism has contrived a fear of what Hadar (1995) calls a “green peril,” a predatory and borderless ‘radical Islam’ determined to threaten the legitimacy of western values and the sovereignty of the United States, (p. 29). The decentralized structure of the Al-Qaeda has only exacerbated this fear of a global green peril, confirming a universalistic view of Islamist militancy, in which “Lebanon’s Hezbollah, Palestinian’s Hamas, Indonesia’s Jemah Islamiah, Hizbul Mujahideen in Kashmir, Abu Musam Al-Zaqarwi’s supporter’s in Iraq (are)… linked as part of a seamless transnational terror network,” (Thussu, 2006, p. 7). In contrast, the nature of the Kashmir conflict enable the Indian press to identify a more definite enemy – and the terrorists here are principally of Pakistani origin. The following hypotheses address these differences in terrorist identity while also considering that the press’ use of national identifiers for terrorist groups might change drastically after the attacks in New York and Washington:

H4: The Indian press is significantly more likely than the American press to identify terrorists by their nationality.

H5: Both press systems will be more likely to identify terrorist nationalities before September 11, 2001, than after.

The perpetrators of the September 2001 attacks generated much public debate on the nexus between religion, terrorism, and democracy: political elites and scholars alike contend that religious, specifically Islamist fundamentalist doctrine, is responsible for perpetuating a violent

For (Osama Bin Laden) and his followers this is a holy war between Islam and the Western world…they come out of a culture that reinforces their hostility, distrust, and hatred for the West – and of America in particular…the problem is not that Osama bin Laden believes that this is a religious war against America: it’s that millions of people across the Islamic world seem to agree, (p. 116 – 117).

The argument for Islamist terrorism is relevant to the Indian context too, particularly in light of the political climate in 2001, when the conservative ultranationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was in power. Furthermore, as the following chapter will establish, the history of Kashmir itself suggests that religion was used to justify both Indian and Pakistani claim to this region, and eventually exacerbated the conflict from the early 1990s by way of (Muslim) separatist movements.

Religion is only one dimension of the complex situation in Kashmir, which in recent years has traversed from a border dispute between two remote third world nations to a ‘nuclear flashpoint’ subject to international scrutiny, (Hoyt: 1999). Lee and Maslow (2005) argue that media coverage of the Kashmir conflict primarily follows the ‘war journalism’ frame, by presenting a uni-dimensional, superficial narrative lacking in historical context. However, in light of the current political climate equating ‘terror’ with ‘Islam,’ it is possible that in addition to war, religion would also become a dominant frame of reference for Indian discourse, as explored in the following hypotheses:

H6: Press coverage in India and the United States is significantly more likely to associate terrorism with religion after September 2001, than before.

The above hypotheses will be tested by analyzing media coverage in four daily newspapers– The New York Times and Washington Post from the United States, and The Hindu and Hindustan Times from India. All four papers are well known national dailies with strong agenda setting abilities in their countries⁹. Press coverage will be monitored for six months before and after the September 11th attacks, thus yielding two time periods for analyses – the

⁹ Initially the choice of newspapers was governed by circulation rates, resulting in four choices: New York Times, USA Today, Hindustan Times, and Times of India. But since USA Today and the Times of India have been criticized for commercializing news and compromising analysis in favor of design (Logan, 1986; Poolani, 2004) they were discarded in favor of The Hindu and The Washington Post. Of the four newspapers presently selected for this study, The Hindustan Times and Washington Post are directly situated within their nation’s capital while The New York Times and The Hindu are nationally recognized agenda setters.
‘pre-9/11’ stage or ‘Time I’ covered all days between March 11 2001 and September 11, 2001; while the ‘post-9/11’ stage or Time II covered the period between September 12, 2001 and March 12, 2002. A four-week constructed period will be used for each time frame, providing a total of eight weeks (56 days) of news coverage.

This particular time frame was chosen for a number of reasons. First, one aim of this study is to examine the United State’s and India’s reaction to the events of September 2001, best captured in the months immediately following the attacks. Second, in the months immediately preceding and following 9/11 the Agra Summit had already put terrorism on public agenda, and India was gearing up for potentially dramatic changes in Kashmir. Finally, within three months of 9/11 on the United States India herself was victim to two terrorist acts – a suicide attempt in the Kashmiri Legislative Assembly in October 2001, and more significantly, an attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001. All these events – and particularly the attack on the Indian parliament – led the government to prioritize terrorism in domestic and foreign policy debates, and provided ample opportunities to address commonalities between the Indian and American experience.

The findings of the content analysis enable certain rudimentary comparisons between the Indian and American experiences with terrorism, and using Mowlana’s theory of flows (1997) we may argue that these discourses could be transmitted through an established pattern from first world to third world nations. We cannot however ignore that each nation’s unique experiences limit its ability to amalgamate dominant ideologies. Keeping these arguments in mind, this study proposes that while news framing of terrorism in both press systems will converge in some areas they might diverge in others; in other words, certain ideological differences between the Indian and American press may provide varying perspectives on terrorism.

Religion remains an important theme in both these contexts. First, the history of India’s involvement in Kashmir itself can be traced back to a growing Muslim separatist movement in the 1940s, with the subsequent creation in Pakistan. Second, the Indian government has repeatedly claimed that all terrorists in Kashmir are Muslim, an allegation that resonates with the American experience, particularly with regard to the September 2001 attacks. The American

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10 India initiated a much publicized effort to renew diplomatic negotiations with Pakistan in July 2001, but the talks failed when neither party was able to achieve a compromise over Kashmir. For details of this summit, see chapter II.

11 It must be clarified that while Muslim separatism was certainly instrumental in the creation of Pakistan, separatist movements (both Hindu and Muslim) were already extant and have deeper historical roots. For an excellent historical overview of Muslim separatism in Kashmir see Rai, (2004), *Hindu Ruler’s Muslim Subjects*. 

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press in turn has questioned the relationship between Islamic extremism and terrorist activity, positioning ‘Islam’ in orientalist terms, as a culture alien to the west.

To what extent has this western rhetoric on Islamist extremism impacted the Indian press? How does India negotiate her secular identity in light of these orientalising discourses? On more general terms, how does the Indian press reassess Kashmir in light of these discourses on religion, terrorism, and war? And finally, how do journalists themselves assess their government’s efforts to leverage the Kashmir crisis in order to build political ties with the west? These questions are explored further in the project through a close textual analysis of the two Indian newspapers, The Hindu and The Hindustan Times.

Outline of Chapters

This study will be organized around five chapters. The first chapter laid the foundation for this study by providing its rationale and exploring the topic in question; reviewing theoretical literature; and finally presenting the research questions, hypotheses, and analytical methods. The second and third chapters will review Indian and US perspective of terrorism and trace the historical events contributing to each nation’s understanding of this construct.

The second chapter examines how a separatist movement in Kashmir developed into a terrorist mine field, in light of the following events: the subcontinent’s partition in 1947, India’s growing rivalry with Pakistan, the challenge to secular politics in India, and the simultaneous abrogation of democracy in Kashmir. The third chapter historically unpacks the ideologically loaded label “Islamic fundamentalism,” favored in dominant western discourse while accounting for the attacks in New York and Washington. After revisiting the Bush administration’s responses 9/11 this chapter provides alternate insights into these events, by situating this particular act of terrorism in the context of other nationalist and anti-imperialist responses in the Muslim world.

Chapter four will present the findings of the content and discourse analyses for this study. It will test the hypotheses developed through a content analysis and will eventually build upon these preliminary findings through a close textual analyses of the newspapers. Finally, chapter five will assimilate the results of the content and discourse analysis, and explain their relevance in light of theoretical considerations. It will also identify the limitations of this study, highlight its contribution to the field, and explore possible directions for future research.
Chapter II
Cross Border Terrorism

Jammu & Kashmir (henceforth Kashmir), a state coveted by India and Pakistan, is geographically situated at the northern tip of India and north-west to Pakistan along the Himalayan range. Deeply rooted in the subcontinent’s turbulent history, the Kashmir conflict which emerged towards the end of British rule in 1947 today epitomizes the ideological and political rivalries between India and Pakistan. Over the last fifteen years the conflict has also evolved from a territorial dispute to a hotbed of terrorist violence; it is viewed with alarm by the international community as the sub-continent’s “nuclear flashpoint,” (Hoyt, 2005).

The war on terrorism has put Kashmir back on the international agenda albeit in a different context; as a breeding ground for Islamist groups allegedly sponsored by Pakistan, Kashmir has become India’s point of entry into the coalition of willing, with Pakistan as its designated enemy state. One may even argue that India’s readings of the war on terror were localized to its efforts to counter terrorism in Kashmir; and that its conceptualizations of terrorism were similarly determined by its rivalry with Pakistan.

This chapter is thus an attempt to understand terrorism within the Indian context. By historically examining the conflict between India and Pakistan – and subsequently within Kashmir itself – it establishes how a secessionist movement in the valley eventually developed into a full fledged political insurgency by Islamist organizations waging jihad against India. It also examines the varying dimensions of India-Pakistani rivalry, and subsequent foreign interventions in the sub-continent, that have exacerbated this crisis. Finally, this chapter will also draw attention to the globalized nature of this war on terror, by examining the consequences of the United States’ intervention in Afghanistan during the 1979 Soviet invasion, and India’s subsequent battles (a decade later), against Islamist terrorism in Kashmir.
History of the Kashmir Conflict

Towards the end of British rule political parties and constituents within the sub continent were divided in their visions of an independent India. The Indian National Congress, a secular political organization (albeit with a Hindu majority) was committed to forming a religiously united and democratic state while the Muslim League demanded a separate “democratic Islamic nation,” culled out of the geographic areas where Muslims were a majority, (Hagerty, 2005). As negotiations between the parties failed and violence between Hindus and Muslims threatened to escalate into a civil war, the empire decided to partition the subcontinent before terminating its rule.

Subsequently when British dominion ended it left behind two newly created nations: India as a secular democracy with a Hindu majority and Pakistan, a decidedly Muslim state. The latter was created by partitioning eastern and western areas of the sub-continent: these included Muslim dominated Punjab, Baluchistan, Sindh, parts of the North-West Frontier Province, and some tribal areas of Afghanistan, which were joined to create West Pakistan. The rest of the country was fashioned out of the Muslim state of East Bengal – East Pakistan was separated from the west by a thousand miles of territory.

The British effort to partition India hardly took into account the complex religious and ethnic conflagrations of their former colony. At the time of independence rulers of princely states were asked to decide whether they would join India or Pakistan, or remain independent of both. Since most states along the Indo-Pakistani border belonged to either a Hindu or a Muslim majority their alignments required little deliberation, and by 1948 all but three states had joined India or Pakistan (p. 16). The first two, Junagadh and Hyderabad, were ruled by Muslim kings although their subjects were largely Hindu. While the rulers desired to either align with Pakistan or remain independent their subjects were in favor of acceding to India. Both states eventually acceded to India after a series of rebellions.

The third state, Kashmir, presented a conflict that remains unresolved till today. This state was ruled by a Hindu Maharaja - Hari Singh - but had a predominantly Muslim population. In 1947 Jammu and Kashmir consisted of three areas - Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladhak. The religious groups in Jammu and Kashmir were divided geographically with Jammu hosting a predominantly Hindu, Kashmir an Islamic, and Ladhak a Buddhist population. Maharaja Hari Singh was understandably in some sort of a dilemma. A decision to accede to India would create resentment
among Muslims in Kashmir, while joining Pakistan would anger the Hindus in Jammu and Buddhists in Ladhak. Besides, Hari Singh was also toying with the possibility of an independent Kashmir that would be part of neither country. The strategic position of Kashmir made it possible for all three options to be considered. The state lies at the northern most tip of India, flanked by India, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan. Being part of the Himalayan region Kashmir is nearly cut off from both India and Pakistan, and can be reached by land only through a part of Punjab, which in 1947 was assigned to India.

While Hari Singh debated the three alternatives, a pro-Pakistani part of the Muslim population rebelled against him in September 1947. In the following month around 5,000 tribesmen from Afghanistan and some Pakistani soldiers invaded Kashmir, capturing Poonch (a Muslim dominated area), to formally establish Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), or what the Pakistanis call Azad (free) Kashmir. Hari Singh sought military aid from the Indian government and, in return, acceded to India.

Under the advice of Lord Mountbatten (the last Indian viceroy) Nehru appealed to the United Nations. In August 1948 therefore a resolution was passed, declaring that the future of Jammu and Kashmir would be determined by a plebiscite after the Pakistani army withdrew from the state. In January 1949 the United Nations called for a plebiscite in Kashmir which however, was never implemented: Pakistani forces refused to withdraw from their occupied territory, and India maintained that a plebiscite could not take place until Kashmir was free of army control. Alternative websites maintained by Pakistanis argue that the plebiscite was not implemented because India claimed that Hari Singh's accession to India in 1947 officially settled the dispute. Negotiations between India and Pakistan have failed continuously since 1949.

Growing contention between the two countries and the failure of the United Nations as a third party negotiator frustrated Pakistan into attempting to annex Kashmir once again in 1965 (Kampani, 2005). This effort failed in the ensuing Indo-Pakistan war from 1965-1966, although the two countries did agree to pursue diplomatic negotiations under the Tashkent Agreement in 1966. For a few years following the Tashkent agreement the Kashmir conflict was pushed to the background as India and Pakistan became embroiled in another battle, resulting in the secession of East Pakistan in 1971, to form the state of Bangladesh. In a 1972 under a peace settlement known as the Simla agreement, India and Pakistan agreed to arrive at a consensus upon Kashmir through bilateral negotiations.
The conditions of the Simla agreement prevailed for nearly two decades during which both countries respected the status quo in the valley, but in 1989 Pakistan once again revised its arguments on Kashmir when an insurgency broke out against India. Since then Pakistan has been waging what the Indian government calls a ‘proxy war’ training pro-Pakistani insurgents to rebel against Indian security forces. While India deems this an act of terrorism Pakistan avers that it is only aiding Kashmiris in their plea for freedom.

The growth of Kashmiri insurgency has also been fostered by events outside the rubric of an India-Pakistan divide – the cold war rivalry, instance, had contributed significantly towards the growth of Islamist terrorism in the sub-continent, particularly after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Fearing that yet another country would succumb to Communism the United States (first under President Carter and then in the Reagan era) attempted to covertly funded an Islamist resistance to the Soviet Union’s military occupation of Afghanistan, in 1979. With some help from Pakistan’s Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) directorate, a substantial quantity of American funds and weapons were used train Afghani mujahideen warriors in Pakistani based madrasas, before sending them back to fight the Soviet forces. Once it had successfully countered its Communist threat the United States withdrew from Pakistan and Afghanistan, leaving behind a host of trained mujahideen and well furbished madrasas, all bereft of a definitive enemy. The catacomb of Islamist groups eventually expanded their warring agenda to a global jihad against the non-Muslim world, with the ‘liberation’ of Kashmir becoming one of their earliest objectives.

The culmination of the Soviet-Afghan conflict thus marked the inception of a violent Islamist insurgency in Kashmir, and a growing stronghold of fundamentalism in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The battle for Kashmir has had devastating effects on the valley and its local populations. In the last fifteen years the activities of cross border terrorists and the Indian army’s human rights atrocities against Kashmiri Muslims have escalated tremendously while its Hindu population has been virtually emptied out of Jammu. It is unclear from media reports what the position of Kashmiris themselves is, and whether they even want to be identified with either nation. However, the chances of establishing an independent Kashmiri state are quite low as this is an option rejected by both India and Pakistan.
Kashmir as a ‘Nuclear Flashpoint’

By the end of the twentieth century international and domestic events clarified that the Kashmir conflict could no longer be solved through negotiations alone. After the cold war and a subsequent break down of the Soviet Union, the prospect of foreign intervention gradually diminished, and war became an increasingly realistic option. The successful development of nuclear armaments by both nations in 1998 added a new dimension to this crisis and immediately drew Kashmir to the global agenda once again.

However, nuclear development had been a priority for both countries long before 1998; and in India’s case it began a few years after independence under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru’s leadership. The legacy of British colonization had fostered in Nehru a desire to prove India’s scientific capabilities to the international community while also fortifying it against future political emasculations. An effective nuclear program would achieve both these objectives, (Hoyt, 2003). By the 1960s India had advanced considerably in nuclear research (and subsequently opted out of the non-proliferation treaty); but did not actually test devices until 1974. The tests were carried out despite vociferous international criticism but the ensuing diplomatic strain made future governments wary of furthering an agenda for nuclear weaponry. Subsequently no further tests were authorized until 1998, when three devices were detonated under the militantly nationalistic regime of the BJP administration. This time, the tests were justified on the grounds of an ‘imminent Pakistani threat,’ as Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee explained, in a public letter to President Clinton:

> We have an overt nuclear weapon state on our borders…Although our relations with that country have improved in the last decade or so, an atmosphere of distrust persists mainly due to the unresolved border problem…At the hands of this bitter neighbor we have suffered three aggressions in the last 50 years. And for the last ten years we have been the victim of unremitting terrorism and militancy sponsored by it in several parts of our country… (as quoted in Muralidharan and Cherian, 1998).

But political analysts argue that Pakistan’s low intensity initiatives were hardly reason enough to develop nuclear warheads, given India’s definitive status as a major South Asian power. Rather than preventing further conflict the 1998 tests would only increase the possibility of an arms race in South Asia while exacerbating an already fragile relationship with Pakistan. For Ahmad (1998) and Hoyt, (2003) the tests served the ruling Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) a dual purpose of defying western hegemony while succoring the favor of a fractious Indian middle class. As Ahmad argues:

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Everyone knows – and therefore the BJP and US also know – that defiance of imperialism is a basic ingredient in Indian nationalism. For the BJP to graduate from ‘Hindu’ nationalism to ‘Indian’ nationalism and thus to become a nationally hegemonic power, it too must go through this baptism of fire…these nuclear fireworks help it cut across the Hindu/secular divide and reach out to claim the mantle of Indian nationalism… (and) will unite very broad sections of the Indian middle class, (p. 23).

The recent nuclear tests in Pokhran, Gujarat, predictably sparked rival efforts in Pakistan barely two weeks later, (it is assumed that Pakistan tested five nuclear devices but the exact number is still disputed). For Hoyt, (2003) Pakistan’s nuclear policy has traditionally been directed by a “perceived threat from India.” (p. 127). The nuclear program in Pakistan began in the 1960s after a series of failed alliances with the United States, in an effort to counter India’s advancements, and also to garner support from the Muslim world. However, despite its growing scientific potential Pakistan’s policy on nuclear weaponry remained relatively ambiguous until its tests in May 1998, (Ahmad, 1999; Hoyt, 2003).

In the international outcry against both states the situation in Kashmir came under much scrutiny and deliberation. Believing that nuclear energy would deter future confrontations, India initiated a series of private dialogues known as the Lahore agreement, which failed barely a year later when army forces became embroiled in yet another dispute; this time in the mountainous region of Kargil near Pakistan occupied Kashmir. Military confrontations that began after the Indian army caught Pakistani-based insurgents attempting to cross the border lines, eventually transgressed into full scale war and an Indian victory, two months later. Evidently the recent detonations had only exacerbated political tensions between the two neighbors; but the war in Kargil demonstrated that their nuclear weaponry significantly affected war strategies in both countries. Thus, while the Indian army reacted swiftly to a border infiltration, this time it chose not to cross into Pakistani occupied Kashmir, suggesting that nuclear weapons did deter military advances, even if they failed to abort confrontations.

The international community viewed Kargil as an act of outright aggression by Pakistan. For India it represented a serious breach of trust. Two years later in July 2001 negotiations between Mursharraf and Vajpayee failed yet again in the Agra summit, a much publicized effort

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1 During the India-Pakistan wars of 1961 and 1965 Pakistani infiltration was always countered by aggressive Indian efforts to push back the army. Subsequently Indian forces would advance into Pakistani territory up to major cities such as Lahore, (Kavic, 1967).

2 President Musharraf visited Prime Minister Vajpayee for a series of diplomatic talks, known as the Agra Summit, from July 14 – 16 2001, in New Delhi. The summit was held amidst high expectations that India and Pakistan –
at constructing a new friendship between the two governments. As an editorial in the Indian magazine *Frontline* (2001) observes:

Given the post-Kargil…frost that had afflicted the bilateral relationship and the worrying upsurge of violent insurgency in the Kashmir valley, it seemed that the uncertainties were so great that there was really no point in preparing for any kind of predictable outcome…the hearty atmospherics failed to bridge the gulf between India’s and Pakistan’s conflicting positions on the status and future of Kashmir and closely related areas, in particular violence and cross-border terrorism,” (p. 11).

**Terrorism in the Valley**

In the mean time this tumultuous relationship between India and Pakistan was mirrored in the political events at Kashmir. A terrorist insurgency which in 1989 began as secessionist movement from Indian governance was now also targeting civilians, and in ten years had claimed at least 34,000 lives in the valley, (Amnesty International, 2001). With some training and financial help from Pakistani *madrasas* (religious institutions of learning) the scale of terrorist activity escalated considerably and was soon to extend beyond the borders of Kashmir. In December 1999 an Indian airplane traveling from Kathmandu to New Delhi was hijacked by five members of the Pakistani based Harkat-ul-Mujahideen group; the plane was diverted to Lahore and then to Khandahar in Afghanistan, where its passengers were held hostage in exchange for three terrorists imprisoned in India. Despite its hardliner rhetoric the Vajpayee government eventually capitulated to Harkat-ul-Mujahideen’s demands and amidst much media criticism, released Maulana Masoor Azhar, Mushtaq Ahmed Zagar, and Ahmed Umar Syed, in exchange for the 150 airline passengers. That the plane was allowed to remain for eight days in Khandahar only highlighted Pakistani association with the repressive Taliban government in Indian eyes; and

rivals who with virtually no political contact since the Kargil war in 1999 – would finally get an opportunity to iron out political differences. Musharraf and Vajpayee were expected to hold negotiations on a number of issues such as nuclear rivalry, bilateral relations, and of course, Kashmir. But the initial optimism waned as both parties ended the talks without any agreement; a BBC report reasoned that “the long-running dispute over Kashmir (was) seen as the main reason for the deadlock,” (BBC News, 17 July 2001).

3 The Indian press severely criticised the government for its lax attitude to the hijacking and for surrendering so easily to terrorist demands; as an editorial in the *Frontline* magazine (2000) claimed, “the deal must honestly be recognised as humiliating and deeply damaging defeat for the Indian state, it’s ‘pro-active’ terrorism stance, and its vital interest in Kashmir,” (p. 5). Indeed as events unfolded the portents of the media only proved true, and the prisoner’s release had severe repercussions on India’s struggle against terrorism. Ahmed Syed was eventually sentenced to death in Pakistan for his involvement in the capture and murder of the journalist Daniel Pearl; but Azhar went on to form the Jaish-e-Mohammad, a Pakistani based organization responsible for the December 2001 attack on the Indian parliament. (Bose, 2003).
was used later to criticize the United States’ association with Pakistan while retaliating against the September 2001 attacks.

The Harkat-ul-Mujahideen’s victory in 1999 led to a spate of terrorist violence targeting Kashmiri political houses and Indian army; in October 2001 members of the pro-Pakistani Jaish-e-Mohammad stormed into the secretariat killing its occupants in an attempt to take over the building. In December that year the same organization along with another Pakistani-based outfit, the Lashkar-e-Toiba, claimed responsibility for a terrorist shooting at the parliament house in New Delhi. Although this attack was thwarted by security forces it nevertheless impressed upon the Indian government that extremist factions would no longer confine their activities to Kashmir.

For India it was indeed significant that its parliament was targeted just a few months after the terrorist attack in the United States. Subsequently the events in December 2001 were instrumental in influencing Indian foreign policy initiatives as well as her stance on Kashmir. Previously reluctant to include third party mediators in conflict resolution dialogs the Indian government now vociferously demanded international attention towards ‘Pakistani sponsored’ terrorism in the valley and framed the parliamentary attack as exemplary of her terror tactics against Indian democracy.

Media reports indicate that since 2001 the scale of violence in Kashmir has reduced, albeit only negligibly. While India acknowledged Mursharraf’s decision (under American diplomatic pressure) to disassociate the Pakistani government from organizations like Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad, relations between the two South Asian states remain far from amicable. Despite the global outcry against terrorism the situation in Kashmir itself has changed very little. Studies analyzing the rate of cross border insurgency suggest that the valley will remain victimized by terrorist violence unless the army adopts more stringent security measures, (Swami, 2003, p. 69). One must acknowledge however that holding the Pakistani government not solely responsible for problems in the valley: the state’s corrupt practices, a lack of public voice, and persistent ethno-religious divides, are also factors perpetuating terrorism in Kashmir.
Roots of Insurgency

Kashmiri discontent with state rule and the Indian government has had a long and turbulent history culminating in political insurgency during the 1990s. Several explanations have accounted for the growth of insurgency in Kashmir: the Indian government contends that it is merely an attempt by Pakistani forces to promote terrorism in the valley, training young militants to wage a proxy-war against India. Pakistan in turn rationalizes that the current status in Kashmir is an inevitable result of India’s political mismanagement. The following declaration by a Pakistani-sponsored organization, as quoted by Ganguly,(1997), enunciates the following reasons for Kashmiri insurgency: “The current uprising in Kashmir is the outcome of multiple factors. These include historic betrayals, constitutional despotism, negation of socio-cultural identity, religious discrimination, economic deprivation and state repression, besides 43 years of misrule and manipulation by Delhi,” (p. 16).

A more nuanced line of reasoning may be found in social science literature tracing the origins of insurgency to fractious identity politics in that state – that is the demise of ethnic, religious, and nationalistic ideals in the valley. Punjabi (1995) argues that the national government’s willingness to promote unpopular regimes in the valley ultimately alienated its Muslim population. Ganguly himself proposes an alternative perspective on Kashmiri insurgency by situating it the within growing political unrest in India during the tenure of the Congress administration. As mentioned earlier India at the time of its independence was little more than a conglomeration of states, each with its unique ethno-linguistic populations. A democratic federation that fostered a shared identity while acknowledging regional differences was thus essential in building this nation-state: in this context Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was quick to recognize that state autonomy would serve national interest better than centralized governance.

However, from the 1960s onwards the democratic institutions set up by Nehru’s were undermined by the coercive practices of his successors (namely his daughter Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv), to counter any perceived political threats. It was further abrogated by the entrance of other political parties such as the pro-Soviet Communist Party of India (CPI), the pro-Chinese Communist Party of India, Marxist (CPI-M), and the “ultranationalist” Jana Singh (predecessor to today’s Bharatiya Janata Party) whose fractious policies seriously undermined the majoritarian ideals upon which the country was formed, (Ganguly, 1997, p. 26).
Nehru’s concession to, and his successors’ reneging of state autonomy affected the direction of Kashmiri politics. After acceding to India in 1948 Kashmir was granted the right to craft its own constitution. Its aims of creating a representative government, providing adult franchise and guaranteeing all Kashmiris civil liberties were duly advocated (at least in theory) by the National Conference, a newly established socialist organization headed by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. Although the National Conference did much to ameliorate the quality of life in Kashmir Abdullah’s methods of governance were more authoritarian rather than democratic, so that future generations of educated Kashmiris found little resemblance between state practice and its egalitarian constitutional claims. The results of Abdullah’s authoritarian practices, Ganguly writes, were glaringly evident to the Kashmiri population:

Unlike elections in the rest of India Jammu and Kashmir elections were largely a farce. The National Conference and its operatives dominated the politics of the state. Furthermore, the central government in New Delhi did little to stay the hand of the National Conference as long as it did not question the accession of Jammu and Kashmir into the Indian Union, (p. 29).

A gradual undermining of democratic practices in the country was simultaneously countered by a growth of political mobilization across various electorates. Within Kashmir itself widespread literacy, an increased exposure to mass media, and a general improvement of socio-economic conditions, fostered a growing sense of political consciousness among local citizens, while at the same time denying them an opportunity to question state practices. In the face of such authoritarianism many Kashmiris (particularly young men) turned to universities and local media to express their dissent. Educational institutions were particularly instrumental in congregating the youth although many also used the rapidly mushrooming madrasas to voice their dissent.

It must be acknowledged however, that the role of madrasas in Islamic mobilization has altered considerably since their inception in the sub-continent. Islamic madrasas traditionally emerged as institutions of religious learning although several were abolished during colonial rule, after the British attempted to limit religion to the private sphere, by strictly enforcing secular education in public schools, (Zaman, 1999). All madrasas draw upon the sharia (‘divinely ordained’ practices) to dictate “ritual and personal” behavior, but vary in their philosophical and religious agendas. While they were not themselves political their traditionalist conventions were often appropriated into the objectives of Islamist movements, such as challenging western
hegemony or fostering indigenous nationalism. The oppressive practices of the Taliban for instance, claimed to draw from the Deobandi philosophy, a Sunni school of thought originating (in the 1800s) from the province of Deoband, north of New Delhi. As Metcalf (2002) observes, what is perhaps most significant of these traditionalist philosophies is their malleability, fitting in neatly with the political agendas of extremist groups, like Al-Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, and so on.

In this manner madrasas in Kashmir did act as areas of political coalescence for a disenchanted youth who were eventually mobilized to participate in widespread unrest and civil strife. In March 1988 a bomb explosion in central Srinagar (the state capital) marked the first of several large scale terrorist attacks that continue even today. This particular assault was carried out by the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), a pro-Kashmiri nationalist organization which later renounced violence as a method of achieving its goals (Swami, 2003: 59). However, the trend initiated by JKLF is assiduously followed by several other groups operating in Kashmir.

While reports vary on the actual number of terrorist organizations’ there is no doubt that they are not all exclusively Kashmiri. Swami distinguishes between three types of insurgents based on their nationality and areas of operation. The first category comprises of pro-Islamist (largely pan-Islamic) groups based in Pakistan with members of Pakistani origin. These include organizations such as Lashkar-e-Omar, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad (allegedly funded by Pakistan’s Inter-Service-Intelligence and aided by Osama bin Laden), Harkat-ul-Ansar (formerly Harkat-ul-Mujaheddin, blacklisted by United States for its association associated with Bin Laden), Harkat-ul-jihadi-Islami, and al-Badr.

The second category comprises pro-Islamic organizations that are Pakistani based and funded, but whose members are Kashmiri. Examples include the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, which demand the integration of Kashmir with Pakistan. Finally, although dwindling in number, there are also a few parties – Kashmiri based with Kashmiri members – campaigning for an independent Kashmir. In 1988 the JKLF was the first of such organizations (although it no longer has a military wing).

Several factors caused political activity in Kashmir to be organized along ethnic and religious dimensions. The rhetoric of the National Conference primarily targeted Muslims, considering the interests of the relatively wealthy Hindu population to be outside its reach. For Kashmiri Muslims themselves the valley was the sole representation of the familiar, as years of
geographic isolation had rendered their socio-cultural practices distinct from that of other Muslim communities in India. Consequently, their sense of alienation combined with a very real fear that Indians discriminated against Muslims, prevented them from leaving Kashmir (Ganguly, 1997, p.40). Moreover, the lack of avenues for secular debate had already led several young Kashmiri Muslims to gravitate towards religion as a means of mobilization. Recognizing this as an opportunity to weaken India’s stronghold Pakistan abetted these loosely constructed groups, and through proper training orchestrated an insurgency in Kashmir. The support and resources for these insurgents came largely from Saudi Arabia and Afghani mujahideen, who had until 1990 battled against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan, (Ganguly, 1997; Abbas, 2005).

It is still unclear why insurgents took to operating on such a large scale only in by 1989, since until this time the attacks primarily targeted army officials or politicians, largely avoiding any damage to civilian life.\(^4\) Swami’s analysis of Indian records documenting arms trade in Kashmir in the 1980s indicates that Indian officials were aware that insurgent groups were amassing explosives but did little to prevent them. Eventually, a sharp increase in attacks against security forces was met by an equally swift and fierce retaliation; from the early 1990s onwards Indian military forces have been relatively successful in hunting out terrorists but at severe cost to the safety and stability of Kashmiri civilians.

Almost all the insurgents, whether Pakistani or Kashmiri, are trained in military camps and madrasas based in Pakistan or Pakistan occupied Kashmir, and filter into India through the line of control. The Indian government initially used violence to quell terrorist infiltration but had to stop on account of the growing number of civilian casualties, making Kashmiris antagonistic to the army’s presence. From 2002 onwards the government changed tactic, adopting what it called the ‘healing touch policy,’ reducing aggressive counter terrorist measures in order to win public favor and prevent future Kashmiri civilians from joining terrorist ranks. Furthermore, by ingratiating itself to Kashmiris the Indian government also hoped to bring about a localized desire to evict terrorists from the state. While this effort has reduced collateral damage in army hands it has not been successful in preventing terrorist infiltration across the border, thereby increasing death counts of both civilians and Indian security officials.

\(^4\) Indian government documents reveal that from as early as 1966 violent confrontations had occurred between Indian security forces and f Kashmiri-liberation groups, (Swami, 2003: 57).
Ganguly’s analysis of the Kashmir crisis (1997) suggests that young Kashmiris, frustrated by corrupt political regimes and lack of economic opportunity were driven to join the ranks of terrorists. However Karim (1994) and Swami (2003) note that several young Kashmiri jihadis though poor were not from impoverished backgrounds, indicating that while economic poverty was an important cause of political frustration, it was not the driving force towards insurgency. Swami reasons that apart from their monetary appeal young Kashmiris were attracted by the pro-Islamic rhetoric of these mushrooming organizations which in practice, confounded Kashmiri nationalism with pan-Islamism. His analysis of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front’s practices during the 1990s are particularly interesting in this regard:

Its (the JKLF’s) manifesto…advocates ‘equal political, economic, religious, and social rights for all citizens “irrespective of race, religion, region, culture, and sex.’ This position…has led to the formation of an extraordinary consensus that the organization is essentially secular-democratic in character (and) representative of Kashmiri nationalism…What this argument misses is that the dividing lines between Kashmiri nationalism and religious fundamentalism – as, of course, with other sub continental movements – has been exceedingly thin, (p.74).

This fusion of religious and political ideologies while not uncommon has particularly interesting implications for India, where there are frequent conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. Scholars such as Sikand (2001) situate the rhetoric of insurgency within a Pan-Islamic discourse, arguing that the goal of jihad for groups like the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen and Jamat-e-Islamia, is only to create a separate Kashmir (albeit as a Muslim state). Swami however, contends that the rhetoric of all insurgent groups carries strongly communal undertones, wedged in a fundamental argument that Hindus and Muslims cannot peacefully coexist:

Terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir is influenced by ideas far transcending its geographical location; increasingly, terrorists are seeking to break out of the confines of the state. The Islamic Right has been successful in linking local conflict to larger issues of communal identity; in weaving the legacy of Partition into the war in Jammu and Kashmir; and in locating this struggle in a larger, global enterprise of pan-Islamic mobilization that conceives as its end nothing less than the destruction of the fractious world of the unbelievers and the establishment of the world of peace under Islam, (p. 85).
Kashmiriyat and the Politics of Hindu-Muslim Relations

Organizing terrorist rhetoric along communal lines appears at first glance, to be antithetical to the historical Indian perception of Kashmiri culture. At the time of partition this state with its dominantly Muslim population was considered essential in bolstering India’s image as a secular democracy. Furthermore, the seemingly high integration between Hindus and Muslims made Kashmir even more unique in the face of growing religious violence in India. This amalgam of Hindu and Muslim values is captured in the essence of Kashmiriyat, a term used to invoke a political identity segregating Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims from their religious counterparts in the rest of India.

Although there is no precise, universally accepted definition of Kashmiriyat, it has been repeatedly used since the early twentieth century to connote a Kashmiri regional identity. According to Zutshi (2004) and Rai (2004) the term has been used politically as well as socially to generate an idealized understanding of Kashmiri identity. In the words of Zutshi:

…Kashmiri nationalism’s memory of the past is refracted through rose-tinted glasses, in which Kashmir appears as a unique region where religious communities lived in harmony since time immemorial and differences in religion did not translate into acrimonious conflict until external intervention, (p. 2).

A traditional understanding of Kashmiriyat assumes the ability to override (or ignore) religious differences, thus divorcing religion from Kashmiri regionalism. For Rai however the essence of Kashmiriyat is based on a fundamental recognition of religious affiliation; it was therefore a deliberate political strategy “to build bridges across religiously defined communities to evoke an ‘older tradition’ of culturally based regional coexistence,” (p. 225). Far from ignoring religious differences therefore Kashmiriyat is a deliberate political strategy seeking to build harmony by recognizing socio-cultural segregations. Rai’s analysis thus indicates that the discourse of Kashmiriyat is not (as commonly perceived) a historical characteristic of Kashmiri identity, but a relatively recent constructed political ideology.

As in the rest of India, relational boundaries between Kashmiri Hindus and Muslims were determined by political and economic rivalry. The ruling classes in Kashmir were the Hindu Dogras, whose dictatorial practices (particularly under British influence) brooked little tolerance

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5 It is worth noting that the term secularism in Indian politics refers to the peaceful co-existence of various religions, rather a clear distinction between religion and politics.

6 Both Hindus and Muslims comprised elite and working class factions of Kashmiri society; however, while elite Muslims had some political clout the Hindu Dogras comprised the ruling factions.
for resistance or debate. It was only in the late 1800s that Maharaja Pratap Singh under British urging allowed the development of a closely monitored public space, which by 1927 represented the interests of at least a hundred different groups. Although theoretically apolitical, the groups were organized along religious lines, a trend encouraged by the politically insecure Maharaja who hoped that such divisions would limit unity among his subjects.

By the early 1900s this public space had developed into an arena for political mobilization that had clearly taken place along religious lines. This emerging ‘Kashmiri’ identity (Hindu or Muslim) was further enhanced by changing social conditions in India. For instance, the movement of Punjabi Hindus under the British Raj into Kashmiri administration seriously threatened the interests of the elite Hindu Pandits traditionally employed in this area. The new competitors catalyzed Pandits into organizing the ‘Kashmir for Kashmiris’ campaign – a unifying platform including at least theoretically, the interests of all Hindus and Muslims, and claiming treatment and employment benefits for state subjects. But despite the seemingly cohesive rhetoric espoused by the Pandits there was no denying that Kashmir Muslims continued to remain formidable rivals for limited opportunities in the state. The employment benefits claimed by the ‘Kashmir for Kashmiris’ campaign actually did little to aid Muslims themselves, since many were uneducated and hence unqualified for these posts. Their primary aim therefore was to develop educational opportunities.

The campaign to mobilize Muslim interest was eventually taken up by core leaders who, according to Rai, were just as concerned about fuelling their own political interests as they were about the status of their community members. Their efforts at propagating Muslim interests were thus tinged with a distinctly anti-Hindu stance:

They brought to public notice the lack of Muslim representation in the state administration and suggested that only provision of adequate education would correct this situation. At the same time the memorandum pressed the point that the ‘backwardness’ of Muslims was caused by Hindu officers who neglected Muslim interests and Hindu teachers who wished to keep the Muslims illiterate, (p. 254).

In the following years several voices (foreign and Kashmiri) joined in the increasingly vociferous expression of Muslim discontent. Prominent among their leaders was one Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, a new graduate of the Aligarh Muslim University who had experienced

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7 These included a place in the Kashmiri durbar (the Kings court) and the British run civil services.
8 For a more detailed analysis of the impact of a changing social climate on the Kashmiri Pandits, see Rai (2004), pp 241-253.
first hand the impact of limited opportunities available for educated Muslims in Kashmir. With the help of members from his ‘Reading Room Party’ Abdullah successfully merged the diverse (and ideologically divisive) community along religious lines, by “tapping into a multitude of grievances suffered by Kashmiri Muslims,” in the hands of their Hindu rulers (p. 270). In 1932, with the wide social base that he had gathered, Abdullah created a new political party, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, which grew to become the most powerful overseer of Muslim interests.

The idea of Kashmiriyat as a unifying identity first took root in the mid 1930s, when the British government’s policies forced Abdullah to change his political rhetoric. In 1934 the creation of a legislative assembly, the Praja Sabha, offered for the first time an opportunity for local Kashmiris to participate in representative government. In order to garner sufficient support for his party’s presence in the Praja Sabha Abdullah realized he had to win over Hindus and Sikhs who constituted a strong minority population. From then on members of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference toned down their anti-Hindu rhetoric considerably, focusing instead on a platform of universal rights for all citizens against the repressive Dogra rule. In 1939 Abdullah went a step further in attempting to win over the elite Pandit community by re-titling his party the ‘All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference’ (henceforth referred to as the National Conference).

Initially, the assimilatory nature of the National Conference’s discourse held little appeal particularly when Abdullah continued to campaign on behalf of the marginalized and under represented Muslims, although by virtue of their size Kashmiri Pandits believed instead that they deserved state benefits accruing to minorities. This persistent rivalry for limited economic opportunity suggested that religion would become inextricably linked with future political decisions in the state, or as Rai observes: “The ‘us’ and ‘them’ of the Muslims and the Hindus and an equality of their rights, had to be accepted before coexistence would be possible in Kashmir,” (p. 279).

The discourse of unifying Kashmiri identity did ultimately gain support among Pandits in the 1940s, towards the end of Dogra dynasty in Kashmir and colonial rule in India. This was largely due to the entrance of two new players from British India in the Kashmiri political stage – the Indian National Congress in favor of retaining a unified sub-continent; and Muslim League advocating the creation of a new Islamic State called Pakistan (Zutshi, 2004, p. 282). While a
significant section of the Muslim population supported the pro-Pakistani Muslim League. Abdullah instead liaised with the Congress in return for its assistance towards politically strengthening the National Conference Party’s status in Kashmir at end of British occupation.

Abdullah’s decision to endorse the Congress, (a party with a strong Hindu following although voicing secular rhetoric), soon won him the favor of Pandits. From then on the National Conference’s political stronghold became formally established, and in 1948 when Dogra rule disintegrated with Kashmir’s accession to India, it was established as the state’s first official ruling party. At the same time the rhetoric of Kashmiriyat was circulated widely in an effort to solidify uniquely Kashmiri values and reinforce autonomy against India’s attempts at cultural integration. As Rai explains:

Selected fragments from an imagined past were collected to construct a Kashmiriyat that would draw in both the Pandits and Muslims. (Abdullah’s) reconstruction of Kashmir moved not from periods of Hindu to Muslim to Sikh rulers but from an age of Kashmiri rule through a long interregnum of ‘foreign dominance’ beginning with the Mughals in 1586 before the end of Dogra hegemony marked the triumphant return to rule by Kashmiris. Day after day, week after week, Kashmiris were told that they had been ‘slaves’ to alien rulers for more than 500 years until their final liberation after 1947, (p 284).

But this rhetoric of a peaceful assimilation of both religions has been at odds with the disparate privileges accruing to the significantly impoverished Muslim majority. In the 1950s for example, a series of economic and political reforms\(^9\) were introduced aimed at making Kashmiri society more egalitarian, but which only succeeded in widening the divide between elite Pandits and Dogras; and the already marginalized Muslim population. Disenchantment with the local and national governments coupled with persistent lack of opportunity finally led to an outbreak of insurgency in 1989. Since then the notion of Kashmiriyat has been severely undermined by the violent activities of Muslim radicals and the subsequent displacement of the valley’s Hindu

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\(^9\) Land holdings in Kashmir were unequally distributed with ownership concentrated primarily in the hands of Dogras and Pandits. After 1947 the National Conference introduced a series of land reforms aimed at breaking up large holdings and distributing them among landless laborers (primarily Kashmiri Muslims). After protesting in vain about this decision the existing class of landowners circumvented state acquisition by exploiting loopholes in reform laws. The most common way of doing so was to break up joint families owning these lands and distribute a portion of the holding to each male member. Since orchards were exempt from these reforms members of the landed gentry also converted their agrarian holdings into highly lucrative fruit orchards. Thus, land reforms did little to alter the marginalized status of the impoverished Muslim community.

In the political sector too Pandits benefited from reforms. The National Conference reserved ten percent of government jobs for Pandits and 50 percent for Muslims. Although Muslims were entitled to a larger percentage of jobs the smaller numbers of Pandits (who constituted around five percent of the Kashmiri population) allowed for greater numbers of this group to be employed in the government services, (Rai, 2004: 284).
population. As discussed in previous sections it is clear that this situation has been further complicated by Pakistan’s pro-Islamic leanings and its support for terrorist activity in Kashmir. However, one cannot deny that the gradual abrogation of secular politics in India by pro-Hindu factions have also contributed, albeit indirectly, to the general climate of unease in Kashmir.

**Indian Secularism and Hindu Nationalism**

The belief that nationalism should be fashioned along religious lines has consistently undermined India’s claim to secularity from the time of independence. The fundamentalist ideology of ‘Hindutva’ has gained a limited stronghold among the Indian Hindu middle-class by espousing a “unifying Hindu culture for all Indians,” (Mehta 2003). Proponents of the Hindutva campaign – namely the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), Bajrang Dal, and Shiv Sena10 – have also successfully alienated minority communities in the country, particularly Muslims, by reinterpreting history to frame them as hostile foreigners, and a threat to a uniquely Hindu heritage. In the words of Panikkar (2003):

…the Hinduised history is a deliberate construction which seeks to valorize the Hindu in the checkered history of the nation…the political history of India is interpreted as a record of the heroic Hindu resistance against foreigners and the last one thousand years as a period of continuous conflict between the Hindus and Muslims…The religious interpretation of the past has a contemporary political intent. It seeks to identify the non-Hindus ad foreigners and to stigmatize them as enemies by invoking a weird logic that their ancestors were guilty of aggression, iconoclasm and proselytization (p. xii-xiv).

In the colonial period a few Indian nationalists (both Muslim and Hindu) resorted to communalism – mobilizing socio-political interests on a religious platform – to distinguish Indian and British cultures, but consequently constructed Hindus and Muslims as two distinct monolithic communities with few converging interests, (Thapar, 2003). Historians indicate that the British themselves contributed to Hindu-Muslim divisiveness by granting each community

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10While they all espouse Hindutva ideology the organizations each have different goals. The earliest among them is the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak, established as an apolitical but strictly Hindu society in 1925. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) was established in 1964 solely as a religious organization, but has been instrumental since 1984 in mobilising support for destroying a mosque in the northern Indian city of Ayodhya, and building a temple in its place. An offshoot of the VHP, the Bajrang Dal is an organization for young militant Hindus created to “guard” the newly constructed temple at Ayodhya. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), founded in 1977, is the largest political organization supporting Hindutva. The Shiv Sena is a Hindu nationalist party in Maharashtra, politically distinct from the BJP but allied with it during national and state elections (Rajgopal, 2001; see also Malik2003).
separate electorates (Dhavan, 1999; Ganguly, 2003; and Bandyopadhyay, 2004). Later, a decision to confirm upon them a special minority status helped create unifying pan-Muslim identity while alienating them even further from Hindus.

During India’s struggle for independence political organizations remained unanimous in their aim of overthrowing the British although they were deeply fissured within, in their visions of an emancipated India. The Indian National Congress which was arguably the largest political party foresaw independent India as an egalitarian secular\footnote{Scholarly literature differentiates between the western (North America and Continental Europe) and Indian understandings of secularism. In the former context secularism is a distancing of political practice from religious belief. In India it refers to the state’s requirement to ‘treat all religions with equal favor and procure all communities with equal status,’ (Ganguly, 1997; see also Chatterjee, 1999; and Chandra, 2004). Gandhi expressed this idea as \textit{sarva dharma sambhava}, which literally translates to ‘let all religions prosper,’ (Upadhyaya, 1992: 817).} democracy ruled by majority vote. Alternative visions of nationalism were espoused by the All India Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha who mobilized support along communal lines. The Muslim League for instance initially sought greater political representation for the disenfranchised Muslim community but under pressure from radical Hindu forces, morphed its demands into seeking a separate Muslim state. In contrast the Hindu Mahasabha initiated an aggressive campaign of nationhood “founded on the idea of racial domination of the Hindus, (and) more particularly, of the subordination of Muslims,” (Bandyopadhyay, 2004, p. 337).

The sub-continent’s partition after independence crystallized \textit{Hindutva}’s anti-Islamic stance by using Pakistan as proof that Muslims were betraying their Indian homeland. Since then Hindu zealots have successfully undermined the Indian National Congress’ \textit{sarva dharma sambhava} philosophy by accusing the Congress of pandering to an increasingly recalcitrant minority, (Ganguly, 2003, Malik, 2005). Several scholars have observed with some trepidation that support for \textit{Hindutva} politics is widespread and ever increasing across the nation, particularly after the BJP was elected into power in 1998 (Hansen, 1999; Panikkar, 1999; Machanda, 2002; Bidwai, 2003; Van der Veer, 2003); but it must be noted that \textit{Hindutva} politics is by no means universally accepted or condoned, even among the majority Hindu population. Public opinion was deeply critical of \textit{Hindutva} politics after the communal riots in Godhra, Gujarat, in 2003, in which the centre and state administrations did little to stop an ensuing pogrom against local Muslims, (Palshikar 2004). But the most decisive indicator of its waning popularity was the BJP’s failure to win a majority vote during the 2004 \textit{Lok Sabha} (lower parliament house) elections (thereby acceding control to the Congress).
Nevertheless, there is no denying that secular politics has indeed been abrogated during the BJP’s rise to power from the 1980s, culminating in its five year parliamentary tenure from 1998 to 2003. Religious tensions were further exacerbated by the controversy over Muslim personal law in 1985 (or Shariah law), often perceived by the Indian public as a thinly veiled attempt by the Congress to win over the Indian Muslims, (Ganguly, 2003). The events leading up to this controversy were as follows: Shah Bano an impoverished Muslim divorcee made a legal appeal after her former husband claimed exemptions from paying alimony under Muslim Personal Law. After much controversy the case eventually went to the Supreme Court which ruled that the payments should indeed be made, and that a uniform secular code should overrule religious practice while citizen equality and justice were at stake. The Supreme Court’s decision angered several conservative Muslims who insisted that their community rights were being deliberately threatened. In the subsequent ferment that followed the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi eventually capitulated to their demands, exempting Muslims from the Uniform Civil Code in favor of Shariah Law. Seizing their political opportunity from the Shah Bano case the BJP along with other Hindutva organizations lost no time in playing up Hindu resentment against the Congress, for conceding once again to minority sentiments, (Ganguly 2003).

Religious discord flared again in 1992 during the controversy over the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhya. The city of Ayodhya in Northern India is of particular relevance to Hindu worshipers of Ram (an earthly incarnation of the Lord Vishnu). It is the city where Lord Ram ruled as king and also marks his birth place. Ayodhya therefore stands today not only as a historical city but also as an epicenter of Hindu religious activity. The Babri Masjid was built in Ayodhya in the 1500s by a nobleman belonging to the court of King Barbur. Historical evidence does not clearly indicate if a temple did exist on the ground where the mosque stood, or if it was destroyed in order to build this mosque – religious and secular parties have both found archaeological evidence to support or disregard this claim. Hindu activists, who have long claimed that Babur did indeed destroy a temple before building a mosque, demand that the temple be resurrected. Rebuilding the temple in place of the mosque – known as the Ram Janmabhoomi movement – has been a contentious debate fanned vigorously by all Hindutva organizations, culminating ultimately in the VHP and BJP’s decision to reclaim the Babri Masjid by demolishing the mosque and building a temple in its place, (Ganguly, 2003).

\footnote{Ram Janmabhoomi literally translates to ‘the birth place of Lord Ram.’}
Not to be outdone, the Congress too sought out Hindu voters by airing a nationalized television broadcast of the Hindu epic Ramayan, a series chronicling the life of Lord Ram and glorifying Indian culture as a ‘golden age’ under his rule, (Rajagopal 2001). In asserting Hinduism as the essence of Indian nationhood the Ramayan successfully internalized the idea of a Hindu state among the Indian middle class; Hansen (2001) even argues that for some Indians the televised epic became inextricably linked with Hindu victory in Ayodhya.

Meanwhile, the popularity of Hindutva particularly among upper class North Indian Hindus allowed the BJP to become a serious political contender against the Congress. Thus, despite losing national elections in 1991 the BJP reinitiated an extremely successful campaign for Ayodhya culminating ultimately in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in December 1992. The ruling Congress Party\textsuperscript{13} which had earlier underestimated the popularity of this anti-secular agenda, could do little to curb either the pro-Hindu activists or the torrent of religious violence in the weeks following the mosque’s destruction that killed at least 2,000 Hindus and Muslims, (Malik, 2005).

The communal riots following the demolition of the Babri Masjid had serious consequences for religious harmony in India but had effectively placed the BJP on the public agenda. In 1998 the party won national elections and over the next five years set about systematically undermining the equality guaranteed to all religions under the constitution: the Ministry of Education for instance, attempted to revise school history texts so that they commended the “virtues of Hinduism” while disparaging the role of Islam in South Asia, (Ganguly, 2003: 19). But the most disturbing evidence of the BJP’s agenda came in 2002 when violence erupted once again in wake of the Ayodhya conflict.

In February 2002 a group of Muslims in Godhra, a town in Gujarat, set fire to a train carriage full of Hindu activists returning from Ayodhya\textsuperscript{14}. The fire burnt to death 58 activists in the compartment and set the stage for a virtual ethnic cleansing in Gujarat as avenging Hindu mobs systematically hunted down the state’s Muslim communities. While the international community condemned these orchestrated attacks against Muslims the BJP-led state government

\textsuperscript{13} National elections in India are held every five years. The Congress won the elections in 1991 (four years after the Ramayan was first aired) and was reinstated as the ruling party with P.V Narasimha Rao as the new Prime Minister. Rajiv Gandhi had been assassinated the previous year by a Tamil Tiger activist.

\textsuperscript{14} There is some controversy about the origins of this fire. Media reports initially mentioned that local Muslims incinerated a carriage after the traveling Hindu activists molested a young Muslim girl and verbally assaulted some vendors. But in July 2002 an official investigation suggested that the fire may have been started by some inflammable material in one of the carriages, (Malik2005: 86).
under Narendra Modi did little to prevent them, choosing instead to blame Muslims for initiating this carnage. In the time it took the Modi government to restore order over 2,000 Muslims had been killed and an additional 150,000 forced into refugee camps, (Malik2005: 87). The state’s failure to maintain peace in itself should have been grounds for its dismissal; but India’s Prime Minister A.B Vajpayee refused to condemn Modi, allowing him instead to contest state elections in the following year.

Although Hindutva practices have flagrantly violated the underlying principles of secularity India still inherently remains a liberal democracy ruled by majoritarian interest. Indeed, during the BJP’s rule India appears to have moved considerably along western understandings of modernity and development – embracing neo-liberal ideologies, actively participating in global economic ventures, and firmly establishing herself as a ‘democracy’ against the war on terror. These practices demonstrate that unlike the non-western, anti-modern discourse espoused through Islamic extremism the Hindu right works within the constructs of modernizing institutions; but at the same time denies cultural pluralities in the public domain. In the words of Chatterjee (1999):

…it in its most sophisticated forms, the campaign of the Hindu right often seeks to mobilize on its behalf the will of an interventionist modernizing state, in order to erase the presence of religious or ethnic particularisms from the domains of law or public life, and to supply, in the name of ‘national culture,’ a homogenized content to the notion of citizenship. In this role the Hindu right in fact seeks to project itself as a modernist critic of Islamic or Sikh fundamentalism, and to accuse the ‘pseudo-secularists’ of preaching tolerance for religious obscurism or bigotry…from this position, the Hindu right can not only deflect accusations of being anti- secular, but can even use the arguments for interventionist secularization to promote intolerance and violence against minorities, (p. 230).

Scholars suggest that the politics of Hindu nationalism has significantly affected public debate on Kashmir as well as India’s relations with Pakistan. For Malik, (2005) and Jalal (1997) it was the Hindu right who at the time of independence, drove the Muslim polity into demanding a separate state; but pro-Hindu discourse currently denigrates Pakistan as proof of Muslim hostility and Islamic separatism. Kashmir has become a similar means of buttressing anti-Muslim propaganda on domestic and international policies. In its campaign for a unified India the Hindu right has criticized the Congress for not adopting a more stringent policy towards Pakistan’s ‘invasion’ of Kashmir, and for pandering to the separatist demands of Kashmiri Muslims. Thus

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15 Reports published on the Godhra carnage suggest that the Modi government even encouraged Hindu fundamentalists to target specific Muslim areas, (Ganguly, 2003).
the BJP has consistently attempted to dispose of Article 370\textsuperscript{16} of the Indian Constitution which
grants Kashmir special legislative privileges and greater autonomy than other Indian states.

Conservative hardliners like L.K Advani and Murali Mahohar Joshi maintain that India
should aggressively quell these separatist movements to the permanent integration of Kashmir.
Indian security forces have largely followed this rhetoric, and dealt swiftly and ruthlessly with
Kashmiri insurgents; but their strong record of abusive human rights have only left civilians with
a stronger desire to remain distanced from India. In this context it is important to note that the
valley is now predominantly Muslim, for Kashmiri Hindus have been steadily displaced by
insurgents.

Without doubt external events in South Asia have helped strengthen pan-Islamic separatism
within Kashmir; for example, James and Özdamar (2005) have argued that Kashmiri Muslims
have been inspired by the Cultural Revolution in Iran, the growth of Pakistani madrasas, and
Islamic radicalism in Afghanistan. Despite these claims however, one cannot discount the Hindu
right’s contribution towards fostering Muslim insecurity: its anti-Muslim rhetoric – particularly
its charge that Islamic cultures are ‘foreign’ to India – combined with its aggressively nationalist
tactics has perhaps only increased a sense of persecution in an already alienated community.

This was certainly evident during the Rath Yatra and Ekta Yatra organized in 1990 and 1991,
not long after the Kashmiri insurgency commenced. Both these movements attempted to instill
patriotic values with distinctly Hindu overtones. Advani’s Rath Yatra, was a procession that
began in Somnath, Gujarat, and traversed 10,000 kilometers until it reached the northern city of
Ayodhya. The procession’s central display, a Toyota van, was decorated to resemble a chariot
(rath) in the Hindu epic Mahabharata, with party workers shouting militant slogans on its either
side, (Hansen, 199: 164). As it traveled across north-west India the yatra received tremendous
press coverage and was generally well received by the Indian middle class.

A year later Joshi organized an even more ambitious procession, this time from Kanya
Kumari at the southern tip of India, to Kashmir. The Ekta Yatra (procession of unity) which also

\textsuperscript{16} Article I of the Indian Constitution regards Kashmir an ‘integral part of India.’ However, under article 370
Kashmiris were granted a ‘special status’ via temporary provisions made to the state. In essence these provisions
limited the powers of the Indian Parliament in Kashmir to three areas – defence, external affairs, and
communications – thereby allowing Kashmir greater autonomy from the centre than other Indian states. From the
Indian perspective it was understood that these constitutional privileges would be revoked once Kashmir was fully
integrated into India. But for Sheikh Abdullah and other Kashmiri leaders it held another possibility, that Kashmir
“was an autonomous polity under Indian protection with the implication…that it might evolve in time to full
aimed at mobilizing nationalist sentiments was strategically scheduled to arrive at Kashmir on Republic Day\textsuperscript{17} in order to hoist the national flag in Srinagar. Although it primarily sought to generate patriotic fervors Hansen’s (1999) account of the \textit{yatra} suggests that the BJP were indeed painting the Kashmir crisis with a distinctly communal tinge:

The \textit{yatra} was designed to project the BJP as more devoted to patriotism than any other political party. Along the route of the \textit{yatra}, Kashmiri Hindus narrated their stories of displacement, and video films of Hindu refugee camps were shown...The BJP claimed to have organized a kesaria vahini, half a million young volunteers determined to sneak into the curfewed state of Kashmir and appear in Srinagar for the republic day celebrations, which Kashmiri militants had successfully prevented for some years, (p. 168).

When the BJP eventually came to power in 1998 it predictably adopted a more stringent policy on Kashmir by advocating nuclear development and beefing up border security while encouraging a heavy handed approach towards insurgents. But despite its war mongering agenda it soon became apparent that the government was reluctant to actually enforce its hardliner rhetoric, when it capitulated so easily to terrorist demands during the 1999 hijacking of the Indian Airlines flight.

The war on terrorism following the September 2001 attacks provided the BJP an ideal opportunity to reinvent its aggressive stand on terrorism. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks it rushed to support the United States while drawing parallels between the American experience and India’s challenges in Kashmir. Scholars have argued that for India, the attacks in Washington DC and New York were important on two counts: not only did they re-define nationalism along democratic lines espoused by the ‘coalition against terror,’ their subsequent demonization of Islam also vindicated India’s claims against Pakistani-sponsored insurgency in Kashmir, (Chellany 2001; see also Kux 2002). While Chellany maintains that India was driven by a need to assert its secularity, Lankala (2002) reads the Indian response in the context of the BJP’s pro-Hindu agenda that was already framing Kashmir as a state under threat from a ‘foreign’ (Muslim) invasion. By focusing on its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism the government hoped to delineate Pakistan among other Muslim states (such as Iran and Afghanistan) in the ‘axis of evil.

If the BJP had expected the US to crack down on Islamic radicals in Pakistan it was sorely disappointed. While remaining sympathetic to India’s concerns in Kashmir the US’ anti-

\textsuperscript{17} The 26\textsuperscript{th} of January, Republic Day, marks the date in which the Indian constitution was framed.
terror campaign was fashioned by its own foreign policy initiatives, and consequently used Pakistan as a military base for targeting the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. The American-Pakistani alliance initially troubled India but the Bush government was quick to mitigate its fears, assuring Vajpayee that India’s “terrorist problem” would not be ignored in America’s long term counter terror operations, (Kux, 2002, p. 97).

But India’s forebodings against Pakistan only increased when terrorists attacked the Kashmiri State Assembly in October, and the New Delhi Parliament House in December 2001. Following American rhetoric the BJP and national media outlets framed these attacks as a threat to Indian democracy and resolved to declare war against Pakistan if the latter continued to sponsor terrorism. As Pakistan continued to deny these allegations war seemed an increasingly imminent option until American diplomacy intervened once again, pressing Mursharraf to meet Vajpayee’s demands. To India’s satisfaction U.S diplomacy also insisted that Mursharraf “hit hard on domestic Islamic fundamentalists” and added Jaish-e-Muhammad and Lashkar-e-Toiba, two Pakistani organizations operating in Kashmir, on its foreign terrorists list, (p. 99). For the Indian government the December attacks were instrumental in fostering closer ties with the United States.

A number of other diplomatic and legal initiatives illustrate India’s efforts to be among the ‘coalition of democracies’ while drawing attention to Pakistani sponsored terrorism in Kashmir. In 2002 the Indian government introduced the controversial Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), a law similar to the Patriot Act enforced by the Bush government the previous year. Like the Patriot Act, POTA provided the judiciary additional capacities to penalize anyone suspected of links with terrorist organizations. It also blacklisted a number of organizations working in Kashmir and specifically ensured that ‘intercepted communication’ (recorded phone calls, messages, e-mails, and so on) could be used be used to prove a suspect’s association with terrorism.

Recognizing that religion remains a discursive theme in the war against terror India under the BJP government, had taken considerable pains to identify ‘Islam’ as the shared enemy between herself and the west. In this context it must be acknowledged that India’s recent venture into global capitalism, her embracing neo-liberal ideologies, and her increasing support for Israel, has certainly helped forge closer ties with the United States, while additionally situating India as a ‘liberal democracy’ along western lines. Thus, while the Indian and American experiences of...
terrorism are essentially different, their political alliance has generated a narrative based on “a common antipathy to ‘Islamic terrorism’ couched in the language of secular nationalism,” (Lankala 2002: 92).

**U.S Policy on Kashmir**

The United States’ position as a global superpower has clearly influenced both the Indian and Pakistani stance on the crisis in Kashmir. From the outset the U.S has conducted diplomatic negotiations with both parties at several levels – unilateral, bi-lateral (with the United Kingdom), and multi-lateral (through the United Nations) – with little success. Although the Kashmir issue has “vexed U.S policy makers since 1947” the volatile nature of this conflict has nevertheless consistently drawn their attention towards South Asia, (Hagerty, 2003, p. 89).

From its onset in 1947 the United States attempted to distance herself from the Kashmir conflict. Already preoccupied with cold war politics the U.S had little expertise and few resources to devote to the South Asian region. As McMahon (1994) argues:

> Senior American officials did not at first grasp the grave regional – and international – implications of the Kashmiri fighting. Preoccupied with more pressing matters, especially U.S-Soviet relations and the incipient European recovery program, they devoted relatively little attention to what seemed a mere legal controversy in one of the world’s most remote areas,” (p. 22).

In an effort to limit its involvement the United States was thus content to follow the Security Council’s directives on implementing a plebiscite in Kashmir, but this effort failed as political complications did not provide adequate conditions for the plebiscite to be executed. Consequently India and Pakistan resumed their status as enemy states and Kashmir remained a disputed territory.

In the 1950s the ideological divide between communism and capitalism was increasingly dictating the nature of international political allegiances. For the United States Kashmir remained a non-issue as long as it did not threaten political stability in South Asia, thereby depriving the Soviet Union of an intervening opportunity. But the inability of India and Pakistan to reach an amicable settlement became again a matter of concern for American diplomacy, and efforts were made at arranging bilateral negotiations between the two states.

In order to establish a stronghold over South Asia the United States initially attempted to maintain close relationships with both India and Pakistan but was set back by India’s decision not
to embrace either American capitalism or Soviet communism. Suspicious of this stance on political neutrality the US decided instead to provide military and economic support to Pakistan, thereby angering Indian officials and fostering their sympathy for the Soviet Union.

In this politically charged atmosphere it was not surprising that intervention yielded few beneficial outcomes. In 1963, a year after China’s triumph on the Sino-Indian conflict, President Kennedy’s aide Averell Harrman and British Commonwealth Secretary Duncan Sandys organized a series of diplomatic ventures between India and Pakistan, but unfortunately made no progress on the Kashmir crisis.18

The failure of the Harman-Sandys mission marked a distinct change in American policy over the next fifteen years: deciding not to expend any more effort in a “region that had consistently proved more troublesome than profitable,” (Thorton, 1992), the United States sought to actively disengage herself from India and Pakistan, even imposing economic sanctions on both states during their border wars in 1962. However, in the 1980s US interest in South Asia was peaked again, this time by threats of a Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In order to thwart Soviet interest in this region the Central Investigation Agency (CIA) began to covertly support Afghani soldiers, the mujahideen, providing them weapons and military training to facilitate Soviet resistance. Pakistan’s close proximity to the Afghan border made her a vital conduit for American assistance, thereby rendering her a critical ally in return for substantial military and economic aid.

Although this military and economic support to Pakistan and Afghanistan would eventually prove debilitating to both Indian and American interests, neither country foresaw these foreign policy implications in the early 1980s, as economic ties were forged once again between India and the United States. India’s burgeoning technology base in ‘electronics, computers, and telecommunications,’ had made it a new market for foreign investment, thereby generating considerable interest for the American government and its businesses (Hagerty, 2003).

But in 1989 violence sparked by Muslim separatism flared once again in Kashmir. Using its new found military strength and with further aid from the experienced mujahideen army, Pakistan sought to undermine Indian stronghold by training and funding these Muslim insurgents in a pan-Islamic jihadi liberation against India, (Ganguly, 1997; Hagerty, 2003). As military

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18 India and China went to war in 1962 because of a border disagreement on the Sino-Indian border, in the northern Himalayan range, in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. However, India-Pakistan negotiations failed in 1963 primarily because Pakistan, in the previous year, gave China approximately 2,000 miles of disputed Kashmir, a territory which India felt was rightfully hers, (Hagerty: 2003, 96).
confrontations between the Indian army and Pakistani-funded insurgents promised to escalate into a full scale battle in 1990, rumors of a potential nuclear strike alarmed the Bush government. Ultimately, a last minute intervention by the American national security advisor Robert Gates successfully averted another India-Pakistan war.

Over the last two decades the U.S has adopted a more prominent role as mediator between India and Pakistan, although its policies have been geared towards crisis management rather than a resolution of conflict, (Hagerty, 2003, p. 103). Under Clinton’s regime U.S policy distinctly favored Indian rather than Pakistani interest particularly after the 1999 war in Kargil. Criticizing the war as a direct result of Pakistani aggression American officials put considerable diplomatic pressure on the Shariff government to withdraw its forces from Indian monitored Kashmir thereby paving the way for Indian victory. Furthermore, in deference to India’s mandate on Kashmir the U.S declared a year later that the conflict should be solved through mutual dialog between states, rather than external intervention, (Hagerty, 2003, p. 102).

Eager to court India’s booming economy and information-technology sectors, the second Bush government’s policy on South Asia followed Clinton’s lead in strengthening Indo-U.S ties, although resolving not to alienate Pakistan from diplomatic engagement. Thus while maintaining that the Kashmir conflict should be solved through bilateral negotiations alone, Washington sought to independently improve its economic ties with both states and even lifted the remaining nuclear sanctions previously imposed on them.

In October 2001, a month after the U.S initiated its anti-terror campaign the Kashmir crisis surfaced once again, as the Pakistani-based Jaish-e-Muhammad terrorist organization attacked its legislative assembly. As border tensions flared U.S diplomacy was called upon once more to “soothe regional nerves,” (p. 103). However, in December 2001 India became victim to another terrorist attack, this time at the parliament house in New Delhi. Upon establishing that the responsible organizations – the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad – were Pakistani, an incensed India demanded that the international community acknowledge Pakistan’s hand in global terrorism, and in supporting jihadi warfare in Kashmir. As Pakistan denied these accusations war seemed an imminent outcome of this dispute: both countries deployed troops to their borders, stopping only when Washington urged for diplomatic negotiations rather than outright war. This time Vajpayee’s vehemently pro-war rhetoric (constructed along the lines of Bush’s discourse after 9/11) eventually succeeded in adding Jaish-e-Muhammad and Lashkare-
Toiba on the U.S state department’s list of foreign terrorist organizations. Under severe diplomatic pressure from the U.S and India President Mursharraf ultimately agreed to crack down on jihadi organizations in Pakistan and prevent their cross-border infiltration to Kashmir.

Despite this promise it appears that terrorism and cross-border infiltration will remain a problem in Kashmir for years to come. In March 2002 Islamabad even released previously captured members of the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad, who have now resolved to renew their jihad for ‘Kashmiri liberation.’ As this conflict drags on the United States remains the primary interlocutor for both states, persistent in its resolution that the Kashmir crisis be solved through bilateral negotiations alone. However, after the 2001 attack on its parliament the Indian government declared that it would no longer participate in these dialogs while Pakistan continues to sponsor terrorism in Kashmir, and the rest of India, (Hagerty, 2003, p. 106).
Chapter III
Fringe Terrorism

On September 11, 2001, a stunned America watched as smoke billowed from a plane-crushed building while frenzied occupants fell from its windows. Minutes after two planes ravaged the Twin Towers news channels had whipped up a discourse of fear and panic, setting the tone for President George W. Bush’s somber words later that evening: “our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts.”

After coming to terms with this devastating experience citizens in the United States asked the logical questions: Why us? Who was responsible for these attacks and why would they target the United States? From a government perspective the explanations were clear and simple – Al Qaeda; a radical Muslim organization was waging war against the United States as part of its larger ideological campaign against ‘western’ ideals – democracy, freedom, and modernity. In a much publicized address to the nation nine days after the attacks the President remarked:

They hate what we see right here in this chamber -- a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms -- our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other… These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life. With every atrocity, they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and forsaking our friends. They stand against us, because we stand in their way.¹

The ready answers and a reductionist approach towards what is evidently a complex situation drew some criticism towards U.S diplomatic initiatives after 2001. While the White House’s mandate to apprehend these terrorists is indisputable its policy measures justifying the war against terror – in fact it’s very declaration of war against an indistinct enemy –generated a fair amount of concern. What is particularly problematic about post-9/11 discourse is the inability (or unwillingness) of government and media to seriously account for these attacks though effective political introspection and their demonization of non-western, particularly Muslim, cultures.

This chapter aims to outline American responses to September 2001 while situating the terrorist attacks historically as a consequence (and component) of international politics. After

¹ Address to a joint session of Congress and the American people at the Capitol in Washington DC, on September 20, 2001.
analyzing elite explanations of the attacks and their justifications for a retaliatory war, this chapter will examine in detail the construct of ‘Islamism’ as a significant component of terrorist identity. It must be acknowledged however that Islamism and fundamentalism are themselves complex and highly debated constructs in academic literature, and an in depth review of literature in this area is well beyond the scope of this project. Thus, while this chapter does explicate Islamist fundamentalism (also labeled Islamic fundamentalism) and trace its growth in South Asia and Middle East, it will avoid in-depth examinations of this phenomenon by limiting its inquiry to movements strategically relevant to Indian and American interests. Finally this chapter will also briefly reflect upon the nature of media responses to the terrorist attacks.

September 11th and War Discourse

While it was clear that the attacks on the United States would “change the world forever” (Caraley, 2002) the precise nature of this transformation remained unclear until President Bush’s address to the Congress on September 20th. In their analyses of this speech Murphy (2002) and Kellner (2002) note that Bush dredged up biblical and military metaphors to explain the attacks and justify American retaliation: the attacks for instance were a “biblical test for the chosen people,” and framed as a deliberate call to war rather than a crime against humanity (Murphy, 2002, p. 611). Furthermore, Bush clarified that the United States was soon to be embroiled in a long drawn campaign that extended beyond the Al-Qaeda to include “every terrorist group of global reach.”

By using Manichean rhetoric President Bush also developed a religious binary of good and evil (or ‘us’ and ‘them’), simultaneously constructing a benign American identity against a notoriously vindictive other. Both Kellner and Murphy observe that that the President’s speeches were also careful to include epideictic rhetoric that justified war as a unanimous American decision, even when the question of military action against Afghanistan was barely subject to public debate. At the same time the President’s speeches ironically claimed that in going to war the U.S was also protecting citizen “freedoms” against tyrannically repressive regimes, (Kellner, 2002, p. 46).

While Bush’s discourse paid homage to Americans, denounced an evil Al-Qaeda, and promised its retribution, it consistently refrained from explaining the long-term goals of this war against terror. The traditional objectives of war – such as securing a territorial victory or regime
change – were hardly appropriate in the face of an undefined adversary. Subsequently Bush’s construction of the enemy is deliberately vague; it is “a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.” The geographic location of these groups, their ideologies, political affiliations, and the very basis for American intervention remain unspecified. As Jervis (2002) observes:

To say that we are at war with a subset of terrorists raises the question of in whose interests the war is being waged. The United States seeks worldwide support on the grounds that al Qaeda and related groups are seeking weapons of mass destruction, which “would be a threat to every nation, and eventually, to civilization itself.” But terrorists, even with nuclear weapons, do not target the entire globe…It might have been more straightforward to declare that it was only terrorists who could menace American assets and allies that were our target, (p. 191).

If the United States’ objectives in this war remained ambiguous the resolve to universalize its participation was not. The President’s categorical demand for global support against terrorism evident in his politically loaded statement, “either you are with us or with the terrorists,” sparked numerous diplomatic negotiations in the international community. For countries like Israel and India this war was an ideal opportunity to garner global support for their own conflicts in Palestine and Kashmir, and subsequently did expand US interest in these areas, (Kellner, 2002 and Lankala, 2006). But as Jervis (2002) and Chomsky (2002) argue – and as the most recent Iraqi war now clarifies — this campaign only targets those who threaten the interests of the United States and its allies.

While this much is evident from U.S foreign policy initiatives after September 2001 the construct of terrorist identity and our conceptual understandings of terrorism itself are still unclear. In his public statements, after the attacks President Bush eschews any reference to state sponsored terrorism. He repeatedly refers to terrorists as fringe groups relying on guerilla-like tactics: they are for instance an enemy that “preys on innocent and unsuspecting people, (and) then runs for cover.” They are irrational, uncivilized, and ideologically brainwashed – an “evil” people who “kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life.” More significantly the attackers are Muslim fundamentalists who “practice a fringe form of extremism…that

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2 These quotes were used in the following Presidential speeches: Remarks by the President In Photo Opportunity with the National Security Team, September 13, 2001; Radio Address of the President to the Nation, September 15, 2001; and Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People, September 20, 2001.
perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam.” Although Bush expends considerable effort\(^3\) in distinguishing ‘violent terrorists’ from ‘peaceful Muslims’ his vividly biblical metaphors\(^4\) juxtaposing words such as ‘evil,’ ‘terrorist,’ with ‘radical Islam,’ and simultaneous media reports of celebrating Palestinians Muslims\(^5\) only reaffirmed public belief that September 11\(^{th}\) was a fundamentalist Islamic backlash against the west.

It is in this context that Mamdani (2004) situates his analysis of elite and popular discourse in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks. He argues that President Bush distinguishes between ‘bad Muslims’ who abet terrorism and ‘good Muslims,’ eager to give the former a wide berth. In doing so the “‘good Muslims’ undoubtedly would support ‘us’ in a war against ‘them’,” thereby proving their social credentials to the American public (p. 15). Seizing upon this good/bad dichotomy the media proceeded to frame the political act of terrorism as a cultural backlash from the Muslim world; concluding that it is ‘Islam’s’ abhorrence for modernity that drives some Muslims towards violence.

Switzer and Ryan (2005) further explore this difference between the cultural ‘known and unknown’ after September 2001, in their study of popular discourse on non-western cultures. An analysis of government and media discourse revealed that the dominantly conservative rhetoric explained terrorism as a desperate attempt by the powerless to unseat the powerful, (p. 44) while accounting for their powerlessness in biblical terms as the fate of non-believers. By relegating fundamentalism to a solely Islamic practice this discourse has also condoned and legitimized

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\(^3\) Excerpt from President Bush’s remarks at the Islamic centre in Washington D.C, on September 15, 2006:

The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That's not what Islam is all about. Islam is peace. These terrorists don't represent peace. They represent evil and war… America counts millions of Muslims amongst our citizens, and Muslims make an incredibly valuable contribution to our country. Muslims are doctors, lawyers, law professors, members of the military, entrepreneurs, shopkeepers, moms and dads. And they need to be treated with respect. In our anger and emotion, our fellow Americans must treat each other with respect.

\(^4\) According to Kellner (2002), Switzer and Ryan (2005), and Chomsky (2002) President Bush initially referred to the anti-terror campaign as a ‘crusade,’ until he was reminded that the term carried explicit references to religious wars between Christians and Muslims, (Kellner, 2002: 144).

\(^5\) Several television and newspapers reported that while the rest of the world mourned along with the United States on September 11, 2001, Palestinians alone celebrated the terrorist attacks. Journalist Michael Binyon in *The Times*, wrote:

The streets tell the story: rejoicing in the West Bank and in Palestinian refugee camps, “happiness” in the mountains of Afghanistan, praise to Allah among Muslims in northern Nigeria. Overwhelmingly, it is among the poor, the dispossessed and those who see themselves as victims that the rejoicing is heard. More ominously, such sentiments are largely confined to one religion and one region: the Muslim world.
global rustication of Arabs and Muslims, thereby furthering the cultural divide between ‘Islam’ and the west.

It is a well documented argument that Islam has long been the ‘other’ against which Western, particularly Judeo-Christian, civilizations have been valued, (Said, 1979; Hunter, 1998). Orientalist discourse which traditionally frames Islam as both pre-modern and anti-modern were first espoused by Bernard Lewis (1990), as an explanation for Muslim anger against the west and more specifically the United States⁶. Lewis (1990) argues that Muslim fundamentalists are currently attempting to reassert traditional Islamic values against powerful western influences in the private and public spheres, (p. 49). Their dissent is expressed through a violent backlash only because it is an undeniable facet of Islam:

There is something in the religious culture of Islam which inspired in even the humblest peasant or peddler, a dignity and courtesy towards others never exceeded and rarely equaled in other civilizations. And yet, in moment of upheaval and disruption, when the deeper passions are stirred, this dignity and courtesy towards others can give way to an explosive mixture of rage and hatred which impels even the government of an ancient and civilized country – even the spokesman of a great spiritual and ethical religion – to espouse kidnapping and assassination, and to try and find, in the life of their Prophet, approval and indeed precedent for such actions, (p. 59).

According to Mamdani it was Lewis who first provided the good/bad dichotomy that later formed the basis of the Bush administration’s foreign policy: he argues for instance, that not all Muslims are fundamentalists; that there are “others, more tolerant, more open,” (p. 23) to western modernity. Violent dissensions between (good) modernists and (bad) fundamentalists in deciding whether to embrace or reject modernity would create discord in the Muslim world, but Lewis cautions the west to remain a spectator while these decisions are being made.

Huntington (1992) who expands on Lewis’ differentiation of the West and Islam universalizes this divide to include the entire Muslim world. For Huntington, the end of the cold war brought the demise of one enemy only to give rise to another; and this time the conflict between western and non-western beliefs lies not in political ideology or economic gain, but in religion, the primary element of all civilizations. Fundamental differences between religious

⁶ According to the orientalist Bernard Lewis the roots of Muslim anger date back to the renaissance, when the west first triumphed over Arabic civilization. But it was the United States’ economic success and liberating cultural rhetoric that particularly threatened Muslim elites, fostering “a growing awareness, among the heirs of an old, proud, and long dominant civilization, of having been overtaken, overborne, and overwhelmed by those they considered their inferiors,” (Lewis, 1990: 59).
beliefs result in political confrontations or an ideological clash. Religions like “Islam and Confucianism” are particularly incompatible with the west, especially “western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, free markets, (and) the separation of church and state,” (p. 40). From Huntington’s perspective therefore the fault line between Western and Muslim worlds lies in the retrograde, aberrant values espoused by a uniform and monolithic ‘Islam.’

As controversial as it is universalistic the clash of civilizations argument has been deeply criticized by academics while remaining a popular frame for journalistic discourse, particularly after September 2001. Edward Said (1980), in his acclaimed critique of orientalist rhetoric argues that a hegemonic desire to maintain power imbalances has influenced Western representations of oriental (non-western) cultures. Orientalism creates an unequal divide between the known west and unknown orient through the following doctrines:

…(There is an) absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient, which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior;…abstractions about the Orient, particularly those based on texts representing a “classical” Oriental civilization, are always preferable to direct evidence drawn from Oriental realities;…the Orient is eternal, uniform, and incapable of defining itself…(and) the Orient is at bottom something either to be feared or to be controlled (by pacification, research and development, outright occupation whenever possible), (p. 301).

Although traditionally a facet of European colonial politics orientalism is currently manifest in the United States through elite rhetoric, media imagery; and is even legitimized in academic writing. But unlike European orientalism which traversed Asia and Africa, American discourse – by virtue of her political and economic interests in this area – focuses on the Middle East. Since the Second World War it is the Arab Muslim who has featured prominently in American popular culture, policy measures, and business ventures. Said writes:

…if the Arab occupies space enough for attention, it is as a negative value. He is seen as the disrupter of Israel’s and the West’s existence, or in another view of the same thing, as an insurmountable obstacle to Israel’s creation in 1948...Aside from his anti-Zionism, the Arab is an oil supplier...In the films and television the Arab is associated wither with lechery or bloodthirsty dishonesty...In newsreels or news photos the Arab is always shown in large numbers. No individuality, no personal characteristics, or experiences. Most of the pictures represent mass rage and misery or irrational (hence hopelessly eccentric) gestures. Lurking behind all of these images is the menace of jihad. Consequence: a fear that Muslims (or Arabs) will take over the world (pp 286-287).
Deconstructing Islamism

The west’s fear of a widespread jihad has intensified substantially in the wake of September 2001. Although governments are quick to attest to differences between Muslims and Islamists – President Bush and former Prime Minister Blair continuously reiterate that the war on terror is not a war against Islam – the term ‘fundamentalism’ nevertheless remains firmly etched in media reports on non-western states, and is associated most frequently with the Muslim community.

Despite its frequent use in the media scholarly literature suggests that there is little consensus among journalists, scholars, and publics, in their conception of ‘fundamentalism’ in general and particularly of Islamic fundamentalism. The term currently refers to a strict adherence towards any religious or political principles, but is historically associated with Protestant theology. Thus, one of the earliest academic references by Neibuhr (1937) describes fundamentalism as a post first world war phenomenon, “an aggressive conservative movement of the Protestant churches in the USA,” (as cited in Caplan, 1985, p. 17). This term has conceptually expanded over the years to include the American religious right, militant Jewish organizations and of course the ‘various forms of Islamist resurgence,’ (p.18). In the post 9/11 era ‘Islam’ represents the religious dimension of all fundamentalist activity and Islamic fundamentalism the undisputed cause of a violent non-western backlash. For Mamdani (2004) the phrase ‘Islamic fundamentalism’ itself is problematic because it provides a limited understanding about the development of Islamist discourses. Unlike political Christianity which has been popularized by clerics like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, the founders of political Islam were – with the exception of the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran – not religious scholars (ulema) but political intellectuals “with an exclusively worldly concern,” (p 47).

In popular discourse Islamic fundamentalism has erroneously become a generic label for a diverse array of Islamist beliefs, ranging from the mediaeval practices of the former Taliban regimes in Afghanistan, to the progressive policies advocated by the Refah (Welfare) party in Turkey, (Tehranian, 2002). A review of academic literature reveals a range of scholarly explanations for this term. According to White, Little, and Smith (2001), it is the “resurgence of

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7 Both the Taliban and Refah party embrace Islamism rejection of western hegemony while asserting the superiority of Islamic over western values. But here the similarities between the two groups ends, for while the Taliban enforced distinctly retrograde social practices (such the restriction of women to the private sphere), the Refah party attempted to build unity among disjointed Turkish and ethnic Kurdish communities, on the basis of Islam, (Tehranian 2002; see also Gulalp 1995).
the Islamic world” in global politics by embracing indigenous political and cultural practices such as the “Islamic legal code” or Sharia, (pp. 6-7). Concurrently, Islamic fundamentalism also represents the outright rejection of ostensibly modernizing Western practices; for Huntington (1993), Pipes (1991) and Lewis (1992) it is the most extreme expression of inherent differences between western and Muslim cultures.

While other western scholars are reluctant to fully embrace Huntington’s clash of civilizations thesis, Islamic fundamentalism is nevertheless perceived at varying degrees as a challenge to western ideas such as ‘secularism’ and ‘democracy,’ (Mowlana, 2000). Barber (1992) situates Islamic fundamentalism as a contending force to western hegemony, a violent political response to the culturally homogenizing force of globalization. For Appadurai (1996) it represents a consequence of reconstituted political communications and patriotic affiliations in a global era: Appadurai argues that in the present era of deregulation and technological connectivity, previously extant core-periphery models of communication have given rise to more complex movements or ‘scapes’, enabling virtually seamless flows of technology, media, finance, capital, and labor across borders. Immigrant diasporas created from these transnational movements retain strong political affiliations with their former homelands while remaining outside the political mainstream of host cultures. In the words of Appadurai:

Deterritorialization, in general, is one of the central forces of the modern world because it brings laboring populations into the lower class sectors and spaces of relatively wealthy societies, while sometimes creating exaggerated and intensified senses of criticism or attachment to politics of the home state. Deterritorialization…is now at the core of a variety of global fundamentalisms, including Islamic and Hindu fundamentalism, (pp. 37-38).

After September 2001 Islamic fundamentalism has largely been regarded as a threat to the universalizing force of globalization; in the words of Barber (1992) it is an expression of “sub national factions in permanent rebellion against uniformity and integration”(p. 57). But Khatib (2003) contends that far from being a negating influence Islamic fundamentalism is instead a “relativizing force within processes of globalization,” offering an alternative means of unifying geographically localized communities Furthermore Islamic fundamentalism refers not merely to religious but also political movements whose adherents subscribe to uniquely Islamic values juxtaposed against western ideals and threatened by western hegemony. While all

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8 Here, the west constitutes western states as well as secular individuals in the Muslim world, often
fundamentalist groups agree that *jihad* must be used to preserve and expand the interests of the Muslim community they are divided in their interpretation of *jihad* as non-violent or military, (p. 392).

By and large popular western discourse does not distinguish between Islamist movements preferring instead to generically dismiss them as fanatical, anti-western, and medievalist. But as Metcalf (2002) argues Islamism was not merely a reaction to generic ‘western’ dominance; the movements “constructed ideological systems and systematically built models for distinctive polities that challenged what they saw as the alternative systems: nationalism, capitalism, and Marxism.” Moreover participants within Islamist movements were not all schooled in *madrasas* or religious seminaries. Many were educated in the west – professional doctors, engineers, and lawyers – who sought to build societies that simultaneously “asserted the cultural pride of the subject and avoided the “black” side of Western modernity,” (p. 54). As the following section enunciates, the core aspirations of Islamic movements are far more complex than a mere rejection of social progression, and are often rooted in historic attempts to carve out unique cultural and political practices in the Muslim world. Islam and Islamism were instrumental in fostering unique Arab and/or Muslim identities against western colonial interventions particularly in Iran and Egypt; and eventually transformed into a means of political mobilizations in other Muslim states (such as Pakistan and Afghanistan) as well. The following section traces the growth of Islamist fundamentalism in this context, using the Islamist-nationalist leanings of the Muslim Brotherhood as a point of departure.

**Islamism as Nationalism: Islamist Responses in Egypt and Iran**

In the late 1800s during the declining years of the Ottoman Empire, Islamism became one response to repeated Western invasions in the Middle East. Arab resentment against the west eventually spurred two kinds of reactions – the first from regional elites who adopted western political and governmental reforms; and others who embraced a return to original Islamic values. The latter option initially found expression in various regional movements (including Wahabism in the Arabian Peninsula during the eighteenth century); but was widely embraced when the Ottoman Empire formally capitulated after the First World War. The victors – Britain and France regarded as ‘infidels representing the interests of foreign powers,’ (Faksh 1997, and Tehri 1987; as quoted in Khatib 2003, p. 392).
— divided between them the various Arab states under Ottoman rule, (Britain also formally annexed Palestine, and laid a foundation for the Arab-Israeli conflict by creating the basis for a ‘Jewish national home’). By offering political and military support to the brutal Emir Abdal Aziz Ibn Saud, the British and French empires succeeded — despite Arab resistance — in recolonizing the whole of Central Arabia (Ali, 2004, p. 81). Lured by the promise of cheap oil the United States in the 1930s joined Britain and France in supporting Ibn Saud’s brutal regime in exchange for subsidized access to Saudi Arabia’s oil reserves.

Waves of nationalism erupted through the Arab world in response to the British and French efforts at political control. In 1928 Hassan al-Banna, a former Egyptian school teacher, founded the Muslim Brotherhood, an organization invoking pan-Islamic rhetoric to counter British rule over Egypt. Borrowing from the fascist motto of unconditional obedience and Jacobian ideas of revolutionary violence⁹, the Muslim Brotherhood under al-Banna formed the basis for an organized Islamist movement soon to emerge in the Middle East, (Boroumand and Boroumand, 2005, p. 137). While Banna succeeded in rallying a religiously based political movement it was Sayyid Qutb the party’s chief spokesperson, who and laid the ideological foundation for Egyptian pan-Islamism.

But the Brotherhood’s campaign for an Islamic state was far from popular with its secular political rivals in the communists and nationalist parties. With some help from the British military (who were hoping to provoke internal contentions between anti-imperialist forces) the Muslim Brotherhood attempted to dispossess its rivals by launching what Ali (2002) describes as a “carefully planned campaign of terror” that continued even after Egypt’s independence from British rule (1948), till 1954, when the organization was eventually banned under President Gamal Abdel Nasser’s secular but authoritarian regime. Several members of the Muslim Brotherhood were exiled to neighboring states in Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Morocco. Subsequently the former Brotherhood members continued popularizing revolutionary ideals and creating the present day political networks of Islamist organizations (Borumand and Borumand 2005, p.138)

⁹ Few in the west are aware that the French Jacobin movement and European tradition of “purifying violence” provided al-Banna the idea for martyrdom as a political act. As Boroumand and Boroumand, point out, Islamist militants today “embrace a terrorist cult of martyrdom that has more to do with George Sorel’s Réflexion sur la violence than with anything in either Sunni or Shi’ite Islam, (p. 137).
Like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt the Islamist movement in Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini was an ideological struggle to reinforce uniquely Iranian (Muslim) agendas contesting the Shah’s politically exploitative pro-American dictatorship. The Iranian revolution in 1979 presented for the first time an Islamist challenge to the United States; a shocking revelation that a new political threat now existed aside from Soviet Communism. Until the end of the Second World War Islamism remained largely outside the purview of U.S interests, and was even regarded as a convenient buffer against secular communist and socialist ideologies – Washington thus supported the Muslim Brothers against President Nasser in Egypt and the Jammat-i-Islami against Pakistani premier Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, (both socialist leaders who were reluctant to accept foreign aid).

But unlike previous Islamist endeavors the Iranian revolution was not just anti-communist but “reverently nationalist,” determined to eschew all foreign influences and particularly that of the United States, (Mamdani 2004, p. 122). Along these lines Ayub (1979) suggests that the Iranian revolution was the latest in a series of efforts to revive political Islam as a means of countering imperialist agendas:

Islam in its political context has become the major instrument through which Iranian aspirations for political autonomy from the dominant powers in the international system – a part of similar aspirations in large parts of the third world - have demonstrated. The Khomeini phenomenon therefore stands heir to a series of venerable line of Islamic-nationalist movements – the leading ones include the Khilafat movement in India and the Sarekat Islam in Indonesia – which have in the past acted as catalytic agents helping to raise the political consciousness of the Muslim masses and channeling their political energies towards anti-imperialist ends, (p. 544).

Iran’s own efforts to counter imperialism date back to the early 1900s when the former Persian monarchy was colonized by Britain and Russia. Although British forces continued to officially govern the country until the end of the Second World War Iran was increasingly relying on American economic support. For the United States herself Iran was potentially a strategic ally against a formidable communist rival – the state bordered the Soviet Union in the north and could be used as a base for ideological and military campaigns. Moreover, the importance of Iran’s vast oil reserves traditionally coveted by Britain was not lost on the United States.

It was cupidity for oil, support for autocratic regimes, and an undermining of nationalistic sentiment that ultimately soured Western (particularly American) relations with Iran. Concerned over public appeals to nationalize Iran’s oil industry (hitherto controlled by American and British
firms) the United States and Britain eventually orchestrated a plan to overthrow Muhammad Mossadeq, the democratically elected but socialistically inclined president, and reinstate the autocratic (pro-western) regime of the Iranian Shah.

The Anglo-American structured *coup d'etat* in 1953 was a watershed moment in the history of Iran. For Ansari (2006) it marked the crystallization of Iranian political consciousness against the west and set off a wave of nationalist efforts, both secular and religious. Among the former were the secular intelligentsia who hoped to eventually ‘modernize’ Iran along the lines of western liberalism. The latter included businessmen and petty bourgeoisie, Iranian merchants whose locally produced crafts could not compete against cheap western imports; and religious clerics – Shi’ite Ulema (or Mullahs) – who feared that the materialistic lifestyle accompanying these imports compromised uniquely Muslim values in Iran. Together, the merchants and clerics formed a lasting alliance that eventually helped establish the revolution twenty years hence, (Davidson 2003: 33).

By 1953 the United States had also supplanted British dominance in Iran, and pressed forward – despite popular resistance – with military and economic restructuring programs. But it was soon evident that this neoliberal agenda so heavily funded by foreign aid assisted only a marginal segment of Iranian society while leaving the majority to struggle with little to no social infrastructure. Within a few years socio-economic parallels in Iran had led to stark differences between the rich and poor, invoking the following comment from American journalist Michael Leapmen:

> Iran is being westernized in all the wrong places. Modern bottling plants for Pepsi, Coke, and Canada Dry have sprung up all over the place, while in the filthy poor quarters of the cities people still drink from the jubes – open water courses that run down the sides of the streets, collecting all manners of rubbish. Tehran Airport is one of the finest in the Middle East yet there is still no adequate road and rail system. A tall Hilton Hotel is being built while hundreds of people sleep in the streets,” (as quoted in Ansari, 2006, p. 45).

Meanwhile, a change in the U.S government was creating fissures in her formerly benign relationship with Iran. Fearing that decrepit conditions could sway the Iranian public towards communism, the newly established Kennedy administration (following Eisenhower’s presidency) began demanding more liberalizing measures from a reluctant Shah. The result in 1963 was the White Revolution, a series of social reforms that included granting female suffrage and replacing the formerly feudal agricultural system with private land ownership. But it soon became apparent that the movement was a doomed failure for, despite their claims of benefiting agricultural
laborers, the reforms only succeeded in disenfranchising the landed gentry while simultaneously empowering the Shah. In essence the White Revolution successfully alienated merchants and the *ulema*, the religious clergy as the largest land owning classes in the country. The *ulema* also objected to the land reforms on religious grounds as contrary to the Shi’ia faith. As Davidson (2003) explains:

> Over the years many Iranians had bequeathed landed property to charitable trusts in an effort to fulfill the Muslim religious duty to share (their) wealth...These trust holdings were often rental property, and the rents helped support schools, mosques, hospitals, soup kittens, and the like. They were also the basis or the salaries that paid the *ulema* who administered these institutions. If the land was to be given over to the renters as part of the Shah’s land reform program, the financial basis of the trust would be jeopardized. (p. 37).

For most citizens the failed white revolution presented an epitome of the Shah’s political incompetence and America’s cultural exploitation of Iran: dissension against both the Shah and the United States finally gave way to nationwide protests led by the *ulema* that subsisted despite stringent government crackdowns. The rebellion was heavily popularized by Ayatollah Ruhollah Mussaui Khomeni (formerly a theology teacher but now universally recognized as the leader of the ‘opposition’), who framed the White Revolution as an American imperialist endeavor and conspiracy against Islam. Borrowing from the Islamist philosophies of al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb Khomeini founded the Islamic Republican Party, whose short term goal was to create an independent sovereign Muslim state while ultimately fostering a global pan-Islamic community. Khomeini’s vision for Iran entailed in Davidson’s words, a “complete rejection” of Western culture, (p. 39): the former Iranian constitution was to be replaced by Muslim Shariah law, with a newly created socio-political order based on Koranic guidelines. The head of this Islamist state would be Khomeini himself, with the sole power in executive, legislative, and judiciary capacities (although a *Majlis* or legislative body did exist its powers were severely diminished under Khomeini’s rule).

With some help from the religious clergy and business classes Khomeni’s radical ideas gathered popular support in Iran. By 1979 public dissension against the Shah was no longer secret, and a national referendum held in April that year indicated an overwhelming support for an Islamic state (according to reports, out of 15.7 million votes 98.2 percent favored an Islamic republic over the Shah’s monarchy). But it was the seizing of the American embassy that ultimately marked the Iranian Revolution, and globally publicized the impact of Khomeini’s
fundamentalist politics in Iran. In October 1979 a group of young student revolutionaries protesting against the Shah’s visit to the United States forced their way into the American embassy in Tehran, holding fifty two diplomats hostage for 444 days. Although Khomeini himself did not initiate the seizure his support for the student guards immediately terminated diplomatic relations between Iran and the west. The horrors of the hostage crisis in the hands of a brutally incomprehensible Islamist regime were publicized heavily in the media. As Ansari (2003) writes:

Having consolidated his Islamic Republic and having gilled the vacuum vacated by the Shah, Ayatollah Khomeini now fulfilled the role of dangerous autocrat far better than his predecessor, especially because he could add religion to the mix. A writer would have struggled to invent such a perfect villain, so alien was the notion of a religious revolution to the largely secular elites of the west. Khomeini now became simply the Ayatollah, despite the fact that he was one of many, surrounded by mad mullahs and fanatical disciples, (p. 94).

In the eyes of the American public the hostage crisis was nothing short of outrageous, but for most Iranians this was merely retaliation against decades of American interference in domestic politics. However, in their justification for the embassy seizure as an act of self defense Iranians had neglected to foresee the crisis’ long term impacts on their nation’s strategic interests. Thus, in 1980 when they were invaded by their Iraqi neighbor under Saddam Hussein Iranians found little diplomatic or military support from the international community. The invasion however cohesively mobilized the Iranian religious community while successfully establishing Ayatollah Khomeini’s leadership in the fledgling Islamist republic.

The Cold War and the Unintended Consequences of Islamism

As an exercise in political Islam the Iranian revolution had a profound impact on religion and politics in neighboring South Asia, particularly on Pakistan and Afghanistan. The revolution had demonstrated the success of Islamist activism and mobilized a social minority and at the same time proposed new ways of thinking about the conduct of politics in predominantly Muslim societies. But while events in Iran certainly influenced the agenda of Islamist groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan the notion of an Islamist identity itself was conceived differently in these states.

Shafqat (2002) writes that Islam was the ‘cultural and ideological’ basis for the creation of Pakistan in August 1947; the nation was carved out from the Indian subcontinent at the end of British colonial rule on the grounds that only a democratic Muslim nation would sufficiently
represent the interests of a hitherto politically disenfranchised community. Among the Islamists in Pakistan religion is the single most important determinant of its citizenry even today, so that “negating Islamic identity is equated with opposing Pakistan,” (p. 133). Over the years such imaginings have transformed into militant strategies towards non-Islamic ‘enemy’ states – such as the United States and India – against whom jihad is practiced.

While the Islamist movement in Pakistan has existed since its independence its expansion both within the state and outside (in Afghanistan) is the result of three factors: a regime support for fundamentalist politics, the Iranian revolution, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, (Shafqat, 2002; Mamdani 2004). Since its independence the ascendancy of military prowess in Pakistan politics was simultaneously compounded by an Islamization of its economy and society, as military dictatorships repeatedly conceded to the demands of “the bearded men of religion, (Jalal, 1995, p. 58). Islamism gained considerably clout during the tenure of Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, a former military officer who successfully deposed the democratically elected Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and appointed himself the premier of Pakistan. Zia himself had come to power with the help of Islamist groups, particularly the Jama’at-i-Islami party. Under his military dictatorship (supported by the United States) fundamentalists were offered a free reign. For Ali (2003) this period marked political debacle in Pakistan:

The new regime had decided to use Islam as its battering ram, and its bearded supporters…were opportunist to the marrow of their bones. They combined religion with profanities of the vilest kind. Under Zia, despotism and lies mutilated a whole generation. Islamic punishments were introduced, public floggings and hangings instituted. The political culture of Pakistan was brutalized. It has still to recover, (p. 189).

It was also during Zia’s reign that the former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, an event from which Pakistan profited economically and militarily by playing upon US-Soviet rivalry. Determined to emasculate their political rival American forces used Pakistan as a base to secretly confer with rebel mujahideen Afghans months before the Soviet invasion in December 1979.

10 The Jammat-i-Islami (henceforth JI) is an Islamist organization founded by Syed Ab’ul Ala Maududi, a former journalist, in 1941, in the Indian subcontinent. Along with other pro-Pakistani ideologues members of the JI campaigned for a separate state with a Muslim majority, hoping to create a society based solely on Islamic aspirations. In Pakistan the JI has emerged as a distinctly fundamentalist organization opposing social reforms and democratic processes, and enforcing a strict adherence to the tenets of Islam through its network of madrasas (Hassan, 1991, p. 57). The Pakistani Inter Service agency initially funded the JI in its jihadi efforts against non-Muslim states (particularly India) but has recently withdrawn official support following diplomatic pressure from the United States. Nevertheless, the JI’s militant wing in Kashmir – the Hizbul Mujahideen, continues its jihad in this area.
Two years later during the Regan administration\(^\text{11}\) the CIA and Pakistan’s Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) worked together to train and arm the Islamist mujahideen in Pakistani training camps, where they were “ideologically charged with the spark of holy war and trained in guerrilla tactics, sabotage, and bombings,” (Hussein, 2002; as quoted in Mamdani, 2004, p.126).

According to Rashid (1999) the aim of American and Pakistani intelligence was to convert the Afghan \textit{jihad} into a “global war waged by all Muslim States against the Soviet Union,” (p. 23).

The CIA’s involvement in Pakistan led to a proliferation of competing Islamist groups and \textit{madrasas}, each recruiting Muslim volunteers from Europe, and Central and South Asia. Initially conceived as religious seminaries on traditional Islamic doctrine the \textit{madrasas} in Pakistan slowly transformed into \textit{jihad} training camps for \textit{mujahideen} resistance against Soviet ‘infidels.’ As Mamdani argues:

…Afghanistan was to be an ideological battlefield. It was Islamic in a triple sense. First, the mobilization of the war targeted a worldwide Islamic public, in all aspects: financial, material, and human. Second, the mobilization was carried out, as far as possible, through Islamic institutions, ranging from banks and charities to mosques and evangelical organizations. Third, the war was (at least in theory) to be expanded to Soviet Asia, the part of the Soviet Union with historically Muslim populations, (p. 129).

The battle between the \textit{mujahideen} and Soviet Union had profound religious and political implications for Pakistan in the long run. Radical organizations that had first received patronage under Zia’s regime were once again empowered through the ISI: one such group, the Jamaat-e-Ulema-Islam (JUI), was originally trained in the Deobandi school and later went on sponsor of the Taliban regime after the American military withdrew from Pakistan in 1989. The ISI’s patronage to paramilitary organizations such as the Harkut ul-Ansar (Volunteer’s Movement) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (Soldiers of Medina) continue today to sustain Islamist campaigns in Kashmir. The Harkat ul-Ansar was in fact under the leadership of Osama Bin Laden, founded exclusively to support the Afghan \textit{jihad}. When labeled by the United States as a threat to the campaign against terror in 2001, it simply changed its name to Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and continued its fundamentalist campaign against India.

\(^{11}\) Initially supportive of Zia ul-Haq’s dictatorship the Carter administration cut back on economic aid to Pakistan after reports of an oppressive human rights record, and the execution of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Although Carter reneged his former policies by offering generous donations in return for Pakistani assistance against the Soviet Union, Zia remained indifferent. The Reagan administration however, succeeded in winning Zia over by offering Pakistan “a huge six-year economic and military aid package which elevated Pakistan to the third largest recipient of foreign aid, after Egypt and Pakistan,” (Mamdani, 2004, p. 126).
The CIA orchestrated *jihad* also galvanized previously disparate Islamist voices into a unified assembly with coherent political objectives. But by financing *madrasas* and mujahideen warriors and more importantly by training them in extortion and warfare, the CIA had created an infrastructure of terror that would eventually infiltrate the borders of other states – including India, Europe, and eventually the United States. Such indeed was the case when Washington began to disengage from Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, leaving behind trained and armed Islamist soldiers eager to continue their holy war campaign to proselytize the non-Muslim world.

**Framing Fundamentalism in the War on Terror**

The above discussion demonstrates that Islamism itself cannot be simplified as merely ‘anti-western’ although dissent against western dominion is undeniably an expression of Islamist discourse. An insight into fundamentalist movements in the Middle East and South Asia has revealed that Islamism in each context is a product of unique socio-political experiences: in the case of the Muslim Brotherhood for example, it is a means of fashioning a distinctly Egyptian-Arab identity in the face of political colonialism. In the Iranian revolution Islamism was a means of mobilizing specifically Shi’ite interests against authoritarian pro-Western regimes. In Pakistan and Afghanistan Islamist forces were cultivated by national and international governments and military to further their own political agendas. In other words there does not exist a well define Islamist or terrorist enemy against whom the war on terror may be successfully waged.

Metcalf (2002) argues that the Iranian revolution and *jihadi* movements in Afghanistan were inspired by Islamist ideologies although they have considerably narrowed their practices over time to fulfill aims particular to each national interest. But media discourses have not distinguished between exercises in fundamentalism, preferring instead to categorize them all as terrorist movements antagonistic to western interests. For Fiske (1990) this very approach to terrorism is problematic. He argues that:

‘Terrorism’…is no longer a definition; it is a political contrivance. “Terrorists” are those who use violence against the side that is using the word. The only terrorists whom Israel acknowledges are those who oppose Israel. The only terrorists the United States acknowledges are those who oppose the United States or their allies, (as quoted in Karim 2002: 43).
Such indeed was the Bush administration’s perspective on terrorism after September 2001; it is also one that was unquestioningly appropriated by the mainstream press. According to Traugott and Brader (2003) the media’s conceptualizations of terrorism – referring to terrorists as ‘guerilla’s’ or ‘insurgents’ – followed elite discourses as fringe activity of politically disenfranchised groups. By relying almost exclusively on official sources media coverage tended to focus on “events and details,” largely ignoring the complex political history that initiated the Al-Qaeda’s destructive ventures. In short, journalism after 9/11 ignored the “motives, goals, and objectives” of terrorism by focusing only on ‘official’ government responses, and postulating upon its implications for the United States, (p. 184).

That the media unquestioningly mirrored official government responses is evidence of their transition from ‘watchdog’ press in a libertarian system to a propagandistic tool for elite discourse, (McChesney, 2002). By focusing on the incident itself the press had Washington’s long and contentious history with South Asia; particularly its support for the mujahideen troops against the former Soviet Union and its sudden withdrawal from Afghanistan in the 1990s, leaving behind a country in political chaos. As McChesney (2002) and Karim (2002) observe, the press steadfastly echoed the Bush administration’s polarized narrative of good versus evil, using the “War on Terrorism,” label supplied by the Pentagon as a basis for all narratives following the events on September 11, 2001, (Karim 2002: 106).

Several scholars have been considerably alarmed by the consensual nature of American media responses to September 11th and the subsequent wars thereafter, arguing that media coverage departed significantly from their widely espoused (and even revered) libertarian philosophy, (Kellner, 2002; McChesney, 2002; Waisbord, 2002; Jensen, 2005; Iskandar, 2006). But these jingoistic overtones in the mainstream press are hardly surprising when we contextualize the events as a foreign invasion on American soil, a hazard to a cohesive nation “facing insecurity and anxiety in a global era,” (Waisbord, 2002, p. 205; Schudson 2004). In this sense the perceived role of the media would be to unify citizens under a common ideology and against an external threat; or to quote Coser (1956), “an establishment of ego identity and autonomy, the full differentiation of the personality from the outside world,” (p. 33). Thus, the foremost theme in media coverage after 9/11 was that terrorism presented a risk – to American security in general but also to each citizen who was hitherto blissfully misinformed about his
nation’s invulnerability. By asserting their patriotism American journalists were perceivably averting the threat that terrorism posed to national morale.

Additionally we must acknowledge that the war on terrorism is also a propagandist war and literally a battle for the ‘minds and hearts’ of a global audience, (Price, 2002; Brown, 2003; Snow, 2006). The consequences of technology – a 24/7 news cycle; and neo-liberalism – a borderless market for news, have created further opportunities (and constraints) for political elite while conducting war discourse. Subsequently, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, the U.S government was pressured to seek world wide support for its retaliatory war in Afghanistan and later in Iraq; it did so by combining global public diplomacy with domestic (and frequently international) media management techniques. In this atmosphere the American philosophy towards media changed from libertarian to authoritarian and brooked little tolerance for dissent – at the domestic level the case of Peter Arnett12 exemplified the fate of journalists who dared question government’s motives on this war against terror. Efforts were made to control the international media as well, from pressurizing journalists to favorably portray the ‘coalition of willing’ armies, to bombing the stations of dissenting media, like Al-Jazeera.13

Clearly, journalists themselves were under tremendous pressure to support the government’s war efforts. Graber (2002) argues that during the war on terror the American military repeatedly withheld information from the press on the grounds of protecting national security, while the Bush administration made several publicized appeals to self-censorship as a “patriotic duty,” (p. 34). As a result, the global satellite network CNN was in a considerable dilemma over how to present the war on terrorism for American and international audiences – criticizing the

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12 Journalist Peter Arnett who received a Pulitzer Prize for reporting in Vietnam and had covered the first Persian Gulf War for CNN, was promptly expelled by his latest employer, NBC, for criticizing the Bush government’s recent venture into Iraq. During an interview with Iraqi TV Arnett said, “Clearly, the American war planners misjudged the determination of the Iraqi forces. That is why now America is reappraising the battlefield, delaying the war, maybe a week, and rewriting the war plan. The first war plan has failed because of Iraqi resistance; now they are trying to write another war plan.” In the ensuing furor NBC which had initially backed Arnett buckled under pressure and fired him for discussing his personal views with the state controlled Iraqi media, particularly at a time of war, (Snow, 2005, p. 105).

13 Prior to the events on September 11, 2001, the U.S government had described Al-Jazeera as a “beacon of diversity and openness in a sea of state-controlled media,” (Price, 2002, p. 6). But once a war on Afghanistan was declared and American interests were at stake the government promptly reneged its former statements, and labeled the station a ‘mouthpiece of Osama bin Laden’ for airing bin Laden’s tapes across the Arab world. Shortly after it began its campaign in Afghanistan the United States attempted to persuade Al-Jazeera to desist broadcasting these tapes, failing which officials offered to be interviewed on the station. Officials even considered buying air time to project favorable images of the United States to the channel’s “broad ranging and critical audience,” (p. 5). Ultimately however, none of these efforts were very successful and the United States retaliated by bombing an Al-Jazeera headquarters in Bhagdad, in April 2003, killing one of its journalists, (Scahill, 2005).
government would undoubtedly enrage the American public while supporting it would cast aspersions on the network’s credibility as a global medium. CNN finally chose to air two versions of the war – domestic coverage that was pro-government, and international programs that offered more critical debates on war efforts of the ‘coalition of willing.’ Attempts to engage American audiences in questioning government practices had met with stiff resistance. In the words of the CNN chief international correspondent, Christiane Amanpour:

We tried to answer a question that Americans were asking and that is, why do they hate us? What is going on over there? It was roundly criticized and very few people for the first few weeks dared to put in their newspapers or on their televisions any kind of analysis or background reasoning, context for some of those negative feelings that go on about the United States, (as quoted in Traugott and Brader 2002: 184).

Immediately after the September 2001 attacks audiences (both at home and abroad) were inundated with military and academic ‘experts’ eager to share their opinions on the causes and plausible responses towards a terrorist act. More often than not their explanations ignored the structural causes of terrorism and focused instead on classifying the act as “right wing,” “left wing,” “nuclear,” or “Islamic,” (Karim 2002: 104). Once it became clear that an Islamist organization was indeed responsible journalistic narratives quickly whipped up a discourse of war hysteria and binary dualism between “Islam” and the “west,” all the time neglecting to historically contextualize the attacks or examine critically the reasons for a sudden (and obviously unexpected) Islamist backlash.

Undoubtedly media discourses on Muslim societies reflect an orientalist perspective, but for Karim the Muslims world itself is partly responsible for its currently conflicting relationship with the west. He writes that:

Most Muslim societies have had shortcomings in developing effective political leaderships, genuinely democratic and self-sufficient communities, dynamic civil societies, and workable mechanisms for conflict resolution among Muslims and with non-Muslims. They have also been slow to implement creative strategies for harnessing human and material resources, independent infrastructures for scientific research, or contemporary methodologies to study indigenous intellectual heritages. The results have been war, social instability, poverty, hopelessness, and a lack of confidence that makes individuals susceptible to the simplistic solutions offered by Islamists and political extremists, (p. 106).

At the same time, a long history of western imperialism and the west’s unwillingness to acknowledge Israel’s displacement of Palestinian citizens, all appear contradictory to professed claims in support of democracy and individual freedoms. Political and cultural divides between
Muslim and western states are subsequently reflected in populist discourses on both sides, and were certainly present in the North American press coverage post 9/11.

Here, the very understanding of Islam presents challenges for building dialogues with the Muslim world, for “Islam” now variously represents “a culture, a civilization, a community, a religion, a militant cult, an ideology, a geographic region, and a historical event,” (p. 109). What is particularly problematic for Karim is the media’s failure to distinguish between the theological philosophies of Islam and their subsequent interpretations as social practices of the Muslim world. The oppressive practices of Afghanistan’s former Taliban regime present one dimension of this lived Islamic experience but are by no means representative of the entire Muslim world. Along the same lines, the press has erroneously identified social practices (like wearing the hijab or participating in communal prayer) as fundamentalist, and universal to all Muslim communities. Such declarations are not merely misguided (in several countries women are not forced to wear the veil or the hijab) but dangerously limit western understandings of both Islam and fundamentalism as foundations of global discourses on a war against terror. The following chapters examine in detail these emergent discourses in the western press immediately following the September 2001 attacks, paying particular regard to the threat of an Islamic peril in western democracies.
The previous chapters have outlined how the United States’ and India’s encounters with extremist groups have substantially shaped their counterterrorism efforts. Although 9/11 was considerably different from other attacks thus far the Bush administration’s subsequent call for a global battle cry necessitated some level of ideological convergence between participating states. This chapter examines the relationship between the United State’s rhetoric on a global anti-terror campaign following 9/11, and India’s concerns about terrorism in context of its conflict with Pakistan over Kashmir. By examining media reports in both countries this analysis will determine if the Indian press’ rhetoric on terrorism and fundamentalism reflects some convergence with current discourses in the American press, as evidence of greater political camaraderie. Simultaneously, this chapter will also examine the Indian press’ frustrations with the global campaign against terrorism and fundamentalism, and the limitations to emend the situation in Kashmir.

Methods

Keeping in mind the above aims the guiding questions for analyses were as follows: How did the Indian and American press frame debates on terrorism and terrorists prior to, and after the events on September 11, 2001? To what extent does the press in each country associate religion with terrorism? More specifically, how is Islamist fundamentalism discussed as a component of terrorist identity? Is there a greater convergence between their media frames after 9/11, or does the Indian press negotiate its readings on the war on terror?

Since the aim of this study was to examine media discourses on terrorism, all stories focusing on this topic were analyzed – these included reports, editorials, opinions, and news analysis. Articles were chosen from a newspaper if they covered any of the following topics: debates on its causes, the theoretical and/or ideological basis of terrorism; acts of terrorism; terrorist threats to national or international security; concerns about the social, political, cultural, and economic impacts of terrorism; confrontations between terrorists and military personnel; stories on individual terrorists or terrorist organizations; and stories on victims of terrorist threats or terrorist acts. Each edition of a newspaper was reviewed from the first to the last page to assess which articles were relevant to the study. Because titles did not always yield enough information about a story the researcher read every article to determine if it was appropriate for analysis.
Articles from *The New York Times* and *Washington Post, the Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* were analyzed in this study. A search of all four newspapers yielded a total of 370 articles – 135 from *The Hindustan Times*, 95 from *The Hindu*, 60 from *The Washington Post* and 80 from *The New York Times*. A summation of articles by country shows that there were 230 articles from the Indian papers and 140 from the American papers. Data retrieved from a descriptive content analysis provided an overview of the changes in both press systems after 9/11.

**Content Analysis**

All relevant articles were analyzed with the help of a code book\(^1\) developed for the purposes of this study. The following coding categories were created after reviewing relevant research questions and hypotheses: the mention of state sponsored terrorism; the nationality of a terrorist; the country of terrorist operation; and finally, if religion was mentioned in relation to terrorism. A coding dictionary was then used to explicate each variable; the coding unit in all cases was a paragraph. Paragraphs that yielded information on more than one topic were coded multiple times for each topic used in this study.

While the primary researcher coded all articles a secondary coder was used for the purposes of establishing inter-coder reliability. Based on past guidelines in content analysis research (Neurendorf, 2002; Wimmer and Dominick, 2005), the secondary coder was assigned to code 20%, or a total of 74 articles. Levels of inter-coder reliability which were established using Scotts Pi were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Scotts Pi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationality of terrorist</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State sponsored terrorism</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion and terrorism</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country of operation</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first hypothesis predicted that coverage of terrorism would significantly increase in both India and the United States after 9/11. A frequency analysis of the number of stories in each country

---

\(^1\) For a detailed examination of the codebook please refer to the appendix.
by time period revealed that terrorism was a more significant topic of press coverage in both states, after the attacks in New York and Washington.

Table II

*Frequency analysis of news stories on terrorism*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre 9/11</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post 9/11</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of stories on terrorism markedly increased in both countries in the second time frame, by 21.8% in India and 30% in the United States. The first hypothesis was thus supported. However, this data does not clarify how many stories in this sample from the Indian press, focused on Kashmir. A further descriptive analysis of the Indian press revealed the percentage of stories that did cover this topic.

Table III

*Terrorism in Kashmir before and after September 11th*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kashmir</th>
<th>Pre 9/11</th>
<th>Post 9/11</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Indian press a total of 135 stories (approximately 58.7%) mentioned terrorism in relation to the Kashmir conflict. The percentage of stories mentioning Kashmir in relation to terrorism increased marginally from 56.7% in the pre 9/11 stage to 60% in the post 9/11 stage. A 2×2 chi-square analysis was employed to examine stories on Kashmir as a function of time frame.
While the percentage of stories marginally increased by 3.3% after 9/11, this increase was not statistically significant, ($X^2 (1, N=230) = 0.251, \ p>0.05$).

The second and third hypotheses addressed differences in each country’s classification of terrorist acts. Although India was keen to liaise with the United States in its efforts to eradicate terrorism, a potential hurdle that both countries faced was in their definition of this construct. For the U.S, concerned solely with the group orchestrating the events of September 2001, the enemy was combating what Tuman (2002) called ‘terrorism below the line’ or violent sub-state groups (Laquer 1989), typified by organizations like Al-Qaeda. But Pakistan’s evident support for the Kashmiri insurgency led India to hold the state culpable for terrorist activities. The following analysis examines the second hypothesis, predicting that stories on state sponsored terrorism are more likely to be covered in the Indian press.

### Table IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Sponsored Terrorism</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>72.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Indian press was more likely than not to consider terrorism a state sponsored activity – 56.5 % of the stories in this sample did mention state sponsored terrorism. In contrast, only 27.1% of the stories in the American press specifically determined terrorism as a state sponsored activity. A 2×2 chi-square analysis was employed to examine press reports on state sponsored as a function of country. Results support the second hypotheses, that the Indian press was significantly more likely than the American press to consider terrorism a state sponsored activity ($X^2 (1, N=370) = 30.3, \ p<0.001$).

Although considerably fewer stories on state sponsored terrorism were reported in the American press, press reports revealed that, prior to 9/11 the American government was involved in combating state sponsored terrorism, particularly by applying sanctions against the governments in Afghanistan, Sudan, Iran, and occasionally Palestine. The nature of the September 2001 terrorist
attacks would necessitate a modification in the United States’ comprehension of and measures against terrorism by focusing on sub-state activities rather than terrorist efforts undertaken or condoned by the state. The third hypotheses thus predicted that the press in the United States would be more likely to consider terrorism a state sponsored activity before September 11, 2001, than after.

Table V

*State sponsored terrorism in the US press*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>State Sponsored Terrorism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre 9/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table reveals that in the United States, the percentage of references to state sponsored terrorism fell from 42.9% before 9/11 to 18.7% after 9/11. A 2×2 chi-square analysis was employed to examine reports on state sponsored as a function of time frame. Results support the third hypotheses, that the American press was significantly more likely to report on state sponsored terrorism before 9/11, than after, \( \chi^2 (1, N=140) = 9.41, \ p<0.05 \).

Although not predicted in the hypotheses this study also found interesting results for the number of reports on state sponsored terrorism in the Indian press for each time period.
Table VI  
*State sponsored terrorism in the Indian press*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>State Sponsored Terrorism</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre 9/11</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post 9/11</td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In India the percentage of stories that mentioned states sponsored terrorism increased from 44.4% in the pre 9/11 period, to 64.3% in the post 9/11 period. A 2×2 chi-square analysis was employed to examine reports on state sponsored as a function of time frame. Results indicated the press in India was significantly more likely to report on terrorism as a state sponsored activity after September 11, 2001, than before, ($\chi^2 (1,N=230) = 8.78, p<0.05$). This is in marked contrast to the American press where the stories on state sponsored terrorism dropped significantly after September 11, 2001.

Given their positions on state sponsored terrorism it was expected that Indian and American media would present different perspectives on terrorist identity. India is most concerned with Pakistani-based while the U.S generically considers it as a ‘stateless’ activity. Subsequently, the fourth hypothesis predicts that stories in the Indian press would be more likely to mention terrorist nationality, than the American press.

Table VII  
*Terrorist nationalities in India and the United States*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>72.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The press in India is more likely than the U.S press to mention the nationality of a terrorist: 72.6% of stories in the Indian press identified terrorist nationalities in contrast to only 44.3% of the
stories in the American press. Conversely, this table also reveals that the U.S press is more likely not to identify the nationality of a terrorist, since 55.7% of the stories in the American press as compared to 27.4 percent of stories in the Indian press, did not identify terrorist nationalities. A 2×2 chi-square analysis was employed to examine reports identifying terrorist nationality as a function country. Results indicated the press in India was significantly more likely than the American press to identify terrorist nationality, \( \chi^2 (1,N=370) = 29.6, p<0.001 \), thus supporting the fourth hypothesis.

Since terrorism in Kashmir is viewed almost exclusively as a Pakistani sponsored activity the Indian press’ identification of terrorist nationality is not surprising; similarly, the attack by a decentralized organization like Al-Qaeda did lead the U.S press to frame terrorism as a universalistic problem of ‘fringe extremism,’ rather than one emanating from a specific state. However, it is not clear from the above analysis whether such patterns of reporting are consistent across both time frames in India and the United States. In other words, would both press systems emphasize the ‘global’ nature of the terrorist threat after the events on September 11, 2001, thereby using fewer references to terrorist nationalities? The following analysis examines each press system’s patterns of reporting terrorist nationalities before and after 9/11.

Table VIII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage analysis of stories identifying terrorist nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>India</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United States</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorist Nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table reveals that both press systems were relatively consistent in their identification of terrorist nationalities across both time frames. The percentage of stories in the Indian press which did identify the nationalities of terrorists dropped only marginally from 73.3% to 72.1% after September 11, 2001; and dropped from 44.9% to 44% in the United States, during the same period. In other words it appears that 9/11 did not substantially alter patterns of reporting on terrorist identity in either press, and the fifth hypothesis was not supported.
A review of stories in all four newspapers suggests that a terrorist’s nationality is not always the same as his country of operation: Omar Saeed Sheikh for example, is a British national but also a member of the Pakistani-based Jaish-e-Mohammad – a group that is perhaps best known for its abduction of journalist Daniel Pearl. The following analysis examines the three countries most commonly identified as the basis of terrorist operation, in each press.

Table IX

Most frequently reported country of terrorist operation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freq</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Freq</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others¹</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The countries in this category are: Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, Kenya, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, North Korea, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, and Uzbekistan. No country received more than three counts.

Both the Indian and American press identify Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Palestine as countries from which terrorist operations occur most frequently. Within India, Pakistan is consistently regarded as the country most associated with terrorist operations – stories on Pakistani-based operations increased from 38.9% to 55.7% after September 11, 2001. An assault by Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad (both Pakistani based organizations), on the Kashmiri Legislative Assembly and the Indian parliament in October and December respectively, would account for the press’ focus on Pakistan. Additionally, India’s attempts to castigate Pakistan’s (rather than other state’s) association with terrorism may direct patterns of press coverage; thus, the percentage of Afghani based groups fell from 14.4% to 7.9%, and those of Palestinian organizations from 5.6% to 2.9% after 9/11.

In the United States it is Palestine that is most often associated with terrorist operations, although the percentage of terrorists attributed to this country dropped from 38.8% to 16.5% after September 11, 2001 – evidently the attacks in New York and Washington took precedence over other
concerns about terrorism. In this context it is also unsurprising that terrorist activity was perceived to operate largely from Afghanistan and Pakistan after September 2001 – reports on groups from Afghanistan increased from approximately 4% to 8.8%, while Pakistan, which was not mentioned in the first time frame, accounted for 7.7% of the stories on terrorist operations after 9/11. Interestingly, despite being the first country targeted for U.S counter terrorism measures, the percentage of reports mentioning Afghanistan as a state sponsor of terrorism remained comparatively low. This is because public discourse post 9/11 focused on the ‘global network’ of terrorism as a fringe, rather than a state sponsored activity, as the textual analysis demonstrates.

Finally, this table also reveals that the United States was less likely than India to identify the countries from which terrorists operated – prior 9/11 both countries had approximately the same percentage of stories that did not identify a terrorist’s country of operation (34.4% of stories in India, and 34.7% of stories in the U.S). After 9/11 however, the percentage of stories in this category decreased in India to 30.7% but simultaneously increased in the U.S to 40.7%. This observation, along with the previous finding, that the United States was less likely to identify nationalities of terrorists, affirms that the media in the U.S are most likely to consider terrorism a fringe or sub-state activity.

The last hypotheses examined the relationship between religion and terrorism, predicting that the press in both countries would carry a proportionately greater number of stories mentioning religion in association with terrorism after the attacks in New York and Washington.
**Table X**

*Terrorism and religion in the US press after September 11*<sup>th</sup>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Pre 9/11</th>
<th>Post 9/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table reveals a proportionate increase in the number of stories associating religion and terrorism. In the pre 9/11 state 53.1% of the stories in the American press associated religion with terrorism; this proportion increased to 74.7% in the post 9/11 stage. A 2×2 chi-square analysis was employed to examine reports associating religion with terrorism, as a function of time frame. Results indicate that in the United States, stories after September 11, 2001 were significantly more likely to mention terrorism and religion in the same report, \(X^2(1, N=140) = 6.78, p<0.05\).

**Table XI**

*Terrorism and religion in the Indian press after September 11*<sup>th</sup>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Pre 9/11</th>
<th>Post 9/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast to the United States, fewer reports in the Indian press have associated religion with terrorism in the second time frame – the percentage of stories in this category has marginally decreased, from 65.6% to 62.1% after September 11, 2001, thus only partially supporting the last hypothesis. The following section explores these results further.
Textual Analysis

Data from the content analysis provided an overview of media framing patterns but does not substantiate the nature of discourse, or how it has altered press constructions of terrorist identity after 9/11. The following analysis seeks to achieve the following objectives: first, it will conduct a cross-cultural comparison of terrorism and terrorist identity. Second, it will compare discourses in each time frame thereby determining if perspectives on terrorism have changed after the attacks in New York and Washington.

Press Coverage in the United States

Pre-9/11

Prior to the attacks on September 11, 2001, media coverage does not suggest that terrorism was a substantive threat within the United States. The majority of reports on international terrorism focused on the Israel-Palestinian crisis; an observation also noted by Weimann and Brosius (1992), in their twelve year (1968-80) analysis of print and television news. Terrorist tropes were used while covering the second Palestinian Intifada\(^2\) (Intifada II), and subsequently described those involved in resistance movements as ‘terrorist,’ ‘radicals,’ ‘extremist,’ ‘guerilla,’ ‘militant,’ or more specifically ‘violent Islamic militant,’ in the case of Islamist groups like Hamas or Palestine’s Islamic Jihad.

In contrast, Israel’s military campaigns in occupied Palestinian territories were classified as ‘retaliations,’ though reports on their atrocities are as detailed as those of Palestinian extremists. Consider for example, the following excerpt from a report in the *Washington Post* on a Palestinian attack in Hebron:

> The apple-cheeked baby girl shot to death in her stroller here last Monday is an Israeli martyr now. Hebron’s Jews wear her glossy photo on a necklace strung like a talisman around their necks. And when they pass the spot where she was hit by a Palestinian gunman, marked now by a guttering candle, they stop and read a poem affixed to the stone wall as an elegy to her pinchable cheeks. Her sweet smile, her kerchiefed cuteness – and to the urgent necessity of revenge. “We will take revenge, we will scream for revenge in body and spirit and await the coming of the Messiah,” it says, (Hockstader, 2001, p. A12).

The emotional overtone of this article, emphasizing youth and innocence in an ‘apple cheeked’ girl’s ‘sweet smile,’ is set to shock the reader into grasping at once the magnitude of crime committed by a nameless ‘Palestinian gunman.’ The journalist’s evident sympathy for the victim invites readers to witness (and vicariously partake) the pain of the Israeli community.

\(^2\) The first Intifada (Arabic for ‘uprising’) lasted from 1987 – 1993, ending with the Oslo agreement and the creation of the Palestinian National Authority. The second Intifada began in 2000.
But atrocities stem from both sides, as one soon learns (a few sentences later) that Israeli retaliation targets children in Palestine:

Saadi Eddin Miteb was home that night with his father, brothers, nieces and nephews. Shrapnel, possibly from exploding Israeli tank shells, pierced the tin roof over a recreation room. The two dozen or so children in the house screamed, and one of them, 9-year-old Ayat, Miteb’s sandy-haired niece, was hit in the instep with a hot metal shard. She needed six stitches. Three smaller children, 4, 5, and 6 years old, became so hysterical under the Israeli onslaught that the family took them to the hospital to be given tranquilizers… (p. A12).

Although reports highlight that both parties suffer violence it is Palestinians who are held culpable as perpetrators of conflict and ‘terror operations’; consequently most stories prior to 9/11 are quick to identify the nationalities of terrorists, and mention where they are based. The following excerpt from a report in *The New York Times* illustrates how acts of terrorism are attributed to a state:

In the last eight or nine days, there have been new acts of Palestinian terrorism against Israelis going about their daily lives. Suicide bombers killed 15 people at a Jerusalem pizzeria and wounded 21 at a cafe outside Haifa -- in addition to taking their own lives, of course… Tonight, security officials said a huge bombing planned for Haifa had been averted when they captured two members of the Islamic Holy War group. The two men were said to have been carrying more than 20 pounds of explosives that they intended to set off at a nightclub, (Haberman, 2001, p. A14).

The frame of the violent Palestinian terrorist is consistently reiterated with only minor alterations in this discourse. Another article by the same reporter states that:

The struggle over shuttered Palestinian offices in Jerusalem intensified today as another Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up in a group of Israelis, this time at a cafe outside Haifa. About 15 people were wounded, none gravely, the police said. The only death was that of the bomber, whom the Islamic Holy War group claimed as one of its own. Even without Israeli deaths, the explosion near Haifa, in the Qiryat Motzkin suburb, was one more jolt for a country already extremely jittery because of a lengthening string of terrorist incidents, (Haberman, 2001, p. A13).

The press also downplays complexities of Palestinian resistance by ignoring differences between insurgent groups and suggesting that they are all sanctioned by the state. This is perhaps

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3 This observation was also made in previous studies examining U.S media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict. According to Noakes and Wilkins (2002) media reports in the United States characterise Palestinians as “violent terrorists, Islamic militants, and the root cause of violence in the Middle East,” (p. 661; see also Chomsky 1989; Said 1981; and Shaheen 1997).

4 As of 2002 there are over 15 known Palestinian resistance organizations. The groups vary widely in their objectives and aspirations for Palestine: some, such as the Hamas and Islamic Jihad are religious organizations, while the Fatah is secular and the Palestine People’s Party (PPP) Marxist. Organizationally, they may be state funded such as the Al-Sa’iqa which is Syrian based and receives some financial aid from the Syrian government, or guerilla movements, such as the Arab Liberation Front, (source: [www.mideastweb.org](http://www.mideastweb.org)).
only a reflection of the U.S government agenda that reiterated in national press conferences. At one such conference outlining American policy in the Middle East President a reporter in the *Washington Post* quotes President Bush directive that the U.S would intervene only when Prime Minister Arafat reigned in insurgent groups: “Do we hear the Palestinians call for discussions? Of course we do. But my attitude is, if they are that interested in peaceful dialogue, they ought to do everything they can to stop the terrorist activity that has accelerated in recent months,” (Sanger, 2001, p.A5).

Such remarks suggest that prior to 9/11, most reports viewed terrorist operations as sanctioned by the state. Although the media do not explicitly refer to terrorism as state sponsored (the Department of State considers terrorism only activity of ‘sub-national groups and ‘clandestine agents), reports do describe state use of terror tactics, albeit only in cases of domestic terrorism. Most reports on state sponsored terrorism remain focused on the Israel-Palestinian crisis and Palestine’s “unwillingness” to clamp down on its fundamentalist groups. An editorial in *The New York Times* offers the following comment on this conflict:

> The escalating violence in the Mideast is horrifying, but the Palestinian leadership seems unwilling to rein it in. Israel, for all its military might, seems unable to deter it…Yasir Arafat may not be able to prevent every Palestinian terrorist from attacking Israelis, but he has formidable means of political persuasion and police compulsion at his disposal. He cannot present himself to Israelis and Americans as the leader of the Palestinian people and then plead powerlessness to order and enforce a cease-fire…By not effectively preventing terrorism; he shares responsibility for incidents like Thursday's suicide bombing. By not arresting known terrorists, he plays into the hands of Israelis who favor assassination strikes against Palestinian militants, (The Middle East maelstrom, 2001, p. A 14).

Few reports, if any, explore the controversies of Palestinian displacement that has fuelled so many violent uprisings against Israel. Instead the causes of terrorism are attributed to popular orientalist perceptions of a retrograde and antediluvian leadership in the Arab world that refuses to accept the reality of Israel. In the words of Thomas Friedman, the *New York Times* columnist:

> The conflict today between Israelis and Palestinians is not just about territory, politics, or religion. It is about modernity – for both Arab leaders and the Arab street. It is about the tension between a developed society that is succeeding at modernization and an underdeveloped one that is failing at it and looking for others to blame…It’s not that Palestinians are anti-modern. It’s that their young people are not given a real choice by their leaders to move in that direction. They are constantly being told by their leaders and fellow Arabs to stay in their old definition of struggle, to stay in a permanent revolution against colonization, to build their society and dignity through conflict against Israel, not through success at modernization, (Friedman, 2001, p. A21).

Albeit simplistic and arguably flawed Friedman’s reasoning of atavistic hegemony is one of the few instances where the press reflects on the causes of Palestinian discontent. Other reports
consider that insurgent groups are propelled by their religious beliefs, hence framing the uprising as the work of “Islamic militants” or “radical Islamic groups.” But journalists are seldom interested in exploring further the day-to-day experiences of Palestinian refugees, and the connection between “Islam” and “terrorism” is not clearly explained, save for mentioning the religious identity of perpetrators. The following excerpt from *The New York Times* typifies the frames used in associating terrorism with Islam:

In a day of expanding violence, an Israeli helicopter gunship killed three Muslim militants today in a rocket attack on a car in the West Bank, hours after Israeli warplanes struck a Syrian radar station deep in Lebanon in retaliation for a guerrilla attack on Friday. The Israeli radio quoted security officials as saying that the car was packed with explosives, and that the men inside were on their way to carry out a terror attack… The men were identified as members of the militant Islamic Jihad group, which has carried out suicide attacks and other deadly bombings inside Israel. The senior of the three was Muhammad Bisharat, who had survived an earlier assassination attempt by the Israelis when a bomb exploded near his car about a month ago, Palestinians said, (Greenberg, 2001, p. A6).

The threat of radical Islam pervades through other press discourses on terrorism (state sponsored and otherwise) and has been observed in other studies as well, (Karim 2002, Abrahamian, 2004). Islamic resurgence became a serious contender to U.S foreign policy after the Iranian revolution in 1979 and has since then been regarded as a “combustible mixture” of medievalist, anti-democratic, and anti-western states, (Miller, 1993: 46). The following *Washington Post* excerpt from a report on Afghanistan, for example, describes the oppressive nature of the Taliban’s policies:

Zardarlu Mohammed is one of 24 employees of Shelter Now⁵ – 16 Afghans, four Germans, two Australians and two Americans were arrested early this month in Kabul, the Afghan capital, by the ruling Taliban movement’s Islamic religious police on suspicions of trying to convert Muslims to Christianity. The Taliban, a radical Islamic movement that controls 95 percent of the country, considers converting to or propagating any other faith to be a serious crime. Foreigners found guilty of proselytizing may be simply expelled, but Afghans may be sentenced to death, (Constable, 2001, p. A19).

While most stories on terrorism were concerned with incidents outside the United States a few would occasionally reference a prior domestic attack, reminding American audiences that the terrorist threat – if imminent – was still at hand. The nature of government responses also suggested that terrorism was treated – in accordance with U.N legislation – as a criminal act, rather than a call to war. This was indeed the media’s frame of reference during the conviction of four individuals arraigned for the 1998 American embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania: a *New York Times*

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⁵ A German-based relief group.
editorial even describes the terrorist attacks as “horrifying crimes” now brought to justice, (The embassy bombings verdict, 2001, p. A22).

Post-9/11

But these perspectives radically changed after Americans woke up on September 11th to the astounding footage of two planes crashing into the World Trade Centre. In the days immediately following the Al-Qaeda orchestrated attacks an over wrought press frantically discussed their political and symbolic implications for American citizens. A new-found sense of vulnerability had emerged:

What was destroyed yesterday was not just the World Trade Center and part of the Pentagon but also Americans’ serenity and sense of security. Watching the horror on television, anyone will find it hard to go about everyday routines without being haunted by the fear that something awful could happen at any time and almost any place. This was, in a symbolic and psychological sense, the end of the 1990s, (Samuelson, 2001, p. A 29).

Among the first questions that journalists sought to answer was why the United States was specifically targeted. Significantly, media outlets chose not to reflect independently on the reasons for the attacks, but looked for cues from the government instead. One journalist in the Washington Post echoing President Bush’s comment about the U.S as the “bright beacon of freedom and opportunity”, states that:

The Twin Towers are like Manhattan itself, architectural expressions of the vigor of American civilization. The Pentagon is a symbol of America’s ability and determination to project and defend democratic values. These targets have drawn, like gathered lightening, the anger of the enemies of civilization, (Will, 2001, p. A31).

Like the government press coverage immediately emphasized victimization and emotional trauma while neglecting to delve into complex and disturbing questions about the politics fuelling such violent outrage. When reports did attempt to reflect upon motives their analysis was woefully simplistic and essentially mirrored President Bush’s good-versus-evil Manichean analogy (Murphy 2001). Far from contextualizing the attacks as part of a growing discontent against widening social divides, the media suggested that they were a vindictive denigration of western liberalism. Terrorism was a barbaric ‘weapon of the weak’ motivated by poverty, oppression, and according to one reporter, “peer pressure,” where individuals willingly “yield their authority to a group,” (Vedantam, 2001, p. A16).
Since no organization claimed responsibility for September 11th, little was initially known about the assailants, save that they were driven by a “suicidal, immortal hatred for America’s government, financial system, and people,” Hoagland, 2001, p. A31). Gradually a clearer picture emerged, establishing that the attacks were masterminded by Osama bin Laden and his pan-Islamist Al-Qaeda. But this knowledge about the enemy only created another dilemma in determining appropriate response: while Al-Qaeda members were clearly involved in the attacks their diverse nationalities made it difficult to categorically assess the blame on a specific state. Eventually the Bush government concocted its own version of the enemy by assessing that America’s terrorist threat was not limited to nationality alone but a wider ideology transcending nation states: in his Presidential address on September 20, 2001 Mr. Bush clarified that the menace included terrorist organizations as well as countries harboring them:

The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism…that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam. The terrorists' directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans and make no distinctions among military and civilians, including women and children. This group and its leader, a person named Osama bin Laden, are linked to many other organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries. They are recruited from their own nations and neighborhoods and brought to camps in places like Afghanistan where they are trained in the tactics of terror. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction.

In this manner the enemy was at once religiously simplified as radical Islam and racially pluralized to extend beyond the Arab world to South and Southeast Asia, and parts of Africa. As Beck (2002) observes, the image of the terrorist enemy after 9/11, was “deterritorialized, de-nationalized,” constructed by the state to “legitimize the global intervention of military powers as ‘self-defense,’” (p. 44). Thus in contrast to its localized scope before 9/11 Islamist terrorism was now considered a formidable global threat, as the following excerpt illustrates:

At least 11,000 terrorists have been trained in the past five years at camps operated by Osama bin laden across the border in Afghanistan, these officials say. Many have since been dispatched abroad to destinations unknown… President Bush said this week that the network operates in 60 countries. But the harder truth, the intelligence officials said, is that no one knows how far Mr. bin Laden's reach really extends. It is certain, however, that the organization's influence goes beyond secretive terrorist cells. It has exported instability on a global basis by training and financing Islamic-oriented insurgency movements from the Philippines and Malaysia to Nigeria and Chechnya, (Frantz and Bonner, 2001, p. A1).

The media’s focus on terrorism measures subsequently expanded from Palestine and its Islamist organizations to “include thousands of operatives in more than 60 countries,” (Apple, 2001, p. A1).
The war on terror evidently was to be a long one as an article in *The New York Times* established, after quoting a senior White House aid: “the assault on terrorism would come in phases, opening with a more focused attack on Osama bin Laden, his operation and his Afghan protectors, but eventually encompassing any terrorist operations with the ‘global reach’ to harm the United States, and the countries that sponsor them,” (Perlex, Sanger, and Shankar, 2001, p. A1). Another reporter, referencing the former defense secretary’s interview during an edition of *Meet the Press*, stated:

Mr. Rumsfeld said the Pentagon believed that several nations that support international terrorists have either developed or are trying to acquire chemical, biological or nuclear weapons, and that the dissemination of those weapons seemed a realistic concern…the military was in the process of adjusting its command structure to deal with terrorism. "There's always been terrorism," he said, "but there's never really been worldwide terrorism at a time when the weapons have been as powerful as they are today, with chemical and biological and nuclear weapons spreading to countries that harbor terrorists," (Dao, 2001, p. B5).

Although the press’ focus on state sponsored terrorism reduced considerably after the events on September 11th, journalists did occasionally debate the possibility of future conflicts with ‘enemy states’ that threaten the interests of the coalition of willing. The following excerpt from *The New York Times* is illustrative in this regard:

In our State Department's most recent report on global terrorism, Iran beat out Iraq and Syria to win the title of "most active state sponsor of terrorism"... Even today, Iran's air cargo planes fly arms and explosives to Damascus for trucking to terrorist headquarters of Hezbollah in Lebanon, for use by suicide bombers against Israeli civilians...Most dangerous to us, Iran leads the terrorism-sponsorship world in the development of nuclear capacity. Sitting atop a sea of cheap oil, Iran needs atomic energy like a hole in the head, but its rulers take income sorely needed by hungry Iranians and spend it on nuclear material and scientific know-how from Russia, (Safire, 2001, p. A35).

Knowledge of the perpetrators furthered an already persistent discourse that September 11th was another instance of an ideological divide cleaving the progressive west and a retrograde ‘Islam.’ Writing along this vein journalist Thomas Friedman observes that the war on terror would involve much more than mere military victories over enemy states:

We patronize Islam, and mislead ourselves, by repeating the mantra that Islam is a faith with no serious problems accepting the secular West, modernity and pluralism, and the only problem is a few bin Ladens…Christianity and Judaism struggled with this issue for centuries, but a similar internal struggle within Islam to re-examine its texts and articulate a path for how one can accept pluralism and modernity -- and still be a passionate, devout Muslim -- has not surfaced in any serious way. One hopes that now that the world spotlight has been put on this issue, mainstream

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6 The U.S Department of State currently identifies Syria, Iran, Cuba, North Korea, and Sudan as state sponsors of terrorism.
Muslims too will realize that their future in this integrated, globalized world depends on their ability to reinterpret their past, (Friedman, 2001, p. A19).

In another article Friedman fleshes out more clearly his views on the reasons of Islamist fundamentalism:

Many Arab-Muslim states today share the same rigid political structure. Think of it as two islands: one island is occupied by the secular autocratic regimes and the business class around them. On the other island are the mullahs, imams and religious authorities who dominate Islamic practice and education, which is still based largely on traditional Koranic interpretations that are not embracing of modernity, pluralism or the equality of women. The governing bargain is that the regimes get to stay in power forever and the mullahs get a monopoly on religious practice and education forever… But as oil revenues have declined and the population of young people seeking jobs has exploded, this bargain can't hold much longer. These countries can't survive without opening up to global investment, the Internet, modern education and emancipation of their women so that they will not be competing with just half of their populations. But the more they do that, the more threatened the religious authorities feel, (Friedman, 2001, p. A25).

If the causes of terrorism remained obscure to most of the American population, the means of retaliation was not. As Kellner (2002) and Eisner (2003) observe the press and broadcast outlets spurred on a frenetically belligerent call for war within days of the attacks and successfully preempted any public debate on alternative methods of engaging with the countries of terrorist operations. Writing barely a few hours after the attack on journalist in the Washington Post settles beyond doubt the media’s expectations from the government:

One can only hope that America can respond to yesterday’s monstrous attack on American soil…with the same moral clarity and courage as our grandfather’s did. Not by asking what we have done to bring on the wrath of inhuman murderers. Not by figuring out ways to reason with, or try to appease those who have spilled our blood. Not by engaging in an extended legal effort to arraign, try and convict killers, as if they were criminals and not warriors. But by doing the only thing we now can do: Go to war with those who have launched this awful war against us…Please let us make no mistake this time: We are at war now. We have suffered the first, devastating strike. Certainly, it is not the last. The only question is whether we will now take this war seriously, as seriously as any war we have fought, whether we will conduct it with the intensity and perseverance that it requires, (Kagan, 2001, p. 31).

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7 A handful of opinion pieces written primarily by academics and researchers suggested that the United States should address the causes of terrorism (poverty, oppression, lack of political opportunity) rather than further antagonize citizens in these countries through war, (see Sokolosky and McMillan, 2001). But these views were overwhelmingly in the minority as most reports not only promoted active militarism but also marginalized dissenting voices in the war against terror, (Eisman, 2003, p. 56).
For President Bush this was a war by a coalition of willing democracies against a theocratic “axis of evil.” During his 20th September address to the nation he declared that the war “begins with the Al-Qaeda but will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.” (Bush, September 20, 2001). But the press, while faithfully reproducing Bush’s Manichean discourse, was more explicit in defining the enemy:

People willing to kill thousands of innocents while they kill themselves are not cowards. They are deadly, vicious warriors and need to be treated as such. Nor are their acts of violence senseless. They have a very specific aim: to avenge alleged historical wrongs and to bring the great American satan to its knees. Nor is the enemy faceless or mysterious…Our delicate sensibilities have prevented us from pronouncing its name. Its name is radical Islam. Not Islam as practiced peacefully by millions of the faithful around the world. But a specific fringe political movement, dedicated to imposing its fanatical ideology on its own societies and destroying the society of its enemies, the greatest of which is the United States, (Krauthamme, 2001, p. A39).

These binary oppositions – radical Islam versus the free world, radical Islam versus peaceful Muslims – formed the basis for future orientalising discourses on the war against terror. For Thussu (2006) the dichotomies created a well publicized myth of a clash of civilizations, with radical Islam replacing the former communist threat, and “exemplified by shadowy networks such as al-Qaeda with its links to ‘rogue’ states such as Iran,” (p. 6). Most reports position this Islamist ‘jihad’ as a consequence of social and political repression, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

The most devastating terrorist act in American history coincides with a deep sense of ambivalence about the United States throughout the Muslim world (and not only there). Admiration and envy commingle with resentment and outright hatred. Political extremists masterfully play on these emotions, leaving some weak and undemocratic governments like Egypt's feeling powerless to control them…The absence of democracy in these lands -- and there is very little democracy in the Arabic-speaking and Muslim lands from Algeria all the way to Pakistan -- creates an atmosphere in which demagogy is easy, reason and tolerance difficult. And the perception that America bolsters authoritarian governments even while it heralds democracy as an ideal fuels a sense of betrayal throughout the Muslim world, (Sciolino, 2001, p. A1).

Occasionally however, one does come across a few voices contextualizing the events on September 11th with the larger discourse of a backlash against western colonialism. The following excerpt from an article in The New York Times for example, states that:

(During the Cold War) the policy of using political Islam as an anti-Communist tool was a crucial reason why so much of the Muslim world came to be dominated by stagnant, undemocratic but stable (so it seemed) and adequately pro-Western governments, on one hand,

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8 President Bush initially referred to the war as a “crusade” against evil but quickly edited this label when advised about its antagonistic implications for Muslim communities: the term ‘crusade’ from Latin *crux* or cross refers to the infamous medieval wars between Christians and Muslims, ultimately resulting in the religious triumph of Christianity against the ‘infidels’ of Islam, (Maddox, 2003, p. 401).
and the traditional forces of political Islam, reconfigured for the latter half of the 20th century, on
the other...After the cold war ended in 1989, and while the rest of the world was gearing up to
join the march of globalization and making great strides toward democracy, liberty and human
rights, the Middle East looked like a bombed-out city. More political oppression, more
intellectual and cultural stagnation, more economic and social despair -- and an ideological void
that only the fundamentalists were able or were permitted to fill, under the demagogic banner of

If a “radical Islamic ideology” was what fuelled acts of terror in the Muslim world, what then
constituted the daily experiences of its citizens? Several reports attested to the ruthless nature of the
Taliban, describing in lurid detail how the regime imprisoned Afghani men for wearing their beards
too short, and outlawed education for women, (Frey 2001: C1). The oppression of women in
Afghanistan was particularly significant on two counts, in denigrating the Taliban while
simultaneously casting the U.S as a heroic liberator of its downtrodden citizens. But while the
absence of the Taliban was certainly welcome, it did little to change conservative Afghan society,
still pursuing traditions that are alien (and presumably retrograde) in the United States. The
following story on the veil is an illustrative case in point:

“Our women have used the burqa long before the Taliban time, and they will continue to use it.
This is part of our religion and culture,” says Sayed Ahmad, 40, a spinach farmer…”What we do
not like about the Taliban was that they beat women who did not wear them.” In many ways,
very little has changed since the Taliban militia fled Jalalabad and the region was taken over by a
trio of armed anti-Taliban factions…virtually all adult women on the street wear burqas , and
almost all men are bearded…Tradition may still dictate that they observe a conservative Muslim
lifestyle, shunning alcohol and confining socializing to members of their own sex. But now,
residents say, the Taliban’s dreaded religious police are no longer on the streets, and no one in
authority is forcing them to comply with those traditions, (Constable 2001, p. A1).

The modern-traditionalist dichotomy is further problematized by indicating that it is these
conservative societies – where religion and politics merge – that are hotbeds for Islamist
fundamentalism and could create a violent clash between the progressive west and orthodox Islam. A
reporter writing on one such community observes that:

Every Friday in mosques across this largely desert country, Muslim leaders warn the faithful to
resist western efforts to undermine the nation’s culture, meddle in its political affairs and replace
Islam with Judeo-Christian values. The imams attack the president and the political elite for their
lack of religious devotion and vow to play a pivotal role in next year’s elections by endorsing a
fundamentalist Muslim candidate…The local clerics do not espouse the theology of terror that
motivated the Sept. 11 attacks. But many fundamentalist Muslim movements from Mali, Nigeria,
Niger, Chad, and Senegal do share the goal of returning to strict Islamic law, known as sharia,
and eradicating the secular state – changes that would radically alter the region’s relationship
with the west, (Farah 2001, p. A24).
By suggesting that Sharia is a fundamentalist practice articles such as these obfuscate differences between Islamic religious law practiced in several Muslim states, and Islamism as a fringe political movement in the Muslim world, (Khatib 2003; Riesenbrodt 2000). All journalists acknowledge at some level that Al-Qaeda’s fundamentalist tactics represented a deviant and extremist perspective on Islam – in the aftermath of the attacks one reporter even quotes the Saudi Arabian ambassador saying that Bin Laden is “deluding himself if he believes that criminal acts are justified by any religion or principle of humanity.” But the prominence given to the Islamist fundamentalist paradigm suggests these perspectives are popular and universally embraced in the ‘Islamic’ world where, as one journalist writes, “skepticism has abounded among average people over the Bush administration’s accusation that bin Laden and his terrorist network were behind the attack on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon,” (Pincus, 2001: A4). The “Islamic world” is in essence a place where two cultures – both pre-modern – exist: the ‘good’ Muslims who ‘…anxious to clear their names and consciences of this horrible crime and would undoubtedly support ‘us’ in a war against ‘them,’ and the ‘bad Muslims,’ engaged in acts of terror, (Mamdani, 2004, p. 15).

In pursuing their discourse on the generic ‘bad Muslim’ the media soon demonstrated that the war on terrorism (despite President Bush’s assurances) was also a war against Islam, (Abrahamian, 2003). The extent to which the press socially ostracized American Muslims themselves becomes clear when we consider the following report written after a journalist’s visit to a faith-based school in Maryland:

Is it reasonable to ask students at the Muslim Community School in Potomac whether there is a conflict between being an American and being a Muslim? It certainly seemed fair after six young people, all born in this country, all American citizens, told me that no, they did not think the United States should be attacking Afghanistan, and no, they might not be able to serve their country if it meant taking up arms against fellow Muslims, (Fisher 2001, p. B1).

Aside from its inherent incompatibility with the west radical Islam also poses a threat by advocating violence through an enduring global jihad. Reports claim that the indoctrination of violence in young, impoverished men begins early on in madrasas – traditionally schools for Islamic religious and scientific instruction – but which are now militant training grounds for those “imbued with a fervent world view and unqualified for jobs outside the mosque,” (Eckholm 2002: A.8). The violence perpetrated by jihadi activists is all the more appalling because it appears to be fuelled by Islamic philosophy itself: it is the quintessentially inexplicable appeal of religious martyrdom or the promise of Islamic paradise (in addition to poverty and oppression), that sustains terrorism against
the west. The following excerpt from a report describing an abandoned building – one of the Al-Qaeda’s hideouts in Afghanistan –is illustrative in this regard:

On a white board in the first-floor classroom someone has written slogans in Arabic: ‘Our way is jihad’ and ‘Martyrdom is the only pride.’ (A) composition book with bomb-making instructions contains entries dated in August 1999 and apparently was written by someone comfortable with the Roman alphabet, but not a native English speaker…A loose piece of paper inside the book explains how to make ‘chemical poison’ using sodium or potassium cyanide. Powerful explosives using fertilizer and TNT are also described. On the cover, a label in Arabic says, “In the name of God, the compassionate and merciful,” (Frantz and Bonner, 2001, p. A1).

The orientalist analogy of a violent and oppressive Islam was eventually extended to other countries as well, as rationale for a global collision between the west and a monolithic Islam. Along these lines one journalist attempted to draw parallels between the war on terror and France’s long standing contention with its Muslim immigrants, after visiting a housing project in Paris:

Like many pockets of poor Muslim immigrants, La Cite is a world unto itself, where young men are caught in a profound and disturbing identity crisis, suffer the sting of racism and the plague of unemployment. Some have come to see in Osama bin Laden, the man America is trying to bomb into submission, as a savior. … France has expressed strong support for America’s war on terrorism, but the government is clearly concerned about containing Muslim anger at home,” (Hedges, 2001, p. A4).

The above analysis reveals that the United States’ understanding of terrorism changed drastically in the two time frames. Although terrorism has always been a threat to American interests the attacks on September 11th brought home the shocking reality of its global dimensions, and seriously undermined the invulnerability of the United States as a military and economic superpower. When it literally hit home, U.S response to terrorism changed from considering it a criminal act (as had been done with those incriminated with the 1993 bombings in Kenya and Tanzania), to an act of war. The focus of this war on terror – the enemy as it were – became ‘fringe’ terrorism practiced by ‘stateless groups’ like Al-Qaeda; although military targets also included states that harbored terrorism by providing a “safe haven” to such organizations, (U.S Department of State: n.d). Finally, radical or fundamentalist Islam was also identified as a characteristic of the terrorist enemy, so much so that press reports using a clash of civilizations analogy, indicated that this war was as much about countering “Islamic” fundamentalists as it was about terrorism.
Press Coverage in India

Pre 9/11:

Terrorism in India has spurred numerous diplomatic and military operations and subsequently received much media attention even before 9/11. The Indian media have covered terrorism in domestic and international contexts ranging from the activities of the Naxalites in Chhattisgarh and ULFA\(^9\) in Assam, to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. But it is the Kashmir crisis which has perhaps directed most media attention – both regionally and globally – as a consequence of India’s political (and now nuclear) rivalry with Pakistan.

Since the inception of the insurgency in 1989 press coverage has framed Kashmir as a hotbed of terrorist activity stemming from across the border in Pakistan. By viewing Kashmir in light of national security and defense press coverage largely relies on a ‘state centric’ perspective, favoring ‘official’ (i.e. military and government) sources over the views of the local Kashmiri population. Stories on terrorism are usually based on press releases about military confrontations with insurgents, incidents of terrorist attacks by ‘foreign’ (Pakistani based) militants, and speeches made by local leaders.

A dearth of investigative journalism, dependence on official sources, and focus on military campaigns all indicate that stories on Kashmir are all framed as part of a larger discourse on the military and political antagonism (dubbed as a ‘proxy war’ by the Indian authorities); subsequently, terrorism in Kashmir is interpreted primarily as a Pakistani-sponsored activity. During a press conference on upcoming dialogues between the two countries Jaswant Singh, the External and Defense Minister declared that: “An offer of a no-war pact with Pakistan is meaningful only if there is an undertaking to end all forms of proxy war which has been witnessed in this region. Aiding and abetting terrorism is a major issue before us,” (No cutting down troops, 2001, p. 10).

The concerns of the Indian press thus lie not merely in describing terrorist activity, but rather in defining (according to government agenda) Pakistan as an enemy state that supports terrorism. By

\(^9\) The Naxalites represent a loosely connected group of radical guerrilla organisations influenced by the Maoist revolution in China. Since the 1960s they have been engaged in a violent struggle to represent the interests of the oppressed (lower caste) landless labourers in India, who are often overlooked by corrupt electorates. Despite its egalitarian ideology however, the movement has eventually morphed to become little more than another domestic terrorist movement. In 2006 the violent activities of the Naxals – looting, killing, and even burning entire villages, led the Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh to describe it as "the single biggest internal security challenge ever faced by our country," (Diwanji, 2003; Ramesh, 2006).

The United Liberation Front of Assam , is a conglomeration of separatist groups aiming to segregate the north-eastern state of Assam from the rest of India. The Indian government recognises ULFA as an established terrorist group and has banned it under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, in 1990.
repeatedly referring to Kashmir in conjunction with ‘cross-border terrorism,’ or infiltration by ‘foreign’ insurgents, journalists confirm that terrorists in the valley work under the aegis of the Pakistani government. The following article – from a press conference with the former Indian Prime Minister A.B Vajpayee after the Agra Summit – illustrates how such arguments are typically framed:

(Prime Minister) Vajpayee said no serious purpose would be served by a debate on whether Jammu and Kashmir was a ‘core issue.’ Pakistan’s refusal to end its support for cross-border terrorism was the main hurdle in the way of creating an atmosphere conducive for negotiations…In his first statement since the Agra summit the Prime Minister said insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir, helped by foreign mercenaries and generous assistance from abroad, could not be glorified as ‘jihad’ – it was terrorism, (Pak terror export key issue, 2001, p. 1).

Another story makes a more explicit reference to the link between the Pakistani government and the Islamist organizations in Kashmir:

It is noteworthy that Pakistan has made no effort to tame the terrorist groups that continue to kill innocents in the name of jihad. Indeed, the tone of the militant groups operating from Pakistan has become more threatening. The Hizbul Mujahideen continues to be on the offensive. The Lashkar e Toiba has gone to the extent of rubbishing the peace process as “a trap for the Kashmiris because peace lies in jihad”…The signal is clear: Pakistan continues to use militancy as an instrument of blackmail to extort a solution on Kashmir the suits its interests, (Bhattacharjea, 2001, p. 10).

_Jihad_ and _jihadis_ are terms often used to describe Islamist groups prior to 9/11. Other adjectives include ‘militants,’ ‘foreigners,’ ‘ultras,’ ‘ulfas,’ ‘fundamentalists,’ or ‘intruders’ – unlike in the west however, the press in India (where Muslims are the strongest religious minority), have avoided using politically sensitive labels like ‘Islamist’ or ‘Islamic’ in conjunction with terrorism. But religion nevertheless does appear as a significant trope in press coverage particularly since Kashmir is viewed as part of Pakistan’s pan Islamic agenda. Although journalists refrain from mentioning religion outright other indicators are used to confirm terrorist’s religious and cultural affiliations: in the following story from the _Hindustan Times_ for instance, an insurgent is identified as part of a pro-Pakistani radical Islamist organization:

In a major setback to the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen militant organization, its deputy chief commander and spokesman, Abdul Hamid Tantray alias ‘commander Masood’, was killed in an ‘encounter’ with the special operations group (SOG) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police in Pulwama district on Tuesday night. Masood shot into prominence when the Hizb announced a unilateral ceasefire in August 2000. He was one of the four Hizb commanders who held the first round of talks with the Union Home Secretary, Mr. Kamal Pandey. A moderate militant leader, he was an active member of the Jamat-e-Islami. He quit his Government job to join militancy in 1990. One of the oldest guerillas in Kashmir, he founded the Al Badr (local) outfit in the early 1990s and later merged it with the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, (Jehad as national interest, 2001, p. 10).
Within Kashmir an increasingly violent insurgency fostered further association between terrorism and Islamist extremism. What began as a struggle for Kashmiri self-determination in 1989 eventually morphed into a large scale Pan-Islamist movement engineered by Pakistani-based organizations seeking Kashmir’s incorporation into Pakistan. Reports typically reference the religious dimension of insurgency by quoting provocative comments from these groups, as the following excerpt from an article in *The Hindu* demonstrates:

The Lashkar-e-Taiba chief, Prof. Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, has said that it was through 'jehad' (holy war) alone that India could be forced to withdraw from Kashmir. In a statement issued here, Prof. Saeed has claimed that Indian troops had now been rendered 'totally helpless' in the face of actions by the militants and time was not far off when India would have to 'vacate' Kashmir, (Reddy, 2001, p. 11).

The militant call for *jihad* appears again in other reports on terrorist activities in the valley. Writing a few days before the much proclaimed Agra Summit in July 2001 another journalist observes that:

The radical women's outfit of Jammu and Kashmir, Dukhtaran-e-Millat, has rejected the tripartite talks on Kashmir and criticised the All-Party Hurriyat Conference for its policies on Kashmir. However, it has reiterated support to the jehad in the State and its merger with Pakistan. The outfit chief, Ms. Asiya Andrabi, told reporters here today that during the coming summit the people of Kashmir would be represented by Pakistan, which had 'all the rights over Kashmir'…Ms. Andrabi said the only solution to the Kashmir problem was jehad. The operations against the security forces should not be stopped and there should be no ceasefire, (Not for tripartite talks on J&K, 2001, p. 10).

But this discourse on an Islamic struggle for freedom is consistently undermined by violent attacks on all Kashmiri civilians, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Several reports attest that terrorism is as much about undermining Indian secularism as it is its military prowess, by identifying the religious communities of victims as “Hindu,” “Sikh,” or “Muslim.” For example, in the following story titled, ‘Jammu also not safe for migrated Sikhs’ a reporter comments on a recent massacre of two Sikh men in Poonch, a northern province in Jammu:

Earlier, all the killings of Sikhs were confined to the valley…these killings had scared the Sikhs in the valley up to such an extent that they started migrating to Jammu. But this incident has shaken their faith in the Jammu region. With the murder of (the two men), the militants want to give a loud and clear message to minorities to leave the state, (Joshi, 2001, p.11).
Another article outlines the emotional trauma of a young Kashmiri girl whose family has been uprooted from its village just north of Jammu:

The ten-year-old girl (Rubina) is a refugee at Belicharana – a dusty village close to the no-man’s land. She and her family live in constant fear of militant attacks. A month ago, her parents decided to migrate from their home in Rajouri. Rubina has heard about terrorists who kill and maim people in the name of Islam. Had there been no threat of militants, she would have celebrated Id at her village and had fun with her friends. Some of her friends are also here but no one knows for how long. They too share Rubina’s terror-ridden nightmares. “Terrorists made us run from our village,” says Rubina. Has she seen them? “No. I don’t want to see them,” (Joshi, 2001, p. 7).

Unsurprisingly, Indians remain skeptical about the vociferous assurances of Islamist groups that most Kashmiris do indeed want to become part of a Muslim state. A former Indian military officer, Brigader V.R.P Sarathy writing on the possible consequences of such an action observes that, “the external jihadi forces fighting in J&K are interested not only in expelling India from Kashmir but also in Islamizing its people on the Taliban model, regardless of whether or not they desire it,” (Sarathy 2001: 12). Viewed in this manner the conflict in Kashmir becomes an ideological tug-of-war between India’s all embracing multiculturalism and a reaffirmation of Pakistan’s status as a Muslim homeland. This cultural ‘clash of civilizations’ as it were is also the principal cause of repeated military confrontations (and diplomatic failures), as the following excerpt argues:

Most Pakistanis sincerely believe in the two-nation theory. Many Indians believe, equally sincerely, in secularism. There is no meeting point between the two. The creation of Pakistan was an uneasy compromise. That did not resolve the basic conflict; it merely isolated it geographically. India cannot give up Kashmir because that will jeopardize its fragile secularism. Pakistan cannot give up its claim on Kashmir because that will strike at the very root of its existence, (Indiresan 2001, p. 9).

But their political differences notwithstanding the Indian media are aware that there are complex questions surrounding Pakistan’s religious identity, and that secularist forces in the country have struggled against Islamic revivalism while shaping the course of national politics. In the words of the veteran Indian journalist, Kuldip Nayar:

Islamabad’s reluctance to chastise fundamentalists has damaged the country’s image. It cannot combine the opposites: use the fanatics to destabilize India and wish that the fall-out would not contaminate the Pakistani society. The silence of the liberals is intriguing. True, they are unhappy as is the majority in Pakistan. But the fear to join issue with the extremists

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10 Although the author refers to India as a ‘secular’ state the term secularism must be understood here within a uniquely Indian context. Rather than a separation between religion and politics Indian secularism is embodied in the phrase Sarva Dharma Sambhava – let all religions prosper. In this sense secularism in India is closer to western definitions of multiculturalism, that is, a universal acceptance of different ethnic and religious identities.
has silenced them. They are afraid to annoy fundamentalists. But they should know that no voice has ever gained strength if it is not raised, (Nayar 2001, p.10).

Prior research has revealed that most Pakistani governments have shared an uneasy relationship with local fundamentalist forces, both ‘wooing the Mullahs and ridiculing them’ (Nasr, 1995, p. 268), and President Musharraf has followed his predecessors in this regard. Musharraf’s ambivalence extremist groups clarifies that only a minority are actually responsible for jihad; however, it also reflects upon the Pakistani government’s inability to control home grown fundamentalist forces now operating across the border. Writing along this vein one journalist describes how extremist groups resisted official attempts to ban public donations for the Kashmir jihad, in the Sindh province:

A spokesman of the United Jihad Council said the (representatives of various ‘militant outfits’) adopted a unanimous resolution against the actions of the Sindh government. The resolution said the “freedom fighters” were sacrificing their lives to fulfill the incomplete agenda of partition and were fighting a heroic war against the highly-armed Indian security forces. It urged the Musharraf government to stand by these freedom fighters instead of undermining the movement…and termed the ban as against the teachings of Islam and a conspiracy of Jews: “We started this fight for the dominance of Islam and support of suppressed Muslims of Indian-occupied Kashmir and would not stop this under any circumstances,” (Reddy, 2001, p.1).

For the Indian press it is these Islamist ideologies that are primarily responsible for Kashmiri terrorism. The perpetrators are thus ‘foreign nationals’ from groups such as Lashkar-e-Toiba (Army of Pure), Jaish-e-Mohammad (Army of Muhammad), and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, all working with the ultimate objective of Kashmir’s integration with Pakistan. The following excerpt from an article in The Hindustan Times illustrates how journalists typically identify insurgents:

At least 20 militants were killed in an operation in the Mandi area of Surankote in the frontier district of Poonch, about 200 km north of Jammu, late Sunday morning. There was no report of any casualty among security personnel. This is the highest number of militants killed in Kashmir in a single operation in the past year. The militants belonged to the group Lashkar e Toiba, Al-Badr Mujahideen, and Harkat ul Jehad-i-Islami groups, whose cadres were mainly Afghan and Pakistani, (20 militants killed, 2001, p. 8).

11A province in south-east Pakistan neighboring Balochistan in the north-west and Indian Rajasthan and Gujarat in the south and south-east.
Clearly, not all insurgents are Pakistani but they all operate ‘across the border,’ as the following article demonstrates:

Security forces today shot dead seven Afghan militants belonging to the Al-Badr group while they were trying to sneak into the Poonch district. This is the first major incident since the ceasefire in Jammu and Kashmir was called off. Elsewhere in the state, 13 people including 10 militants were killed, an army officer wounded and 15 kg of RDX seized since last evening, and (7 militants shot dead, 2001, p. 1).

Post 9/11

The terrorist attacks in New York and Washington affected national discourse in India on several dimensions. Like the rest of the world India too pondered deeply about the nature of American retaliation and how it would affect future perspectives on terrorism. For some sections of the political elite the tragedy on September 11th and President Bush’s subsequent castigation of “fringe” religious extremists, dovetailed neatly with their own clash of civilizations’ analogy of a Hindu nation threatened by a “borderless,” violent, and predatory Islam, (Chakravartty, 2002: 206). But more significantly 9/11 was a political opportunity to foster closer ties with the U.S, become a coadjutor in its counter-terrorism efforts, and gain sympathy (and support) in undermining Pakistani-sponsored terror in Kashmir.

Initially frustrated by America’s strategic reliance on rival Pakistan and its willingness to overlook the nation’s Islamist factions the Indian government finally scored a point in its favor after the December 13th parliamentary attacks when the United States conceded to incriminate the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jasih-e-Mohammad, including them on its list of foreign terrorist organizations.

Media coverage in this period reveals that the Indian press had slightly different responses to all these events: the following analysis will demonstrate that by and large the press unlike government was not monolithic in their advocacy for a retaliatory war in domestic and international fronts. As the primary target of Islamist terrorism, Kashmir continued to remain a subject of continued interest to the media albeit this time in light of global terrorism in addition to India’s relations with Pakistan.

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001, both the Indian government and press were quick to draw parallels between the Islamist agenda governing the attacks in New York and Washington and those in Kashmir, thereby localizing terrorist discourses within the Indian context. Within days of the attacks in New York and Washington the External Affairs Minister said at a national press conference that Kashmir was “a definite target of the Taliban's international terror network,” and that “the Taliban leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar, had exhorted his ‘fighters’ in
Kashmir to return to Afghanistan for a confrontation with the U.S,” (Aneja, 2001, p. 1).

When terrorists from the Jaish-e-Mohammad group bombed the Kashmiri Legislative Assembly barely three weeks after the attacks in the U.S, Omar Abdullah, the Minister of State for External Affairs, declared that bin Laden had also masterminded this event, and had “reached and agreement with the (Pakistani-based) Harkat-ul-Mujahideen leader Fazul al-Rehman, to launch a jihad (holy war) against the US and its allies,” (Stung by attack, 2001, p. 11). A few months later, in December 2001, a report in The Hindustan Times mentioned that local police in Jammu and Kashmir had found “the first Al-Qaeda link in the Kashmir valley” after arresting a terrorist in Srinagar with alleged links to this organization, (“Al-Qaeda Man Arrested” 2001: 3). Other reports that both 9/11 and Kashmir were consequences of a global jihad:

The Taliban may have been barbarians but they were international barbarians. Their ranks comprised more than just Afghans. There were Arabs – just like bin Laden himself – and there were Pakistanis drawn by the talk of jihad. There was also a floating population of international warriors…who were attracted to Islam and looked for holy wars to fight. And then of course there was the Pakistani army. The international nature of the Taliban army – and even more global nature of the Al-Qaeda network – should give the Americans pause for thought…What the Americans don’t seem to realize is that you cannot artificially separate bin Laden, Afghanistan, the ISI, the Lashkar-e-Toiba, the Harkat-ul-Ansar, and the Jaish-e-Mohammad. They are all part of the same hydra, a sort of Jihad International Inc, (Sanghvi, 2001, p. 11).

But despite these efforts to establish connections with the U.S, press discourses in India differed considerably in their construction of the terrorist enemy. While the threat of ‘radical Islam’ figured prominently in the American press journalists in India continued to focus on state sponsorship as the primary cause of global terrorist operations, and were quick to point out the close political ties between Islamabad and the Taliban. One journalist reporting after a press conference with the Prime Minister wrote:

Addressing the nation for the first time since the horrendous attacks on Tuesday, Mr. Vajpayee sought to paint India as a decade-long victim of the kind of terrorism that had manifested itself so viciously in New York and Washington…Without mentioning Pakistan, he virtually invited the international community to recognize Islamabad's role in aiding and abetting terrorism. “We must strike at the roots of the system that breeds terrorism. We must stamp out the infrastructure that imparts the perverse ideological poison by which the terrorist is fired up. We must hold governments wholly accountable for the terrorism that originates from their countries. In other words, to get at the terrorists the world community must get at their organizations, at those who condition, finance, train, equip and protect them," (Khare, 2001, p. 1).
This trope of Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism was particularly prominent after the attack on the Kashmiri Legislative Assembly in October, and reflected the press’ bitterness at India’s rival being chosen as an accomplice in U.S counter terrorism efforts. An editorial in *The Hindustan Times* offers the following comment after the explosion in Kashmir:

The irony is that the tragedy occurred barely a day after Pervez Musharraf had claimed there was no terrorist outfit in Pakistan anymore. It is common knowledge that the Jaish-e-Mohammad, founded by Azhar Masood of the Khandahar hijacking fame, has its headquarters in Karachi. Its cadres – who in Musharraf lexicon would translate as ‘freedom fighters’ – are foreigners, many of them from Afghanistan. These facts are not disputed even by Jaish-e-Mohammad which has recently repeated its resolve to wage *jihad* in Kashmir from its bases in Pakistan. So where does this double talk take the world in the war against terrorism? (Proud to be killers, 2001, p.10).

Thus, unlike the United States India’s primary ‘Islamic threat’ stemmed not from a global network of fringe, ‘stateless’ organizations like Al-Qaeda, but from a range of fundamentalist forces in neighboring Pakistan. As the following editorial in *The Hindustan Times* explains:

There is little doubt that the entire *jihadi* enterprise which Pakistan had nurtured with the Taliban’s help is in danger of coming apart with the international community turning so determinedly against terrorism. In addition, there are muted voices inside Pakistan warning against the encouragement of the *maulvi* mentality, thereby tarnishing the country’s reputation. It isn’t that Islamabad was unaware of how the Taliban connection was harming Pakistan. But it carried on nevertheless in the hope that if this link bred religious extremism in Pakistan, the damage caused by it would be compensated by the possible success of Islamabad’s proxy war in Kashmir, (Jehad as national interest, 2001, p. 12).

From the government and media perspective the events on September 11th were stupendously important to the proxy wars in Kashmir because “our neighbor is no longer a unified monolithic entity; it is a battleground in which liberal and fundamentalist forces fight for survival,” (Bhattacharjea 2001: 10). For India, the war on terrorism entailed recognition that Al-Qaeda is only one among several Islamist groups operating in Central and South Asia, and that an Islamic Pakistan too is a hotbed of fundamentalist activity: if the United States truly aimed to wipe out global terrorism it would do well by beginning with the *jihadis* in Pakistan. Writing in *The Hindustan Times* Brahma Chellany, a New Delhi based strategic affairs analyst, says:

The US-led military campaign in Afghanistan represents barely half of the required international counter-terror efforts in this part of the world. The other half of the requisite effort would have to try and achieve by political means in the Taliban’s cradle – Pakistan – what militarily is being sought out to be accomplished in Afghanistan. Unless the state-run terrorist complex in Pakistan the security of the West and India cannot be safeguarded from
the spreading cancer of *jihad*. It is the anti-terror campaign’s central political goal – to tear out the Taliban-type culture – that should make Pakistan quake. Eliminating Osama bin Laden, Mullah Mohammed Omar and other Al-Qaeda figures cannot bring enduring success as long as the 4,000 *madrassas* in Pakistan continue to mass-produce *jihadis*, (Chellany, 2001, p. 10).

However, not all were optimistic that the United States would see India – under the religiously conservative BJP – as a natural ally in a war that was already inflaming “radical sentiment in the Islamic world,” (Ranade 2001, p. 11). As the war on terror progressed it became even clearer that elite expectations of a political alliance were entirely misconstrued: although India was not castigated for its poor record on religious harmony it was Pakistan that was a preferred military ally, owing to its geographical proximity to Afghanistan. Moreover, the press were gravely disappointed that ‘America’ would talk only of “terrorism in the broader sense” while eschewing any specific references to Kashmir, (Just ignore the hotheads, 2001, p. 10).

In this abrupt turn of events the press’ former sympathy for the United States quickly changed to criticism, (Chakravartty 2001). By neglecting to consider the long term implications of its military policies a decade earlier, the U.S was now fighting its own ‘Frankenstein’ in Bin Laden; after unleashing a factory of Islamist guerillas in the sub-continent, (Chellany, 2001: 10). The fragile Indo-US connection became even more tenuous after President Bush dismissed the Lashkar-e-Toiba (notorious in Kashmir for its violent pro-Pakistani campaigns), as a “stateless sponsor of terrorism” – a remark that apparently “failed to pass muster even within his administration,” (Rajagopalan, 2001, p. 9). Another report questioning the United States’ motives in this war on terror claimed that:

According to the U.S an act of terror essentially means an act of terror executed *against Americans and their country*. What happened on September 11 in Washington and New York was an act of terrorism. What has been happening in Jammu and Kashmir for the past 23 years doesn’t qualify as terrorism as far as the Bush administration is concerned…It is unfortunate that even at the time of U.S Secretary of State Colin Powell’s visit to Delhi on Tuesday, the Bush administration chooses to ignore the harsh realities of Pakistan’s

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12 Here Chellany refers to the CIA trained *mujahideen* soldiers used to counter the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1989. He argues that: US weapons and other aid created the Frankensteins that have come to haunt regional and international security…It was at a White House ceremony attended by some bearded and turbaned Afghan guerillas in the mid-1980s that Reagan proclaimed mujahideen such as Bin Laden as the “moral equivalent of the founding fathers” of the United States…To fight Soviet-Style atheism US policy makers did not hesitate to use religion for political ends. Islam was employed to unite the Muslim world and spur the spirit of *jihad* against the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Now, with the *jihad* fires threatening to go out of control, the blatant misuse of religion for political purposes can no longer be tolerated, (p. 10).
undeclared war on India. Pakistan is part of the problem of global terrorism and not part of the solution, (Narenda, 2001, p. 10).

One theme that reverberated in Indian readings of September 11 was the West’s demonization of Islam. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks (while sympathy for the U.S still ran high) a few journalists replicated the Bush government’s claim that Islamist terrorism was a primordial attack on modernity (Ganguly, 2001, p.10). A report in The Hindu for example, states that:

In its true sense as one of the five pillars of Islam, the obligation for jehad, or struggle, is little different from similar obligations in other religious systems. Every person is enjoined to struggle, or wage jehad, against his baser instincts and social evils. This is an imprimatur in any religious system. Used as a political term over the past two decades, the term jehad has acquired a secondary and altogether different meaning. As used by its votaries jehad has become a cover-tag for the activities of a group of people filled with a blind unreasoning hatred for anyone else who does not subscribe to their lifestyles, world views or even dress and behavioral codes, (Menon, 2001, p. 12).

Another report replicated dominant western discourse post 9/11 on a predatory and borderless Islam:

Jihad and crusades have gone on since Islam’s birth in the 7th century. But this jihad is universal, it includes Hindus and others. It might end in terrible damage to human civilization itself…For the US and its allies, Islamic fundamentalism has become a life and death challenge of the new millennium. Fifty years ago, the Islamic Ummah had started bestirring into violence a structure whose major fault lines cut a wide swath from Atlantic to China. It is now in full bloom around Afghanistan and Pakistan, a strategic centre of the Islamic world. Trained by the CIA and ISI, there are now over 100,000 jihadis all over the Islamic world, in Kashmir, Albania, Chechnya, Xinjiang (China), Central Asia, and elsewhere (Singh, 2001, p. 10).

But such perspectives were by no means unanimous: India’s significant Muslim population and Islam’s long history in the subcontinent enabled its media to engage in a broader debate on Islamist terrorism, thereby deconstructing orientalist explanations favored by the west. An editorial in The Hindustan Times argued that western claims about a belligerent and monolithic Islam is a specious overview of complex nationalist struggles in the Arab world, (‘Osama’s failed marketing strategy,’ 2001). Other writers critiqued ‘Hindu radicals’ for threatening Indian Muslims, and observed that Islamist practices like jihad represent an extremist perspective that is rarely tolerated even in the Muslim world, (Menon 2001; Ranade, 2001). Occasionally, journalists would also

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13 According to the Indian government’s 2001 population census approximately 13.4% of Indians (138 million) were Muslim, (Census of India: 2001).
comment on the impact of the anti-Islamic backlash on Muslims themselves: one such view espoused by Hasan Suroor in *The Hindu* says:

> Claims that Islam is a peaceful religion which does not preach violence may be intended to counter the anti-Islam rhetoric, of which there has been no dearth in the recent weeks; but every time a Muslims sings the virtues of Islam he inadvertently suggests that these qualities are unique to his faith; and as though other religions in fact preach hate and violence. This is then seized by critics of Islam to reel of examples of “Islamic” violence, and prompts Salman Rushdie to agonize over the “nature” of Islam in week end supplements while Naipaul gets another chance to deliver himself off some more steam against the “tyranny” of Islam and its assorted excesses, (Suroor, 2001, p. 11).

Although its initial efforts to join the coalition of willing were rebuffed, the months following September 11th did foster closer ties between India and the United States, particularly in the aftermath of the attacks on the Kashmir Legislative Assembly and the Indian parliament. Drawing inspiration from the war-mongering rhetoric of the Bush administration, the External Affairs Ministry asserted – after the attacks in Kashmir, that “there is a limit to India’s patience,” and pressed the United States to include Jaish-e-Mohammad in its list of foreign terrorist organizations. Meanwhile, G. Parthasarathy, India’s former ambassador to Islamabad declared: “If the United States can travel thousands of miles to take out terrorist camps, I don’t see why India shouldn’t do so when our cities are bombed and our legislatures attacked,” (as quoted in Ranade, 2001).

The assault on the Jammu and Kashmir assembly was also viewed as irrefutable evidence of India’s victimization to Islamist terrorism. In an article titled “US finally sees terrorism in India,” a reporter triumphantly announced:

> Shedding its coyness, the United States has finally made it explicit that its war on terrorism would indeed address the menace that India has been battling in Jammu & Kashmir for years…Ever since President Bush declared a war on terrorism the US has been chary of spelling out its position vis-à-vis Kashmir for fear of offending Pakistan, its new ally in the offensive against Osama bin Laden. However, with (Jaswant) Singh by his side, Powell said on Tuesday: “We are going after terrorism in a comprehensive way, not just in the present instance of Al-Qaeda, but terrorism as it affects nations around the world, (including). India, (Rajagopalan, 2001, p.1).

As the Indian government (egged on by the Kashmiri Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah) debated the possibility of war against Pakistan, terrorists struck again on December 13th in New Delhi – five members from Lashkar-e-Toiba, another the pro-Pakistani outfit, were shot dead while trying to force an entry into the Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament). The assault was instantly

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14 The External Affairs minister in the BJP administration from 1998 to 2002.
compared to those in New York and Washington in terms of ideology and intent (Lankala, 2001): just as the Twin Towers were symbolic of American freedom, so was the Lok Sabha “the very bastion” of Indian democracy, (‘Parliament attack’ 2001: 9). When the identity of the terrorists was established the Home Minister L. K Advani, like President Bush, framed December 13th as a Pakistani-bred Islamist threat democracy and progress:

The attack was undoubtedly the most audacious and the most alarming act of terrorism in the nearly two-decade long history of Pakistani-sponsored terrorism in India. (It) has led parliament to wonder why the terrorists and their backers tried to raise their stakes so high, particularly when Pakistan is claiming to be a part of the international coalition against terrorism. The only answer that satisfactorily addresses this query is that Pakistan, itself a product of the indefensible two-nation theory with an extremely tenuous tradition of democracy, is unable to reconcile itself to the reality of a secular, democratic, self confident, and steadily progressing India…(‘Attack aimed at wiping out top leadership,’ 2001, p. 1).

Initially, press responses to December 13th also echoed an American inspired discourse of aggressive nationalism, in terms of a ‘free world’ under an ‘Islamic’ threat (Singh, 2002). Writers pondered whether India would always have to fend off a theocratic Pakistan now “suffused with the majoritarian communal ideology...easily manipulated by the military-mullah complex,” (Sahay, 2001, p.12). When President Bush persuaded a reluctant Musharraf to clamp down on Pakistani Islamist organizations, the media breathed a collective sigh of relief, confident of a “reluctant but growing acceptance in the free world that the problem of terrorism is not confined to Osama or a black turbaned Talib,” (Singh, 2001, p. 10). But in the ensuing debate about an ‘appropriate’ Indian response it soon emerged that the press in India – unlike their counterparts in the United States – did not unanimously support a retaliatory war.

Studies reveal that public opinion (in conjunction with the government and broadcast media) was strongly in favor of military action, privileging a ‘war drummers agenda’ to “stamp out terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir,” (Advani 2001; Singh 2002). A few writers even argued that failing to do so might embolden militants – now secure under an American-Pakistani alliance – to instigate further violence in India, (Raja Mohan, 2001, p. 11). In an article provocatively titled, ‘Are we a soft state?’ columnist Vir Sanghvi argues that the government’s unwillingness to combat

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15 In her study on media responses to the December 13th terrorist attacks Machandani (2002) observed significant differences between broadcast and press discourses. Television broadcasts – by virtue of their immediacy – were also emotionally charged and “set the tone for public war jingoism” within twenty four hours of the attacks, (p. 18). The press on the other hand were a little less unanimous in their call for war: while a majority of reports in mainstream national dailies did advocate military action others cautioned an excessive ‘media hype’ and rushing to war without considering diplomatic alternatives, (p. 20).
terrorism in the past has inadvertently invited such violent and audacious attempts to destabilize the state:

When a country is attacked by foreign terrorists it must first fight back and defend itself. Everything else is secondary. Our problem is that Pakistan – and perhaps the rest of the world – sees us as a soft state. We give the impression of having a mouth of steel and a fist of plastic. We will not consider any compromise on Kashmir, but we will not go to war to defend it... We will condemn cross-border terrorism but we will not cross the border to fight it. If we are to act firmly against the terrorist menace then we must abandon humming and hawing... If we believe that Pakistan is behind the terrorists then we must treat it as the enemy, (p. 11).

But other writers cautioned that judging by the course of events in Afghanistan, India would do well not to follow the retaliatory example set by the United States – a military payback would not be a “one-strike affair” but a continuous campaign that would drain economic resources and human power in both countries. A few emphasized the human cost of war to be endured by soldiers and civilians who “happened to be at the wrong place and wrong time,” (Reddy 2002: 12); while others questioned the effectiveness of war strategies against terrorists who “have probably disappeared or shifted deep inside Pakistan,” (Bidwai, 2001, p. 10). More significant however, was the bitter recognition that “India would have to go it alone” without any help from governments that that have themselves advocated military offensives against terrorism: in the words of one columnist, “the very western powers (we) call ‘friends’ will most likely turn their backs on (us) and make arcane suggestions,” (Sahay 2001, p. 12).

In the furor over the terrorist attacks in the United States and New Delhi, the press’ focus on Kashmir itself had shifted somewhat after September 2001. During the weeks following September 11th little appeared to change in Kashmir – reports continued to emphasize the violence inflicted by ‘foreign’ Islamist militants upon local Kashmiris (primarily Hindus and Sikhs), in an effort to “drive out members of the minority community,” (“BJP flays killing of girls,” 2001, p. 9). What was significant however, was a lack of ambiguity in identifying the terrorist perpetrators: the erstwhile ‘foreign’ militants, ‘ulfas,’ or ‘intruders’ were now unmistakably members of pro-Pakistani organizations like the Lashkar-e-Toiba, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, and Jaish-e-Mohammad, and were identified as such. The following excerpt from The Hindu outlines a typical report on Indian military encounters with terrorists:

Nine police personnel, three of them Assistant Sub-Inspectors, were killed and eleven injured when militants of the Pakistan-based outfit, Lashkar-e-Taiba, struck in this border town on Sunday night. The Superintendent of Police, Handwara, Mr. Garib Das, said two militants forced their entry into the camp of the Special Operations Group of the Jammu and Kashmir
police, threw grenades and resorted to indiscriminate firing. One of them, Abu Usman, was killed in the encounter that followed. A LeT (Lashkar-e-Toiba, a Pakistani-based organization), spokesman confirmed that two men of his *fidayeen* unit attacked the camp, (Bhukari, 2001, p. 1).

While reports prior to September 11th provided details about terrorist-military confrontations and violent incidents of terrorism in the valley, they tended to examine Kashmir ‘from a distance,’ through officially sourced agency and government reports. Subsequently, few journalists actually would (or given Kashmir’s political instability, could) provide an insight into the daily experience of Kashmiri themselves. As Manchanda (2002) argues, ever since the Kashmir insurgency broke out in 1989 the national media has literally “turned its back on Kashmir…hollowed out politics, and delegitimized the story of the people in Kashmir,” (p. 24).

The majority of press coverage in this region continued to reproduce such discourse, although reports did occasionally provide disparate insights into the Kashmiri perspective. One story chronicling a journalist’s visit to Srinagar reflected upon the peoples’ sense of alienation from both India – and resentment that their interests were replaced in favor of politically undermining Pakistan. Other reports were constructed along this vein, suggesting that greater economic opportunities and political franchise would go a long way towards ameliorating the daily experiences of Kashmiris. Such discourses were rare, however, and the media continued to provide an overwhelmingly state-centered approach to this conflict, again favoring political perspectives at the expense of human rights.
Journalists and scholars alike have described September 11, 2001, as “the day that changed the world,” (Beecroft and MacDonald 2004; Sanger 2001; Addley, Brookes, Mills, Hattenstone, Fleming, Moss, Burkeman, Gow, and Katz: 2001; Stankiewicz 2005; and Mishra, 2007). At first glance it appears that the terrorist attacks and subsequent American reaction has had a discernable impact on international relations – at the very least the Bush government’s aggressive response demonstrated once again the United States’ unrivalled military strength in two triumphant battles (Afghanistan, Iraq). For Jervis (2003) the war on terror also reconfirmed that the U.S remained the global hegemon while successfully positioning ‘American’ values of liberal democracy and free market capitalism against a new post-communist threat, Islamist fundamentalism (p. 83).

More significantly the events on September 11th brought home what Cronin (2002) and Rojecki (2005) call the dark side of globalization, that economic interconnectedness also meant the end of social isolation in a world where, “the danger of unexpected terror events any place, and at any time, proliferate and becomes part of the frightening mediascape of the new millennium,” (Kellner 2002: 154). Other scholars have examined how the unilateral, combative agenda of the Bush government prompted international support for a retaliatory war (Sádaba and La Porte, 2006; Saft and Ohara, 2006), and in general legitimized military options as a means of countering political opposition, (Kellner 2002; Pednekar-Magal and Johnson 2004). The war on terrorism was thus in all senses a global one both in terms of its mediation and response: it was in essence a world-wide conflict that would be fought by a coalition of willing states (“us”) against an amorphous but formidable enemy, (“them”).

This call for a global alliance also entailed certain paradigm shifts in foreign relations and the United States was forced to politically re-engage with countries such as Pakistan, Russia, India, and China, that it had formerly ignored or (in China’s case), provoked (Kellner, 2002, p. 151). For their part these nations were quick to acknowledge President Bush’s rallying war cry and reassess the magnitude of the terrorist ‘Muslim problem’ within their own boundaries. However, a closer analysis of international response reveals that while the attacks successfully created an outrage their impact on local constructions of terrorist and/or Islamist identity was relatively limited. Discourses emerging from the American experience were not merely absorbed but carefully negotiated by other countries in light of two important factors – a desired
relationship with the west, and (when applicable), their own struggles against Islamist terror. The findings of this study highlight two important (but often undermined) consequences of 9/11. First, that in addition to reinforcing the United States’ position as the global hegemon the events were also actively used by other countries – China, India, and Russia – to reinstate their own grievances against Islamist fundamentalism. More importantly this analysis also demonstrates – by comparing press discourses in India and the United States – that while the attacks in many ways transformed the nature of global politics they did not significantly alter indigenous understandings of terrorism.

Regionalizing the Terrorist Threat

But how indeed were global discourses on terrorism ‘localized’ to the Indian context? This study compared media constructions of terrorism and Islamist fundamentalism in India and the United States, and found that whilst national discourses converged in some respects after 9/11 their similarities were limited since the Indian press viewed the attacks through a local lens in the India-Pakistan conflict. A content analysis of press coverage confirmed that terrorism was significantly higher in the media agenda of both countries after September 11th – stories on this topic increased dramatically by 30% in the United States, and 22% in India. However, the analysis also established that terrorist identity was constructed differently in each national context: in general, the Indian press was more likely than the American press to consider terrorism a state sponsored activity and largely identified terrorists as Pakistani nationals. And while the number of stories on state sponsored terrorism decreased after 9/11 in the United States, it was found that they significantly increased in India during the same time frame.

Further textual analysis suggests two reasons for these news framing patterns: first, several stories in India discussed the aborted attempt by Pakistani-based Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) to sabotage the Indian parliament barely three months after the attacks in New York and Washington. The incident created a furor in India about Pakistan’s alleged sponsorship of terrorist networks. Additionally, India’s response to September 11th also indicates attempts to 'read' terrorist operations in the US in conjunction with those in Kashmir. Chakravartty (2002) for example, found that within hours of the attacks the Indian government had made an “instant connection” between Islam and terror; an official statement released on behalf of the former BJP government proclaimed, “What India has been witnessing for over a decade, the United States has experienced the fury of Islamic terrorism only now on its own soil,” (p. 206). But while the Bush government vented its fury against terrorists “practicing a fringe form of Islamic extremism” aided
and abetted by the Taliban (Bush 2001), the Indian elite pointed to Pakistan as the “Taliban’s cradle” and a “state run terrorist complex,” (Chellany, 2001: 10).

However, as the United States steadfastly refused to recognize Pakistan’s sponsorship of terrorism in South Asia a bitterly disappointed India eventually admitted that the terrorist enemy – even in this seemingly ‘global’ war – was constructed within a uniquely American experience. A report in the New York Times confirms the United States’ reluctance to become embroiled in the conflict, stating that “While the American government does not want to become a mediator in the Kashmir dispute, it fears the consequences of war between India and Pakistan, and does not want resources and attention diverted from its own global campaign to crush the terror network of Osama bin Laden,” (Eckholm and Dugger, 2002, p. A1). In light of this perceived affiliation between the United States and Pakistan the Indian press’ support for the war on terror subsequently faltered during the attack on Afghanistan, in October 2001.

But reports also indicate that for its part the United States was clearly aware of Pakistan’s fundamentalist affiliations if a little reluctant to openly acknowledge them – in the words of journalist Thomas Friedman, “Because of Sept. 11 and the subsequent attack on the Indian parliament by pro-Pakistan Kashmiri terrorists, the U.S and India made clear that Pakistan’s foreign policy had to change – or America would destroy it economically and India militarily,” (Fried, am, 2002, p. A. 13). Thus, while India did fail to muster international support against Pakistan’s presence in Kashmir (the US and UK consistently refrained from being enmeshed in this political imbroglio) Pakistan’s association with terrorist organizations was internationally acknowledged and when possible admonished by the international community.

The assault on the Kashmir Legislative Assembly and the Lok Sabha prompted government and policy analysts once again to draw connections between the Indian and American experience. Inspired by populist American discourse the Home Minister L.K Advani declared that the “very bastions” of Indian democracy were attacked by the same Islamist groups orchestrating the massacres in New York and Washington. As further evidence of Al-Qaeda’s connections with terrorists in Pakistan and Kashmir, the strategic affairs analyst Rahul Roy-Chaudhury (2003) stated that:

In addition to operating terrorist training camps in Afghanistan LeT (Lashkar-e-Toiba) cadres have also engaged in specialized training in Al-Qaeda camps. Elite LeT cadres are also believed to have been responsible for Osama bin Laden’s ‘outer’ cordon of personal security…most importantly it is alleged that the LeT training camps in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir are being used as ‘sanctuaries’ for Al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters who have escaped U.S and allied bombardment in Afghanistan. In this context a November 24, 2002 letter
believed to have been written by Osama bin Laden cites U.S support for ‘Indian oppression in Kashmir’ as one of the causes for Muslim resentment towards the U.S, (p. 280).

**Democracies in Crises**

Interestingly however, studies suggest that in the months preceding and following 9/11, neither country had followed democratic principles while responding to the threat of terrorism, or, in India’s case, separatist insurgencies. Writing in the American context McChesney (2002) and Snow (2007) observe that the Bush administration’s call for a retaliatory war was barely debated¹ in American congress, much less the domestic press. A study by Graber (2003) demonstrates that in the weeks following September 11th the government followed distinctly authoritarian practices – propaganda, censorship, secrecy, silencing dissent, and information control – while simultaneously claiming to defend American democracy against ‘barbaric’ (Islamist) oppression. In the words of Snow (2007):

…democratic governments have tended to wage war in a manner that mainly reflects the way they do business in peacetime, namely by paying due respect to such characteristics of democratic practice as accountability, transparency, protection of minorities, the accommodation of dissenting views and so on…but the democratic propaganda model is also a way of establishing the moral high ground, of demonstrating that democracy is a better way of doing politics, and of continuing politics by other means, because democracies rarely – if ever – wage war against other democracies. Democratic enemies are usually non-democracies – a dictatorship or an authoritarian regime that does not conform to international laws or norms, (p. 391).

For its part the Indian power elite have had an equally dubious record of implementing democratic practices in Kashmir. From the time of its amalgamation with India, the state has been fraught with ethno-national conflicts which the Indian government has done little to ameliorate through with starkly authoritarian practices – rigging state elections, patronizing politically acquiescent leaders, and abrogating civil liberties. All these factors contributed towards the secessionist movement in Kashmir beginning in 1989. More significantly the growing presence of terrorists and military personnel has unleashed an unprecedented level of violence in the valley, with the death toll ranging from approximately 20,000 to 50,000 since 1990, (Joseph 2000: 43).

According to Bose (2000):

For the ordinary Kashmiri, the last ten years have been a living hell. Checkpoints, cordon-and-search operations, beatings, humiliations, verbal abuse, summary executions, rapes, and

¹ According to Snow the vote for war was 98-0 in the Senate and 420-1 in the House. The sole dissenter was Representative Barbara Lee Oakland was the only person in the senate to vote against the war resolution, (p. 389).
custodial torture have transformed Kashmir from a tourist paradise inhabited by a gentle, friendly people, into one of the most oppressive places on earth, (p. 101).

Reports from international non-profit groups such as Asia Watch and Amnesty International as well as independent research, (Butalia 2002) have established detailed accounts of “security excesses,” from army personnel who are themselves reluctant to remain in an area surrounded by a culturally hostile population (p. 45). The violence exerted by the Indian army combined with the atrocities of Pakistani-abetted insurgents has made the entire valley a veritable battlefield, with civilians – particularly women and children – victims of both forces. Bhatt (2003) elaborates:

Military and security forces alike have not only abused Kashmiri women for their personal avarice but also as a means of settling political and religious differences. Innumerable cases of rape have been registered by national as well as international organizations. The army and police chiefs, when questioned, reply as a matter of fact, that this is an expected as well as inevitable result of an insurgency. Dr. Ashok Bhan, head of police in Srinagar, said, “You have to understand the psychology of the solider. He has been away from home for two-three years. If he sees a young woman in a house he might try to have a chance with her,” (p. 222).

Although incidents like these have been ubiquitous, the domestic press rarely touches upon such flagrant violations of civil liberties by the Indian military, (the terrorists on the other hand are always held accountable). In this particularly analysis patterns of news coverage were similar to those found in previous studies (Sultan, 2000; Machanda 2003; Ray 2004), that is, they provide a one-dimensional perspective on this region – they are heavily based on ‘official’ sources, press releases, and statements or speeches by government officials; rarely providing an insight into the daily experience of Kashmiris themselves. Thus, although the content analysis demonstrated that more than half the stories in the newspapers referenced Kashmir in each time frame they provided little information about this region, focusing instead on Indian victories against ‘foreign terrorists,’ attempts to quell insurgencies, speeches by local politicians, and (failed) dialogues between Indian and Pakistani leaders on cross border terrorism.

In this regard it is significant that Kashmir itself was not of much interest to the press after 9/11, even if terrorism in general received more prominent coverage. Such findings are not surprising since Kashmir is viewed primarily in light of India’s conflict with Pakistan, but they do establish the motives of local media coverage: with news on Kashmir following the established patterns of war journalism (Lee and Maslog 2005), one can only deduce that the press’ is not concerned about Kashmir itself, but rather in its status as conflicted territory and a topic of ‘national security’. If the
media coverage on Kashmir were to be put in perspective we may argue that the conflict represents one dimension of India’s complex rivalry with Pakistan.

Another explanation for limited perspectives on this conflict lies in the nature of journalistic reporting in India, which generally favors political news over human interest, and avoids critiquing elite perspectives, (Shah 1988). Furthermore, the pressures of the work place also influence the nature of coverage: journalists are obligated to report ‘objectively’ and ‘immediately,’ providing a superficial overview of events with limited background or historic context, (Iggers, 1998). Finally, Kashmir itself presents unique challenges to reporters who now have few social connections with this region and even less cultural access to its local population. Until the early 1990s Kashmiri Pandits transmitted information on Kashmir, and had already set the stage for its alienation by “projecting Kashmiris as traitors and secessionists,” (Machanda, 2003: 22). Subsequently when the conflict broke out and the Pandits fled the valley journalists were both unwilling and unable to cultivate local sources, thereby restricting coverage to “officially sponsored stories datelined Srinagar,” (p. 23). Little has changed over the last decade and the prospects of re-engaging once more with the alienated Kashmiri population continue to diminish.

Reinterpreting the Islamist Threat

If Kashmir itself was not the focal point of press coverage Pakistan’s alleged sponsorship of terrorism certainly held local media interest particularly in the aftermath of the attacks on the United States. As the content analysis reveals the religious dimension of the terrorist threat in India was apparent even prior to 9/11 with reports describing how “external jihadi” forces claiming to fight against Muslim oppression, were actually “Islamising the region on the Taliban model,” (Sarathy 2001: 13). However, the press also recognized that Islamism represented only one dimension of Pakistani political discourse, and that while President Musharraf professed that he would not impede “the freedom struggle” in Kashmir, he did not condone the violent measures used by fundamentalists to achieve its liberation from India, (Reddy 2001: 1).

After the September 11th tragedy this acknowledgement of ideological disjunction in Pakistan was replaced by an aggressive agenda against the state and its ‘Islamic’ terrorists. Lankala (2006) and Chakravartty (2003) situate Indian response in the Hindutva BJP’s resurgent militant nationalism, that instantly formed ideological connections between the Al-Qaeda’s role in September 11th and Pakistan’s sponsorship of the Kashmir insurgency. The press in turn viewed the attacks in light of this nationalist agenda and opposed the United States’ collusion with its political rival and
ideological ‘other,’ (Lankala 2006: 93). After the assault on the Indian parliament, the press’
demonization of Pakistan became even more profound as reports complained loudly about a “rogue
state” (Vohra 2001: 3) colluding with Muslim extremists to “strike at the heart of Indian democracy,”
(Parthasarathy 2001: 11).

However, this analysis also clarifies that the press were not monolithic in their acceptance of
a Hindutva discoursesseeking to alienate the Muslim community, and were just as wary of the
American inspired threat of ‘radical Islam.’ Results from the content analysis clarify that after 9/11,
religion played a more significant role in the American than Indian press and that a fewer proportion
of Indian stories were actually concerned with religion in the second time frame. Given that Islamist
organizations had orchestrated the September 11 tragedy and the December 13th assault on the Indian
parliament, it was not surprising that public discourse in both states voiced concerns about a violent
and predatory “Islamic peril” (Karim 2003). But within India the threat was reconstituted in
nationalist terms to demonize a different Islamic other, in Pakistan. Thus, rather submitting to the
western thesis of a radical, transnational, and intractable Islam, the press maintained that
fundamentalists acted under the supervision of the state which was ultimately responsible for
controlling their movements.

Political rivalries with Pakistan aside, there are several reasons accounting for the press’
reluctance to reproduce western rhetoric of a monolithic and inimical “Islam.” As part of a country
where Muslims constitute a significant religious minority and often participate in public discourse,
Indian writers could hardly afford to subscribe openly to the racist and orientalist elocutions
espoused by the west. Furthermore, an American agenda of aggressive imperialism would be
counterproductive (at least theoretically) to India’s policy of religious acceptance, sarva dharma
sambhava.

A more nuanced explanation contemplates press discourse within the complex rubric of
Indian nationalism, shaped since its independence by the contradictory forces of global
decolonization and regional orthodoxy (Rajagopal, 2001). At one level India had emerged as part of
the newly created ‘third world’ that sought isolation from the communist-capitalist divide.
Alternatively, it was a democracy that was theoretically secular but nevertheless mobilized along
religious (predominantly Hindu) aesthetics. Thus, while outwardly professing a liberalist agenda,
India also normalizes a Hindu discourse within, thereby articulating an ambivalent relationship
towards its religious minorities, (Lankala 2006).
Finally, it must also be acknowledged that peculiarities within the English press itself have fostered their negotiated readings of the militant *Hindutva* rhetoric as well as western anti-Islamic discourse. In a country as diverse as India catering to a complex agglomeration of ethno-linguistic, caste, and religious aesthetics, it is impossible – if not singularly incorrect – to make broad generalizations about its various publics and media institutions. Rajagopal (2001) offers an alternative means of thinking about Indian audiences as a ‘split public,’ divided by the contradictory forces of a secular-liberalist, and Hindu-regionalist nationalism. The media in turn have encapsulated two distinct entities – an elite, liberal English print emphasizing “objectivity,” and “truth,” over editorializing practices; and populist regional language outlets where the “narrative aspect of news is more in evidence,” (p. 153). But over the years the English press has also developed a relationship with liberalist and nationalist politics and reflects – in its self-proclaimed right to “define the nation,” – a discourse that is secular at least in theory if not in fact, (p. 158). The press’ ambiguous attitude towards the Muslim community thus reflects an attempt to straddle both nationalist discourses, albeit to varying extents: most mainstream English dailies remain situated in liberalist ideals, although some such as the *Daily Pioneer* and the *India Today* magazine are along the more conservative end of the spectrum.

**Reading War Responses in India**

This contradiction between a regionalist-militant versus secular-liberalist nationalism was also present during press debates on a military retaliation after December 13, 2001. Admittedly, in the immediate aftermath of the attacks government and media reaction were universally bellicose and jingoistic: at a press conference a few hours after the attack, (former) Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee announced that India’s “war on terrorism had now reached its peak,” while Home Minister Advani promised to “liquidate the terrorists,” (‘Suicide attack on Indian parliament,’ 2001). Over the next two weeks the print and broadcast outlets reproduced these tropes, virtually “baying for military action,” pressing the government to “follow Israel” and ‘do to Pakistan what the United States did to Afghanistan,’ (Manchanda 2002: 19).

The press’ initial mirroring of the government’s warring agenda may be explained through the findings of Donahue, Tichenor, and Olien (1995), in their classic study on journalistic coverage during conflict. Donahue et al argue that in times of crisis the media adopt a “guard dog” policy of *reflecting* hegemonic discourse rather than challenging it, thereby engendering a homogenous consensus wherein elite power structures are retained within the state. The characteristic of a ‘guard
dog’ emerges exclusively in times of attenuating circumstances (such as war or other political exigencies), and marks a significant departure from the traditional ‘watch dog’ role of the press as an autonomous and non-partisan entity.

With regard to this particular incident, we must acknowledge that the Indian press’ preliminary response was strikingly similar (and perhaps inspired by) the United States’ reaction to 9/11. Here too we observe the domestic media functioning as guard dogs, faithfully recounting the Bush administration’s rhetoric about “evil” and “bloodthirsty” attempts to destroy American freedoms, (Kellner 2002, p. 145). Studies have also established that a complex interplay of several pressures – political uncertainty, patriotism, professionalism, and propaganda – preempted a multidimensional approach to the war on terror. Graber (2003) and Snow and Taylor (2006) demonstrate how the government skillfully subverted debate by clamping down on civil liberties to ‘safeguard national security’; Paterson (2005) notes that similar attempts were made (albeit with mixed results) with the international press. Within the predominantly acquiescent national media, the jingoistic discourse of conservative channels like Fox News set national standards for a patriotic agenda that other outlets were pressured to reproduce (Iskander 2005). Jensen (2005) further problematizes this struggle between a journalist’s own patriotic convictions and the need for professional ‘objectivity during a crisis:

…it matters not how any particular journalist conceptualizes patriotism or what might be the best way for journalists to make good on their patriotism. Just as rejecting patriotism as a framework is political, so is accepting it. How then, can journalists both openly proclaim a political position and continue to make the claim that they are politically neutral? (p. 80).

Unlike the American response which remained universally supportive of elite opinion, some journalists in India eventually did revert to their ‘watchdog’ role by questioning the propitiousness of war as a retaliatory measure. As Chakravartty (2002) argues and this analysis confirms the press’ support for war wavered on several grounds – the economic and human cost of war, its futility in actually targeting terrorists, and the long term consequences for India as an emerging global player. Although Kellner (2003) postulates that President Bush’s “aggressive championing of military solutions” was responsible for plummeting diplomacy in India and Pakistan (p. 154), the impact of his warring agenda appears limited, at least within the national English press.

These differences in Indian and American articulations of elite discourse raise significant questions about their media philosophies. The American press is traditionally rooted in a libertarianism which encourages and even demands that it be a critical, rational, and self-reflexive entity, (Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm: 1963). To facilitate its institution as independent ‘fourth
estate’ the press is provided immunity from government control at all possible levels, from ensuring private ownership (at least theoretically), to granting journalists special constitutional privileges under the first amendment.

Indian journalists on the other hand receive no such allowances. Emerging from a colonialist, authoritarian experience the Indian press exhibits characteristics of what Hachten and Scotton (2002) call the ‘third world’ or ‘development’ media, wherein private ownership complements government controlled outlets, but where all media assist in the monumental task of nation building. In such a system journalists are to “support authority, not challenge it,” (p. 162) and press freedom is secondary to dominant concern of “maintaining public order” (Rajagopal 2001: 156).

Given these guidelines the media’s response to the terrorist attacks in each context appears contradictory to their governing philosophies. However, a closer examination of the American-libertarian and Indian-authoritarian tradition allows us to view these narratives from a different paradigm. The events on September 11, 2001, were hitherto unprecedented in the United States and unleashed a “spectacle of terror” that caught most Americans unawares, (Kellner 2002; Van der Veer and Munshi 2004). In the days following 9/11 President Bush declared a state of emergency ostensibly to counter a growing paranoia, but which also heavily curbed civil liberties. For a media that – despite its libertarian sensibilities – was woefully intertwined with business and political conglomerates (Bagdikian 1983; Bettig and Hall 2003; Snow 2005), elite powers would inevitably set the agenda for future discourse. On the other hand the attack on the New Delhi parliament took place during an ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan, and was largely perceived as another instance of Pakistan’s attempt to undermine its rival. In this sense the ‘shock value’ of December 13th was less than that of 9/11 and did not perpetuate so great a political crisis: to quote L. K Advani, the public was astounded by this daring attempt to threaten “the very bastion of Indian democracy” but remained unsurprised by identity of the perpetrators themselves.

Studies on the Indian media reveal significant differences between media perspectives on a retaliatory war with the press dissenting, and broadcast outlets supporting elite perspectives (Chakravatty 2002; Manchanda 2004). The differences between press and broadcast media may be explained historically in terms of their ownership and growth within the subcontinent. The broadcast media remained under government jurisdiction from the time of India’s independence till as late as 1992, when the market was finally deregulated. Even today, the public service channel Doordarshan is monitored by the state and remains the channel with the single largest reach in rural and urban India, (Thussu, 1999).
The press on the other hand was free from private ownership. Most Indian newspapers including *The Hindu*, *The Hindustan Times*, and *The Indian Express* were conceived during the nationalist movement and emerged as a means of garnering public support against colonial rule. Consequently, British attitudes to the indigenous press were suspicious, often viewing it as an “irresponsible and trouble making body that required strict policing,” (Rajagopal 200, p. 157). Little has changed after independence so that even today political elite in India regard the press as a threat to social order, rather than a check on government excesses. Authoritarian controls over the press have been exercised in various forms such as personally intimidating journalists via the Press Council or rationing newsprint supplies. But previous attempts to directly muzzle the media – such as Prime Minister Indira Gandhi’s emergency in 1975\(^2\) – have had disastrous results for power elites. As a result, despite its authoritarian practices, the press’ established status as oppositional to elite interests has enabled journalists to continue expressing dissent against policies.

**Global Consequences of September 11th**

The objective of this analysis was to determine how global constructions of the terrorist threat after the attacks in New York and Washington were unpacked in other nation states. An examination of press discourses in India revealed that while the events on 9/11 had a significant impact on the media’s agenda, press readings were negotiated in light of India’s own efforts to counter terrorism in Kashmir, and against Pakistan. In other words the Indian press’ response to 9/11 not only indicated an unwillingness to accept dominant discourse but also reinterpreted the Islamist threat to a localized enemy in Pakistan (rather than a generic ‘radical Islam’). Furthermore, the press’ readings of the war in Afghanistan suggest that – contrary to popular belief about American hegemony – the Bush administration’s discourse did not set a leading example for retaliatory efforts in other countries. Rather, this analysis suggests that Indian journalists learnt from the American experience in Afghanistan, recognizing the futility of a long term military invasion that would cost much but may never achieve its aim of ‘smoking out’ the elusive terrorists.

These readings on the aftermath of 9/11 in India augment our understandings on the cultural implications of globalization in two different but interrelated ways: first, they contribute to a growing literature challenging the dependency and cultural imperialist models in international

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\(^2\) In a desperate attempt to salvage political control from an increasingly recalcitrant public Indira Gandhi declared a state of political emergency in 1975. For the next 19 months the government heavily curbed civil liberties – the press was heavily censored and over 200 journalists imprisoned. But despite her efforts Mrs. Gandhi lost national elections in 1977, enabling the conservative and religiously militant Janata Party to take power.
communication. And second, they demonstrate that local media still reaffirm the construct of a
nation state in a seemingly borderless world by reconstituting globalized discourses within their own
cultural milieu. Both these arguments are further explored.

Advocates of the dependency and structural imperialist models claimed that the west’s
ownership of media hardware (infrastructure) and software (information) fostered global disparities
in transnational information movements from the first to the third world, rather than the reverse,
(Schiller 1964; Galtung 1971; Mowlana 1985, 1993). While claiming to merely carry information
across national boundaries, the media in reality become a tool for imposing western beliefs and
ideologies on third world states, thereby transforming the latter’s political and cultural milieu along
western lines.

The era of globalization has if anything only widened these inequalities of power and wealth.
For Mattelart (2000) the post cold war doctrine of soft power in the United States has replaced its
former military interventionist strategies with a new means of dominance by controlling information
access and content. In contrast to the Fordist era of compartmentalized, structured organizations the
essence of globalization is seamlessness – a borderless world market serviced by an empire of
interlocked conglomerates. Market forces rather than government or other autonomous institutions
control public discourse so that free speech is replaced by free “commercial speech,” and freedom
translates to economic deregulation (605). For some scholars this has serious consequences for the
sustenance of indigenous cultures, domestic media philosophies, and the sovereignty of the nation-
state, (Schiller 1964; Thussu 1998; Price 2002).

The Indian media echoed similar apprehensions during the early 1990s when the state
eventually opened up domestic markets to multinational investors. Although initially supporting
deregulatory measures the elite press were particularly reluctant to embrace foreign investment in
their own sector, for aside from the threat of competition, there was a very real fear that foreign
media would bring with them foreign perspectives, thereby undermining the diverse (and often
nationalistic) paradigms offered by indigenous print outlets. But as Sonwalkar’s (2001) examination
of the media industry reveals, foreign media investments have had limited effects on the growth of
domestic press. Although advertises have increased their overall support for broadcast media rather
than print, the mainstream English3 press nevertheless continue to benefit from niche investors,
(Sonwalkar 2001: 758).

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3 Jeffrey’s (2000) study of regional print media has shown that it has been even less affected by economic reforms than
the English press. According to Jeffrey, circulation figures in Indian language newspapers have grown almost steadily
While economic deregulation has certainly brought the ‘abroad within,’ the cultural impact of foreign media cannot be dismissed merely as an imperialist venture, but rather as an attempt to cultivate hybridism between uniquely Indian and quintessentially ‘global’ (western) values. In her analysis of foreign investment strategies in India Fernandes (2000) demonstrates how multinational firms regionalized their marketing strategies to complement nationalist narratives, thereby positioning their products for Indian mass appeal. Along these lines Chadha and Kavoori (2000) observe that despite deregulating market structures foreign media firms continue to face barriers to entry because of stiff competition from local outlets and the inability of international programming to sustain audience interest.

While there is a substantial amount of literature highlighting the benefits and drawbacks of global connectivity on third world media structures, comparatively fewer scholars have examined how regional media themselves receive and contemplate information about distinctly global events. This study fills this gap in literature by demonstrating that rather than merely reflecting the United States’ aggressive, essentialist rhetoric, the Indian press’ readings of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington was carefully negotiated to conform to its own domestic concerns. Furthermore, despite their government’s acquiescence to President Bush’s coercive enjoinder for international support the press themselves remained critical of the U.S response to 9/11, albeit only after clarifying that rival Pakistan was its chosen ally. In this regard it is significant that the Indian press also challenged American discourses of victimization by pointing out that bin Laden, Al-Qaeda, and other fundamentalists groups in South Asia were essentially fostered by the CIA during its efforts to counter Soviet expansion into Afghanistan. Finally, the press’ refusal to emulate the global hegemon was confirmed again after journalists contradicted their government’s warring agenda in response to the December 13 terrorist assault in New Delhi.

This analysis also demonstrates that the press actively used the events on September 11, 2001, to reaffirm perceptibly ‘Indian’ nationalist values that were regionalist-militant as well as secular-liberalist. In the days following the attacks in New York and Washington local journalists produced their own version of a predatory and threatening ‘Islam’ by recounting the militant Hindu troves of the BJP administration and demonizing Pakistan as a religiously theocratic state. When the Lok Sabha in New Delhi was attacked by terrorists the injunction of Pakistan as a fractious

since the 1970s and the entry of foreign investors has made little difference local competition. This is because transnational conglomerates are reluctant to enter a market in which they have few linguistic or cultural connections with consumers. Moreover, such outlets often cater to rural audiences who have comparatively far less purchasing power than their urban, English-speaking counterparts, (p. 212).
and fundamentalist state was revisited once more, and positioned this time as a threat to an inherently
democratic and secular India. In this manner the press successfully localized the threat of terrorism
while simultaneously drawing connections between the American and Indian experiences with
Islamist terror.

**Limitations and Future Research**

While this analysis provides a substantial insight into *The Hindustan Times and Hindu’s*
readings of the war on terror, it nevertheless just a glimpse of the complex and varied nature of the
Indian media’s reactions. As mentioned previously, the two newspapers considered for this study are
both part of the elite English language press, which – though significant in their own regard –
articulate a minority urban, middle-class response that is very different from the more populist
regional language newspapers (Jeffrey 2000, Rajagopalan 2000). The choice of using *The Hindu* and
*Hindustan Times* itself may be questioned on the basis of their ability to represent the Indian print
media in general and English press in particular. Both papers ostensibly have a national readership
although their actual reach is more or less limited to specific geographic areas – the readership for
*The Hindustan Times* thus based primarily in New Delhi and northern states while *The Hindu* is a
dominant player in Tamil Nadu and the south. The geographic location of the two newspapers was
important in determining the nature of their coverage – thus, being closer to the capital (where a
large number of Kashmiri Pandits now reside), *The Hindustan Times* carried a larger number of
stories on Kashmir and the India Pakistan conflict (135) than did *The Hindu* (95). The rationale for
choosing the two papers was thus based on location and content, rather than the more ‘objective’
criterion of circulation. By this argument, the findings of this study are limited to a small proportion
of Indian print outlets even though they contribute to a significant portion of the ‘public voice,’
(Lankala 2006). A more comprehensive overview of press responses could be attained in the future
by examining discourses in regional language newspapers as well.

There is another limitation of this study arising from its use of only two newspapers. Here, a
close textual analysis both papers demonstrated that there are rich debates local understandings of
democracy, religion, and war, but in the process has compromised on gleaning the ‘larger picture’ as
it were. Because its focus was on unraveling various layers in this debate, the findings of this study
also deviate slightly from other analyses of the Indian print media’s responses to the terrorist attacks
in New York and Washington, which argue for a greater convergence of anti-Islamic discourse
between the Indian and American media, (Chakravartty 2002; Lankala 2006).
Additionally, this analysis is also limited in its ability to speak for other media. Machanda (2000) and Chakravartty (2002) found significant differences in press and broadcast responses to the war on terror in that broadcast outlets were found to be more compliant with government discourse, while the press was less monolithic in its support. While an examination of television coverage is well beyond the scope of this study such a project would provide valuable insights into the patterns of media coverage in India.

Although this project found significant trends among Indian newspapers’ localization of terrorism discourses it must be acknowledged that these findings are time bound to the period of examination. The political climate within India itself has changed considerably after 9/11, both locally – with the Congress government replacing the conservative BJP regime in 2004 – and internationally, with faltering support for the most recent US invasion of Iraq. Consequently, future studies may find that the Indian press is less likely to remain favorably disposed to US discourses on terrorism in more recent years, than immediately after 9/11.

It must also be acknowledged that India’s responses to the attacks on September 11, 2001, reflect upon its rivalry with Pakistan rather than its interest in Kashmir. As mentioned earlier, stories on Kashmir in the Indian press are framed in light of national security and Pakistan sponsored terrorism, but rarely delves into the complex and uncomfortable questions about India’s own conflicted relationship with this state or the political aspirations of its local citizens. In this sense the emphasis on Kashmir per say is slightly misplaced and future studies would do well to examine Kashmiri terrorism in light of the larger conflict between India and Pakistan.

Finally, it must also be acknowledged that this project examined only one dimension of the perceived Islamist threat in India. The conflict between India and Pakistan is complex and historically rooted in ideological, political, and religious differences – the violent partitioning of the sub-continent in 1947 only foretold of various ‘communal’ rivalries that would exacerbate a Hindu-Muslim divide in India. Despite the limited popularity of Hindutva politics the global backlash against Islam after 9/11 did have consequences for local constructions of a Muslim threat, as illustrated in Lankala’s (2006) analysis of press coverage during the December 13 2001 attacks on the New Delhi parliament, and the communal riots in Godhra, Gujarat a few months later.

The nature of the Kashmir conflict has undoubtedly changed since the 1990s, with the Taliban’s rise to power contributing to a growing Islamist presence in the valley, (Rashid, 1999). The ‘Islamization’ of Kashmir is now a well documented aim of fundamentalist discourse thereby incorporating Kashmir as part of the global jihad feared by the west, while simultaneously
challenging Hindu-Muslim ‘communal’ relations within India itself. Although beyond the scope of this particular analysis future studies could examine how the nature of the Kashmir conflict itself has altered along religious and political dimensions, and whether the ‘religious’ dimension of this conflict and its consequences for communal harmony within India, is fully acknowledged by the Indian press.
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Aim of study:
This study will determine if there is a relationship between media debate on terrorism following the 2001 attacks on the United States (henceforth 9/11), and Indian press coverage of terrorist activity in Kashmir. More specifically, this project is interested in determining if discourses in both press systems converge in their coverage of terrorism, religion, and nationality, after 9/11.

Content analysis:
The purpose of content analysis in this study is to identify media framing patterns of terrorism in the American and Indian press, before and after the September 2001 attacks on the United States. This analysis specifically examines media discourses on types of terrorist activity and associations between religion and terrorism.

Sampling method:
Four newspapers – the New York Times, Washington Post, The Hindu, and The Hindustan Times – are considered for this study. Newspaper coverage was examined from March 2001 to February 2002, constituting a total of six months before and after the attacks on September 11, 2001. A constructed month was created for each of the six months prior to and after the attacks.

Since the aim of this study is to examine media discourses on terrorism, press reports focusing on this topic are analyzed. Specifically, the following topics are used as criteria for selection in each constructed month period: debates on the theory and ideology behind terrorism, acts of terrorism; threat of terrorism to national or international security; concerns about the social, political, and economic impacts of terrorism; confrontations between terrorists and military personnel; and stories on individual terrorists or terrorist organizations.

Units of observation and unit of analysis
The unit of observation and measurement for this study is a single news article. The unit of analysis is a sentence.

Code Book:
This code book will identify and explicate the variables to be coded for this study. It will also provide instructions on how to code for these variables. Each article provided should be analyzed for all of the variables used in this study.

Method:
Please read the entire news story. Using the following code book please code for each article in the given tabular sheet of paper. After you have finished coding all your articles please return your filled in sheets to the principal investigator.
Variable List and Dictionary:

PRIMARY KEY: The digit primary key assigned to the article.

NEWS_COUNTRY: Code for country from which newspaper is published:
  0 – India
  1 – United States.

NEWS_TIME: Code for time period in which article was published:
  0 – Pre-911
  1 – Post 9-11


STATE_TERROR Story mentions state sponsored terrorism
  0 – No
  1 – Yes

State sponsored terrorism: The U.S Department of State (2002) refers to state sponsored terrorism as the “coercive activities undertaken by states and their surrogates,” (p. xviii). It is terrorist activity undertaken by a state, or a group working under the approbation of a state.

  Code for state sponsored terrorism if any of the following are present in a story:
  - References to cross border terrorism from ‘X’ state(s).
  - References to states as ‘rogue states,’ ‘terrorist states,’ ‘axis of evil,’ ‘sponsors of terror.’
  - References to states funding a terrorist or terrorist organization.
  - References to states initiating acts of verbal or physical terrorism, such as killings, shootings, kidnappings, enforcing laws that curb civilian rights (ex: dress codes, right to work, right to speak, right of religion).
  - References to states initiating violence on civilian property (ex: destroying housing, public monuments, public buildings).
  - References to a state’s ability to control terrorist activity, by either supporting them or curbing the power of organizations, (Ex: references to states protecting terrorist groups or clamping down on groups, shutting down organizations).

NATIONALITY Mentions nationality of an individual or group in article.
  0 – No
  1 – Yes

Nationality: Any reference to a terrorist or terrorist organization’s country of origin. Ex: Pakistani, Palestinian, Afghani, Iranian, and so on.
COUNTRY Identifies from which a terrorist or terrorist organization operates.

0 – None
1 – Afghanistan
2 - Algeria
3 - Bangladesh
4 - Cuba
5 - Egypt
6 – Indonesia
7 - Iran
8 – Iraq
9 - Ireland
10 – Libya
11 – North Korea
12 - Pakistan
13 – Palestine
14 – Saudi Arabia
15 - Somalia
16 - Sudan
17 – Syria
18 – Other (Please mention name of country)

Country: Any reference to the country from which a terrorist or terrorist organization operates. The ‘country’ is usually the geographical location from which a terrorist attack is initiated; the place terrorists leave before reaching their target destination. This may or may not be the same as the terrorist’s country of origin (nationality).

RELIGION Any mention in a story of religion, religious beliefs, practices, or ideologies in conjunction with terrorism.

0 – No
1 – Yes

Religion: According to the Webster’s dictionary (2007) religion is a personal set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices. This study attempts to determine if religion appears as a significant frame within the story.

Code for religion if any of the following is present:
- The use of adjectives connoting religious identity or ideology. Ex: Hindu, Hindu nationalist, Hindu fundamentalist, Muslim, Islamic, Islamic fundamentalist, Islamist, Sikh, Jew, Christian, Christian fundamentalist, etc.
- Any reference to religious beliefs or ideologies an individual, organization, or state, (Ex: Islamist belief that suicide is an act of martyrdom, phrases indicating support for religiously motivated violence, such as “Spread Islamic cause across the globe,” “Create an Islamic state,” and so on).
- Any reference to socio-cultural practices of religious individuals, organizations, or states, (Ex: the practice of covering Muslim women through burqas, hijabs, or veils, of Muslim men wearing beards, observing Ramadan or Christmas as religious holidays, of Muslims using a prayer mat, of Jews following Sabbath, Muslim states following Shariah law, etc).
- Identifying an organization that professes religious identity or ideology. (Ex: Al-Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Al-Badr, Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Muslim Brotherhood are known Islamist organizations).
- Words connoting Islamist practices, such as: jihad or holy war, fidayeen (suicide bomber), mujahideen.
- Words or phrases connoting socio-religious practices in the Muslim world such as: Shariah, madrassa, umma.
- Any reference to a religious cleric such as: priest, rabbi, mullah, imam.
- Any reference to a religious text or passages from religious texts such as: Bible, Torah, Gita, Koran.
- Any reference to a place of religious worship such as: temple, church, mosque, gurudwara, and so on.

Note: An Islamist organization like Al-Qaeda can come under the label of ‘terrorist’ or ‘religion.’ Based on the findings of previous studies this project will code for these organizations under religion rather than terrorism. Additionally, although organizations such as Al-Qaeda and Hamas are primarily referenced in relation to terrorism their primary goals are not terrorism per say; rather, terrorism is a means of achieving each organization’s goals.
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