Preface

The events of recent months have brought South Asia into the international limelight with literally a bang! This has been accompanied by a vigorously renewed interest in studies pertaining to patterns of co-operation and conflict among the major South Asian countries. Although initiated four years previously, the following research also attempts to analyse South Asia by way of determining the levels of order, welfare and legitimacy as also the prospects of peace in this part of the world. I chose South Asia as the area of my doctoral research primarily because it seemed both logical and convenient to study the subcontinent while being a resident of its most prominent state - India. It enabled better access to research material and a greater awareness of daily happenings as well as of academic activities related to the subject matter. Being based in India also provided additional concern and impetus for delving into the dynamics of South Asia and the adjoining Southeast Asian countries. Moreover, a three-level research plan had been initiated at the Masters level of my studies. Thus, research undertaken for a dissertation on certain social, economic and political realities of India at the M.A. level proved to be an added advantage. It provided insights into the order, welfare and legitimacy concerns of India over a period of forty-five years. This was elaborated upon at the M.Phil. level to deal with interactions between India, Pakistan and Bangladesh from both the global agenda, and the order, welfare and legitimacy perspectives. Consequently both the M.A. and the M.Phil. dissertations helped provide a particularly strong foundation as well as a rational continuity to this doctoral thesis. At the same time, I must also admit that given the nature of my research topic, it was quite difficult to bring my dissertation to a firm conclusion. South Asia is indeed such a dynamic and rapidly changing part of the world that one must keep abreast of developments therein on a daily basis. As a corollary, one can also never be sure of what might happen tomorrow! Keeping this mind, I decided to include occurrences in South (and Southeast) Asia until the end of August 1998 in my analysis. Moreover I would also request readers to bear in mind the extended nature of my research investigations and the fact that this doctoral dissertation was penned in several phases at academic institutions in two different countries.

Here I would also like to explain that not only was this doctoral research carried out by me over a period of four years (September 1994-August 1998), it also involved a two-year tenure (from October 1996 till September 1998) at the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg in Germany. The latter was made possible following the award of a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Ph.D. fellowship by means of which I could avail of academic guidance from two professors, one in India and another in Germany. Having initiated my research under the supervision of Professor Dilip Mohite at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, I could subsequently proceed to the South Asia Institute at Heidelberg to further refine certain premises of my dissertation under the co-supervision of Professor Subrata Mitra. The vast literature available at the South Asia Institute and the international scholastic exposure that I received during the tenure of my German fellowship, also helped to enhance my overall understanding of South Asian politics. In this context, I would like to thank the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), particularly Dr. Christa Klaus and Frau Stella Conradi at the DAAD office in Bonn, for making my stay in Germany so fruitful and comfortable. I am also extremely grateful to Professor Subrata Mitra, Professor Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema (on an Iqbal Professorial fellowship at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg) and my other colleagues & members of the Department of Political Science, South Asia Institute for their invaluable support and guidance during the past
two years of my research investigations. Similarly, my sincere gratitude to Professor Dilip Mohite for moulding my academic career over the past several years and giving me the opportunity to work at the Department of Political Science, Baroda University. Here I would also like to thank my other colleagues and former students at the aforesaid department for their share of encouragement and support to my research work.

And finally, my deepest gratitude goes to my wonderful parents whose unflinching love and support has enabled me to develop various aspects of my personality, and to achieve all that I have thus far.

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