PAKISTAN'S DETERMINANTS FOR WARM RELATIONS WITH CHINA IN EARLY 1960s

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Abstract. Sino-Pakistan relations had survived in strains and doubts throughout 1950s. Nothing significant had taken place to prove decisive for their close contacts. Many domestic compulsions in both countries and particularly, the external environment impeded them from going near to each other. On the contrary, the decade of 1960 saw improvement and cordiality in Sino-Pakistan relations. This decade tested some cases and passed the Sino-Pakistan friendship which has continued since then. This paper seeks to analyze the events and elements which were instrumental in the changing course of the two countries' bilateral relations. It also attempts to find the impacts of the changing international system on China-Pakistan reconciliation and seeks to find out Pakistan's determinants for warm relationship with China. Two research questions have been addressed here: Why did Pakistan draw itself away from its ally "United States" and wanted to get closer to P.R. of China? And, why did China want to be closer to the U.S. – allied Pakistan?

Keywords: Pakistan, China, India, security, Bhutto, SEATO, CENTO.

Introduction

Pakistan's making of friendship with China has been a combination of changes in both variables; international system and domestic politics. But it was the international system that pushed Pakistan's friendship with People's Republic of China more than the changes in internal dynamics of the Pakistani government. As Maqbool Ahmad Bhatty (1999) confirms "from 1959 onwards, China's relationship with South Asia underwent a radical change, in response to India's forward policy of military penetration along the disputed border with China". The already tense Sino-Indian ties over the Tibet issue and the border problem changed into a border war. Pakistan and China found themselves in a political environment

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where they had to cooperate with one another against India. "Since China and Pakistan are such different societies", as William. J. Barnds (1975) puts it somewhere else "their co-operation can hardly be based upon ideological or mutual attraction, and has therefore often been ascribed simply to the bitter quarrels between each of these countries and India". The increasing Pakistani disillusionment with the US in the post-Dullesian period, when the new Kennedy Administration favored India created an obstructing hurdle in US-Pakistan relations. Furthermore, the differences between Beijing and Moscow were growing in a rapid speed, and Pakistan's relations with the Soviet Union were already hostile. It is also important to note that the United States' and Soviet Union's help to India in the Sino-Indian border war motivated the foreign policy makers of China and Pakistan to develop a cordial entente. The United States' new foreign policy ignored India's non-alignment and her close relations with the Soviet Union. As a Senator, Kennedy had urged to reassess those American aid programs which, in his view, had reflected an impractical and ill-concealed disdain for the neutralists and socialists who in a nation like India represented the free world's strongest bulwarks to the seductive appeal of Beijing and Moscow (Kennedy, 1957). PRC had opted for an anti-double policy, opposing both superpowers at the time. Remaining isolated with vulnerable security situation, China and Pakistan viewed these developments as detrimental to their vital national interests and hence cooperated with each other to challenge the superpowers' game with India.

This bilateral relationship was not only the direct outcome of all these readjustments but also the prolonged and serious thinking in the foreign offices of the two countries. Beijing asserted its foreign policy on the close links with Karachi to safeguard her position in South Asia and make Pakistan a bridge between herself and Muslim countries, especially the Middle East, where the two superpowers had been trying to diminish Chinese influence. On the other hand, Pakistan had already started reviewing its foreign policy at the turn of 1960 when "courses directed toward strengthening its independence, renouncing the one-sided orientation toward the Western powers, and extending cooperation with the socialist states and the Afro-Asian countries began to gather momentum in its foreign policy. Such periodization in the development of Pakistan's foreign policy, with certain deviations, is widespread and acknowledged" (Moskalenko, 1974). This was the external variable. The internal variable, on the other hand, left a significant impact on Pakistan's foreign policy as well. Earlier in 1960s, the transition to a new thinking of leadership started to emerge gradually. The actors of political change who were in opposition to Ayub's policies grew stronger and finally the chief policy agents, such as the then Pakistan's Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, became more and more powerful as decision makers. It was clear that the authority of the supporters of previous policies was increasingly on the wane, "but did not disappear, causing the complexity and multifarious nature of Pakistan's foreign policy" (Ibid.). Following are Pakistan's determinants responsible for the long-term and durable nature of the Sino-Pakistan cordial entente.

The US – Going away from Pakistan?

Pakistan was already in despair about its military pacts with the United States to the extent that the US was not ready to safeguard Pakistan's security in the case of India's attack. On the contrary, the United States went to a great length to assure India that its alliances were not against her stability in the future (Alavi, 1998). Though it was mentioned in the pacts that an attack on a member state by a third state would be considered attack on all states and other states would help the victim one. Pakistan had joined the Western bloc in the hope that Western countries would help Pakistan against India and get concessions on Kashmir. All these military alliances were against only that of communist states, mainly of the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China. Pakistan had paid a lot for its attachment with the West by providing its bases for US forces from where the U-2 incident took place and proved hostile to the USSR while having ignored the PRC. According to George J. Lerski: "It's over commitment in military alliances with anti-Communist powers (which) created the paradoxical situation in which, in the era of the hot line between the White House and the Kremlin, Pakistan had to face across her long frontiers the world's three largest unfriendly nations without getting from her American ally any support in what seems to the one-track minded Pakistani nationalists to be the most vital issue, namely, selfdetermination for their coreligionists in Kashmir" (Lerski, 1968). Being a member of SEATO and CENTO, Pakistan's hope of the US possible help against India further crashed when Eisenhower succeeded second time as a President and visited India in 1959 as the first United States President to have done so. The US wanted to make an alliance or confederation of India and Pakistan against the Communist China (Bhutto, 1968). Kennedy's Defense Secretary Robert McNamara warned Pakistan that it should realize that together with India as it was threatened by the same enemy: Communist China. But when it did not get concretized and materialized, Eisenhower Administration and latter, the Kennedy Government favored India. The US backed up India to the extent that during Sino-Indian border War, United States helped India with a tangibly full support. After the 1958 election victory of the Democratic Party to the US Congress, there was an increasing pressure on Eisenhower Administration to cooperate with India. The reason that was given was that the United States had to balance relationship between India and Pakistan. India was becoming significant for US after the former's conflicts with China. The Kennedy Administration fulfilled the previous government's promises of collaborating with India. While a Senator, Kennedy remarked at the University of New Hampshire with a praising tone that "India follows a route in keeping with human dignity and individual freedom". He hoped for India's greatness and called for a long-term strategy with other Western nations "in a serious long-range program of long-term loans, backed up by technical and agricultural assistance – designed to enable India to overtake the challenge of Communist China". He wanted India "to win that race with Red China" and "to be a free and thriving leader of a free and thriving Asia" (Kennedy, 1957). This stance of Senator Kennedy before his presidency was hardly welcome in Karachi. Soon after being elected into his office of presidency on 20 January 1961, Kennedy focused his thinking on a new policy for South Asia. He believed that a stable democratic and prosperous India could halt the Chinese communism in Asia. The US under Kennedy's leadership started praising nonalignment as an effective way of political and social stability which could cancel, or least, hamper the expansion of communism.

Washington's gestures towards New Delhi perturbed Karachi and resulted in the fact that the US "was out to appease India and to get her in its orbit of political influence by all possible means" (Khan, 1967). The US move potentially affected the security of Pakistan and weakened its plan of parity in defense capability vis-à-vis India. As noted earlier, the main concern of Pakistan had been its security, mainly against India. As Pakistan was already inferior to India in almost all fields, these US commitments had direct bearings on Pakistan's defense and security. The Ayub Khan's Regime was concerned about the US flow of aid to India and reached to a conclusion that the United States had decided to make India a dominant power in South Asia, by ignoring the threat that India would pose to Pakistan (Lerski, 1968). Moreover, Pakistan's disillusionment with United States on the Kashmir issue increased to a considerable extent when at the end of US Vice President, Lyndon B. Johnson's visit to Pakistan, in May 1961, while issuing a joint communiqué on 21 May 1961, Johnson did not make any statement to the Kashmir problem (*Ibid.*). Pakistani leaders, press and people felt unhappy about the US no-hint position on Kashmir dispute.

In the process, the balance of power in the subcontinent was changed and Ayub Khan Regime's fear that India might use the newly acquired weapons of the US to maintain its control over Kashmir, enhanced (Khan, 1964). Pakistan protested to the United States over its lavish assistance to India, but Washington totally ignored Pakistan's protests. The Indian domination in the region was not only in disadvantage of Pakistan but also for other states of South Asia, which were much smaller than India as compared to Pakistan. On the eve of his visit, in a television interview in London, telecast throughout the US on 10 July 1961, on the day of his arrival in the US, Ayub Khan remarked that as a result of the proposed US arms aid to India, she will become more powerful and the small neighbors of India might turn to China for protection (Asian Recorder, 1961). Again Pakistan failed to stop the US supply of weapons to India. Ayub Khan was trying his best to convince the US for the grave consequences of its aid to India. Later on, in a press conference in New York, he said that Pakistan sought China's friendship because there was no clash of interests between them and that Pakistan might support China's seat in the United Nations. Later, Ayub Khan converted his spoken words into reality when Pakistan supported Communist China's representation in UN and worked for boundary demarcation with China. When India occupied Goa with full military action in December 1961, it further increased Pakistan's dilemma of a more powerful India. Pakistan's ally, the United States, did not take any effective measure to satisfy Pakistan against the Indian ambitions. Expressions full of anger and grief had been seen throughout Pakistan and the leading newspapers of Pakistan vehemently credited the already presented idea of alliance with People's China against India.

As a small state if compared to India, Pakistan had always feared aggression and its or her security conditions left her ready for a third position to collaborate with any other powers for strengthening her sovereignty. When Pakistan realized that the United States could not do more for its security, she moved forward toward socialist states. If the superpowers had really been honest in finding a solution for Kashmir problem which was a security issue for Pakistan, it would not have tilted towards China for support. Klaus H. Pringsheim has analyzed: "Had either the Soviet Union or the United States been willing to support Pakistan's position on Kashmir, Sino-Pakistani friendship might never have materialised" (Pringsheim, 1965). Although Pakistan's relations with the former Soviet Union entered into a new phase with the USSR's agreements for projects (what kind of projects), but she was still not so trustworthy, as was evident from her soft corner for India. The previously ignored state, Communist China, was attractive to Pakistan, with whom she later consolidated her ties.

The Changing Security Scenario Ahead of Pakistan

The foreign policy of a country reflects its interests. The most important interest of a state's foreign policy is defense and security. The already securityconcerned state of Pakistan saw a change in international relations, which altered its defense thinking into a more robust way. K. B. Sayeed has acknowledged: "To summarize the position that existed at the beginning of 1960, Pakistan was reasonably satisfied in the sense that the returns that it realized from its foreign policy were of the same order as the objectives – security (s) plus a reasonable amount of development (d). To state this in the form of an equation: Foreign Policy = S + d (small d to indicate that development was not as important as security" (Sayeed, 1968). Pakistan was surrounded by three hostile neighbors. The most threatening state of India which had had continuing and endless disputes with Pakistan. Karachi was doing her best to normalize its relations with New Delhi by offering the joint defense of the subcontinent, but the Indian refusal left it in vain. The western neighbor, Afghanistan, was the first Muslim country who had not recognized Pakistan. The primary cause for the rivalry was the demand of Pukhtoonistan, which was presented by Afghanistan immediately once Pakistan got independence in 1947. The Pak-Afghan relations had been under stress due to the Durand Line between the two countries, which Afghanistan had not been willing to recognize it as a formal international boundary line. The Soviet backed Afghanistan which was disturbing the situation in its adjacent areas of Pakistan, namely, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. In these restive areas, Afghan-supported some elements, from time to time causing revolt. The most serious crisis lasted from September 1961 to June 1963, when diplomatic, trade, transit, and consular relations between the countries were suspended.

Their severe differences came into lime light when in 1955 the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul was attacked by an aroused mob and burnt the Pakistani flag.

The agitators were protesting against the incorporation of the tribal areas of West Pakistan into one of its provinces. They always considered that these areas historically belonged to Afghanistan. The second event, which was most critical in their bilateral relations, was the closing of Pakistan Consulates in Afghanistan, due to the fact that the staff members were harassed. Pakistan also demanded Afghanistan to close her consulates and other agencies in West Pakistan because of their involvement in subversive and anti-Pakistan activities. Accordingly, Afghanistan did so (Montagno, 1963).

The Soviet Union was a great threat too in a sense that it had added a distressing picture to Pakistan's security. The relations with the Soviet was not normal since Pakistan's first Prime Minister, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan had visited United States and rejected the Moscow's offer to visit the Soviet. Relations further intensified by the Soviet support to India against Pakistan. The most important issue between India and Pakistan had been the Kashmir, on which, most often the USSR had been taking the Indian side. Since the Pakistan's entry into alliances with the West, the Soviet Union was complaining about Karachi's leaning. A number of protest and counter-protest notes had been exchanged between the two countries. Soviet-Pakistan relations reached their lowest ebb in 1960 when an unarmed American reconnaissance U-2 plane was shot down over the Soviet Union. The plane had taken off from Peshawar, West Pakistan where Pakistan had allowed the United States to establish "listening posts" and allowed the flights of spy planes over the Soviet Union. The Soviets threatened Pakistan with punitive retaliation as they were aware of the take-off base. This incident, however, took a bizarre turn when the United States at first refused to acknowledge the shooting of the U-2 plane, and Pakistani decision makers had to face the wrath of the Soviet Union alone (Rajput, 1973). The Soviet Union protested and warned Pakistan for the grave consequences of the action, and made stronger the Indian position thereafter.

After taking over power in 1958, General Ayub Khan had declared for normal and friendly relations with all its neighbors. The reappraisal of foreign policy got momentum in 1959. Pakistan had hinted the Westerners about the independent policy and new approach to relations with the Communist world. Looking to the new map of changing scenario earlier in the 1960s, Pakistan was facing challenges from its three eastern, western and northern neighbors; India, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union respectively. Her biggest ally, the United States, friendly state of Britain and other Commonwealth members were far away. Pakistan was watching carefully the state of Sino-Indian relations. In late 1950s and early 1960s, when the Beijing-New Delhi differences changed into open hostilities, Pakistan rushed to shake hand with its misunderstood friend, P.R. China. As such Pakistan had no fundamental clash of interests with China and she had criticized the Pakistan's pro-West moves in a milder tone than the Soviet Union, Pakistan offered her boundary demarcation. Unlike the Soviet Union, Beijing had not supported India on Kashmir issue and Afghanistan on Pukhtoonistan problem. Also, China's watch and wait policy of the South Asian rivals and superpowers competition became fruitful with the change in international system. The self-defense and maintenance of stability in the region affected the Sino-Pakistan relations in a way that gradually became warmer (Ruixiang, 2008). The no-option situation of making friends in the region forced Pakistan and China to start their era of cordial relations. Thus, only the Communist China appeared to be worthy of friendship.

Internal Dynamics of Public Pressure and Leadership's Role

During the 10 month regime of Feroze Khan Noon the pressure of the elected representatives continued to mount. In March 1958, the debate on foreign policy in National Assembly reflected near unanimity in denouncing pacts and advocating normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China. Prime Minister Feroze Khan Noon, in the course of his speech declared that if the US stopped military aid to Pakistan, it would not hesitate to break the pacts and "will go and shake hands with the people whom we have made enemies for the sake of others" (Asian Recorder, 1963). An influential Pakistani industrialist, diplomat, politician and statesman – M.A.H. Ispahani visited China extensively in December 1960, spent their twenty days and held long discussions with prominent leaders there. On his return, he strongly put forward the Chinese case for normalization of relations with Pakistan. The Chinese leadership was interested to present the image of its Communist structure that the economic and agricultural fields were not stagnant but growing with a rapid speed. They invited a Pakistani delegation of industrialists led by an East Pakistani Lawyer, A. Ahad, including other industrialists like Najmuddin Valika, A.K. Khan, and representatives of the Adamjee and Ispahani firms. Later, China invited more delegations from Pakistan. A former Pakistani Army officer, General Habibullah Khan went to China and remarked on his return that the West had tried to suggest that the Chinese communes were lacking in efficiency. But contrary to that of the Western propaganda, he was impressed by the Chinese system (Sayeed, 1964).

Although President Ayub Khan was known to all for his pro-West leanings, he then too advocated a balanced foreign policy on equal footing. According to Yaacov Vertzberger, Pakistan had the following four options for its foreign policy.

- "1. Maintaining its current policy, relying only on its membership in the Western alliances and remaining the United States' "most allied ally".
- 2. Ending its alliance with the West and adopting a nonaligned policy based mainly on closer cooperation with Asian and African countries.
- 3. Ending its alliance with the West and exchanging it for an accommodation with China and, if possible, the Soviet Union as well.
- 4. Trying to maintain its alliance stature but at the same time cooperating with China and perhaps the Soviet Union on matters of mutual interest" (Vertzberger, 1983).

Pakistan adopted a new kind of bilateralism based, on the one hand, on not antagonizing its Western allies including the US, while, on the other hand,

normalizing and strengthening its relations with the socialist states, particularly the PRC. This policy of Ayub Khan was evident from the fact that he appointed Muhammad Ali Bogra as a Foreign Minister whose policy speech which he delivered in the National Assembly on 27 June 1962 demonstrated that clearly and explicitly. The Bogra's appointment was imperative in the sense that he was the person who had consulted with Chinese Premier, Zhou En-lai in 1955 during the Bandung Conference, where he had successfully presented Pakistani case to his Chinese counterpart.

Ayub Khan followed a policy of rapprochement somewhat reluctantly with China. But the most important personality who has always been a strong supporter for cordial relations with socialist states was Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the then federal minister for fuel, power and natural resources in Ayub Khan's cabinet. The architect and a known advocate of strong Sino-Pakistan relations, Z.A. Bhutto, had a great impact on Sino-Pakistan relations, especially, after he had become foreign minister in 1963. He had led a delegation to UN General Assembly session in 1960 for such purposes. After coming back to Pakistan, he criticized the government's total dependence on the West and emphasized the importance of having good relations with socialist countries. He was so critical to Ayub's one-sided policy to the extent that he eventually separated himself from the government. Bhutto was the first person in Pakistan who refrained from voting against the Communist China's membership in the UN in October 1960, which was totally against the United States' instructions (Bhurgri, 2002).

Mr. Bhutto had ideological attachment with socialism as well. Writing on the Political Situation in Pakistan, he remarked that "only socialism, which creates equal opportunities for all, protects from exploitation, removes the barriers of class-distinction, and is capable of establishing economic and social justice. Socialism is the highest expression of democracy and its logical fulfillment. The range of socialism is as wide as conceivable. Apart from those that have undergone the process of revolution, there are many countries, among them even constitutional monarchies, where socialist requirements have been progressively realized without violent changes. The universality of the precepts of socialism is essentially due to two reasons: first, the basis of modern socialism is objective; second, socialist thinking is relevant to all countries in every part of the world in their actual economic and political condition. Socialism is therefore of direct interest to Pakistan, an under-developed country marked by internal and external exploitation" (Bhutto, 1968).

Bhutto's approach was Third-World oriented, ideological, anti-Western and strongly nationalistic. Once pointing toward the Soviet Union and Communist China, he remarked that we should develop and expand contacts with these countries and other sectors of the world. He considered the capitalist countries' aid to developing nations as the tactic of imperialism for interference in weak countries. That's why he had strong wishes for normal and good relations with the socialist bloc, "but without any cultural imposition or political domination

by them" (Bhutto, 1994). He was less concerned than Ayub Khan with the economic situation of the country and more enthusiastic for good relations with socialist states. He had considered actual threat to Pakistan's independence from the total dependence on US. Realizing the same dilemma, Bhutto criticized Pakistan's membership in the Western alliances. That was long before he remarked that "we should withdraw from CENTO and SEATO" (Bhutto, 1972). He advocated the view that the emergence of Global Powers had changed the concept of a Great Power in such a way that they were striving to establish dependency relations with the Third World countries and gave aid, to make a new kind of slavery system in the world. Bhutto analyzed the new imperialism and Great Power politics in these words. "The aim of a Great Power is no longer to subjugate the world in the conventional sense, but to control the minds of men and gain the allegiance of the leaders of underdeveloped nations, through economic domination and other devices, without necessarily interfering directly. In the age of neo-colonialism the physical occupation of territories by a Global Power is not necessary, as the objectives of its global policy can be achieved by indirect exploitation and various kinds of inducement. The multitude of powerful but invisible devices and agencies operating more or less through remote control now bring the same result that physical subjugation used to in the past" (Bhutto, 1969).

Bhutto was strongly critical to the role of the Great and Global Powers. His opinion about the small country and a Global Power was, that the "relationship between the Global Powers and the smaller countries is on an unequal footing, whereby the former can exact a multitude of concessions without responding in sufficient, let alone equal, measure". It seemed to Bhutto that a smaller country could not bring a Global Power under her influence. On the contrary, a Global Power maintained relations with smaller nations to pursue its policy of narrow self-interest, which was a cause of confrontation between them. He asked: "Should the smaller nations therefore obediently follow the dictates of Global Powers and exchange their independence for material gains and promises of economic prosperity?" The answer was "No" (*Ibid*, p. 11).

Analyzing the international and national scenario of Pakistan, it was hardly possible for Ayub Khan and Z. A. Bhutto, to be totally dependent on Western countries and stay far away from the socialist bloc. Although the bureaucracy and the military leadership were pro-West, the public demand for closer contacts with the People's Republic of China changed the Pakistani leaders' thinking. The calculations made left only one option for Pakistan Government, which was to keep its alignment with the West and establish entente with PRC as well.

Conclusion

The foreign policy of a country is not only the result and response to changes in the perpetually shifting international system, but also a mirror of continuously mutable domestic politics. The case of Pakistan's relations with China during the 1960's was not different in any way. The internal developments and changes of Pakistan, though secondary to the external environment, had impacts on its foreign policy and relations with China. The people of Pakistan had never felt themselves threatened from their northern neighbor, the People's Republic of China. Even during the strained-decade of the fifties when the West intentionally had publicized the Communist China as a threat, in order to urge for joining alliances by the Asian states, the Pakistani public opinion was contrary to the West in this regard. The actual obstacle for the Sino-Pakistan normalized relations was the Western-oriented civil and military bureaucracy. Masses in Pakistan had always advocated the idea of cordial relations with PRC. Moreover, it was a significant shift in international system regarding South Asia which leveled the ground for cordial relationship between Pakistan and China. The deteriorated Sino-Indian relationship, the US' pampering attitude towards India and the Soviet-Indian friendship paved the way for boosting up Pak-China relationship in 1960s.

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