CHAPTER V
COMPARING THE CASE STUDIES

The problem of security, the perceptions about it and ways of meeting the challenges of security is not the same for all nations of the world. Indeed the security situations in East Asia differ a good deal from those in South Asia. This chapter compares the two sets of alignments, Pakistan-China and North Korea-China against the background of threat perceptions. A comparison entails an understanding of the parallels as well as the differences. There is reasonable degree and depth of convergence between the two cases.

Moreover, a comparison will also inform us about the nature of perceptions of the two countries and their ways of meeting the security dilemma. A comparison throws some light on how threat perceptions have advanced. All the three countries in the Asian region namely, Pakistan, North Korea, and China are nuclear powers and share a feeling of being a divided nation. The US has been involved in both the cases as an extra regional player. As the much weaker of South Asia’s two largest countries, Pakistan courted support from outside the region and turned to the US for assistance in narrowing the gap between Indian and Pakistani capabilities.

The US also had a central role in the case of North Korea. During the Cold War era the relationship between North Korea and South Korea was characterized as hostile and DPRK (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) felt threatened by - the US-ROK (Republic of Korea) alliance. In response to these perceived threats, both Pakistan and North Korea aligned with China. Though power asymmetries exist between Pakistan and North Korea on the one hand and China on the other, both Pakistan and North Korea were driven to China because they had no other choice. The bilateral relationship in these cases, its intensity as well as its strength is a result of carefully calculated strategy and willingness. An alignment-like situation is present in both the cases showing willingness of Pakistan and North Korea to cooperate with China as well as their desire to retain freedom from their relatively powerful ally.

Since Pakistan and China are strikingly different societies, their convergence can hardly be based upon ideology. Both Pakistan and China are ideologically apart. It has, therefore, often been ascribed simply to the hostile relations between each one of them.
and India. In fact, 'Cooperating with the enemy of your enemy is a strategy that has commended itself to nations throughout history' (Barnds 1975: 463). The relationship between Pakistan and China is informal and intimate as it is not governed by any formal treaty of friendship and alliance. It is built on an understanding evolved over the years. Pakistan shaped its security policy in awareness of the regional imbalance of power. Since its inception in 1947, democracy or a semblance of democracy could survive only for a period of two and a half decade in Pakistan. It has been under military rule for a longer period. The absence of democracy also had its bearing on foreign policy. Not only in Pakistan, more so in China, there has been an absolute and unaccountable government at the apex. This is the only ideological convergence between the two.

On the contrary, in both China and Korea, nationalism emerged out of a condition of national humiliation imposed by outside powers (Kiyosaki 1976: 3). Both China and unified Korea have experienced the agony of what they called imperialist aggression. Both had become divided nations and have been enmeshed in the Cold War. There is also a cultural affinity between North Korea and China. China and North Korea share common cultural, philosophical and quasi-religious common value system based on Confucianism. Added to this, these countries are ideocratic states. Marxism-Leninism is the common axiom governing their polity. China has served as a model for the development of North Korea. The relationship between North Korea and China is formal in that it is based on a written treaty signed in 1961.

Achievement and maintenance of security is one of the consistent objectives of all statecraft. Various tactics are employed to achieve this goal. Stephen Walt in *The Origins of Alliances* focuses on the balance of threat including both power and the perception of threat to explain alliances. He claims that states balance against the state that poses the greatest threat to their security. This explains why most of the strongest states in the international system allied with the stronger of the two superpowers, the US rather than with the weaker, the USSR. According to Walt, the perception of threats to a nation's security varies. The chapter will proceed by evaluating four factors that determine balancing or bandwagoning. They are aggregate power (determined by population,
economy, military and technological capabilities), geographical proximity to others, offensive power, and aggressive intentions. All affect the threat perceptions as described by Walt.

Have the threat perceptions undergone a change in the post-Cold War era? Do the perceptions change? If they do then how? Can future behaviour be predicated by past behaviour? It all depends on the change in variables. The following analysis will also deal with these issues and give a broad analytical overview of the similarities and peculiarities of the two sets of alignments. The foci of the study are one decade before the end of the Cold War and one decade after the Cold War ended.

The first section of this chapter briefly summarizes the two cases and then analyzes the four components of balance of threat (hereafter BoT) theory in the context of these cases for a comparison during the Cold War period. The second section attempts to examine the changes in these variables during the post-Cold War years. The next section analyzes the impact of the threat perceptions on security negotiations. The final section provides a summary of the chapter.

I

The cases

Pakistan and China

A Pakistani scholar articulates security 'essentially as a negative term implying the absence of real or perceived threats whether stemming from external sources or internal troubles or incumbent economic disparities and inequalities to certain coveted values' (Cheema 1991: 281). Pakistan and China enjoy “all weather and all encompassing” relations. On 22 November 1962, Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Z. A. Bhutto affirmed, “We have declared that our friendship with China is unconditional”. He gave the reason why Pakistan held China in special esteem, “We admire and salute the PRC for not having taken a hostile stand on Kashmir in spite of the fact that, in the past, our relations with the great Asian neighbour were not cordial as they are today” (as cited in Burke 1973: 288).
Relations between Pakistan and China have been influenced by the dominant position of India in the region. In fact the single most important factor, which has impinged on the Pakistani construct of security, was the threat it perceived from India. Since threat indicates a constant factor, any changes in its intensity were accompanied by an enhancement in Islamabad’s military capacity to challenge India’s security planning for the region. China’s problems with India were exacerbated by India’s proximity with the Soviet Union as rift was developing between Moscow and Beijing. It also perceived India as a potential challenger in the region. These factors reinforced the increasing overlap of interests between China and Pakistan i.e., mutual enmity towards India. Hence, China embarked on an enduring strategic relationship with Pakistan. During the Cold War, the Sino-Pak alliance was forged to counter the perception of Soviet and Indian hegemony in the region. In the post-Cold War period also the Sino-Pak alliance was based on common perceptions.

China alone had sufficient credibility to influence Pakistan. While Pakistan’s alignments with China have enhanced the security of the country through deterrence against India, it has also helped in other fields. Its indulgence with Pakistan includes almost everything – nuclear and missile technologies, economic assistance etc. China supplies Pakistan with cheap and good quality military equipment at ‘friendship’ prices. On the other hand, Pakistan provides a market China’s weapons, and access to Western technologies. So in more than one way, the Sino-Pak relationship is mutually beneficial. Further the alignment also effectively balanced the threat posed by India.

North Korea and China

The Sino-DPRK relationship has also been described as that of “lips and teeth”. Regarding this friendship, an editorial of the Renmin Ribao asserted that “The Chinese and Korean peoples are comrades-in-arms and brothers sharing weal and woe. Our two peoples and our two armies have forged a profound friendship cemented in blood in protracted struggle against common enemies” (Kim 1985: 208).

North Korean threat perceptions are more intense because the interests of the four major powers – China, Japan, the Soviet Union and the United States converge here in a relatively small area. Chinese analysts have dichotomously characterized the situation in
North Korea as unique in the world, with "compress relations" that essentially remain "stable in an unstable position" (Bean 1990: 122). North Korea is supported by the erstwhile Soviet Union (it has no Warsaw Pact type alliance in East Asia, but had a bilateral alliance with North Korea) and China. The treaties between the DPRK and its two allies – the Soviet Union and China, signed in 1961 called for immediate military and other assistance in case of military attack from any nation. During the Cold War, the rationale for the alliance was to contain the military threat posed by the US-ROK alliance. After the end of the Cold War, China expressed a strong dissatisfaction with what it perceived as a unilateral foreign policy pursued by the US as the only superpower. The politics of the US in the East Asian region, it felt, were keeping the Cold War alive. The maintenance of balance of power in East Asia depends upon this alliance.

This chapter seeks to understand balance of threat with reference to these two case studies. Walt suggests that states will attempt to balance against the greatest threat in the international system. The following section compares the two sets of alignments on the basis of a few central questions:

1. Does the difference in aggregate power matter? Is it applicable to both the cases?
2. Does geographic proximity matter? Is it an important factor in building alliance in both the cases?
3. Does the difference in relative capabilities matter? Is it a strong variable in both the cases?
4. Is aggressive intention an important factor in building alliance in both the cases?

The following variables determine such perceptions of threat and help in understanding and comparing the two alliances.

*Evaluating the factors that affect the threat level*

*Aggregate power: South Asia*

Kenneth Waltz (1979: 191-192) provided definition of power as the 'extent that (one) affects others more than they affect (oneself).’ A state’s power can thus be understood as a combination of its capacity to influence others to behave as it wants them to, and conversely to resist the unwelcome influence of others.
The conventional balance of power in South Asia lies in India’s favour. Pakistan is a country of 803,943 square kilometers in comparison with India’s 3,166,829 square kilometers. This difference in the territorial sizes of India and Pakistan exacerbates Pakistan’s insecurity. Indian ‘giantism’ has engendered considerable fear and mistrust among the neighbouring countries, which is inherent in the asymmetrical situation, and can probably only be eliminated if the Indian ‘compound state’ is dissolved ‘into a dozen Thailands’ (Lewis 1991: 389). India has superiority over Pakistan in terms of manpower, resource base, weapons, industrialization, military, defense industry etc. This imbalance of power in South Asian region leads to Pakistan’s relationship with other countries. The Pakistani leadership perceives that India aspires leadership in South Asia.

The relative strength of India’s military capabilities bolsters Pakistan’s fear of ‘Indian hegemony’. Pakistan lacks strategic depth. Karachi, the only major port, falls within easy reach of Indian military aircraft (Dholakia 2005: 108). Such lack of strategic depth forced Pakistan to look for support from the Western powers. It tried to strengthen its positions by developing relations with the US, the Middle East and China. The most important element of Pakistan’s security calculation was to acquire the means to counter Indian power. According to Rahim Khan, Secretary General Defence of Pakistan, “The size and shape of the country’s armed forces and its strategy is determined by the threats it faces both internally and externally” (Sawhney 1985: 104). In Pakistani perception, in view of the extensive borders, limited depth and location of the vital areas along the border, the size of the armed forces provide effective military capability. Doger and Sen (1990) report an asymmetric arms race between India and Pakistan, with Pakistan responding to Indian military spending. During the Cold War period, superpower rivalry compounded the Indian threat and at the same time generated opportunities for Pakistan to counter it.

Aggregate Power: East Asia

In case of East Asia, North Korea is smaller and has been weaker than its neighbours. The balance of power lies in ROK’s favour. South Korea has twice the population of the North. A comparison of the GNP (Gross National Product) of the North and South from 1953 to 2000 makes it clear that North Korea was never close to the South. In 1960 North
Korea’s GNP was $1.52 billion while South Korea’s GNP was $1.95 billion. Economic growth in the 1970s and 1980s created an economy in the South far stronger than the North. By 1970, North Korea’s GNP had grown to $3.98 billion, while in the South the GNP was $7.99 billion. In the 1980s, South Korea made remarkable economic achievements whereas the North Korean economy had begun to experience difficulties.

To measure the aggregate power, an important component is the military. In this case, it implies a comparative evaluation of the military capabilities of both Koreas to assess the military balance on the Korean peninsula. South Korea’s total military expenditure includes not only its defence budget but also American aid for the security and stability of South Korea. It has increased ROK’s national defence capability. This increased military strength, coupled with the stationing of US military forces in the South created threat perception in the North. The South Korean military is better equipped and better trained than the North. The North, although it has numerically larger armed forces, faces a much more highly trained and capable US-ROK armed forces. Michael O’Hanlon (1998: 142) notes, ‘given the obsolescence of most North Korean equipment, however, actual capabilities of most forces would be notably less than raw numbers suggest. About half of North Korea’s major weapons are of roughly 1960s design, the other half are even older’. In terms of defense spending, in the mid-1970s North Korea fell behind the South, spending less on defense. By 1977, the South was spending $1.8 billion opposed to $1 billion by North (Kang 2003: 47).

Since the 1980s, the balance of power between the two Koreas shifted further in Seoul’s favour, characterized by an expanding military gap. Thus, the most common measures of power like economic size and defense spending show that North Korea was never stronger than South Korea. And this imbalance of aggregate power between the two Koreas has intensified military tension on the peninsula. At the same time, relations between North Korea and the US are obviously asymmetric. United State’s uncompromising position on keeping its troops in South Korea bolsters North Korea’s perceived threat.

The balance of power is an important factor in building alliances in both the cases. To counter the threat from US-ROK alliance, North Korea developed closer relations with China. This alliance is indicative of the Chinese view of Korea as a buffer state, vital
to China's national security. For North Korea, her axis with China is a question of life and death but such is not the case with Pakistan. Pakistan is bigger than North Korea. Pakistan has friends in the Middle East, Europe, and the US. In fact it has a presence which cannot be neglected. North Korea has isolated and even insulated itself. Its sole guarantor is China which has underwritten its security.

**Geographical proximity: South Asia**

Nicholas J. Spykman (1944: 22-23) stated that the geographic location of a state in the world is of basic importance in defining its problems of security. It conditions and influences all other factors...[and] regional location defines potential enemies and allies and perhaps even the limits of a state’s role as a participant in a system of collective security.

Questions relating to defence and security cannot be answered adequately unless geography is taken into account. According to some scholars, a country’s emphasis is shifting from military to economic competition. Nevertheless, such a shift cannot eliminate geography as an important variable in a country’s foreign policy. The states are more likely to intervene in neighbouring than the distant states. Morgenthau (1960) asserted, 'The most stable factor upon which the power of a nation depends is obviously geography'. Walt points out that geography influences the states choices of allies.

The external dimension of a country’s security pertains to its immediate geostrategic environment. One of the reasons for Pakistan’s insecurity is its geographic location. Pakistan faces India geographically without any strategic depth. There are no natural barriers on most of the Pakistan-India border. The two share long borders that could be a source of threat and Pakistan’s lines of communication are vulnerable to India. Some of the main cities of Pakistan like Islamabad are situated around 80 km from the Indo-Pak border. According to a Pakistani assessment of its own strategic weaknesses, 'Pakistan feels exposed because its lines of communication and the highly developed canal system that irrigates the fertile areas of Pakistan that are critical to its economic survival run close to the Indo-Pakistani border... India’s capture of just 40 km would wipe out Pakistan because its communications, irrigation, industry and population are all taken together within that depth' (Tahir-Kheli 1984: 212). An additional complicating
factor for Pakistan is the fact that Karachi is the only deepwater seaport available to Pakistan, making it very easy for India to reinforce a naval blockade of Pakistan and thereby cut off Pakistan’s access to international commerce (Grover 1997: 299-301).

At the most general level, Jammu and Kashmir has remained the basic issue of Indo-Pak conflict. Partition of British India led to the division of Kashmir into two parts: the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, and the Pakistani controlled Azad Kashmir. It made Pakistan’s defence vulnerable. Pakistan’s only road and railway line, linking Lahore with Peshawar, runs parallel to the Kashmir border. Moreover, three rivers Indus, Jhelum, and Chenub over which Pakistan enjoys sole right under the Indus Basins Water Treaty enter Pakistan from Kashmir (Chaudhri 1991: 107). The strategic and economic considerations make it imperative for Pakistan to seek a just settlement of the Kashmir dispute. While regarding his apprehensions about Pakistan’s insecurity, President Ayub Khan said: ‘Pakistan is divided into two halves, West Pakistan is pressed between three mighty powers in Asia. One (India) is virtually hostile and the others have an ideology which conflicts with our ideology’ (as cited in Jafri 1966: 156). His following statement also in the regional context makes Pakistan’s insecurity from India clear:

‘Just look at the map of Kashmir. Just look at the location of rivers on which the life of whole of West Pakistan, of some 45 million people depends..., there is the added problem of our security, of physical military security. The present ceasefire line is just like a grip around our neck’.

Thus, India shares a long border with Pakistan. On the other hand, China does not share long border with Pakistan. Under these geographical realities Pakistan was bound to coexist as a close neighbour to China in the midst of surrounding unfriendly countries and probably adhered to the suggestion that ‘let us seek strength within the campus of our own geography, the Middle East on the one hand, and China on the other’ (Pakistan Times 27 May 1962). To ward off the eventualities, Pakistan not only initiated a strategy to modernize its armed forces but also entered into alliances. It was this sense of insecurity that compelled Pakistan to align itself with the West and later with China.

Geographical proximity: East Asia

Korea shares a northern border with China and Russia and faces Japan across the Korean Strait and the East Sea. At present, the peninsula is divided into two parts, the Republic
of Korea (South Korea) and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea). The three nations that border North Korea are: to the South, South Korea (238 KM border); to the North, China (1416 KM border); to the North-east, Russia (19 KM border). Geographically the US is not a part of East Asia but due to its important historical role in regional security, its security alliances and commitments to South Korea and its military bases in the region, the US is seen as a part of the regional security structure. Though it is thousands of miles away from the North Korean borders yet it threatens North Korea through its ally - South Korea (in close proximity to North Korea). South Korea is supported by two maritime powers- the US and Japan, separated from the peninsula by sea. Geographically and militarily, North Korea is in an advantageous position as it is supported by China and the erstwhile Soviet Union, the two continental powers that border North Korea. The Yalu River separates the two countries, North Korea and China.

The importance of geographical proximity shows variation in the two cases. Geographic proximity is not a big issue in case of South Asia as India and Pakistan are neighbours. Pakistan shares a larger border with India than with China. Between the two, China is farther. The threat from China is not immediate. Thus, it is understandable that Pakistan felt greater threat from India than with China. On the contrary, in case of East Asia, geographic proximity is not an important factor. The length of the border between North Korea and China is longer than North Korea and South Korea; hence, North Korea should have felt more threatened by China. Moreover, the US is even farther away. Thus, geographical proximity is not a very important factor in the perception of threat in East Asian case.

Offensive capabilities: South Asia

Offensive capability refers to influence capability or the ability to affect the environment. Realism focuses on the material balance of power (Waltz 1979). Realism contends that states rationally focus on the distribution of material capabilities and act accordingly. One state’s increasing material capabilities necessarily threaten other states because these increased capabilities could be used for an attack any time. Those with the largest material capabilities determine the structure of world politics, and to protect their position they seek to deny any relative gains to their competitors or potential competitors (Grieco 1990).
In the case of South Asia, in 1974 India displayed its nuclear weapons potential by detonating a plutonium-fueled nuclear device. In 1980, it orbited an earth satellite, being the sixth nation in the world to successfully do so. In 1985, it commissioned its first indigenously built nuclear power reactor and its first fast breeder reactor. It was ahead of Pakistan in the development of long-range missiles and rockets and excelled in various other fields. Pakistan failed to win any of three wars fought with India and in 1971 its territory and population was also cut short. The traditional enmity between these two countries remained intact throughout President General Zia ul-Haq’s period (1977-1988). Pakistan held India responsible for the regional arms race, and insisted that the Indian military threat to Pakistan’s territorial integrity and independence was no fiction (Wirsing 1991: 83). Pakistan lacked the requisite capabilities to cope with the Indian threat. To deal with the perceived threat from India, Pakistan’s security planners engaged in a ceaseless effort to improve its security situation.

The Pakistanis felt that their national survival was at stake, therefore Indian military power had to be contained. A government-funded think tank in late 1985 wrote ‘the dilemma of the two-front situation notwithstanding, the greatest threat to Pakistan comes from India’s national aim of achieving world power status and hegemony over the region, its armament programme, and its arm-twisting of its weaker neighbours’ (Akram 1985: 36). A report published the same year by the anti-Zia and left-leaning Independent Planning Commission of Pakistan (based in Lahore) said that not only was the Indian threat to the independence and integrity of Pakistan increasing, but that ‘by any standard of future projection India qualifies as the most menacing of history’s time bombs’ (Wirsing 1991: 84). By the end of this millennium, the number of troops deployed by India was 1300,000 and by Pakistan was 600,000 (SIPRI 2001: 61). Thus, advancement in capabilities in all the three wings of the Indian forces and self reliance and superiority in space equips India with potential offensive capability much ahead of Pakistan.

**Offensive capabilities: East Asia**

In the case of East Asia, the US has set up a system of effective military containment against North Korea and has deployed its forces in South Korea. Since 1953 North Korea has faced both South Korean military and US military deployments that comprised
100,000 troops as well as a nuclear threat. Later there were 38,000 troops, nuclear-capable airbases and naval facilities that guarantee the involvement of the US in any conflict on the peninsula. In 1978, the alliance structure between US-ROK became most intimate with the creation of the Combined Forces Command (CFC) through which a US general took direct operational control of the South Korean military bringing together the South Korean forces and the US forces in Korea (USFK) in a single unified command structure (Kang 2003: 311). The CFC is the only combined command between the US and an allied country outside NATO. On the other hand, there are no foreign troops in North Korea. Assessment of relative power that includes the US forces in the peninsula shows that North Korea did not have the material capabilities to face the US-ROK alliance. The measurement of offensive capability also includes the import of military capabilities on the Korean peninsula. In terms of military transfers from their respective patrons, between 1965 and 1982, North Korea received $1.5 billion as military transfers, mostly from the Soviet Union. Over the same period South Korea received $5.1 billion from the US (Kang 2003: 306).

Offensive capability is an important factor in both the cases. In South Asia, India's offensive capabilities posed a threat to Pakistan. Similarly, the offensive capabilities of the US posed a threat to North Korea. Therefore, this variable had an important impact in both cases.

**Aggressive intentions: South Asia**

Walt sought to augment realism by adding the issue of intent to capability. To him, offensive intentions also constitute the threats against which states balance or bandwagon. Aggressive intentions are a question of whether a country is likely to use force to achieve its goals.

In the eyes of Pakistan, India is arrogant, aggressive, expansionist, illiberal, hypocritical, deceitful, and above all, Pakistan’s enemy (Syed 1974: 16). The perceptions of almost all Pakistani leaders regarding India have been similar. The statements of some Indian leaders and expressions of people’s sentiment have reinforced this belief. Pakistan perceives India as an aggressive giant that is determined to reverse the effects of partition. The Indo-Pak war in 1971 resulted in the dismembering of Pakistan by the Indian armed forces and a growing Indian nuclear weapons capability had threatened
Pakistan’s security. Physically the breakup of Pakistan led to a 15 percent reduction in Pakistan’s territory and a reduction of nearly 60 percent in Pakistan’s population. According to Pakistani perception, there is no guarantee that India will not do the same again if it gets a similar opportunity (Chaudhri 1991: 105). In addition to this, India took over 90,000 Pakistani troops as prisoners (Sathasivam and Shafqat 2003: 126). From Pakistan’s point of view, India expresses strong displeasure over the efforts of Pakistan to raise the subject of the bilateral problem (Kashmir) at international forums (Rizvi 1993: 21). The more aggressively India behaved toward Pakistan, the greater was Pakistan’s defense expenditure. The enemy image of India has entrapped the psyche of its masses so much that that it is difficult for an average Pakistani to believe that given a chance India may not be interested in destroying Pakistan (Nandi 1995). As this would mean a total change in the balance of power situation in the region which may not work to India’s advantage in the long term.

Aggressive intentions: East Asia
North Korea is insecure because of the division of the Korean peninsula and the subsequent security dilemma that has been created. Between North Korea and South Korea there is only an armistice agreement, not a peace treaty concluding the fighting in 1953, hence technically speaking, both are still at war. The absence of an agreement on reunification has compelled the two Koreas to face each other as enemy state since their inception. On 1 October 1953, the US and ROK signed a mutual defence treaty or the treaty of alliance. During the Cold War, the DPRK was opposed to the US, which was depicted as the driving force behind imperialism. This view was compounded by the Korean War experience and America’s intervention. US Vice-President, Humphery, in February 1966, stated: “As long as there is one American soldier on the demarcation line the entire power of the USA is committed to the security and defense of Korea” (Ha 1984: 114). The US has imposed a series of economic sanctions against North Korea. For instance, on 28 June 1950, exports to North Korea were banned; on 26 August 1955, North Korea was barred from importing or exporting any defense materials and services; on 20 January 1988, North Korea was designated as a sponsor of international terrorism and so on (Yonghwan 2004: 68).
An aggressive intention is perceived by both North Korea and China from the US. The US sent strong signals resulting in threatening posture. The US nuclear threat was a potential threat to the North Korea. However there was no actual war between North and South Korea. At the same time there was no tension free atmosphere. This variable is not true in case of Pakistan-China alliance. Pakistan perceives an aggressive intention from India. Pakistan’s perceived threat from India is not a figment of her imagination, it has roots in the actually happened events in Indo-Pak relations. There has been three full fledged war between India and Pakistan. On every occasion due to military superiority of India, Pakistan was made to feel its weakness. In 1971 Pakistan was cut in two countries. Bangladesh was carved out mainly due to Indian armed superiority. In the year 1999 there was a fourth occasion, Kargil conflict, when Pakistan came to a head-on- military clash with India. Hence, Pakistan’s threat perceptions vis-à-vis India is not imaginary but rooted in recent history. Having said this it is not to argue that on all these four occasions India has been the aggressor and Pakistan as the victim. So this variable has been an important determinant in both alliances.

An Evaluation

The logic of realism that expects Pakistan and North Korea would seek to protect its interest and maximize its power to balance threats perceived by them is symbolized in these two cases. If the perception of threat comes from the immediate neighbour, by the relatively small power (in this case India as compared to China), it compels her to ally itself with the greater power in order to enhance its power to counter the threat. The analysis of the four factors suggested by Walt illustrates that the issue that drives China and Pakistan together is mutual hostility with India. Possessing aggregate power coupled with its geographical proximity, offensive power and aggressive intention, India does pose a threat to Pakistan. Pakistan’s insecurity is centered on its geography, limited resources, a smaller population, a smaller economy, an inferior military, etc. It faces a potential enemy larger in physical and economic size than itself. Pakistan could not balance India because of its limited economic resources and other means to implement its objectives. These strategic factors taken together and Pakistan’s concern to secure itself have contributed to its security policy towards China. In the case of South Asia, Pakistan
aligned with stronger power than its enemy. Both Pakistan and China act in accordance with their national interests. They pursue power to counter hostile pressure. The Sino-Pak alliance becomes overwhelming against India.

North Korea alone cannot balance the ROK-US alliance. The DPRK and the US are two highly asymmetrical countries, given the fact that North Korea has a weaker military and the US is a global superpower, given its overwhelming national and military power. Similarly, China alone cannot balance the ROK-US alliance, as it is not capable of challenging the US. In fact, the capabilities of the US are such that alone have become threatening to both China and North Korea. The DPRK-China alliance has therefore tried to counter the threat posed by ROK-US alliance. In the case of East Asia, North Korea aligned with weaker power than its enemies.

China became a firm believer in security as a function of power, alliance and manipulation of friends and enemies (Robinson 1994). It played a crucial role in the South Asian as well as the East Asian power balance under the Cold War structure.

**China, not a threat to Pakistan and North Korea**

A comparison of the aggregate power and the offensive capabilities of all the concerned countries reveal that China has a huge size and a bigger population than both Pakistan and North Korea. It has the largest military as well as the largest economy as compared to India and South Korea. Moreover, when geographic considerations are added, the disparity in conventional forces is multiplied. There were fewer relations between Pakistan and China that divided them as compared to Pakistan and India on one hand and China and India on the other.

According to Syed (1974: 9), Pakistanis see China as a non-exploitative power. They feel she is not imperialistic, has no satellites in her camp, does not attempt to dominate Pakistan or extract concessions from her in return for her support, does not propagandize her ideology, and scrupulously refrains from interfering in Pakistan's domestic affairs. Pakistani diplomats share these perceptions. Pakistan turned to China to counterbalance any strong pressures that may emanate from India. China, the axis of whose policy in South Asia was to seek counterbalances to India responded positively. Z. A. Bhutto (1969: 148) observed that India’s hostility toward these two countries, had
given them a ‘fundamental common interest, so that it was in Pakistan’s national interest to seek China’s friendship and in China’s national interest to support Pakistan’. Pakistani people are inclined to believe that if Chinese support during their wars with India did not produce the desired results, the blame must go to their own government, which agreed to a hasty cease-fire in 1965 and bungled the East Pakistan situation and then the war with India in 1971. In 1971 the Chinese were constrained by the overwhelmingly superior military power of the Soviet Union, which had allied itself with India. This awareness of Chinese inferiority vis-à-vis the Soviet Union did not lower China in Pakistani esteem (Syed 1974: 9). The alliance with China was considered sufficient by Pakistan to offset the perceived Indian threat.

The Korean strategic situation is different from the pattern in South Asia. North Korea shares a long border with China. The two nations have a history of an intimate relationship. China is relatively weak in terms of overall national strength compared to the US. Given its geostrategic position, geopolitical proximity, a huge economic potential, and traditional relations with North Korea, China continues to play an important role in the East Asian region. North Korea was looking for support from a non-threatening nation. It sought protection from a neighbouring power. A strategic factor in the evolution of Sino-North Korean relations was the Chinese participation in the Korean War. Communist China continued to render generous help to North Korea during the post-Korean War period (Koh 1969: 942). They have a common denominator i.e., the US as their principal barrier to the realization of the conquest of South Korea and Taiwan. China holds one of the major keys to the DPRK’s security. In Pyongyang’s words, the friendship between the two countries is firmly “sealed in blood” (Koh 1969: 941). Thus, during the Cold War years, geopolitics and ideology combined to make it possible for Pyongyang to extract maximum economic, military and security benefits from China.

II

The post-Cold War years

International changes have been sweeping since 1989 and national security perceptions since then have undergone transformations. The focus of world tensions and instabilities has shifted into conflict-prone regions like East Asia and South Asia. There was also a shift from geo-political security concerns to geo-economic ones i.e., the emphasis shifted
from military to economic factors of power. Pakistani, North Korean and Chinese perceptions of the strategic environment following the recent changes need to be discussed.

India and China have agreed to work towards a cooperative relationship. In December 1996, during President Jiang Zemin's visit to India, the two countries signed a new agreement on Confidence Building Measures along the LAC (Line of Actual Control). Yet China's attempts to improve ties with India since the early 1990s have been accompanied by parallel efforts to bolster the Pakistani military's nuclear and conventional capabilities with India. The nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan in May 1998 have shifted the focus of security concerns in South Asia to its nuclear dimension. The BJP (Bhartiya Janta Party) declared intentions to deploy and to induct nuclear weapons and their delivery systems which undermined Pakistan's nuclear goals (Ahmed 2000: 3). India's declared resolve to weaponize its nuclear capability enhanced Pakistani perceptions of threat. Released by its National Security Advisory Board on 17 August 1999, India's draft nuclear doctrine envisages a nuclear triad in which nuclear weapons would be delivered by aircraft, by submarines and by mobile land-based ballistic missiles. The doctrine also discloses India's intention to respond with "punitive retaliation" against a nuclear adversary (Ahmed 2000: 2). Pakistan's nuclear policy has been India-centric. Its singular aim is to counter and contain India.

The security situation in East Asia has been transformed since the end of the Cold War bipolarity. It could be said that as the socialist camp collapsed in 1990s, East Asia grew in importance. The Bush administration criticised Kim Jong-il as an untrustworthy leader and designated North Korea as a typical rogue state on the globe. With its programme of modernization, China has modified its policy toward the Korean peninsula. The geostrategic environment in which PRC-DPRK alliance was formed has been transformed. China's cultural role in North Korea, the foundation for this relationship, in time took on an economic dimension. It has distanced itself from North Korean policies in many ways and increased its economic contact with South Korea. Deng Xiaoping has stated, 'we do not necessarily agree with some policies made by North Korea' (Pollack 1986: 789). As a result, China's trade with North Korea has been on the decrease in recent years. In other words, China's South Korea trade surpassed that with the North.
Thus, a historic and strategic logic binding their relationship is changing. In spite of this, it is against the interest of North Korea to abandon the relationship with China because of the economic assistance it receives from China. Despite change in its policies, China has replaced the Soviet Union/Russia as North Korea’s chief trading partner.

North Korea has also adopted methods such as nuclear weapons and missiles because it cannot compete with South Korea or the US in a military competition within the conventional sphere. Tension mounted on the Korean peninsula in 1994 when the possibility of another Korean War was debated. During the Panmunjom meeting on March 19, 1994, the North Korean negotiator, Pak Yong-su walked out of the conference room after making some remarks to his southern counterpart. In his statement, which was subsequently retracted by North Korean leader Kim Il Sung, Pak reacted: ‘Seoul is not far away from here. If a war breaks out, Seoul will turn into a fireball Mr. Song, you will never survive the war, either’ (Kihl and Hayes 1997: 182). North Korea’s Army Chief of Staff Choe Gwang, on 8 April denounced the U.S., Japan and South Korea for ‘engaging in a vicious attempt to provoke a war against us’ and claimed that his army would ‘give them a decisive counterblow and annihilate them mercilessly’ (Kihl and Hayes 1997: 182). As the East Asian strategy review report noted in 1998, ‘the security alliance between the US and the ROK serves as the foundation on which all US diplomatic, defence, and economic efforts on the Korean peninsula rest.’ (Lee 2003: 281).

China’s relations with North Korea began to improve in 1999 due to shared threat perception related to the US led war against Yugoslavia over Kosovo. According to Chinese security analysts, Kosovo caused a shift in Chinese thinking on the matter of tolerance for US forces in Asia. China now felt surrounded by the US-Japan and US-ROK alliances (Kim 2006: 187). Intervention in Kosovo also triggered alarm in DPRK. It prompted Pyongyang to improve its diplomatic relations with Beijing. For North Korea the value of China is enormous. It is the main bridge to reach the other major players in the region because China has diplomatic relations with all the parties in the conflict. China is the only country that is still under a treaty obligation to offer military assistance to North Korea. In short, both Beijing and Pyongyang were alarmed by the US military operation to revive an allied relationship of strategic convenience. However, in the post-Cold War era, China’s foreign policy wish list with respect to North Korea might be said
to comprise at least five “no’s”: no instability, no collapse, no nukes, no refugees or defectors, and no conflict escalation (Kim 2006: 186).

There are many reasons why alliances endure or fall apart, but states form alliances to balance against threats to ensure their survival. Threat-based balance predominates in both the cases. Bilateral alliances and security cooperation have been playing a central role in both the regions as the basis for strategic balance. Earlier, the pattern was characterized by military confrontation and ideological antagonism. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the Moscow-Beijing rapprochement has changed the scenario. Now the trend is a mutual readjustment of policies among the nations concerned. However, the end of the Cold War does not mean the resolution of old problems.

III

Impact of the threat perceptions on security negotiation

From the analysis of the two cases of threats and response, it is clear that all the concerned countries in procuring for their own security took the security concerns and actions of the other states into account. Does history continue to play an important role in defining security relationships in both the cases? When perceptions begin to vary among allies the alliances come under several kind of strains. If the present has evolved from the past, the future is also to unveil from the present. In a word, the continued relevance of an alliance – military or political has to be validated or underlined repeatedly. An alliance can suddenly face a flux like situation.

The strategic dependence of Pakistan and North Korea on China was never matched by the dependability of their alliance partner. It is true that China has been a trustworthy ally of Pakistan. China offered Pakistan a counterweight to India. But it was not unconditional. In its war with India in 1971, China avoided a risk to itself. This experience proved that nations have permanent interests, not permanent friends. Pakistan's propaganda often magnified the Indian threat and attributed India for dismembering Pakistan. Pakistan's security policy has always reflected this danger. Pakistan’s weakness vis-à-vis its Indian neighbour continues to compel Pakistan to depend on Chinese support. Pakistan seems to pursue security policies that would antagonize its adversaries and keep its allies.
The aim of the North Korean regime, headed by Kim Il Sung, was to reunify peninsula under a Communist government. The two summits of North and South Korea held successful talks in Pyongyang on 13-15 June 2000, to initiate cooperation. The U.S. and North Korea also made efforts to improve their relations. President Clinton’s visit to Pyongyang was also sought. Is there an improvement in Chinese-South Korean relations at North Korea’s expense without any improvement in North Korean-U.S. relations at South Korea’s expense? The ways in which the US modifies its security policy towards the region is a critical factor.

China perceives that many factors endangering peace, stability and development are on the rise in today’s security environment. At the center of China’s perceptions of security threat lies a strong distrust of the US. Its sense of insecurity has intensified as a result of improvement in US-Russia relations. To keep the US in check, North Korea has enhanced its relations with China and Russia. North Korea could follow the Chinese model and open the country to the outside world. China, despite its changing stance on the Korean Peninsula, continues to value its friendship with North Korea.

To many observers, the concerned countries in both the regions are captives of historically rooted distrust and misperception. In any case, it is not easy to discern the precise equation between these countries. The comparative study shows that the two alliances have their peculiar characteristics. They also share the pattern of alignments or alliances. In both the cases, the challenge in the post-Cold War era is to resolve the issues unresolved during the Cold War era.

In case of South Asia, the relationship between Pakistan and the Peoples Republic of China is not historical in its nature and is not based on a common ideology. More or less it is the single factor of common enemy that has pushed them to follow the balance of threat theory. The superpower conflict is also involved. The common enemy had treaty of friendship with one of the superpowers. In the post-Cold War era, there being no superpower conflict, the tension between Pakistan, China and India has eased but not vanished. In this case negotiations are going on to solve the Kashmir problem. China has now adopted neutrality on Kashmir.
While in case of East Asia, the problem becomes more complex at the strategic place where the interests of the major powers converge. The relationship between undivided Korea and Peoples Republic of China has evolved through history while the Sino–DPRK alliance emerged from an ideological affinity. On that basis there are common enemies i.e., South Korea and the US. Although North and South Korea have a common historical heritage, the developmental gap is huge. The involvement of the superpower with a security treaty is also there. Though the post-Cold War era has tried to change the equation, the threat is still being perceived by North Korea. However, it continues to follow the policy of seclusion and isolation.

In both cases, the smaller nations namely Pakistan and North Korea play a very important role. They share a common denominator: China. The Peoples Republic of China being the most developed nation in the region supports these two least developing nations because it also perceives the same threat. At this juncture, it is not possible to predict future scenarios with respect to these states, as there is variation within each possibility.

The dominant international threat to Pakistan was regional in origin as it came from within the South Asian region and stemmed from the inequality or asymmetry in power between Pakistan and its rival: India. But superpower rivalry overshadowed Pakistan’s rivalry with India by destabilizing regional arms balance. Now that superpower rivalry is no more, India is perceived more of a threat in Pakistan. As K. Subrahmanyam (1982: 178), puts it, ‘Most of Pakistan’s security problems and the haunting sense of insecurity of the country’s rulers are inherent in the nature of the Pakistani state and the relationship between rulers and ruled. India can do nothing about it’. According to him, India was the victim of distorted images and its security policy was misunderstood and misperceived. The debate over Pakistan’s security policy has been wide ranging.

The ongoing discussion has revolved around the fundamental question whether the dominant threat to Pakistan sprang from the regional rivalry between India and Pakistan. China intrudes into the bilateral conflict to follow the balance of threat theory. The region of East Asia is also facing complex equations. DPRK’s policy suggests that they had planned to play for survival. Although inter-state relations have improved, the perceived
threats from the neighbouring countries have not completely disappeared. A reappraisal of East Asian security relationships and China’s role in it probes the BoT theory.

Yet, both the regions are going through a process of change and adjustment at the strategic level. The threat perceptions of Pakistan and North Korea show that although geopolitical factors continue to have a bearing on the national security, economic factors are also coming to the forefront. The situation is different in the two cases. The definition of security and threats become multifaceted. The countries under test have no alternative but to follow a cooperative approach to security. This does not mean that hostility will vanish. Economic well being of its population and enhanced levels of affluence also reduces country’s threat perceptions.

IV

Summing up

A comparison between the two sets of alliances with huge power asymmetries is relevant to the Cold War as well as post-Cold War era. This chapter is devoted to the comparison of Pakistani and North Korean challenges and opportunities in the international arena. The foreign policies of three countries namely, Pakistan, North Korea and China fall within a special category of foreign relations. They reflect divergent views about regional security. The significant conclusion emanating from the foregoing analysis is that the Pakistani and North Korean relations with China are influenced by similar variables. In recent years power and related considerations have overridden ideological determinants. Sino-Pak relations have been an important factor in countering threat posed by India in the Indian subcontinent. Similarly, Sino-DPRK alliance has been an important factor in countering threat posed by US-ROK alliance in the East Asian region.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

Any research endeavour in social sciences and more so in analyzing the patterns and dynamics of international politics has to be, at best, of a tentative nature. In the context of international politics, where national interests keep moving and shifting, the researcher’s findings have to be of somewhat ad-hoc and transitory nature. Moreover, in the post-Cold War period where the feeling of cooperation and convergence are replacing the cut-throat competition and power rivalry of block-politics, the contours and the content of the matrix of international relations are undergoing a change, though this change is slow. In other word, after an in depth discussion of ‘balance of threat’ theory of Walt in Asia, an attempt shall be made in this last chapter to discuss an overview of the problematic and to spell out my tentative findings.

Chapter three and four noted how Stephen Walt’s balance of threat theory could be applied to the case studies at hand – Sino-Pakistan and Sino-North Korean alliances. The analyses presented carry derivative evaluation of balance of threat theory in the context of major conflict situations of Asia, with special reference to these two cases. The main objective of this study had been to interrogate certain basic assumptions of Walt’s theory. Chapter five outlined some of the major similarities and differences between the two cases. The attempt in this chapter is not to recapitulate what has already been discussed but to present some general observations and overall evaluation of building of alliances in South Asia and East Asia.

The principal building block for the argument that has been put forward and tested in this research is Stephen Walt’s seminal work, The Origins of Alliances. He emphasized the role played by threat perceptions in stimulating balancing behaviour among states. His insight that states do not balance against other state’s power per se, but against perceived threats posed by the latter, offers an important explanation for the pattern of alliance behaviour. The effort here had been to examine some of the findings of the balance of threat theory in different regions rather than attempting to reinvent the theory all over again. This work attempted an assessment and comparison of the utility of Walt’s theory in the Cold War and post-Cold War international politics and its consequent
manifestation in explaining Sino-Pak and Beijing-Pyongyang alliance. The research explored whether balance of threat remains useful as a guide or an explanatory tool in understanding these alliances. In doing so, the research attempted to test threat which is derived from the combination of a state’s aggregate power, its geographic proximity, its offensive capability and the aggressiveness of its intentions as they are perceived by other states based on Walt’s theory by examining whether or not states in the regions other than West Asia follow its axioms. Balance of threat theory provides an excellent explanation for the building of alliances in the bipolar world. A decade of international politics since the end of the Cold War provides sufficient resources to assess the relevance of the theory because of the significant events within this period (1990-2000). With the end of the Cold War, traditional security threats have substantially diminished in various parts of the world, especially in Europe. Nonetheless in South Asia and East Asia, the traditional notions of security threats continue to dominate the security discourse as arms race and security dilemma remain an overriding concern. On the basis of this study, a number of significant conclusions emerge.

This research attempted to throw light on the puzzle as to why Pakistan and North Korea have historically been aligned with China rather than standing against it. Balance of threat theory predicts that states balance against the power that they perceive as more threatening. It could be argued that the Pakistani policy makers have viewed the Indian policies as more threatening compared to China. India’s intentions were also perceived as more threatening when compared to China. Similarly, North Korean policy makers perceived threat from South Korea when compared to China. South Korean and US intentions were perceived as more threatening when compared with China. A variety of factors seem to be pertinent which are discussed in the previous chapters. The introductory chapter of this work started with the hypotheses that

1. States ally to balance against threat rather than power alone.
2. Pakistan allied with China because it perceived a threat from India.
3. North Korea allied with China because it perceived a threat from South Korea and her ally United States.

The hypotheses raised at least two sets of important arguments, one at a theoretical level and the other at a substantive level. Walt’s conclusion that balancing is far more
frequent than bandwagoning behaviour is also reflected in this research work. In South Asia and East Asia, it was not balance of power, rather a balance of threat that determined the alliances. The determinants of threat perceptions have acted as independent variables by influencing Pakistan and North Korea’s formulation and execution of policy responses.

Geography, culture, religion and history are not the only reasons for the active Chinese presence in South Asia. Since China and Pakistan are strikingly different societies their convergence can hardly be based upon ideology. Their objectives have shown a tendency to coincide because of similar interests centred on hostility towards India. The Sino-Pak alliance has therefore often been ascribed simply to its hostile disposition with India. Pakistan recognizes India as one of its principal enemies and hence has friendly inclinations towards India’s foes.

India has been the predominant factor for Pakistan’s security anxieties. Geographical proximity is one factor in Pakistan’s threat perception. India’s geographical centrality is emphasized because there is no larger country in the region. In terms of power, India certainly has the upper hand in the region. India is far better endowed than her neighbours in terms of size, population, gross domestic product, natural resources and military power. But the perspective is incomplete without China in the spectrum. From Pakistan’s perspective, China has not posed a security threat. Pakistan’s policy makers don’t envisage the prospects of security concerns from China. Pakistan and China have never used force against each other. For Pakistan, China’s pro-Pakistan tilt can be seen in many issues, including Kashmir, nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation issues.

The very birth of Pakistan in 1947 witnessed a conflictual relationship with India. Thus, Pakistan which emerged as a consequence of the ‘two-nation theory’ formula was entangled in hostility based relationship with India. Pakistan’s threat perception is also based partly on the potency and intentions of its neighbour and partly, on its incapacity to maintain a conventional military balance with India due to resource constraints. Pakistan’s defence spending has been proportionality larger than India’s. While assessing the intensity of the Indian threat, Pakistani decision makers have generally showed repeated concern about the balance of relative military power.
Pakistan’s security planners have always been engaged in ceaseless efforts towards improving the prevailing security conditions. In addition to the regular revamp of her armed forces, defense production and naval development, she has consistently been procuring sophisticated equipment from outside. Pakistan’s strategy has been of seeking parallel external support against any possible incursions that she may not be able to resist or defy herself. It was this operative sense of insecurity that compelled Pakistan to align itself with the West and later with China. Its policy was to focus attention on developing close economic and diplomatic relations with China. To that was added the policy of buying military hardware. The factors that underpins this bilateral relationship is the mutual interest that Pakistan and China share, that of containing the expansion of Indian influence in the region, and of countering any security threat that India may pose to any of them - more so to Pakistan than to China.

Z. A. Bhutto in *The Myth of Independence* (1969: 187) recognized that India was more powerful but argued that this relative inequality was counterbalanced by, “the justice of Pakistan’s cause, the spirit of her people, the collaboration of the people of Jammu and Kashmir who resent India’s occupation of their land and seek to join Pakistan in a common brotherhood, and the overwhelming support she has received from other countries, including that of People’s Republic of China.”

The radically changed international situation since 1990 had its impact on Sino-Pak alliance as well for the reasons mentioned below:

- International politics with the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1990 does not correspond to the world of bipolar politics anymore.

- The US has since then, begun to take a benign view of India. There were indications of the US seeking some strategic cooperation between India and Pakistan. Relations between India and the United States have considerably improved. In fact some optimists opine that for the first time there is light at the end of the tunnel for improved India and US relations.

- In terms of might, China is a giant today. It does not want the Asian map to be recast. China now envisages economic dominance over the rest. Consequently, there has been a marked improvement in Sino-India relations.
India therefore, no longer occupies the number one spot as its foe. This is
not to argue that Sino-Indian relations are no longer competitive and
conflictual.

- At the same time there is some improvement in Indo-Pak relations. If any
evidence is needed, then one can cite, at dialogue level via people to people
contact, cultural contact, and developments like introduction of Samjhauta
express etc.

Since the Sino-Pak relationship is a complex phenomenon, it is difficult to
formulate a specific theory or even a model of mutual bilateral relationship. This owes
primarily to the lack of authentic and accessible sources of information on the subject.
The closed nature of Chinese society, the role of Communist ideology and pragmatic
approach of Chinese foreign policy have added to the predicament of comprehending the
Sino-Pakistan relations especially in the field of military and nuclear cooperation.

In the case of East Asia also, geography determines balance of power. The
geography of Korea has shaped its history. The division of the peninsula into North and
South Korea at the end of World War II was also attributable mainly to geopolitical
factors. The international relations in the East Asia region evolved into multipolar
relations owing to the changing balance of power. Through a series of alliances, all four-
US, Russia, China and Japan - are linked, directly or indirectly, to the defence of one of
the two Koreas. There was a time in 60's and 70's when Korean peninsula had emerged
as the cockpit of conflict in Asia. Under these circumstances North Korea continued to
perceive threat from US-South Korean alliance.

In Pyongyang, there is substance to the fear and suspicion of external powers.
Pyongyang has perceived itself to be under nuclear threat from the US and therefore
security has been one of the main motivating forces behind Sino-DPRK alliance. South
Korea aligned with the US, the only superpower involved in that region which could
render military protection and economic support to it. It was in the interest of the US to
ensure the existence of South Korea as a viable non-Communist state in a region which
the American leaders and public viewed as of vital strategic interest to the US.
The Sino-DPRK alliance can be characterized as a case of extremely asymmetric dependency. This characteristic of the alliance stems from the fact that the survival of DPRK virtually depended upon the degree to which China was able to provide military and economic aid to North Korea in order to ensure its existence as a Communist entity. North Korea's defence, large standing army as well as its economy depended upon military and economic aid from China. China helped North Korea to achieve some sort of conventional superiority against South Korea. But North Korea's nuclear brinkmanship became a security challenge for Chinese foreign policy. The nuclear issue confronted Beijing with a new set of dangers in the management of Sino-North Korean asymmetric interdependence at the bilateral, regional and global levels. Nuclear programme of any country is a combination of several factors and the North Korean experience is no exception. In East Asia, North Korea has contemplated nuclear weapons primarily for two reasons. First, she wants to acquire a credible nuclear deterrence against her adversaries and secondly to boost and enhance her leverage of power.

China and North Korea have shared a history of intimate relationship spanning several decades. Those situations have changed drastically from China's alliance relations with North Korea during the Cold War era and then to China's two Korea policy in the post-Cold War era. Sino-DPRK alliance no longer depended upon the common threat perceptions as well as ideology factor. In the post-Cold War era, China is not going to jeopardize its own interests by coming to the rescue of any country. China was satisfied with the continuation of the division of Korea into two spheres of influence, reflecting the balance of power in the region. At the same time, China seeks to avoid collapse of the North Korea because it would have human, economic and political consequences for China. Failure of a Communist state would definitely have political impact on China. Normalization of the US-China relations made North Korea more isolated. As the end of the Cold War saw the collapse of the socialist countries in Eastern Europe, North Korea feared that their regime would follow the same path. In the post-Cold War years, the Korean peninsula has become a focal point in East Asian international relations, a locus where the national interests of four major powers have come to intersect.
It appears that the North Korea-China and Pakistan-China alliances in the period 1980-1990 (Cold War period) and in the period 1990-2000 (post-Cold War period) faced basically the same questions i.e. military security and domestic political stability. In the intervening years, there had been significant changes some brought about by the fact that Cold War had come to an end and some by regional and international circumstances which had transformed the character of Pakistan’s and North Korea’s dependence upon China. This analysis supports an argument that an alliance is more likely to thrive when the partners share basic common beliefs and perceptions. Although the different countries in an alliance may have different capabilities and needs, each partner can provide something required by the other.

Concluding observations
The study reveals that the main determinant of the two alliances has been the security and strategic interests of preventing any power hostile from posing threat to the concerned countries.

Since its inception, Pakistan has perceived the main threat as India. This perception permeated all aspects of Pakistan’s policy and strategic pursuits. That is why it detected India’s hand in almost all the conflict situations analyzed in the study and regarded India’s involvement in them as the pursuit of its design to undo Pakistan. Fortunately for Pakistan’s polemicists, there are certain parties and individuals in India who never reconciled to the fact of Pakistan’s creation. Occasionally, they threaten to undo this fact. Both the economic and military strength to counter India’s design, the evidence presented in the study suggests that China provided support to Pakistan. The study reveals that the main determinant of China’s policy is a coherent and well designed attempt to systematically contain and if possible to roll-back India’s influence in the area.

In case of Pakistan-China alignment, there is just a political intimacy developed partly spontaneously and partly consciously, taking the Indian factor into account. India emerges as a common denominator and a factor of consequence in Sino-Pak relationship. This single reason has encouraged massive transfers of defense equipment, economic aid and technology from China to Pakistan. The conclusion therefore is that threats from India have adversely affected Pakistan’s security environment at the domestic, regional
and global level. Sino-Pak relations have been an important factor in the maintenance of balance of threat in the Indian subcontinent. Balance of threat theory provides an explanation for the alliance like relationship between Pakistan and China.

Pakistan’s policy of countering external threat from India is through support of its ally - China. Pakistan is much weaker than its principal adversary - India. This case study provides powerful support for the balancing hypothesis. It also supports the statement that states may choose to ally with the stronger of two powers, if the weaker side is more dangerous. In other words, states balance against the states that pose the greatest threat, the latter need not be the most powerful states in the system. This case also supports Walt’s view that states may be willing to cooperate but unwilling to sign a formal treaty. The presence or absence of a formal treaty says relatively little about the actual level of commitment between the parties.

The analyses presented reveal yet another aspect of the North Korea’s foreign policy strategy. In the post-Cold War era, North Korea-China alignment demonstrated the prevalence of power politics consideration over ideological commitments in China’s foreign policy. The changing threat perceptions among North Korean policy makers towards the US and South Korea have been generated by a combination of external and internal factors. With the cessation of Cold War, the changed prioritization in US foreign policy, which henceforth emphasized promotion of democracy around the world, constituted a new source of threat for the North Korean regime. North Korean decision to establish relations with China aimed at diversifying its external political and economic relations meant to bring its foreign policy more in tune with the changed power structure in the post-Cold War era.

Assessment

The results are mostly consistent with the hypotheses from the theoretical model. Taking two case studies Pakistan-China and North Korea-China, it can be concluded that Stephen Walt and his balance of threat theory offers a good explanation. North Korean security policy was similar to that of Pakistan. The balance of threat theory can be applied to South Asia and East Asia both during the Cold war and in its aftermath. These
regions differ in their structures of amity-enmity relations and in their capabilities as well as in the manner in which the same security functions were performed in each region.

Balance of threat theory provides a compelling explanation for the alliance relationship. However, it is a mistake to suppose that any single analysis or model can explain and much less rationalize the many sided and complex phenomenon of foreign policy. Any results derived from examining alliances cannot be applied to other areas or to different time periods. This comparative study does not reach any single conclusion with respect to the application of balance of threat in the post-Cold War era. As Wohlfarth (2004: 234) says, “A theory that seems to apply everywhere all the time is likely to be of little practical utility. Any theory worth its salt is likely to be wrong about some things and simply inapplicable to others.” The policies or thinking should be rational and temporal and should be ever self-evaluative as any misperceptions and self-delusions in this regard can be dangerous for international relations and international order. It must be reminded that the subject of international relations is very complex. A single data point and without a comprehensive study of international conflict cannot assert something important and something unimportant. A study cannot conclude with definitive predictions. An analysis offers a starting point for a more comprehensive theoretical development. Disparities of wealth, ideological conflict, confrontation of objectives and interests, perceptions and misperceptions and other aspects of international relations will continue to ensure that states will apply their power for their interests and needs. Alliances are likely to persist as a major instrument of statecraft, especially in the region marked by rivalries and threats.

Although geopolitical factors continue to have a bearing on national security, geo-economic factors are coming to the forefront. Security perceptions have been undergoing transformations i.e., there is a shift from geopolitical (Geopolitics is understood as the traditional national security threats, which emanate from the geography and history.) security concerns to geo-economic ones.

Sino-Pak ties continue to grow without formal linkage. Despite the changes in the international and regional environments, this relation continues to enjoy cordiality and continuity. Even after more than fifty-five years of independence, the ghost of the past still dictates the mindset of the leadership of India and Pakistan. Or it can be said that it
suits the leadership to keep the public attention away from domestic problems by citing fear of an external aggression. China’s whole strategy has been geared to promote in Asia a balance of influence favourable to Beijing and to prevent any power hostile to it from gaining control of areas in its vicinity from which it could posit threat to China itself. This strategy has been prompted by the security as well as the objective of acquiring predominant position in Asia. After having said this, I am inclined to argue that in the last half a decade or so, the warmth of Sino-Pak entente has somewhat tapered off. China is busy in improving ties with her adversaries.

One conclusion we can draw is that despite a number of ups and downs, mutual suspicions and apprehensions, both China and Pakistan had realized the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of each other in their respective foreign policies. It was perhaps this realization, on the part of both countries, that they have maintained successfully uninterrupted relationship with each other. North Korea’s relations with China had occupied a prominent place in the North Korean foreign policy during the five decades 1950 to 2000. To be sure there were periods or situations when stresses and strains, irritants and frictions were noticeable in the bilateral relations. These irritants were never allowed to assume serious proportions. The short periods of stresses and strains were seen more as an aberration or unwelcome deviations in otherwise cordial and close relations between North Korea and the People’s Republic of China. However, China’s security relationship with and alliance policy toward North Korea are undergoing change.

If a state perceive some other state as an enemy, then it is likely to become so in what becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Pakistan’s threat perception is based not on actuality but on pretence in order to sell the idea of military preparedness to its own people. The normalization with India is impeded by major hurdles- the hangover of past issues that include the Kashmir dispute, differing security perception, varied interpretations of normalization, different approaches to the resolution of crisis. The Pakistani army, the foreign office, the govt., the political leadership, and the media had dinned Indo-centric ideas into the minds of Pakistanis. The war of words reveals this subject. India dismisses the fears of its neighbour, Pakistan. As Indira Gandhi said, ‘Well, I do not think that their fears are genuine and when you talk to them, they do not sound genuine....... this is just a put-on thing; they have no grounds otherwise’ (as cited in
Mansingh 1984: 240). At the same time it can be said that Chinese efforts in the contemporary period indicate the desire to share experiences with India in almost every field of economic development. China and India are neighbouring countries and also developing countries. Both countries face the same challenge i.e., accelerating economic development. Multi field cooperation benefits both sides.

Correct threat perception and the socio-political and military development in the region are of utmost importance for formulating a nation’s security policy and effectively defending and enhancing the core national values. Cooperative approach to security may make the difference. There is need to rebuild a web of regional relations, and to manage external alliance frameworks in a way that will maximize benefits. This is an unending process.

This study has sought to demonstrate that the balance of threat theory provides an effective analytical tool in the study of international relation. The research has showed that balance of threat theory make possible to take into account and compare both internal and external sources of Pakistani and North Korean foreign policy. The analysis has pointed to the fact the balance of threat approach can explain the rationale behind the entente-like relationship between Pakistan-China and North Korea-China. It has been able to account for sources of threat and describe the way by which these have shaped Pakistani and North Korean foreign relations. The analysis highlighted the decisive force of threat perceptions formed within the elite’s social structure. The employment of the theory in this study has confirmed the assumption that the overall considerations of Pakistan’s and North Korea’s policy makers responsible for their foreign relations have followed the balance of threat pattern. Threat perceptions among the domestic actors, the foreign policy elite are key variables that determine the direction of a state’s foreign policy. By understanding the logic behind the balance of threat theory we can predict more accurately future tendencies in interstate relations.