



HISTORY

Le North Kashmir Web Site



THE WAR OF KASHMIR



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Short chronology as well as accompanying notes of the war of Kashmir:



Rajahs in XIXth century

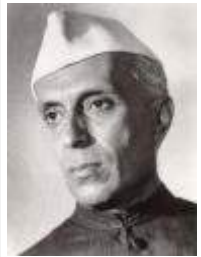
The Kashmir area has been fought over for a long time, well before the conflict started between India and Pakistan. Hindu ground and Buddhist since the third century AC, the Kashmir was invaded by monghols during the 16th century, Afghans (pachtos) during the 18th century and by Sikhs in the 19th century. The British arrived in Kashmir under the rajah Gulab Singh dynasty in 1849, unifying the heterogeneous territories which were populated by divers ethnic groups, this unification lasted for one century until 1947. On August 15, 1947, the Indians took over the borders of British Raj, those which had been fixed by »The Great Game«: if the Kashmir borders and those of the Central Asian territories met the needs for control by Russians and the United Kingdom, they could not answer future logic needs of this century concerning the partition of India. The Kashmir was a territory which made the partition of India problematic from the very beginning taking into the account the great richness of this territory which was called "Indians Switzerland" and was desired by many.

1947, the partition and the first Kashmir war :



Ghandi and its profligate, symbol of Indian resistance

In few weeks, just after the proclaimed partition of August 15, 1947, 14 millions people were moved out of India towards Pakistan and vice versa; it can be estimated that 1 million people were massacred during the population transfers, creating enormous hatred on both sides of the new Indo-Pakistani border. Pakistan was born and at the same time, the war of Kashmir. Kashmir had a population of mainly Moslems at the time of partition and was directed by the Maharadjah who was of Hindu religion. This Maharadja supported Dehli in exchange of military aid which would drive out the insurrectionists cachemerians who received their help from the pathans Pakistan and the pachto tribes which threatend Srinagar (October 28, 1947). India invaded the Kashmir; it was the first Indo-Pakistani confrontation of which UNO made a resolution of the end of in January 1, 1949.



Nehru

1949, the traced control line :



Jinnah, the father of Pakistan

An arbitrary cease-fire line was temporarily traced in Kashmir. At the time, UNO proposed a referendum for the Kashmir independence, a referendum that India never respected because they were sure of an unquestionable failure. Kashmirians found themselves separated by the 2 sub continental powers even though. India is unable to keep Kashmir which is dear to Nehru, the Pakistani cannot either seize the Kingdom by force although it's deep in their hearts. From these major frustrations, were born various wars which still mark the history of the two countries up to now. The control line was thus "temporarily" as from the North to the Chinese border, it still remains "temporarily". During the year, China who became a Popular Republic, did not agree with the borders of Kashmir, and made the accusation of them having been imposed on them by the treaty of Drangsté in 1842 and that they "were also never limited". This lead to the first war between India and China in 1962.

1960, the Sino-Soviet rupture :



Mao Zedong

The China of Mao does not appreciate the growing peace relationship between the Soviet Union of Khrouchtchev and the United States; the rupture became real between China and the Soviet Union when Khrouchtchev refused to provide China with a prototype of a nuclear bomb. In 1960 the Soviets thus withdraw 1390 experts and engineers who worked in China especially concerning the project of the Chinese atomic bomb.

1962, the Chinese invasion of Indian Territory:



Scene of maoist revolution

In 1962, China made use of its war strategy to invade the territories of Aksai Chin and inflicts a strong defeat to Aksai Chin («the desert of the white stones»), which is a vast desolated plain, with more than 5000m of altitude in the east of the pass of the Karakorum range. It depends on the kingdom of Ladakh and is without any particular value, its fate is connected to the Chinese invasion of Tibet and the Chinese reinforced their control of the unstable Chinese provinces of Central Asia. October 20, 1962, the troops of the popular army of China launch an offensive on the plain of Aksai Chin and advance for 18 kilometers. India answers immediatly; this confrontation produces several hundreds of deaths. November 18, 1962, China withdraws but keeps the control of 47 735 km2 of the Aksai Chin plain. The disagreement between them concern nearly 120 000 km2 today, essentially in the North-West, Aksai Chin in the North-East, the greater part of the Himachal Pradesh.



Popular speech of Mao

The Chinese today maintain that the borders initially set up at the time of the reaty of Drangtsé signed in 1842, were not legitimate and were set up only by aligning posts which were first traced on the ground. They add that they are not supposed to respect the treaty considering that the Peking government was not part of the draft (however one of the signatories, Tibetan of birth, of mandarin origin took part since the tibetans were wiped of the chart in 1962, so the treaty was declared invalid and void). In fact, the Chinese built the Lhasa road to Kachgar through the Aksai Chin mineral, in the fifties after the invasion of Tibet : this road is now essential to their political and strategic device to connect and control annexed Tibet and the autonomous Moslem province of XianYang. This defeat leads to the political isolation of India. Nehru thinks of taking the United States as partners but finally refuses them definite, Khrouchtchev is the only one who doesn't adopt the Chinese point of view, China, thus saves India's honors and this leads to the signature and break-up of the sino-Soviet. India learns from its defeat: more than ever, learns to count on its own forces in the field of security. It is probably at that time that India secretly plans the nuclear weapon. Still in 1962 always, China acquires even more territory totalling 5 180 km2 in Karakorum, next to the borders of Pakistan, validated by a treaty and obviously not agreed on by India. China since remained closed to all negotiations of settlement of its border and any disagreements with India. China, since its withdrawal of this conflict, remains the enemy number one of the Indian Union, just after Pakistan.

1964, China becomes nuclear power:



Image de la révolution chinoise

In 1960, when the Soviets rapatriated their experts from China, they happily went to tear up the documents concerning the nuclear bomb. It was without taking into account the ingeniousness of the Chinese who, quickly picked up the pieces, reconstituted the documents and discovered important information. Only 4 years later, they succeed in building and testing their first bomb.

1965, second Kashmir war:



Pakistani heavy gun

A new war burst out in August 1965, this time it is the area of Rann of Kutch located on the border between the Indian State of Gujarat and the province of Sind which was the target, but the conflict quickly extended to the Kashmir. Pakistan, who started this war, called the«Gibraltar operation", probably waned to benefit from the apparent military weaknesses of India after its defeat with China in 1962. This war was finally won by India (signature under the good offcness of the Soviet Union the treaty of Tachkent in January 1966) whose army was strengthened after its defeat in 1962 thanks to the Soviet Union's assistance. This war broaght about 5000 Indians victims and 4 000 Pakistanis. During the same year India supported the Afgahn claims of the tribal territories which are next to the Pakistani borders to the West, this in order to force Pakistan to scatter its military forces into two directions.

1971, third Kashmir war:



M. Ali Bhutto

The consequences of the third war was the creation of Bangladesh, the ex Eastern Pakistan: The 2 Pakistans separated by 2000 kilometers, were then populated by a similar population and religion but of so enormous different cultural origins that the relations between the 2 parts of the countries didn't agree and broaght about a repression of the independent Bengladeshis movements (movement of the Awami league) this is especially strong on behalf of the armed forces of Western Pakistan. It is followed by a bloody repression with approximately 300 000 evaluated victims. This announced division is deviously encouraged by India, it's in their interest to be positioned at the Western and Eastern divided borders. The migration of millions of Bangladis to India leads India to declare war aggainst Pakistan in December 12, 1971, always being supported by its ally, the Soviet Union. In 12 days, Pakistan loses half of its naval force, a quarter of its aviation, a third of its army and especially 13 000 km² of territory: This new war sees the recognition of Bangladesh (the fatherland of Bengalís) with the agreements of Simla, agreement stipulating that the problem of the Kashmir must be resolved by the 2 countries with diplomatic support, without international assistance of the conflict. This last concession was a hard one to swallow for Pakistan whose strategy was always to look for international help of the conflict.

This defeat then plunges Pakistan into a deep state of shock, political results are profound, Pakistan is then withdrawn from the Commonwealth as a sign of protest. Pakistan is no longer in a position to oppose India, because of the loss of Bangladesh as well as the insurrection of Balouchistan (India no longer hides this problem). Ali Bhutto gains the elections, elections quickly followed by the putsch of general Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, a putsch which will create an islamist integrist dictatorship without mercy and will hang Bhutto in 1977 for a false crime.



Colonel Zia

1974, the year of the Indian bomb:

India proceeds to a series of 6 underground nuclear tests in the Thar desert. The Indian bomb uses the technology and plutonium brought from Canada, the United States, France, Germany and England. The race between the nuclear powers of India and Pakistan technological, began then. Since 1980, Pakistan, helped by China, is suspected to have the bomb. India and Pakistan then sign a treaty of nonaggression of their respective nuclear sites. These 2 countries which did not sign the nuclear treaty of non-proliferation (TNP) returned to the very closed club of the nuclearized nations through the small door.

1978, the opening of the KKH:



The opening of Karakoram Highway, which was equal to the work of at least the boring of the Channel tunnel, geographically connects the Entente Cordiale between China and Pakistan. If for Pakistan, the KKH represents an interest to have a territorial recourse near the Chinese armed forces in the event of an Indian attack, the KKH is for China an additional means to be close to the operational area (after the completion of the Lhasa Kachgar road in 1957) and to connect the unstable provinces of Sinkiang, Tibet and Aksin Shin. China itself is useful to Pakistan as a counterweight to India. Thus, the construction of Karakoram Highway definitively binds Azad Kashmir ("free Kashmir") to China, the part of Kashmir which is under Indian control. Since 1978, the threat of the Chinese presence and influence on Kashmir seem to be an established fact for India, and tends to give a new dimension to the conflict.

La Karakoram Highway

1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan:

Since 1979, with the help of the United States, Pakistan is more occupied helping the Afghan mujahidins to erase the Soviet enemy than to fight India over Kashmir. During this time in 1989, India increases its presence in Kashmir in order to face Islamists independent movements and terrorists which became violent and were increasingly and, constantly armed by the Islamic integrist government of Pakistan and General Zia. Srinagar and the surrounding area became zones of nonright where regular operations of extreme violence were carried out either by the terrorists against the Indian interests, or by Indian soldiers against the population. The successive victories of the guerrilla carried out by Afghans against the Soviets lead Pakistan to believe it possible to drive India out of Kashmir by similar means. It is at that time that the independent Kashmirian terrorist groups of Pakistan become reality. Since the eighties, terrorist and violence in Kashmir did not stop (about 25 000 Kashmirians died in terrorism acts). The assistance brought by the United States was a means of considerable modernization to the Pakistani army. This American Pakistani agreement was not well looked upon by India, a historical ally of Russia.

1984, Sikh revolts in Punjab and Indian attacks against Siachen:

During this year, Punjab was a victim to a separatist revolt that India repressed firmly especially, if we consider the strategic position of this province, between India and Pakistan and being next to the Kashmir territories and unstable Pakistani Sind. The risk of other separatists can really be contagious with other provinces of India, not only the Kashmir. This



revolt had its high point by India's attack on the famous and highly symbolic Golden Temple of Amritsar where the last rebels took shelter. By this attack, India firmly confirms its control of the provinces that tried to be independent like Assam, the territories of the North east and of course, Kashmir, because of the risk of separation of the Indian union. During the same year, the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by several bullets in the chest by two Sikhs who were part of the security service. The son of the late, Rajiv Gandhi, was sworn in as Prime Minister per interim.

This same year, India launched an operation in the Meghdoot and attacks were carried out upstream the glacier of Siachen in higher Karakoram.

Fruit of an interpretation of the agreements of Simla in 1971, this war with the arguable strategic interests, causes an ecological and military disaster, the highest conflict of the world still continues since ever.

If we exclude the Siachen glacier from the two poles, it's the biggest glacier of the world and on

its hillside takes place the highest battle of the world (above 5000 meters). India wanted to gain the eastern territories of the Karakoram for them to be closer to the Karakoram Highway, a strategic itinerary between China and Pakistan. Because of this, in 1982 India sent its special troops to be trained in the Antarctic in order to reproduce the same conditions as those of an attack on the Siachen glacier. Afterwards, in April 1984, India undertook a military operation, known under the name of Maghdoot operation (Meghoot) on the Pakistani territory by making use of its Air Force, they parachuted their men onto the Siachen glacier which was not geographically linked to India.

As up to this day, an evaluation suggests that between 3000 and 100000 soldiers are stationed there by both sides. According to another evaluation, Pakistan has three battalions on the glacier, whereas India has seven battalions on the Siachen glacier. The Pakistanis can supply most of their troops on the peak by road and then on mules through the passes, however, India still needs to use helicopters and planes to transport supplies, food and soldiers.

On an average basis, one Pakistani soldier is killed every four days whereas one Indian soldier is killed daily. According to certain reports, more than 1300 Pakistani soldiers were killed in this war between 1984-1999. As far as India is concerned, this war cost them 50 millions of Roupies and approximately 2000 lives (until 1997) Just about most of the deaths are due to extreme atmospheric conditions. According to other sources, only 50

% of the Indian soldiers come home alive from the front, they suffer from mental illnesses due to lack of oxygen of this high atmosphere, amputations and other symptoms which are caused by the extreme climatic conditions of high altitude.

Discover Siachen glacier from space :



Prayers of a Moslem soldier

1986, the Brasstacks operation:

A series of operations close to Indian Sind, in order to test new Russian weapons, created a fearful reaction from Pakistan regarding the use of real ammunition on the Pakistani territory and a possible identical operation compared to that of 1971 in Eastern Pakistan. Pakistan moves a strong division to neighbours close to Penjab. India then cancels the operation.

1990, death of Rajiv Gandhi:

The Jammu-and-Kashmir are placed under direct presidential administration. Rajiv Gandhi is assassinated on May 21 by members of the LTTE, the release movement of northern Sri Lanka.

1992, fall of the Soviet Union and diplomatic Indo American revival:



Moujahidines on a Soviet armoured tank

The fall of the Soviet Union drags its strategic support of the Indian conflict along with it. India turns to the Israeli state for a new agreement and hopes that common work on terrorism, which makes the 2 countries suffer, can be planned. There is no doubt that the India Israeli partnership is a first major step towards a return to the normalization of diplomatic American relations, which were quite fragile at that time. At the same time, the destroying of the Babur or Babri Masjid mosque, supposed by built on the site of a Hindu temple creates riots between communities, Hindu and Moslem women in the whole of India.

1996, the Kashmir election:

The exceptionally high rate of partition of 30% mark these elections. The population states by this vote, its refusal of war and affirms its will of autonomy. This new separatist action introduces another political difficulty that India and Pakistan would have liked to avoid because India always refused to take into account the Kashmir identity who's Independence was foreseen by article 370 of the Indian constitution but which was never applied.

1998, nuclear proliferation on the move:



Ballistic Pakistani missile Gauri II

In July 1998, an attempt of reconciliation of the 2 countries is conceived concerning talks between president Nawaz Sharif and Indian Prime Minister AB Vajpayee, but thereafter India and Pakistan proceed to a series of nuclear tests which ruined the rare attempts at reconciliation ever made. India refuses in 1996 to ratify the nuclear treaty of nonproliferation and proceeds to a series of 5 underground tests on May 11, 1998. Pakistan answers by a series of official tests, another nuclear conflict, and this becomes a new international crisis. The Pakistani nuclear weapon is considered essential regarding the international question of the Kashmir. History reveals that this Pakistani strategy is partly successful, thanks to the fast and efficient intervention of the Westerners in the conflict ever since, in particular the United States (for which, the Pakistani tests represent a failure compared to the American policy of nuclear nonproliferation). One then might suspect China of having played an important part in the Pakistan manufacture of the bomb. Iran (always without official nuclear weapons but whose missiles »Shabab-3« are probably equipped with nuclear warheads) and Korea probably received help from Pakistan. The Pakistani nuclear weapon is a threat to the Indian nuclear power which is a threat to the first official Chinese nuclear equipment both were strong opponents of the Russian enemy and the Americans of at a certain time. The conflict of the Kashmir is a strong nuclear vector of the proliferation in the world.

1999, the Kargil crisis :



In May of this year, Kashmirians freedom fighters aided by the special armed forces of the Pakistani army infiltrated beyond the control line and went downstream from the Siachen glacier, during military operations and this, in front of the Indian army. This crisis was at first, set up by Pakistan just after the remote events of Kosovo: Pakistan who on the contrary to India always desired an international debate of the Kashmir question then hoped for a solution of an UNO choice as in Kosovo. UNO could then pressure India to organize a referendum on the attachment of Kashmir which, as one knows, could be favorable to Pakistan, if ever it were organized. But this strategy is a strategy of despair when one knows the weak role that UNO played in the solution of the Balkans conflict.

These operations which were the wish of General Musharraf were condemned by the international community, India reacted firmly and engaged significant military means on the ground, 20 000 soldiers were deployed, some ten planes and bombers flew on a major front line which is 120 kms long, blocking the Pakistan positions up to the heights. July 10, 1999, the 2 countries decided on a mutual withdrawal of the zones of combat.

But this withdrawal of the troops caused a serious crisis within the Pakistani army and did not forgive President M.

Sharif who yielded to the pressure of the United States. In October, Pervès Musharraf reverses the Government without bloodshed and issues the emergency state. This putsch caused great concern in the occident and resulted in a series of measurements and declarations. The public warning came from the International Monetary director of the International Monetary Funds (IMF) who declared that Islamabad would not receive any installments on the loan of 1,6 billion dollar. In London, the Commonwealth announced that it would forbid the military junta to take part at the summit, Karachi Stock Exchange plunged by 7,36%, Wall Street by 2,7%. Kofi Annan exhorted the Pakistani soldiers »to try to return to a civil government as soon as possible". India again places its forces in a maximum state of alert but P. Mousharraf publicly informed India, without mentioning it directly, that they should not try to benefit from the weakness of the Pakistan situation in order to attack the Pakistani interest.

The nuclear powers recognized since the 1998 tests, did not prevent the new crisis of 1999 and political instability. The crisis composed of significant risks between the 2 nuclear countries is however only a crisis, and not a war. In itself It seems that the nuclear dissuasion avoided sidesteps and the quick arrangement of the conflict between the 2 countries, as well as the reactions of the international community and that in particular of the United States (helped by Chinese neutrality) all played an important role. However, it is known today that the use of the nuclear weapon was seriously considered by the Pakistan army during this conflict.

2000, the recrudescence of terrorist acts worsen the conflict:



Victim of the conflict

October 1, 2001, a terrorist attack on the assembly of Jammu and Kashmir leaves 40 dead. The bonds of Afghan terrorism and Kashmiri are very obvious with the fall of the Taliban regime in November 2001 quoted by the jihad islamist on the highlands of the Kashmir. New tensions came up after the attack carried out on December 13, 2001 against the Indian Parliament, Delhi accused islamists groups supported by the Pakistan. The attack leaves 9 victims however, uncreadibly, not one Indian minister was killed or wounded.

On the other hand, acts of cruelties of the Indian army against the Moslems Kashmiri are current (disappearances, tortures) and are stated to be like permanent aggression of the Moslem people by Pakistan». This mixture of terrorism and guerrilla worsen the Pakistani Indo relations. Fighting begins again along the control line and the 2 countries station their troops again at the border who has never really existed. In 2002, India and Pakistan are again close to war with nearly a million soldiers stationed at the two parts of the border.



Indian soldiers

September nine eleven:



Pakistani demonstration

After the attacks launched by Al Qaida and the reaction of the United States who is ready to strike Afghanistan, India naturally offered its military bases to the American bombers and planes but this attitude was not welcomed by Pakistan who accuses India in September 19, to wish to recover the American alliance for its own benefit. Pervèz Mousharraf announces his total support to the United States. This outstanding speech is the main turn around of strategic alliances in Central Asia and at the same time it represents the revival of the Américan-Pakistani relations.



Terrorists Islamists

2002, a new bigger conflict:



Pakistani 's Manisfestation

During this year, the terrorist attacks in Jammu on May 14, and on May 21 in Srinagar as well as the bombed car in Bombay made the situation worse again, cancelling the timid try of goodwill of the 2 countries and which ended up by a Handshake between Pakistani President Pervèz Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, who were invited to discuss Kashmir at the meeting of Katmandou in January 2002. Pakistan proceeds to a series of missile shootings. In May, the Indian Prime Minister tells his troops that the moment of a »decisive combat» had come. The Pakistani President answers that »if the war is imposed on the Moslems, the Moslems will not show cowardice». June 6, the confusion continues when the British newspaper, the Daily Telegraph, entitled »India projects a nuclear war from now on until weeks to come, and radio-controlled nuclear bombs were charged on mirage 2001 and Mig 27 planes», and the projects of invading the Pakistani territory was even published in the newspapers.

The nuclear conflict risk was taken very serious by the Westerners, the embassies panic and the embassy of Great Britain was evacuated in Delhi. The United States return concerned and pressure Pakistan, thereafter Pervèz Musharraf informs an American emissary on June 6 that its country will "definitively prevent " the infiltration of armed groups coming from Azad Kashmir, the pakistanis part, India was content with this announcement, the dangerous strategy of Indian's higher bet was paying off. However President Pervèz Mousharraf's speech has only few results on the terrorists activity of the Kashmir.



Indian demonstration

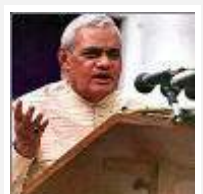
During this time, new elections (the first time since 1977) are organized, India wanting to prove its goodwill to the word and the Kashmirians by installing ballot boxes, but these elections were the most fatal of the Kashmir history, 527 people are killed, terrorists organized terror to dissuade the population to go voting. The elections come up with a coalition of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the Congress Party, respecting and making use of human rights, and agreed to a new compromising policy with a minimum common program, the wish and need to reconcile the communities of the province, the release of political prisoners and respect of human rights.

December 2003, attacks against président Pervèz Mousharraf:



Pervèz Musharraf

Mr Perves Mousharraf miracuouly escape two attacks of a bombed trapped car, one on December 14 th, the other the 25th, between Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Financed by Al Qaida, through the intermediary of the Islamists mouvement, these attacks were firmly condemned by India.



Atal Behari Vajpayee

Last political events, signs of a possible outcome of the conflict ?

Today, it is important, for all, to find a solution. India, who took the initiative to join the dialogue in April 2003, seeks to become a world power. Strong by economic growth and its democratic state, it has a place with the UNO Security Council but must, for that reason, get out of the Kashmir mess. It seems to agree, more than ever, to make concessions which they proved by the real modernisation with which the Indian leaders greeted the revelations made on the escapes of the Pakistani nuclear program. An additional sign of goodwill was in the beginning of mid January during the discussions with the representatives of the Hall Party Hurriyat Conference, a coalition of moderate separatist groups. From the Pakistani side, the declaration of President Mousharraf at the end of last year, announcing that Pakistan was ready, for the first time since years, to give up the organization of a referendum concerning the Kashmir, as well as to accept and include the fate of the province in “total discussion” , indicate a real viewpoint change. It is true that the cachmerian separatists ended up becoming a threat to President Mousharraf himself of which proof can be found because of the last attac from which he escaped in December 2003. Furthermore, the Kashmiri movements which fight for the annexing of the province to Pakistan became an Islamic reference mark and their increasing influence on the Pakistani companies worried the President. Extract of french newspaper l'Humanité (17.02.04)

Finally, there is no doubt that the question of the terrorist support to Kashmir by Pakistan became the main condition for new Pakistani Indo negotiations, the major settlement of the conflict.



May 2004, the defeat of BJP at the indian legislative elections :



In a Srinagar street

Sonja Gandhi won the legistrative elections in India, after a poll marathon which lasted three weeks. Pakistan neighbour and rival of India, quickly reacted to the announcement of the results. “We hope that an unspecified change of government in India will not affect the process of peace” a member of the Pakistani government declared. The Congress immediately reassured its neighbours and insisted that they were engaged in a work to create a lasting peace in the area. “Release, May 13, 2004 by Liberation”.



Geopolitics mistakes wich were the origin of the Kashmir conflict:

The causes of the conflict were many, which you will be able to see at the end of this document - the access to the specific and better documented sites. This Web site proposes a thought of the particular topography of Kashmir and which were, at the time, the root of the Kashmir conflict.

Geography is a means of knowledge which also takes into account the heights of the mountains, the lengths of rivers, etc. the social and economic situation of the time, so that it basically, meets a fundamental need which allows to act on the ground. Geography makes use of this information and it's, more or less high degree of accuracy, enables the people to have an important advantage in a conflict. To behold the geographic keys is to have the base of geopolitics and the military strategy. The punishment of a geographical ignorance is inevitably war. The particular topography of Kashmir, extremely mountainous, had unevitable consequences on the problems of an already complicated partition. At the time of the partition, the principal economic situation of Kashmir was forgotten because it was less necessary to seek the richness in its earth, rather than in the immense and unexpected richness that the mountains can offer - thus water was the forgotten element of the partition. By declaring that Kashmir was “the jugular vein of Pakistan” Jinnah underlined a geographic fact of considerable strategic importance. In these areas, water is not only “necessary” to life, it is “life itself” and this expression becomes very important especially at this latitude which is equal to the deserts of Baloutchistan, the Rajasthan and Takla makham, where the rainfall is even less than in the Sahara. The partition of 1947 deprived Pakistan of its river sources of Punjab of Jelhum, Chenab, the delighted one, Beas and Sutlej - rivers which gave birth to the name of the Penjab province. These five river, the sources are in Kashmir, are vital for the economy of the country. The Indus basin in which the majority of the Pakistani population lives, concentrates all the richness of the country and it is supplied by water of various rivers and their affluents. This richness, as well as the formidable icecap of the northern areas, comes from one and the same origin, Kashmir. Without speaking about the sacred character of the Indus river, to conquer these highlands, would allow Pakistan to control the whole Indus flow whose source can be found on the annexed Tibetain grounds of the Chinese ally.



The problem of the Kashmir is in his heart : the beautifulle and rich valley, the indian's Switzerland.

The speed by which the partition was set up as well as the geographical ignorance of North Kashmir at that time in the middle of the last century, probably was of great importance in the conflict which opposed India, China and Pakistan. On August 15, 1947, date of the partition, the geography was not better known than in 1937, when Shipton wrote his book "Blank on the map" the title describes the sorry character of these forgotten Arctic areas by humans. The layout of the borders between India and Pakistan, at the time of the partition, was decided upon by a special commission between the 21st and the 24th of July 1947 in only 11 days. These 11 days were not long enough for the commission to decide on the Kashmir borders, whose geography was, in many cases, always vague or even unknown. The considerable amount of information reported by the Survey of India, followed by explorations of Goldwin Austen, Conway of Baltoro, Shipton in the areas of Panmah, Shaks gam and Biafo, the Bullock couple in the areas of Hispar and Siachen, were all ignored. The first existence of Kashmir is the probable consequence of this ignorance.

In 1962, the area of Aksin Shin, remote and backwards, was added to India for the same reasons. This negligent Indian strategy, which led to the loss of their territory, because, at first sight, it seemed without economic value, will have serious consequences to the conflict especially regarding the credibility of the Indian military forces. The origin of the second Pakistani Indo war and the acceleration of the nuclearisation of the conflict. Lastly, during the crisis of Kargil in 1999, India had much trouble to get rid of the Pakistani forces as well as the infiltrated Kashmiries, because, with their excellent knowledge of their homeland and good resistance to altitude, they held an advantage over the Indian military. These examples particularly show up to what point geographic knowledge is of major importance when war is at stake. This had unquestionable consequences on the Kashmir conflict especially in this part of the world where ground is very difficult.



Geographers in Kashmir

Geographical science, when shared with the art of war, is in the interest to control territory. The obvious link between geography and war is the cartography. Already in the 19th century, the British Raj, wanting to affirm his domination in Asia, trusted the British officers who travelled the remote mountains and back are as of the north, with the cartography of the Indian sub continent and its borders. They were long, difficult and perilous missions. Sir Godwin Austen, as well as George Everest were Survey Officers of India. They devoted their lives to writing pages of figures, going through cold and inhospitable places, sometimes disguised as natives, sometimes illness took over, but they always continued to add their contribution to this enormous task, the establishment of a detailed chart of the sub continent. From the south of India in 1808, the great Survey Officers progressed step by step. The Everest (Peak XV) was only identified in 1848 and K2 in 1856, after half a century of exploration.

In the 19th century, all of the sheltered kingdoms of the Himalayas were prohibited, for eg, Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim as well as Kashmir. One can measure the exclusiveness of these regions and the difficulty of going through their mysteries by reading "Voyage in Tibet" written by Alexandra David Neel and also "Annapurna, first 8000" where Herzog was the first one of the Westerners to open the doors of Kathmandu in 1950. The high, remote back valley of Kashmir, which have a more septentrional climate than the Himalayas in the South and are closed by snow during the winter, are separated by unclimbable mountains. They sheltered various populations who lead a self-sufficient life and were not very open to dialogues. The rulers and the kings of these high valleys made war from one valley to another. The tradition of armed robbery damaged their reputation and brought misfortune to the travellers who went to these high valleys. Karakorum meant " the black mountains", which refers less to their colour than to the danger of the paths that the merchants of the silk road were obliged to use. These rulers and heads of tribes kept and

strongly protected geographical information which had come into their valleys. The geographers were then compared to spies. George Hayward, explorer and geographer, paid with his life for his curiosity. He was assassinated in 1870 in Darkot by mir it Walli who worried about the disclosure of the cartography of his valley. These mirs still reigned as masters of their valleys in 1947, at the time of the partition, the country was still completely closed in. These difficulties made good geographic knowledge impossible regarding these highlands and consequently the good partition of Kashmir of 1945, was wrong.



Alexandra David Neel

It is difficult to find precise maps of the Kashmir area, they are held by the major states of the armies for obvious strategic reasons. It is still the case in all the massives of the Himalayas. It is curious to note that cartography can be used as a propaganda media, which makes it very political. It is enough to consult several maps of the Indian sub continent to notice that at what point the borders of the 3 countries in Kashmir are changing. Recently, to please the 3 opponents, the World Bank "disadvised" its cartographic Service not to produce maps of the Indian peninsula which could be too precise and show the Kashmir area. Another example, the official altitude of K2 of 8611m was questioned in 1976 by a Pakistani expedition which recalculated its altitude up to 8760m. Another expedition, American this time, recalculated its altitude with the help of a satellite to 8858m, i.e. higher than Everest. For the highest mountain top not to be in Nepal any more (a country politically dominated by India) but in Pakistan has obvious political repercussions (the altitude of K2 was later recalculated by Italians and was closer to that of origin). Recently, India opened for expeditions, the powerful tops of the eastern Karakorum, even though there are violent arguments about this. Expeditions must obligatorily be composed of the Indian army. To conquer the tops, and to make false altitudes in order to represent political borders without definition, are sometimes necessary exercises and part of a means to obtain political goals. The war that the 3 opponents delivered in Kashmir is also part of this manipulation and we may suggest that the territory is also part of a psychological war.



G. Hayward

The real dispute about Siachen territory really started when India worried about the climbing permits granted to the mountaineers by the Pakistani authorities, in the region that was not yet clearly defined in the 1980 maps. India saw a means to expand and started to train its picked groups of soldiers in the 80ties in the arctic, having their men go through hardships and extreme conditions, hardships based on cold weather conditions (this is still the case today as part of the Indian manoeuvres will take place jointly with their US partners in Alaska). After the Indian invasion of the Siachen glacier, Pakistan precisely calls this as "cartographic aggression" coming from India, indirectly pointing out the importance of cartographic gaps of these remote areas and the consequences of a never-ending conflict. Now it is necessary for the belligerent to defend the nation up to the far territories of its ice.

An extraordinary event was that in 1947 or 1949 none of the governments nor the superior officers who set up and co-signed the line of control (LOC) on the topographic maps, thought it necessary to go as far as the Chinese border. Did they have the geographical knowledge of these remote areas to be able to decide and trace some kind of a border? Probably not. The written agreement only states that after the NJ9842 point, the line goes as "far as the north up to glaciers". This huge inaccuracy leads to the dispute of the two countries who intend to become owners of this area, 35 yrs later, the Siachen glacier in 1984.

The Siachen war started precisely where the geographical maps ended in the north of the NJ9842 point. India claimed its border as from the high mountains of Saltoro up to the top of Gasherbrun (8068m) by going through the strategic passes of Bilafond and Sia. The Siachen glacier is therefore Indian according to Delhi, based on a hydrographical argument: the Nubra river that flows downstream from Siachen and that irrigates Indian Ladakh, must belong to them up to its source. Pakistan, however, demands the border set up in 1949, which means, the one that separates the Siachen glacier into two, the upstream belonging to them by right.

Today, the new military technics of observation (in particular satellite observation, drones,...) and the reinforcement of communication means, improve the monitoring of the control line and stabilize the concerned forces. Invasions, similar to those of 1962 and even 1999, are no longer possible, even more so because these extremely mountainous areas cannot be used as fast and significant openings. It only allows the infiltration of small groups of armed men whose terrorist activity in Kashmir is still currently more significant either – before or after the winter, when the high passes are accessible after the melting of snow.

Not to know all about this mountainous area was probably one of the many causes of the Kashmir conflict. Perhaps the enclosure and the very mountainous topography of this part of the world will, in the future, avoid some misunderstandings. Today, in a conflict context, geographical information referring to Kashmir is kept secret defense. Certain territories, like the glacier of Siachen, the solid mass of Kailash or Aksin Chin, remain of very difficult access, they are isolated by mines and the control line remains solid. They are much more accessible to a satellite exploration than to a human exploration, it is always "Blank on the Map".



Two means of reflections concerning the future of the conflict :

He would be quite a wise man, the one who could predict the future of a conflict which remained blocked for half a century. However, the recent international events cannot be without consequences on the Kashmir conflict and leave some traces of reflection for the future of the conflict. Hereafter are some assumptions:



The American new deal :



P. Mousharraf et G.W. Bush

September 11th is a fateful date for the geostrategic Middle-East and therefore for the Kashmir conflict. Afghanistan is occupied by the coalition troops, the United States reinforces their agreement with Pakistan which was originally set up ever since the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Vis a vis the American pressures, Pakistan made the difficult choice to betray the old Taliban allies to help the United States fight terrorism. The reinforcement of the American diplomatic influence of the Middle East and particularly in Pakistan, changes all. The legal bases of Pakistan politics, whose initial idea was the foundation and defense of the Moslem world against communism, the construction of a Moslem community to counter the Indian hegemony in Asia (always keeping in mind, a possible retrieval towards the east if ever India attacks) make it hard to represent the Indian neighbour as unworthy and the conquest of Kashmir, impossible. The Pakistani army operates a radical change of behaviour and refuses its support policy to the Afghan Jihad Movement. It also makes the courageous but perilous choice to fight terrorism with the countries of the coalition. The cause of the Jihad being lost, Pakistan could be tempted to try to reconquer the support of the Islamic militants by supporting their terrorism in Kashmir, this is very important for President Mousharraf because he risks losing the control of the separatist cachemirian movements or might lose the support of the Pakistani population if the Kashmir cause, based on national unity, becomes forgotten. There still remain some 3000 separatist cachemirian militants armed in Indian territory. Deprived of logistical support, this could be tried as a last resort, a suicide mission or by an increase of the attacks against Indian interests of Kashmir or even directly against President Musharraf himself – as was the case in the beginning of 2004.

Furthermore, Pakistan cannot do without the United States who back up a State, close to economic bankruptcy. After the support for the anti-terrorist coalition, President Mousharraf

obtained the disappearing of all the American sanctions (which pulled down the economy of the country since the nineties – this occurred because of support given to the sectarian policy of the Afghan Taliban and also because of its nuclear policy) Facing the diplomatic revival with the United States and thanks to the economic pressures, Pakistan should really give up supporting the separatist Kashmiri movement because of the fight against international terrorism. As it is, the position of Pervesh Musharraf has never been so delicate.

The war of the United States against terrorism is an advantage to India who, for a long time, accused Pakistan to be the principal addition to the independent Kashmiri terrorists. In this way, the Indian leading class could also try to go for a strategic alliance with the United States even though they still openly doubt the goodwill of Pakistan to make an end to Kashmir terrorism. (see the declaration of the Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee - "Pakistan cannot fight terrorism in Afghanistan and encourage it in Kashmir")

Moreover, the Indo – American relationships were reinforced in order to balance the relationship with China, of whom the economic emancipation is well known and which are threatening the Indian interests. As far as the Chinese were concerned, the conflicted relations with its Indian enemy became more supple after September 11th. India and China already shared the same fear, for a long time, the Moslem extremism, with Kashmir in India and Xian Yang in China and these are fears, that September 11 has once again brought alive. This recent agreement between India and China did not please Pakistan for whom China represents the first allied Pakistani cause with Kashmir.

Furthermore, China seems to have accepted the reality of the Indian power in Asia and seems to have put distances between Pakistan since the end of the cold war and especially since the renewal of the Pakistani-American relations. Pakistan finds itself, from now on, receiving lots of applause from India, Afghanistan but a little less from China. Ever since April 2003, the relations between India and Pakistan remained rigid in spite of an extended hand proposed by Prime Minister Behari Vajpayee towards them. However, these two countries have, ironically, the same ally, the United States. The new American diplomatic relations with the two opponents make the United States seem the new mediator of the Kashmir conflict and could make it possible to organize a debate on an international level – what is exactly what India refused since 1971. The end of the conflict seems to depend, more and more, on the American diplomatic position as well as many other areas in the world.



The new energy stakes and its consequences for the Kashmir conflict :

Already, after the Russian failure in Afghanistan in the 80ties, the end of the cold war and the renewed independence of the central Asian Republics, the US decided that the Taliban Movement was worth associating with in Afghanistan - supporting, according to the necessary political stability, the construction of a gas pipe line between Turkmenistan, Pakistan and south Asia (through the UNOCAL company). It's at that time that Kashmir began to feel the after effects of the Taliban politics on Afghan territories, a politic, as one knows, that was supported by Pakistan and the US.

But it's probably China's waking up and its energy greed that weighed heavily on the Kashmir conflict. For the Chinese the energy stakes are already enormous. In 2012, China will have doubled its needs for oil. In 2030, it will probably be the first economic power of the world (in front of the US) and first or second world consumer of oil, however, two thirds of its reserves are in the Arabic peninsulas (therefore, the US interest for the Iraq oil fields - the economic future of the Americans is being built up today).

It's in the Chinese province of Xinjiang (which means "New Border" in Chinese) that fields of fossil energy seem to be the most promising in China: the oil fields, on one hand, (discovered in the Tarim basin to Dushanzi, Karamai, Korla and Urumqi) and on the other hand, the coal reserves (the Taklamakan mines). The growth of China will provoke an unknown tension on the world market of fossil energy, for oil but also for coal which covers right now two thirds of the Chinese needs. So, the Chinese development might well transform the Xinjiang province into a new Far West.

Facing these new world stakes of energy, China, a big consumer, must in years to come, diversify but also secure its source of energy stocks. Seeing the problems that the US have to pacify the future regions of oil producers (Iraq, central Asia, Saudi Arabia - still undamaged but for how long?) the protected areas of production, the distribution of oil and the coal pits of Xinjiang, could represent an interesting alternative for the near future.

The stake of natural oil is different. China holds 5% of the natural world reserves of oil. Russia at least a third, and certainly more with the new reserves discovered in Siberia. Naturally, Moscow negotiates its oil with Beijing. If the agreements are signed, two pipelines will supply China from the north-east, as from Irkutsk and Komсомосk. Future economic partners like China and Russia would like to be counter weights to the American interests in central Asia, which could be a major reason for reconciliation of these two countries in future years. The coming together of economic interests between China and Russia, even a future cordial agreement will not be without consequences on the geopolitical scale of central Asia and the Kashmir conflict.

The strategic importance of the Xinjiang province therefore becomes more and more important for China and the world. To have more control, China promotes massive immigration (like in Tibet) towards this deserted territory non-regarding the autochthonal population, the Uigours who are strapped in front of the Hans, now a majority. In this way, China protects its future by defending its economic interests and by controlling efficiently the crowds. What will be the Indian responses to this new weight of Chinese politics in Asia? Under these circumstances, one can understand better the vital geostrategies aspect represented by some 37500m2 of the deserted plateau of Aksai Chin, the Soda and Lingzi Chin platforms on which the road from Lhasa to Kashgar was built, major and vital for China to link the administrative west provinces of China to the far away and precious Xinjiang. One can hardly see how China hopes to negotiate with India concerning these territories, something China refused to do in the past anyway. One might also wonder if the awakening of China could bring forth a democratic process, in this country of dictatorship known for its uncompromising attitude concerning the limits of its enormous territory.

Towards a fight of civilization or under a continental reconciliation ?



Rawalpindi

To try to predict what kind of world we entered after the end of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war, American professor Samuel Huntington, published in an article in 1993 and affirmed - "My assumption is that in this new world, the conflicts will not primarily originate within the ideology or the economy. The great causes of human separation and the principal sources of conflicts will be cultural. The National States will continue to play the first role in the international business but the principal political world conflicts will set nations and groups, belonging to different civilizations against each other. The shock of civilizations will dominate the world politics. The fractured lines between civilizations will be the lines who face the future." According to huntinton, the Kashmir, which is in between civilizations, i.e. India, the East, the West and China, may have a big conflict in the future. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan and its religious fundamentalists, who are the guardians of this political stability, are naturally opposed to India's undenominated regime and its multicultural attachment which represent the base of its union. The Kashmir conflict is therefore, not only a territorial conflict but also a political ethnic conflict between a Moslem world, in an archaic way – opposed to India's choice – the first democracy of the world whose values are fully recognized by the occident and guide its economic, political and cultural exchanges. They are definitely turned towards the future and progress. There is no doubt that the Kashmir conflict is more and more a handicap for India whose economic strength and the democratic model are ready to grow in the world, which leaves hope for the solutions.

Moreover, the disagreement between Pakistan and India, was from the beginning, a misunderstanding. Before the partition, Pakistan was a concept, the dream of Ali Jhinna who had the intuition that Moslems of the sub-continent deserved their fatherland. The fight of anti-British independence was in the hope of creating two different groups – a theory based on only religious differences. But the roots of India and Pakistan merge in a sub-continental similarity. Pakistan is, just like India, a result from the regrouping of ethnic groups of very diverse origins whose only political and spiritual bond, is the Islamic religion. When President Pervez Mousharraf supported the fall of the Talibans by the coalition, the demonstrations supporting the Taliban, were of astonishing little strength. The Pakistani population, disappointed by the extremism of the Taliban, did finally, not seem to be inclined to defend Moslem sectarisme. The invasion of Afghanistan by the coalition which resulted in 23 years of failure of the pro Afghan policy, brought India and China closer and showed up the economic weakness of Pakistan vis-a-vis India. A fact, that isolated Pakistan a little more and whose only security lies in its partnership with America, a way to get stronger.



Rawalpindi

Pakistan is an – in between – territory which, after having turned to the East and his/her Moslem brothers, will perhaps not have any other choice today but to seize the outstretched hand of India – a country which still has not accepted the "the theory of the two nations" ever since the partition. Perhaps the end of the conflict supposes the recognition and equal identity of these two enemy brothers that the strategic manipulation of alliances could always keep separate.

Links:

This site does not claim to analyse a very complex situation of Kashmir, it is however, a means to sites dedicated to this subject. The sites treating Kashmir are numerous, the sites selected hereafter are all of exceptional quality (generally in French language):

- <http://www.senat.fr/rap/r01-336/r01-3360.html> : very official information but fascinating regarding the Kashmir.
- <http://src.ca/nouvelles/dossiers/Cachemire/index.html> : a coloured file, clear and concise on the Kashmir problem on the Radio operator Canada site.
- http://www.dnd.ca/admpol/fra/doc/strat_2002/sa02_10_f.htm : A very good report/ratio on the Canada site and its group of policies. This document gives the news correctly + explains conflict after the new American diplomatic relations regarding South Asia.
- <http://www.jaia-bharati.org/index.htm> : The shape of this site of association Jaia Bharati (association dedicated to India) is exceptional, large file of the history of India and their thinking also that of Kashmir, small exceptional information not to be missed (great mark for their opinion).
- <http://www.oaric.com/Cachemire.pdf> : For all be able to include/understand reciprocal perceptions of India and Pakistan of the conflict of Kashmir , a very serious and enthralling file of the Observatory of Analyses of the Contemporary International Relations (OARIC).

International relations (OARIC). Christophe Jaffrelot, director of the CERI (International Research and Studies Center), is a graduate from Institute of Political Studies of Paris, university Paris I - Sorbonne and National Institute of the Languages and Eastern Civilisations. He teaches the political questions in South Asia with Sciences Po, lucky for us who are studie the Kashmir!! Therefore below you'll find complete articles, which are serious and thrilling regarding Kashmir and studging come from the excellent CERI site:

- <http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com/publica/etude/etude84.pdf> : The great illusion, assessment of the Afghan policy in Pakistan.
- <http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com/publica/etude/etude83.pdf> : Les relations internationales de l'Inde à l'épreuve de la relation indo-pakistanaise (février 2002).
- <http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com/archive/mai03/artcjjz.pdf> : The question of the Kashmir after September 11 and the news in Jammu and Kashmir (June 10 2003).
- <http://www.ceri-sciencespo.com/archive/july02/artjzb.pdf> : Variation set of themes (same authors).
- <http://www.iss-eu.org/occasion/occ43.pdf> : Same topic and same authors on the Institute of Study and Security site (IES).



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