The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan constituted very significant incident that made its impact on the course of events and opinions, both regionally and internationally. Owing to the geopolitical factors, it was of the greatest concern to the people of India and Pakistan. It is in this context that this study aims at the various aspects of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, its impact on the then prevailing climate of public opinion in Pakistan and India, with the resultant impact on India-Pakistan relations. The study centres round the following propositions:

(i) Afghanistan had always been the most important factor in influencing India before 1947, due to its geographical location that had bequeathed it certain parameters of spatial elements in its relationship, both within and outside. However, in the post-War geo-strategic global situation, after the emergence of Pakistan, it has influenced the politics and strategy of the South Asian region-especially India-Pakistan relations:

(ii) The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, both the cause as well as consequence of the super-power rivalry in the Indian Ocean region took India and Pakistan in the geopolitical sweep and thus had impact on the domestic public opinion of the two countries. At both levels of public opinion-mass opinion, consisting of diverse and
conflicting attitudes, prejudices, views, etc., as well as the elite opinion, exhibiting the rational viewpoints of the press, governmental agencies, political parties and persons of higher intellectual calibre—the incident generated a climate of opinion—competition in pursuing various interests and influenced both decision-makers and the mass public in the asymmetrical political systems of India and Pakistan—the two uneasy neighbours in close proximity to the strategic land of Afghanistan.

(iii) India-Pakistan relations, which have been characterised by mutual suspicion and hostility since 1947, witnessed new dimensions of conflict and co-operation; of the perceptions of security and development; and fluctuating trends of arms race and detente in the wake of the Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan:

(iv) The implications arising out of such developments point-out the necessity of co-operation between the two countries so as to minimise the outside forces' presence in the region and thereby reduce tension to promote peace and economic development of the region.

The method of presentation of the material is mainly descriptive-comparative, with a chronological order depending on the contextual frame of the subject. The study, though involving considerable empirical research, takes on holistic
analytical approach to explain the essentials of the matter, e.g., preliminary survey of the conceptual framework of public opinion and its parameters in India and Pakistan; the statements of facts, including participation of the USA, the USSR, Pakistan and India in the Afghan crisis with the certain perspectives; expectations, demands and identification of the leadership there in various situations like geographic, strategic, developmental, etc. to influence people's perspectives, situations, etc. and to have a feedback for their assessment; and with some kind of ultimate outcomes. Since our main concern is with the domestic public opinion, the study is largely based on the newspapers, journals, periodicals, magazines, books, etc. In addition, rich and varied literature on the conceptual framework of public opinion, its parameters in India and Pakistan alongwith geography and politics of the region, including Afghanistan and the Soviet Union has also been utilized to organise the different type of material into a single theoretical unit of study.

For the inspiration, help, encouragement and cooperation received during this research work I feel indebted to many people and institutions, all of that cannot be mentioned here. I wish I could put my deep sense of gratitude in an elaborate form but the space does not permit me to do so.

I take this opportunity to express my humble gratefulness and indebtedness to Professor R.C. Sharma, who
has kindly supervised this work and helped me in the systematic development of the dissertation. His ideas, arguments and approach proved to be very vital in developing an inter-disciplinary focus on the issues and complexities involved in the subject. I am grateful to Mrs. Nasira Sharma whose knowledge and literary insight on Afghanistan has benefitted me very much. I am deeply indebted to Professor M.L. Sondhi of CIFOD, who has been a constant source of inspiration to me and always found time amidst his busy schedule. His vast experience in academic as well as governmental position provided a unique flavour in his arguments and suggestions that helped me greatly. I owe much to Professor S.A.H. Bilgrami of A.M.U. Aligarh for his treatment, which is generally meted out by a father to his son. I am grateful to him for his keen interest in the subject, his guidance and his unfailing help that gave me the benefit of his wide knowledge and wisdom. I also feel indebted to Mrs. Bilgrami for giving me all sympathetic help and encouragement. I am very obliged to Professor S.N. Jha, Professor Aswini Kumar Ray and Professor C.P. Bhambri of CPS, JNU for providing me unflinching co-operation in this task and for their constant concern about my research activities. My grateful thanks to my eldest brother-in-law Professor Suresh Chandra Upadhayaya, of IIT, New Delhi for his most humane and sympathetic guide and co-operation, without which even my best efforts could not have yielded the desired results. My friends, Ashutosh of Aligarh, Dr. Mohd. Khalid
of Afghanistan and Manoranjan Mohanty of JNU have given me constant encouragement. I thank them earnestly.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my uncle Shri Mathura Prasad Pathak: my father-in-law, Shri O.P. Tiwari: my mother-in-law. Smt. Krishna Tiwari for their untold affection and co-operation. My wife Neelam, who is the main moving force in my life, who has had to put up with the hectic life with me, who shuttles round at my side with scarcely a pause for breath and certainly without a proper holiday or rest deserves all my deepest love and thanks. My little son Shashank instilled in me the spirited challenge by making the beautiful sketches on my notes to work hard to the best of my ability.

I would not have been able to procure all data included in this work, if it were not the efforts and kind help of the personnel of the libraries: Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, New Delhi; India Council of World Affairs Library, Sapru House, New Delhi; Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murti House, New Delhi; Indian Institute of Public Opinion, New Delhi; Ratan Tata Library, University of Delhi; UN information centre and the American Center Library, New Delhi; Maulana Azad Library A.M.U. Aligarh etc. I must also record my feelings of gratitude to A.O. and staff, School of International Studies, particularly to Mr. R.K. Saxena, Section Officer, Mr. Kakkar, Mr. Mohan Lal and Mr. Khuller of CIPOD of their earnest help and cooperation. I owe very much
to Shri Om Birla of Kota, Rajasthan who provided me all necessary help and opportunity to complete this work. In the last, I offer my obeisance to my spiritual preceptor for fathomless grace.

My very special thanks are due to K. Muralidharan who took pains to type these pages efficiently at a very short time.

For whatever shortcomings which remain in this work, I alone am responsible.

PLACE: NEW DELHI
DATED: 23rd January, 1992

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