

**FOOTNOTES TO A CONFLICT?**  
**RETHINKING QUESTIONS OF CLASS AND THE STATE IN POST-ACCESSION**  
**JAMMU AND KASHMIR**

by

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## **Abstract**

Various conceptual framings have been used to approach the Kashmir conflict over the years. These accounts have portrayed Kashmir as a pawn of nation-building exercises and an existential bone of contention between nuclear-armed water-scarce India and Pakistan; as the contemporary locus of ancient ethno-religious hatreds let loose by the partition of the subcontinent; and increasingly in the broadly 'Leftist' circles of contemporary South Asia, as the centre-point of a confrontation between an imperial State and a dissenting indigenous populace demanding the right to freedom. This thesis offers several critiques of these approaches and suggests the employment of class- and State-theoretical paradigms to understanding the conflict. I argue that attention to the processes of capitalist transformation in Kashmir and to the changing role of securitisation in India alongside the different politico-economic projects that have captured State power and control over the process of State-building, can add complexity and dynamism to analyses of a conflict that is regularly conceived in ahistorical and politically autonomous terms. By studying class-relations in Jammu and Kashmir since the state's controversial accession and divergent Indian State-projects since independence I advance two claims. First, "new" Kashmiri nationalist movement(s) which aspired to hegemony after accession, arose neither as an inherent tendency nursed by an incompatibility with modern Statehood or ethno-religious diversity, nor as a unique consequence of heavy-handed governance or foreign interference, but instead, as products of a particular set of socio-economic circumstances whereby cross-national and sub-national inter-class and intra-class struggles of the emerging Kashmiri bourgeoisie were deployed along "nationally relevant" parameters in order to seize State power. Second, the protraction of the insurgency in Kashmir can be understood by tracing the histories of State-sponsored securitisation as a process which initially worked to consolidate the borders of a national economy and engender national integration in pursuit of State-led development with variable social impacts, but increasingly began to be deployed to induce the militarisation of internal politics, the creation of security 'spectacles', and the militarisation of civil society along existing societal fault-lines, in response to the liberalisation of the Indian economy.

## Lay Summary

Many scholars and public intellectuals have sought to understand the root causes and reasons for the protraction of the Kashmir conflict. In these analyses, a lack of attention has been paid to issues of class-formation (that is, the development of the particular relations shared by groups of people to the means of production and to labour) in Kashmir and to different State-forms (that is, the ‘type’ of government as determined by its political, economic, and ideological projects) in India. This thesis reintroduces these concepts in order to argue that the conflict is better understood in terms of ruptures between emerging local and national capitalists, and the different politico-economic projects and growth-strategies which have been realized at the State-level, and have employed the military, paramilitaries, and foreign policy disparately in order to consolidate their immediate or long-term visions of the national economy.

## **Preface**

This thesis is original, unpublished, and independent work by the author, Debolina Majumder.

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## List of Abbreviations

AFSPA	Armed Forces Special Powers Act
APHC	All Parties Hurriyat Conference
ASKPC	All State Kashmir Pandit Conference
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BRICs	Brazil, Russia, India, China
BRO	Border Roads Organisation
BSF	Border Security Forces
CIS	Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
CPI	Communist Party of India
CRPF	Central Reserve Police Force
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
DTTI	Defense Technology Trade Initiative
FDC	Food Control Department
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GREF	General Reserve Engineer Force
IAKF	Indo-American Kashmir Forum
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INTUC	Indian National Trade Union Congress
ITBP	Indo-Tibetan Border Police
JJK	<i>Jama'at-i-Islami</i> of Jammu and Kashmir
JKLF	Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front
JKPC	Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference
KSG	Kashmir Study Group
KWA	Kashmiri Worker's Association
LBA	Ladakh Buddhist Association
LOC	Line of Control
MUF	Muslim United Front

NHAI	National Highways Authority of India
NHPC	National Hydroelectric Power Corporation
NLF	National Liberation Front
NSS	Nagarik Shuraksha Samiti
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PIE	"Post-colonial Informal Empire"
PWD	Public Works Department
RAC	Regional Autonomy Committee
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SC	Scheduled-Caste
SEB	State Energy Board
SOG	Special Operations Group
SPO	Special Police Officer
SSB	Sashastra Seema Bal
STF	Special Task Force
UKLF	United Kashmir Liberation Front
VDC	Village Defence Committee
VHP	Vishva Hindu Parishad
WHAM	"Winning Hearts and Minds"

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To my parents.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

On an afternoon in October, two years ago, the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia hosted the eminent Kashmiri-Indian (one wonders what the order of this hyphenation should be) filmmaker, Sanjay Kak, and arranged for a public viewing of two of his acclaimed documentaries, *Red Ant Dream* (2013) and *Jaishn-e-Azadi* (2007). I had a chance to see the former film, a testament of sorts to “a fair and honourable fight” (Sanjay Kak as quoted in Tanushree Bhasin 2013) and the horrors of modern day capitalism, while writing my undergraduate thesis on the early stages of the Naxalite movement. On this occasion, I had come to see the latter of the two documentaries. The event itself was not particularly well-attended; the majority of the audience consisted of faculty and staff, as well as a small smattering of students. I remember very little of what I watched on the screen that day, which is in no way to discredit the filmmaker; for one, I had forgotten to bring my notebook and thus was unable to record its claims in a detailed manner, and secondly, I was distracted by the events of the consequent discussion generated by the documentary amongst the audience and the filmmaker. Thousands of miles away from the locus of the Kashmir conflict, the film, which in large part dealt with the aspirations of the nationalist movement in Kashmir, produced an atmosphere of palpable unease and tension amongst the audience. One of the questions asked made a ubiquitous reference to the small Hindu minority that had fled the region after the onset of the insurgency because of a mass of targeted killings: “What about the *Pandits*?” Soon, a heated, if detached argument on partiality of the cinematic document and its characterisation of the issue at the hand began. I do not remember Kak’s responses to such questions; at this point, I was already trying to locate an exit route from the conference room.

I mention this episode for two reasons, for one, it was indicative of the great deal of “blind passion and sectarianism” which mention of the Kashmir conflict conjures, both among certain “popular” and “intellectual” elements of the subcontinent, and secondly, because it served as a close encounter with the prevalence and persistence of public memory in almost all accounts of this conflict (Gramsci 2011, p. 418). With regard to the first point, I must clarify, for I do not infer that emotion and passion have no place in scholarly discussion. As Antonio Gramsci (2011, p. 418) once wrote, “The intellectual’s error consists in believing that one can know without understanding and even more without feeling and being impassioned (not only for knowledge in itself but also for the

object of knowledge).” I mean to indicate instead, that such discussions on Kashmir, often take a turn towards the notion that to feel is to always already know and understand. In the summer of that year, I had visited the National Archives of India as part of a month-long research trip for my Master’s thesis. While I was already “interested” in writing on Kashmir at this point, a series of what I thought were unproductive daytrips to the archives as well as the global political climate of the neo-imperial war on Syria, had made me thoroughly question the premises of my project proposal which intended to look at questions of legality and constitutionality in State practice and militarisation. It was at this juncture, that I began to think of the conflict in terms of national movements and national ideologies. I came upon Eric Hobsbawm’s writings on history and identity, and noted with interest the stark parallels between one of his experiences at a conference in Civitella della Chiana and mine in the episode described earlier. Hobsbawm’s (1994) short essay traversed a wide array of topics. He distinguished, on one hand, the memorial narratives of survivors and the dead, and on the other, the role of what were perceived to be destructive and incompatible histories of universality. He wrote, of the boundedness of history to contemporary politics and the notion of the timeless nation even in the face of its historical novelty (p. 55), both of which are discussions I take up later in this thesis. He propounded the “supremacy of evidence”, the “historical verifiability of political or ideological claims” and the duty of the historian to deconstruct “political or social myths dressed up as history” (*Ibid.*, p. 58 and 59), tenets which I have attempted to adhere to in some sense or the other. Yet he also ruminated on the limits of this role, for “when evidence [was] absent, defective, conflicting, or circumstantial it [could] not convincingly refute even a highly implausible proposition” (*Ibid.*, p. 60), a point that weakens some of my arguments about the actual composition of early nationalist movements after independence, details on which have been lacking. Nonetheless, Hobsbawm (p. 63) was clear, “bad history is not harmless history...The sentences typed on apparently innocuous keyboards may be the sentences of death”. Hobsbawm thus argued that the task of the historian was certainly not to deny memory; instead, it was to counteract the politicisation of these memories through myth-making.

In the case of Kashmir, these memorial discourses of the Kashmiri nationalists, internally displaced *Pandits*, and a variety of different types of Indian nationalists, have received wide circulation, in so far that they have often become the official histories of different groups, arranged asymmetrically in the hierarchies of politico-economic power. The Kashmir conflict, to the extent that we do understand it, has come to be both unequally constituted and fragmented by these

narratives. The politicisation of such narratives can be dangerous for a number of reasons. For instance, on the one hand, the notion of intractable ethno-religious violence has been mobilised a number of times in recent history as a humanitarian concern beyond the domestic level of the State; and such States, almost always peripheral, semi-peripheral or post-colonial, have been framed not only as agents but as agents requiring “international” disciplining, intervention, and regime change by the US and its allies. On the other hand, ethno-religious schemata of social relations within the national ideologies of particular State-forms have often sanctioned the use of coercive measures, including but certainly not limited to, societal militarisation and varieties of spectacular violence. In each of these cases, the State, remains decoupled from society and the societal relations of production which determine the incidence of different State-forms along with the variance in the actionable interests of different class-alliances. Countering such narratives is thus a matter of both academic and political urgency. From an academic perspective, the Kashmir conflict has generated many critiques of “the” Indian ideology, some of which I have explored in more detail than others. It has also allowed us an opportunity not only to study nationalism and nationalist movements, but also to study second-generation nationalisms and national movements, or perhaps more appropriately, nationalisms and national movements which have at contingent moments of time and space been submerged on account of the hegemony of others, and have reemerged upon the decline of these other nationalisms and national movements. How then can one begin to work towards some form of a universal history of this conflict? My arguments are arranged as follows.

The first chapter serves as an exposition of the theoretical assertions which will guide the next two chapters. I begin by using the concept of scale and scaling to distinguish between a variety of conceptual framings which have been used over the years to approach and represent the conflict; as the fault-line between the ideational boundaries of global conflicts; as either a nation-building exercise, geo-strategic, or existential bone of contention between nuclear-armed water-scarce India and Pakistan; as the contemporary hotbed of ancient ethno-religious hatreds let loose by the partition of the subcontinent; and increasingly in the disparate segments of Leftist political thought in South Asia, as an opposition between the imperial Indian State and the dissenting indigenous Kashmiri populace demanding the right to *aṣāadi* (freedom). I systematically evaluate the shortcomings of this literature, which traverses academic and popular public debates, by critiquing their theoretical and ideological bases, parsing their empirical framework, and to a lesser extent identifying the immediate intellectual origins of these framings. A number of concerns emerge in the

literature currently available on the conflict. These include the adoption of moralising ontologies, ahistorical and primordialist understandings of ethno-religious identity and national cultural alterity, primarily mono-scalar arenas of investigation, and a tendency to divorce the “political” interests of the Indian State and Kashmiri patriots from underlying social relations and processes. I suggest an alternative in the form of a class-theoretical approach to tracing the development of new Kashmiri nationalist agitations after the controversial accession of the state<sup>1</sup> to the Indian Union, and a State-theoretical approach to grasping the different permutations of Indian Planning and national security policy towards Kashmir since independence in the wider context of India’s changing position in the capitalist world system.

The second chapter is sub-divided into two sections. It challenges analyses of the conflict, which have distanced the politico-economic projects of new Kashmiri nationalist movements from the competing class-projects of the emerging Kashmiri bourgeoisie, by taking up the class-theoretical approach delineated in the previous chapter. The first section attempts to uncover how processes of economic development and agrarian change have affected social relations in post-accession Kashmir and generated particular ruptures within the emerging Kashmiri bourgeoisie, and between the Kashmir and Indian national bourgeoisies. I start by introducing the Indian State-capital nexus in the present day and adumbrate the domestic politico-economic project of the Indian republic from independence to the advent of economic liberalisation. I then trace the differential class-relevant impacts of the capitalist transformation in post-accession Kashmir as a function of state-and central-government planning, and thus situate these processes in the wider context of State-led development in India throughout the Nehruvian and Post-Nehruvian periods. I outline some of the impacts of this capitalist transformation on the socio-economic relations of Kashmiri society through an analysis of land and institutional reform, financial integration, the *kulakisation* of horticulture farming, limited industrial growth, and the inheritances of the bureaucratic apparatus. In the second, shorter, section of this chapter, I examine what class-interests, produced by the process of capitalist transformation outlined earlier as well as wider geo-economic and geo-political changes, have been represented in three different ‘forms’ of “new” nationalist movements in Kashmir.

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<sup>1</sup> In this thesis, I use “state” to refer to the Indian federal unit, and “State” to refer to the politico-economic entity.



In the last chapter, I explore the parallel processes of securitisation in Jammu and Kashmir as a function of the changing politico-economic projects that have captured State power and control over the process of Indian State-building. I evaluate both the temporary and long-term effects of securitisation on the social life of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as changing relationships between security, State and capital. In the most general terms I argue that different politico-economic projects, which are themselves the manifestation of a particular balance of class forces at the level of the State, employ different forms of securitisation in order to establish what they imagine are the immediate or long-term needs of the national economy. This chapter is also divided into two sections. The first part of the chapter begins with a brief study of the development of national security discourses in Nehruvian India, and the particular ways in which it manifested in early post-accession Jammu and Kashmir. I then scrutinise the part played by the security apparatus in consolidating a bounded national economic space and in tying together the national frontier to the “mainland” through arterial infrastructure. I consider the differential impacts of such processes upon regional economies and social relations in Jammu and Kashmir. In the second half of this chapter, I consider the changes to national security policy and discourse brought about by liberalisation, as well as what this has meant in practice. I consider the burgeoning military budget, import-dependence in defence, the militarisation of internal politics, the spectacularisation of violence, and societal militarisation. The end of this chapter serves as a conclusion to the whole thesis, and identifies the key parts of my argument and its possible weaknesses.

Evidence from a number of primary sources has been crucial in supporting the arguments I make in the following chapters. In addition to correspondence-, publicity- and intelligence reports, and assessments from the Ministry of States and the Ministry of External Affairs archived at the National Archives of India, I have used a variety of digitised speeches, debates, studies and surveys from the state government of Jammu Kashmir and the Government of India, digitally archived intelligence reports from the US and UK governments, the websites of organisations such as the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, *Panun Kashmir*, Kashmir Study Group, and Indo-American Kashmir Forum, legal cases, press information bureau releases, answers, questions, and debates from the *Rajya Sabha* and *Lok Sabha*, memoirs, reports from non-governmental organisations, a limited array of field studies, and where information has been largely lacking, newspaper articles. Every effort has been made to arrange the contents of each chapter in rough chronological order, nonetheless, the phenomenological traditions, principles and practices I discuss are subject to

intersection, overlap, suspension, resumption and reconstitution, in other words, their histories are not static and are the product of an ensemble cast of historical actors; these realities have at times confounded attempts at periodisation.

## Chapter 2: Theorising the Kashmir Conflict: Critiques and Alternatives

Antia Mato Bouzas (2016) has identified an epistemological difference between the long-standing *inter-state* dispute between India and Pakistan regarding the territorial governance of the Kashmir region and the *nationalist movement* in Kashmir that opposes the historical accession of the princely state to the Indian Union. The distinction that Bouzas makes is also essentially a scalar one. In this context – the international and sub-national “aspects” – combine to create the Kashmir conflict as we know it. One also notices, that despite the considerable overlap between these two disputes, scales can represent the parameters of competing sovereignties (whether Indian, Pakistani or Kashmiri), distinctions between which carry the specific political baggage of “internationalisation,” bilateralism, or national self-determination. However, scales are not the sole acquisition of one political force or the other. Presenting Kashmir as a matter of “national” importance, for example, can have vastly different spatio-material realities and ideological ramifications depending on which type of nationalism is being promoted. Scalar constructions serve instead as “arenas around which socio-spatial power choreographies are enacted and performed” (Swyngedouw 2004, p. 132), and are both created by and create a nexus of historically positioned and reconfigured interdependencies (Brenner 2001, p. 606; MacKinnon 2010, p. 30). Additionally, although the command over a particular scale is not the impetus for configuring the conflict around a scalar order, the political practice of scaling has long been used by various interest groups to discursively fashion the conflict as indigenously-rooted or transnational as a means of suggesting favourable solutions or the maintenance of the status quo. It is crucial at this juncture, to remember as MacKinnon (2010, p. 23) has noted in a recent effort to open up political economic approaches to scale, that “it is often not scale per se that is the prime object of contestation between social actors, but rather specific processes and institutionalised practices that are themselves differentially scaled”.

I bring up scale in this chapter primarily for organisational purposes, that is, to classify and distinguish between the various approaches that have been used to interpret the Kashmir conflict. In doing so, my objective is to identify the ideological and material projects of diverse political actors, which are consolidated through “specific processes and institutionalised practices.” Methodological containment for instance has characteristically plagued the approaches adopted by many analysts of

the conflict. Conceptions of discrete national and international scales have routinely hived off Indian State policy from trends in global capitalism by locating the Kashmir conflict within a process of autochthonic and spatio-temporally isolated state-building either due to assumptions about the absence of historical transformation in the Indian State's politico-economic projects or the irrelevance of the said transformations. Bob Jessop's (2005) analysis of the spatial dimensions of Gramscian state theory is of particular use here in providing alternatives to this approach. In particular, Jessop reveals that Gramsci's seemingly nationally grounded understanding of the struggle for the assumption of hegemony in Italy was instead informed by an "interpenetration" of various scales. This scalar process was exemplified by the cosmopolitanism and external orientation of traditional intellectuals and their ensuing failure to both induce territorial integration and develop a "national-popular" project in Italy (Jessop 2005, pp. 427-8). Accordingly, Jessop argues that this reveals a multi-scalar basis to the inter-linkage between class and the political economy of the State in Gramsci's work, wherein domestic class alliances are directly relational to foreign economic policy. This precipitates a methodology of State theory that considers the State "politically in terms of its embedding in the wider ensemble of social relations in all their spatio-temporal specificity" (p. 432). Appreciating the cosmopolitanism of traditional intellectuals in Italy as Gramsci does, for example, lets us make sense their preference for the creation of a centralised capitalist/worker industrial bloc policy in line with Fordism over a democratic alliance between the Italian ruling classes and Southern peasantry. Recognising the integrated roles of regional and continental socio-economic systems in this instance not only reveals the inner workings of the Italian State-form at a particular historical conjuncture without fetishizing the intrinsic characteristics of the nation form itself, but also allows us to comprehend the international order as the product of all of its constituent parts.

This discussion brings me to the other part of my argument in this Chapter. Adopting a multi-scalar method of evaluating the relationship between the Indian State and Kashmir is not only a case of placing the conflict within the South Asian context more generally, which as Ali Nobil Ahmad and Hasan Karrar (2015, p. 50) have noted still exhibits a tendency to "detach the unit of analysis from regional and global contexts". It is also not limited to spatially embedding Kashmir within a "regional-conflict system of interconnected zones of instability" (Pugh, Cooper & Goodhand 2004, p. 52) which includes the Central Asian countries of Afghanistan, Tajikistan and the Ferghana Valley

as well as parts of the Middle-East such as Saudi Arabia<sup>2</sup>, which although helpful in tracing the influence of trans-national actors, takes at face-value the notion of shared causes of this instability. Instead, it is a case of counteracting disembodied analyses that flatten, disconnect and atomise discussions on Kashmir by ideologically and methodologically severing the region from its *material context* – namely the host of multi-scalar relations of production and socio-economic relationships that structure class society. In conflict zones, as in any other context, the ends of the process of territorialisation are much more complex than establishing the conditions for the geopolitical sovereignty or political authority of the State. Though this is certainly a determinant in State policy, the process of territorialisation is also coupled with the evolving pressures exerted by domestic and foreign capital on the State's economic projects.

By using the aforementioned concepts of scale and the processes of scaling as analytical tools to review but also build off the multiple readings of the Kashmir conflict that this thesis challenges, I attempt to trace the political origins of these discourses by re-centering the collective historical agents involved in their historiographical production and evaluating the validity of their epistemological suppositions and solutions. I ask the questions: How have diverse historical agents in political and civil society understood the stakes of the conflict? What inclusions and exclusions, gaps and disconnections, intended or unintended, occur within these politico-ideological readings and what are their implications? In short, what then is the Kashmir conflict framed as a conflict *over* and why? As I hope the above questions indicate, my goal is not to create dialogues between disembodied narratives or induce false equivalences between these interpretations<sup>3</sup> but rather to pinpoint the politics of their production as well as some of their common conceptual presumptions and methodologies as social artefacts. This is in order to first, critique the overwhelming tendency to obscure class-relevant motivations and politico-economic “pre-histories” of the insurgency in favour of culturalist, ethno-nationalist, and politically determinist explanations, and second, to produce an

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<sup>2</sup> For more detail on “regional conflict systems/complexes” see Wallenstein & Sollenberg (1998).

<sup>3</sup> Indeed, a substantial majority of this chapter evaluates the most recent post-structuralist and post-modernist readings of the conflict. These analyses have neither been previously considered collectively nor been the subject of engaged criticism within academia as they are often seen as a welcome break from the high-politics of some of the earlier approaches. For a more general discussion of the historiography of Kashmir see Vernon Hewitt (2007). For a thematic historiography of the region centred on borders and the processes of bordering see Zutshi (2015).

alternative conceptual framework (theoretical and methodological), which makes use of research on the embedded social relations of post-accession Jammu and Kashmir as well as the forms of the post-independence Indian State and their relationship to the changing dynamics of global capitalism.

## **2.1 Regional Rivalries: Grand Strategies, Existential quandaries, and Water Insecurities**

Academics who adhere to the view that the Kashmir conflict is an example of inter-state rivalry between India and Pakistan have often identified one of three motives behind this war by proxy: to affirm one or the other post-partition narrative of “nation”-building (as opposed to state building) through territorialisation; to assert regional hegemony in the purely Manichean sense of the term; and to occupy the most advantageous position regarding continuing disputes over trans-boundary rivers within the region. Certain political geographers such as Robert Bradnock (1998, p. 14) have argued that the current Kashmir conflict and the multiple efforts to secure control over the region post-1947 arose from the opposition between the nation-building projects of India and Pakistan which placed a great deal of importance on the notion of territorial sovereignty. This manifested both in the desire to possess the region for its “global strategic” and “regional geopolitical” potential, concepts based entirely on its locational significance, as well as to prove to the national public on either side, the viability of one or the other oppositional ideologies of secular or religious nationalism.<sup>4</sup> To support the former argument, Bradnock (2006, p. 86) in his later work traces the historical geopolitical salience of the region from the colonial period, where it connected South and Central Asia and thus featured in the Great Game rivalry of the British and Russian empires; to the Cold War period, where it was framed again as a pawn in US-led strategies for the containment of the USSR; and to post-2000 era where it serves as a crucial locus for alliance building between China and Pakistan.

On the other hand, the environmental historian Daniel Haines’s (2014) opines that the two States sought political control over the various resource systems (for instance the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab riverine systems) which cross Jammu and Kashmir. To Haines (pp. 635-638), the purpose of such an endeavour was existential; the search for territorial sovereignty assisted India in determining

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<sup>4</sup> This latter interpretation certainly attained popularity amongst the mainstream political establishment in India and Pakistan in the early years of independence. See Ashutosh Varshney (1991).

the ideological inside/outside of the Indian nation-state as it applied to Pakistan. Whether it was in service of the existential or geostrategic needs of nation-building however, both Bradnock and Haines are agreed on the notion that the pursuit of territorial sovereignty through political boundary-making in and around Kashmir has been the determining cause of the conflict. However, in conceiving of land and water simply as territorial acquisitions rather than acquisitions in the means of production, such accounts both essentialise and delimit State functions. In other words, the search for territorial sovereignty is treated here as unrelated to the economic aspirations and projects meant to be realised through State parameters in the post-colonial period. Despite the use of historical analysis, there is thus a tendency to reify an institutional separation between national and global property relations and the management of State-society relations, instead of accounting for how the State reproduces economic relations in socio-political forms.

Despite Undala Alam's (2002, p. 344) pre-emptive critique of the "water wars hypothesis" wherein she observed that, of all the factors potentially contributing to the Kashmir conflict, the dispute over water had generated the most (but not particularly hopeful) signs of cooperation between the two States and thus seemed the least likely explanatory factor for its protraction, fresh developments such as the controversy over the Baglihar Dam possibly led other scholars to reaffirm the significance of water. Robert Wirsing's (2008) work, for instance, informally challenges Bradnock and Haines's arguments by introducing a "hydro-political model" of understanding and settling the Kashmir conflict. Arguing that the dispute over Kashmir was not motivated by irredentist territorial ambitions in recent years, due to a dearth of "present room for aggressive territorial expansion," Wirsing (pp. 232-4) identifies the growing concern over water scarcity plaguing the subcontinent as having heightened the interest in the largely untapped hydro-capacity of Kashmir. Likewise, while writing on Pakistani incentives in particular, Ayesha Jalal (2014, p. 67) has argued that the Kashmir conflict was always spurred by the country's resource anxieties: "Whatever the emotive claims of religious affinity with Kashmiri Muslims, it was effectively water insecurity that drove a barely armed Pakistan to make the incorporation of Kashmir one of its main strategic goals [in 1947]". This line-of-reasoning has also been adopted officially by the Pakistani government, in so far that it has been argued that the Indian control of river sources in Kashmir would allow the Indian government to effectively halt the flow of water downstream to Pakistan and thus further aggravate the water-security issues which plagued the country. As Narendra Kumar Tripathi (2011, p. 70) argues by tying together the processes of identity generation and water

conflicts, “It is very significant that the interstate water discourses resort to overt military imagery...The power of the dominant discourse cannot be overstated in influencing and shaping identities...This discourse is more potent as it has its own propaganda machine and its own official ideologues. Further, it may be very convenient for the ruling elites to shift the blame of an intra-state scarcity dilemma to an interstate security dilemma.” Thus, the process of scaling the causes of internally existing crises to hypothetically possible international conflicts can be used as a pre-emptive for negotiations or war. Amongst the illustrative examples which Tripathi cites is that of the former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf’s thesis written while studying at the Royal College of Defence Studies, London, which argued that control of Kashmir was crucial in establishing the water security of Pakistan.

However, in treating Kashmir as the passive terrain of a conflict between regional powers, the territorial sovereignty and resource scarcity explanations do not address the indigenous roots of opposition in the region. Those who have sought to bring a Kashmiri “voice” to the foreground of these debates have also in fact tended to claim that the Kashmiri insurgency was itself a reaction to the inter-state rivalry. Indeed, some Kashmiri academics and civil society actors contend that the very placement of Kashmiris at the intersection of the unending Indo-Pakistan quarrel without any say on matters concerning their own fate necessarily created an atmosphere of public resentment towards both parties, with violent consequences for the region. While at the start of the negotiations, Indian officials, alerted the Kashmiri state government that the World Bank was thinking of assigning the ‘Western Rivers’ to Pakistan and personally assured them that all precautions would be taken to protect water use in the region (Government of India 1954b), the prominent Kashmiri social scientist Kulbhushan Warikoo (2002, p. 17) condemned the Indian delegation who negotiated the Indus Waters Treaty in 1960 for failing to follow-through on such promises of protecting its own agreements with Kashmir by pandering to both international (World Bank) and Pakistani opinion.<sup>5</sup> In a published statement, Syed Nazir Gilani (2005, pp. 42-3), then the Chairman of the International Kashmir Alliance (London) and Secretary General of the J&K

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<sup>5</sup> Though Warikoo does not mention it, the lack of Kashmiri participation in the Indian delegation might have been especially surprising due to the strong presence of Punjab and Sindh in the Pakistani delegation, whose envoys launched a vociferous internal campaign for the protection of provincial as well as national interests (Alam 2002, p. 346).



Council for Human Rights, conveyed a similar sense of betrayal over the liberty the Indian government had taken in administering control over and distributing ownership of the natural resources of the region and decried the self-interested nature of Pakistan's interest in Kashmir. That the anger over a state being denied its rightful share in matters of riparian rights could and would manifest in separatist desires is not all that novel a contention in the Indian context, in spite of its rather limited applicability to the Kashmiri case. Scholars of fresh-water conflicts in the subcontinent have maintained that the roots of Punjabi separatism in 1980s were to be found in the Sikh nationalist Akali Dal party's opposition to the central government's decision to firstly allocate equal shares of the Ravi, Beas and Sutlej river waters to Punjab and Haryana (divided in 1966 along ethnic, religious and linguistic lines) and secondly commission a Sutlej Yamuna Link within Punjab to transfer Haryana's share of river water (Swain 1998, pp. 169-171; Mustafa 2007, pp. 491-2). This decision became the cornerstone on which separatist elements both publicly 'ethnicised' government failures in distributing resources and launched its armed struggle against the Indian State.

Even though scholars of fresh-water conflicts in the subcontinent do not all adhere to the grim Malthusian predictions of the "water-wars hypothesis," they nonetheless assign a determining role to riverine disputes in prompting widespread conflict if left unresolved by multi-scalar governance institutions. Such propositions can however be disputed on several counts. Firstly, if we are to take these deployments of the "resource wars" hypothesis on their own terms, they do not answer why and how a resource-based dispute would politically operate in primarily ethno-religious terms as in the Kashmiri context. Even in cases where scholars have provided some added dimension to the narrow focus of classic geopolitical accounts of "resource wars" by noting that the chronic, multi-scalar character of conflicts over resources, as well as the characteristics of resources themselves (such as their degrees of concentration) and their location (how they are spread in a wider political geography) might all determine the political shape these conflicts take (Le Billon 2007, p. 174), they have not necessarily considered the role of a particular resource in maintaining or changing the balance of class forces in a region. What class entities for example, might have a greater tendency to mobilise in order to secure control over a particular resource such as fresh-water? Alternatively, which classes would exercise the right to extract ground-rent on such resources if the central government's proprietary rights were overthrown? Why in any case would the Central government not honour the commitments it had made towards protecting water use in Kashmir in the first place? Why have such historical actors found the ethno-religious front rather than resource-

based nationalism particularly effective in mobilising the larger public for such ends? Secondly, both analyses of Kashmir as a pawn in the inter-state rivalries of the subcontinent and the water-wars hypothesis, distance themselves from an analysis of the global economic climate after the Second World War, and after the end of formal decolonisation, and do not question the consequences of the positioning and integration of the countries and regions in concern within the world-system. This is because of the pre-supposition that “State logic” is either expansionist, continuously in search of regional domination, or motivated by internal anxieties.

David Katz (2011, p. 20) has noted in a meta-disciplinary study on the subject that one of the reasons that the “water wars” hypothesis in particular, is popular amongst politicians and political organisations is because it can be used to “signal to a third party a desire for intervention”. Katz does not include academics in his list of social actors who might have cause to stress the risk of violent conflict due to water scarcity for explicitly political reasons; however at least in Wirsing’s case the interpenetration of academic and organisational roles might not necessary make such an argument improbable. Wirsing (2003, “Preface”), who by his own admission was once a member of the Kashmir Study Group (KSG), an American think-tank formed by the Kashmiri-American businessman Farooq Kathwari whose suggested solutions to the conflict are discussed in more detail later in this chapter, has for example, repeatedly advocated the “urgent and inescapable” need for the United States to play an active and interventionist role in settling the dispute and securing regional stability in South Asia (2003, p. 10). Much like the warnings over nuclear proliferation in the region and elsewhere, the water scarcity thesis seems worthy of suspicion for its concealment of potentially interventionist insinuations, even though what is probably being offered, as Tariq Ali (2011, p. 9) puts it elsewhere, is less a “humanitarian war’ but an informal Camp David”.

## **2.2 Primordial Hatreds and Partition Plans**

Another approach pinpoints the roots of the conflict in the supposedly definitive boundaries which exist between the cultural, ethnic, or religious backgrounds of the various inhabitants of Kashmir and India. In this case, the situational differences of religion and ethnicity are framed as portents for a natural civilizational clash that can only end in protracted conflict. This view, as we shall see, does not have to be explicit in the explanations or interpretations of theories of primordiality, in fact they have often been a characteristic of the problem-solving or paradigmatic conflict-resolution approaches which suggest some form of partition as a solution to ancient ‘blood

feuds' and inevitable ethnic strife. Since they focus on the prior incompatibility of religious and ethnic coexistence, I distinguish these theories from some of the others I will discuss in the next section which attribute the genesis of the conflict either to the oppression of the Kashmiri Muslim majority by the Indian State (that is, through the generation and super-imposition of normative ethno-religious identities onto Indian national-popular culture in an effort to repudiate the cultural life of the nation's peripheries) or which articulate subjective divergences in feelings of collective national belonging.

The Kashmir Study Group (KSG) is one such entity which has produced conflict resolution plans on the basis of cultural homogeneity. In 2000, the group produced a proposal entitled, "Kashmir: A Way Forward," which suggested that either one or two hypothetical sovereign Kashmiri States be formed out of the existing Indian- and Pakistani-administered regions. The criteria for the incorporation of people into the State(s) was the degree to which populations either embodied *Kashmiriyat* ("the cultural traditions of the Vale of Kashmir") or "interact[ed] extensively and beneficially with Kashmiri-speaking people". As a result, the KSG excluded from its hypothetical arrangements, any regions with which it saw little or not enough cultural, linguistic, or religious commonality with Kashmir, such as the vast majority of Jammu and Ladakh. Another proposition, alongside the geographical division of the Kashmir Valley from the rest of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, was that the independent State or States comprise "a free-trade zone with borders open to the free flow of peoples, goods, and services". In 2005, the KSG revised their initial plan, and offered a five-State solution instead, with three self-governing entities on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LOC), two on the Pakistani side, and one supra-national "All-Kashmir Body" which would "coordinate areas of broader interest" between these State-lets (Kashmir Study Group 2000).

The KSG and Kashmiri patriots, certainly do not have the monopoly over campaigning for the notion of an ethno-religious *raison d'être* and solution to the conflict. Indeed, a rather interesting commonality exists between the KSG and the Hindutva forces' recommended conflict mitigation plans, though their schemes envision national and subnational parameters respectively. In as early as August 1952, the British Advisor in India reported that Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, the founder of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, had been to Kashmir and "nailed his colours to the mast of separating Jammu and Ladakh from the Valley" unless Article 370, which granted autonomy of the state within the Indian Union, was abrogated (*Reports of the Adviser in India to the Central Commercial Committee* 1951-

2, Document No. 59). Much more recently, in the early 2000s, the BJP-RSS combine vacillated between its support for the trifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir along parameters similar to those proposed by the KSG, although in this case, on a subnational scale around its main ethno-religious clusters, into Jammu (for predominately Hindu Dogras), Kashmir (for both Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims), and the Union Territory of Ladakh (which would house a Buddhist majority and significant Shia Muslim minority), although the self-designated “cultural-social” organisation (RSS) and political party (BJP) have not always seen eye-to-eye on this matter.<sup>6</sup>

The absurdities produced by the entry of communalism into the basic terms of governance for conflict mitigation in the region is however perhaps best exemplified by the recommendations of the Regional Autonomy Committee (RAC), appointed by a former leader of the National Conference, Farooq Abdullah (then in a coalition government with the BJP). In its 1999 report, the RAC, which was established for the purpose of devising an intra-state solution to the question of regional autonomy, suggested a staggering (though unimplemented) eight-fold partition of the state along a Hindu-Muslim axis, in effect entirely segregating the two groups (Chaturvedi 2005, p.148). One of the deceptive implications of using this process of scaling as a solution to the Kashmir conflict was that it obfuscated a complex and spatially-manifested set of material social realities traversing religion, through the reification of supposedly irreversible and innate communal boundaries. As Chaturvedi in his study of the geopolitical visions underlying Kashmiri autonomy politics puts it:

There is much more behind the manipulation of “scale” than meets the eye. The human-cultural mobility and intercourse of centuries is subjected to the geo-political reductionism of territoriality with the aid of a “new” reading and interpretation of the “history” of newly discovered “regions” of Doda, Rajouri, and Poonch, which, we are told, “existed as small kingdoms independently or have been parts of Kashmir Kingdom. (2005, p. 151)

Hence, in this superimposition of irreconcilable differences between religious groups *ex ante* onto the topographic map of the region there is an effort to ultimately create *new* scales of governance

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<sup>6</sup>The RSS for instance, was quick to adopt the Jammu Mukhti Morcha’s demand for a separate state – pre-empting RSS support for trifurcation – once the pair decided to contest the 2002 elections (Behera 2007, p. 123). The then-Deputy Prime Minister Advani had initially been in favour of trifurcation, in the face of increasing demands for Union Territory status from the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) which had enacted a social boycott of Muslims, but later retracted his statement in an effort to mollify his ally Farooq Abdullah (Noorani 2001). As Behera has noted, there existed considerable ambiguity in the state and federal BJP stances (2002b).

and scalar enclaves, the justification for which is said to be carried within history. In reality, such plans would merely consolidate and fulfill the interests of the BJP's immediate and traditional support base in the region. The erstwhile Jana Sangh, and its various sister organisations for example, has long taken on the mantle of representing the rights of privileged Kashmiri, Dogri and Punjabi elites in the region against the redistributive and regionally autonomist tendencies of the left-oriented National Conference (Varshney 1991; Behera 2002a). The eight-fold division also accommodates the more recent demands of cultural revivalist civil society organisations claiming to represent the interests of both domestic and diasporic Kashmiri *Pandit* communities such as *Panun Kashmir*, the Indo-American Kashmir Forum (IAKF), and the All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference (ASKPC), which opposed the trifurcation plan on the grounds of appealing for a separate subnational homeland for Kashmiri Pandits (see for example statements by *Panun Kashmir* 2009 and Sazawal 2010).<sup>7</sup>

These rather disorienting propositions for the resolution of the conflict on the basis of subnational partition, as suggested by Indian political parties such as the BJP, state government committees, and *Pandit* advocacy groups alike, as well as national partition, encouraged by separatist groups, the KSG, and the Pakistani government, share a basic premise in so far as they both take the rhetoric of the Kashmir conflict as an 'identity' or 'group' conflict at face value. For example, Martijn Van Beek (2001, pp. 529-31) in his study of the movement for Union Territory status in Ladakh contends that the practice of institutionalising group identities in the Indian political system, in line with an official politics of identity recognition, neither grasps the actual cause of societal conflict nor proposes an adequate solution to it, by resorting instead to "identity fetishism". Rather, as Pratyush Chandra (2003, p. 116) has noted elsewhere, it is a fundamental reality of capitalist development itself that the exploitation of labour power is realised in essentially "fetishized social forms, relations and conflicts". Far from being simply a colonial bequest – identity fetishism and the forms of political wrangling which produce it, work to contingently manufacture "the competitive ethic inherent in the social relations of production in a 'late capitalist' country" (Chandra 2003, p. 125).

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<sup>7</sup> For more information on Kashmir Pandit civil society groups and their political associations see Evans (2002) and Duschinski (2008).

Another scholar, Aparna Rao (1999) presents a particularly cogent refutation of the notion that multiple ‘ancient hatreds’ created the conditions for the Kashmir conflict. By tracing the changes in *Bakkarwal* groupings (non-Kashmiri speaking traditional goat and cattle herders in Jammu and Kashmir), she argues that the use of the discourse of consanguinity has been crucial in the cooptation of class-relevant inequalities. The institution of a land-revenue model based on a hierarchical organising system composed of tax-collectors who kept a share of the tax collected, led to the emergence of a monetised economy and the increasing demand for peasant labour. These demands were enabled by a system of unequal exchange called *sakawat* in which wealthy and ambitious men provided taxable stock, surplus, food and clothing to poor families in exchange for their labour (in herding) and access to, if not ownership of, their land (*Ibid.*, p. 63-4). The growing belief that the *Bakkarwal* were “aggressive and predatory” in their herding strategies led to the attachment of a socially and officially criminal identity onto the *Bakkarwal* by rural Kashmiris, Dogra and British officials alike in the 1920s (*Ibid.*, p. 65). Criminalisation imposed restrictions on wealthy *Bakkarwal* by terminating their access to land, and in the ensuing political protests these very political actors were able to use their community identities to act as representatives of their bonded dependents while in effect protecting their own interests. Their communities as Rao (p. 67) notes, now served as “political resources”. From the 1970s, the Congress played a role in polarising ethnic groups in Kashmir, this in addition to regional developments on the one hand such as the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan, the Iranian revolution, the disintegration of the USSR into multiple ethno-religious polities, as well as the development of other ethno-religious separatist movements in India (such as the demand for Khalistan), and on the other the growth of the religiously-chauvinist nationalism of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and BJP reproduced a social climate in which it was possible to channel economic discrepancies into a fundamental clash of ethno-religious interests (*Ibid.*, p. 74). As Rao (p. 75) puts it, “In the midst of all these ‘cultural’ issues, the issues that never got mentioned in public political discourse was the growing economic stratification and the political power being increasingly perceived as an income-generating resource for individuals and small groups who had access to it”. Among the pastoralist *Bakkarwal* for example, a system of semi-bondage continued even after the land reforms in the state, by virtue of the temporary nature of wage labour (as porters in the summer, as professional shepherds employed by other groups, and if fortunate as construction labour for government or private contractors), and the replication of relations of bondage in waged work itself (*Ibid.*, p. 76).

While Rao leaves the notion of *Kashmiryat* (as an oppositional concept to the notion of ancient blood-feuds) uncriticised – claiming instead that the emphasis the Congress placed on differences between Kashmiri and non-Kashmiri ethnic groups in the region “implied an open attack on the concept of Kashmiriat” (p. 74), Chitrlekha Zutshi (2004) takes a rather less optimistic view of the concept. It is particularly notable that the discourse surrounding *Kashmiriyat* had no presence during the 1930s which saw ongoing protests on the issues of political and economic representation (Zutshi 2004, pp. 224-233). Where primeval ethno-religious strife could stand in as an explanation for economic inequalities, the utopia of a lost era of “peaceful coexistence of religious communities” was equally capable of concealing underlying material differences (*Ibid.*, p. 329). In this case instead of the concept of national organisation arising from the actual presence of radical social equality, the national imaginary (defined in this instance by *Kashmiriyat*) itself became a *condition* for this social equality.

### 2.3 The Tyranny of the Post-Colonial State?

The public intellectuals, “cultural producers”, and academics whose works I consider here can be said to constitute a generally pro-“Kashmiri nationalist” subsection within the Indian intelligentsia. Though mainly working from within Kashmir and India, they also constitute a distinct “diasporic” presence and base in the metropolitan city and in a “metropolitan intellectual orthodoxy” to use Ahmad’s terms (1992, p. 86). My selection of both formally academic and more popular non-fiction sources for evaluation in this section is based on the fact that many of these critics perform both societal roles based on the forum and medium of their publications (that is, most of the academics and authors I address here are self-branded public intellectuals who have published in both academic and journalistic fora as well as undertaken the odd creative project). Additionally, though they do not belong to a formally labelled “school” of thought, the content of their critiques commonly overlap with anti-foundational analysis and their compositions frequently converse with each other implicitly (appearing in the same essay collections) or explicitly (with direct references). Rhetorically, the condemnation of imperialism as it is applied against the Indian State and its policies in Kashmir within these works, frequently takes the form of an analogy to India’s erstwhile status as a colony under the British Empire.<sup>8</sup> In its popular public intellectual format,

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<sup>8</sup> There is no effort in any of these accounts to differentiate between imperialism and colonialism; rather, colonialism is treated as a general model of imperialism. Glassman (1999, p. 675) notes that it

examples of this narrative can be found in three recent anthologies of dissenting Indian and Kashmiri voices on the conflict: *Until my Freedom has Come* (2011), *Kashmir: A Case for Freedom* (2011), and *Of Occupation and Resistance: Writings from Kashmir* (2013). Apart from this, several academics have also taken up the ‘colonial’ hermeneutic. The grievances identified by these accounts are then used to explain both the germ of civil unrest in Kashmir and the reasons for its protraction. In doing so, these accounts advance a number of claims as to the nature of Indian rule in Kashmir, namely that, the Indian State is colonial because it tries to establish forced compliance through a masculinist coercive State apparatus that criminalises an entire peripheral population; because it suffocates the distinct *ethnos* of the Kashmiri nation; because its modern origins cannot house the notion of unbordered pre-colonial sovereignties; because it rules from a distant and dispassionate centre establishing its hold over the periphery with the aid of a handful of selected local elites and regional political contractors; because it denies Kashmiris their fundamental right to self-determination on their own terms and with their own leaders regardless of whether these terms adhere to modernist or rationalist imaginaries. I will assess the aforementioned claims for their analytical rigour (that is, in terms of how applicable and enriching the deployment of the concept of colonialism is to describe the relationship between India and Kashmir) and advance the alternative conceptual framework and ensuing methodology I will adopt in the next two chapters.

### 2.3.1 Is State-sponsored Violence “Imperial”?

Fahad Shah (2013), a Kashmiri journalist and the editor of *Occupation and Resistance*, writes that after the departure of the British, the Indian state filled the colonial vacuum in South Asia, hence “[t]he occupied became the occupier [and] Kashmir, indeed, has become a colony of India.” The evidence for this claim is that India “hold[s] Kashmir by *force*” as it does other areas of the sub-continent (2013, no pagination; italics mine). Other contributors such as Gautam Navlakha and Angana Chatterji similarly establish this parallel by noting that the Indian policy in Kashmir and the British colonial control in India both embody a tendency towards destructive militarised violence. As Navlakha (2011, p. 158; italics mine) puts it, “when post-colonial states deploy troops to bring a rebellious people...to *submission*, and hand over that area to the military, then in actual fact they act

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is misleading to conflate the two “in that [colonialism] foregrounds the national dimensions of domination when these have been increasingly subordinated to the class-relevant dimensions of imperial projects”.



as an *alien* force” the subsequent relationship being that between a “subject people and their imperial masters”. Chatterji (2011a, pp. 132-3; all italics mine) concurs, contending that colony and post-colony are equals “in the administration of *brutality*.” Indian governance in Kashmir to Chatterji, is about nothing so much as the power-hungry baring of brawn -- its “ability to disburse violence, to manipulate and dominate” for the purposes of rendering “*an imaginary past real* ... emblematic of India’s triumphant unification as a nation-state.” Like the exotic and inferior colonial ‘Other’, Chatterji argues India’s “historically manufactured nemesis” is “the Muslim ‘Other’” which is easily transposed onto the Kashmiri nation itself, by virtue of its majority Muslim constituency. Chatterji augurs, “We are witness of the *paradox of history*, as calibrated punishment – the lynching of the Muslim body, the object of criminality – enforces *submission of a stateless nation (Kashmir) to the once-subaltern post-colony (India)*”. Writing elsewhere, Chatterji (2011b, p. 98) clarifies the implications of what she suggests above: the violence against the Muslim Kashmiri body is a perpetuation of “[s]tate racism – the primacy of Hindu majoritarian will in state decisions – [which] orders India’s rule in Kashmir”.

Institutional violence and militarisation in other words, is presented as having no “purpose” other than to induce psychological and physical submission of a “rebellious people” to the territorial form of the nation itself, at most for the sake of upholding the *ideological* narrative of the State’s birth, but more often than not due to its innate quest for diaphanous “power”. In Chatterji’s case, the distinction between State and a sort of public “common sense”, represented by “Hindu majoritarian will” is collapsed to the extent that the historical State in India is portrayed as nothing but an instrument or simple representation of public communal decree. In Chatterjee’s narrative for example, Kashmir is subject to violence by the Indian military not because the coercive apparatus of the State has long been disproportionately used to suppress the peasantry, oppressed castes, and the working poor (largely Muslim in Kashmir) as an organ of class rule or in the interests of the maintenance of the ruling class coalition (whether between national bourgeoisie and landed gentry or the national bourgeoisie and regional petit bourgeoisies), but because the “Muslim body” is the “historically manufactured” while at the same time *the* supra-historical ‘Other’ of India itself. If imperial relations and colonialism as concepts can be abstracted to mean a relationship between any two national forms (in this case a nation-state and a “stateless nation”) characterised by the established precedence of coercion over consent then it follows, as these articles argue, that post-independence Indian state is as colonial as its predecessor. Despite the fact that these assessments

do not pretend to provide extensive scholarly backing for their arguments but rather appear to give voice to political dissent, they do not account for the fact that there is nothing *per se* to connect violence exclusively to colonialism (nor in fact to the ‘modern State’ as I will discuss later) and although the majority of imperial powers have certainly ruled through various forms of violence and coercion, imperialism does not have to be militarily repressive in order to be imperial.

These assertions of sub-national imperialism and the State-form’s ontological connection to violence are not limited to popular histories and personal accounts, but have found traction in organisationally realist and post-foundational accounts of the Kashmir conflict. Dibyesh Anand (2012, p. 71) for example, accuses Marxists of underemphasising “the role of ideas irreducible to a specific social and material condition – in this case nationalism”. Anand’s proposal infers that *certain* ideologies are transhistorical rather than rising from particular productive relations or modes of production, and exist within their own intellectual histories. On what grounds this differentiation should be developed and why, is however not mentioned. “Large nation-states” such as India and China, as Anand (p. 73) puts it, are dependent on the “subjugation of the distinct groups of people and appropriation of their history, identity, life, and death as a part of the grand story of one unified polity”. Anand uses these deductions to support the notion that India and China are “post-colonial informal empires” (PIEs) rather than multi-ethnic States, as they are governed by a centre that has “strong imperial impulses” which sees their State forms as continuations of great civilizational empires (Anand mentions this characteristic to differentiate such States from the US which are ‘multi-ethnic’) and because they have inequalities based on ethnicity primarily in the peripheries (Kashmir and Tibet) as opposed to within the entire society (*ibid.*)

Both Chatterji and Anand’s analyses of the Indian State decouple it from society and the societal relations of production that determine the incidence of different State-forms and policies along with the variance in the actionable interests of different capitalist class fractions. The State itself appears thus in fetishized form – imbued with agential properties and an inherent logic – with a unilateral commitment to securitisation and the maintenance of asymmetrical power relations in the periphery in order to assert its sovereignty, national resurgence, and claims to universal muscular nationalism. As such, to Chatterji and Anand, State practice (whether “state racism” or State-led securitisation) in the country’s peripheries is in the service of constituting an identity of the State and establishing social relations with its citizenry typified by subjugation and submission. Empirically, such assertions are backed by an emerging cluster of literature which connects the Indian “security

State's" practices of governance in Kashmir to those of the British colonial government in the sub-continent by studying the contemporary redeployment of an inherited and unreformed colonial legal apparatus against real and perceived risks to State defense. Arvind Narrain (2016, p. 165) for example, likens the Indian State's use of militarised lawfare for the purposes of suppressing demands of self-determination in Kashmir to the infamous "crowd-control" methods exercised by the colonial government during the Jallianwala Bagh incident, indicating that the civilian deaths in each case demonstrate the illegitimacy of either sovereign's reign. He concludes with a different analogy, an Orwellian one: where the pigs in *Animal Farm* ousted humans and continued to exploit "animals they perceive[d] as inferior" (p. 166), the Indian State ousted British colonialism only to continue to exploit Kashmiris through the very instruments of colonial rule. Thus, apart from the suppression of ideological dissent by its criminalisation, scholars have interpreted such laws as enacting a system of ethnicised/racialized collective violence against a subject population in line with practices of colonial domination. Mathur (2012, p. 34) for example writes of Indian counter-insurgency policies in Kashmir as being "shaped, above all, by the perception of cultural difference – religious, linguistic, ethnic – as dangerous and somehow suspect". Another linked argument points to the regionalised entrenchment of colonial "emergency" laws such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in Kashmir and the ensuing creation of 'extra-judicial' spaces and temporal states of exception which mandate absolute social control (examples include Duschinski 2009; Duschinski 2010; Mathur 2012; Roy & Singh 2015). Within these parameters, these texts argue, the most identifiable features of democratic governance, especially those ensconced in the paramount institutions of the independent nation such as the constitution, are suspended. But to what extent can empires be conceived of as abstractions typified by the regular or extra-territorial deployment of violence? To what extent does the fragmentation of empire as a concept within these accounts add to existing analysis? Imperialism as a concept has little to do with one State's domination of another State not to mention other sub-national entities or the ascendancy of particular capital blocs to hegemonic positions within a nation, but rather codifies the particular process by which different capital fractions conduct class struggle, either through the apparatus of the imperial or peripheral State, in order "to facilitate the forms of internationalisation of capital most relevant to their interests", as Jim Glassman (1999, p. 684) has argued along with other scholars of modern capitalism. Yet almost all of these accounts, except for Anand's, which I discuss again in the subsection on developmentalism and internal colonialism,

make little effort to delve into the socio-economic relationships between the global system of capitalism, the Indian State and Kashmir.

### 2.3.2 Stateless Nations and Separate Nationalisms

If for Gautam Navlakha (2011) the relation of militarised domination makes the Indian State an *alien* oppressor, other deployments of the colonial model as it is applied to Kashmir depict Kashmir's historical, geographical and cultural dissimilarities with the Indian heartland as evidence of the Indian State's oppression and occupation of a *foreign* socio-cultural entity or people. In some cases, these differences have been recounted by combining a sense of violent exclusion from the 'Indian social imaginary' with a sense of psycho-geographical estrangement. For example, Hilal Bhatt (2011, p. 83), in an account detailing his assault by VHP Kar Sevaks returning from Ayodhya, writes of both being specifically targeted for vicious xenophobia because of his Kashmiri Muslim ethnicity and not feeling at "home" in the stifling heat of the North Indian plains. In other cases, difference connotes the presence of a stateless community and unified national entity collectively alienated from Indian national culture and thus automatically resistant to it. Scholars have stressed a unique Kashmiri past that did not meet "the basic criteria of Indian nationalism" namely an anti-colonial struggle against Britain and the leadership of the National Congress, which engendered the Indian State and civil society's efforts to distort and silence Kashmiri history (Kumar and Dar 2015, p. 38). Nitasha Kaul makes a similar point when she argues for instance, that the "Kashmiri political voice and consciousness was different from that of the rest of India" and establishes the existence of a 'composite' unity of people by urging the Indian bureaucracy, political leaders, army chiefs, Hindu religious extremists and the "ignorant layperson" to:

Come to Kashmir. Walk through our cities. The bridges. The ruins. The graves. Look at what we eat. Look at our buildings. Our shrines. Our architecture. Our speech. Our history. Speak to us. See how we live. *We are not you. We have never been you. We don't want to be you* (Kaul N, 2011, p. 199 and 206; italics in original).

The cultural alterity of Kashmir is thus rooted according to Kaul in urban design, architecture, language, lifestyle, cruel histories, food and religious practice. The last point is further reinforced by the distinction made between "[t]he centuries-old tradition of '*Kashmiriyat*' [which] bears testimony to the identity of Kashmiris as a people who did not let their religious affiliations overwhelm their ethnic and regional commonality" and "the bungling Hinduised outlook of a democratic India" (Kaul N, 2011, p. 198 and 202). To Kaul (2011, p. 190 and 212), the historical identity of Kashmir

must instead be located within the “tragic” geopolitical narratives of “the mountain-peoples of Eurasia” which have been “eaten up” by “the meta-narratives of big states”. This last point folds within it the idea of the ‘great Indian chauvinist’ State, which Mohamad Junaid (2011, p. 280) observes elsewhere, has “run roughshod over legitimate rights of smaller and weaker peoples”.<sup>9</sup> Such characterisations share much in common with James Scott’s (2009) redeployment of the concept of “Zomia”, first devised by Willem van Schendel, to encompass flexible, egalitarian, hill-dwelling populations historically resistant to incorporation into the enclosures of modern nation-states.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, there is little to indicate substantial division between the *processes* of national and identity formation or the mass mobilisation of bourgeois-democratic nationalism in India and Kashmir in the half-century predating independence. Moreover, rather than a one-sided cooptation of the issues plaguing princely states by various factions of the Indian nationalist movement, a multi-scalar critique of foreign imperialism and domestic feudalism emerged in popular politics as a point of unification between the two. In operational terms, this was because the progressive political agents campaigning for independence from the British and Dogras were able to deploy strategically the commonalities between the formal colonisation of the subcontinent by the British Crown and regionally limited Dogra rule in Kashmir, which began after the British government, peddled the state to Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846. There was more in common than not between the economic

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<sup>9</sup> Junaid is not the first to critique Indian national chauvinism, a more direct reference to the perceived expansionist and regionally domineering ideology of the state can be found in the communications between Pakistani Ambassador to the PRC, N.A.M Raza, and Liu Shaoqi (“Record of Conversation following Pakistani Ambassador to the PRC Raza’s Presentation of Credentials to Liu Shaoqi”). Raza in response to Shaoqi’s statement of China’s realisation of Indian ‘great power chauvinism,’ makes particular reference to India’s desire to annex neighbouring countries:

I am a little surprised—how did China discover so late that India possessed great power chauvinism? For Pakistan, not long after independence, we discovered India possessed fierce great power chauvinism. Nehru is very cunning; he has betrayed the trust of a great many people. But the number of people that see through his false front already increases daily. Yesterday, I heard a Ceylonese Member of Parliament say that India is scheming to swallow up all of the countries in its vicinity, annexing Ceylon, Burma, Pakistan, etc. Currently, India already has indigestion, if it continues to swallow down territory, one day it might burst to death (1962, no pagination).

<sup>10</sup> I owe credit to Jim Glassman for this observation on the parallels between James Scott’s deployment of the concept of “Zomia” and such subscriptions of a distinctive or tragic mountain-dwelling Kashmiri identity.

situation in Kashmir and that in British India. They both bore the transformative marks of marketization in the form of the very classes that would take leadership of the movements for independence. Additionally the Dogra state, which had consolidated its legitimacy on its religious lineage, promoted the subdivision of its subjects almost entirely on the basis of religion, in a manner identical to the colonial government in India (Zutshi 2004, p. 80 and p. 210). For the latter reason, it is unsurprising that the political leadership of popular parties often established themselves by claiming to represent the interests of particular communities. The populist religiosity of the Muslim Conference in Kashmir (later to become the National Conference) or its counterpart led by the more quintessentially conservative *Mirwaiz* Muhammad Yusuf Shah, thus did not seem anomalous in the context of the majoritarianism of the Congress. Instead, in conflating the notions of homeland, nationalism and religious identity, Chitrlekha Zutshi (2004, p. 260) argues the National Conference played a role akin to that of the Congress in the Indian mainland, in effect narrowing the field for other nationalisms in either context.

The notion of *Kashmiriyat* discussed previously was one such guise, which the Indian and Kashmiri political leadership sought to mobilise collectively in order to mitigate contradictions between their theories and practice of nationalism and national unity. If for the Indian Congress, the existence of *Kashmiriyat* was proof of a utopian spatially-defined locus where the core concepts of democracy and secularism had borne fruit in the subcontinent, its adoption by the National Conference was equally useful in presenting the party as one which spoke for the Kashmiri people despite whatever public gaffes indicated to the contrary (see for example the considerable fallout of the script controversy which led to the resignation of one of the core members of the National Conference, Prem Nath Bazaz in Zutshi 2004, p. 279.) Chitrlekha Zutshi's masterful account of the emergence of Kashmiri popular politics is worthy of a much more detailed exposition than I provide here, particularly due to its subversion of the tendency to disconnect and isolate a *uniquely* Kashmiri culture and claim to national consciousness, by instead locating Kashmir within the many analogous histories of State-formation, ruling-class consolidation, colonial governance, and socio-economic transformation in the subcontinent. Two valuable accompaniments to Zutshi's work however are those of Aijaz Ashraf Wani (2007) and Andrew Whitehead (2010) who delve into the attempts of subcontinental communists to formulate a composite anti-feudal and anti-imperial front for freedom from princely rule and colonial subjugation in Kashmir. I will elaborate on these examples of connected histories to stress that little but complete geographical isolation might account for the

emergence of atomised ethno-cultural clusters that bear no relation at all to their wider regional context or contiguous political entities— this was not the case in Kashmir, instead historically determined points of linkage with the Indian independence movement serviced the nationalist project of the emerging bourgeoisie.

The radicalisation of Sheikh Abdullah's political programme against the Dogra monarchy – that is, the movement away from the espousal of overtly religious populist rhetoric and a politics of reform to the focus on the rights of the working classes and peasantry and the destruction of feudal privilege as a means of national and sub-national unification – began directly as result of the increasing involvement of Congress communists in the National Conference. Whitehead (2010) argues that though the impact of the communist connection in Kashmir was most acutely felt in the 1940s, it began in as early as the 1890s with the creation of the Jhelum Valley Road, which facilitated the movement of civil servants from other cities of the British Raj to Kashmir. Many of these were left-leaning intellectuals from Lahore (such as the famous poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz, M.D. Taseer and Fazal Elahi Qurban), and others such as Freda Bedi and her husband Baba Pyar Lal Bedi were committed socialists and members of the Indian independence movement. Most, like Rajani Palme Dutt, a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, saw the possibility of mass mobilisation against feudalism in Kashmir as an experiment in the potential radicalisation of the Indian National Congress (Whitehead 2010, pp. 142-5). Aijaz Ashraf Wani (2007, p. 254) notes that these Congress affiliated communists played a role in encouraging trade union organising in Kashmir that was to lead to the formation of the *Mazdoor Sabha* in 1937, a general worker's union responsible for introducing the praxis of class struggle through open "Study Circles" and extending the movement for freedom from Dogra rule to the countryside. The communists also helped initiate the Quit Kashmir Movement of 1946, inspired by the similarly named civil disobedience movement in India, which arguably became the largest organised political protest coordinated in the Kashmir Valley during the period of Dogra rule (Whitehead 2010, p. 151). The mutual exchange at work here, was noted by Gene D. Overstreet and Marshall Windmiller (1959, p. 244), in their extensive study of the Indian communist movement, when they observed that the Communist Party of India (CPI) Central Committee adopted the August Resolution in 1946, which, "proposed mass action *à la* Kashmir in all states, thus indicating that the CPI had adopted the "Quit Kashmir" movement as a model for political action. Indeed, a few weeks after the publication of the August Resolution, the Party issued another policy statement that declared Kashmir to be the 'hub of today's freedom battle' and

asserted that ‘a new form of struggle’ had begun there.” When Abdullah delivered his first speech to the Constituent Assembly, he both recognised the significance of the Indian independence movement to Kashmir and vice versa, noting:

Our footsteps have taken us not among the privileged, but into the homes of the poor and downtrodden. We have fought their battle against privilege and oppression and against these darker powers in the background which sought to set man against man on the ground of religion. Our movement grew and thrived side by side with the Indian National Congress and gave strength and inspiration to the people of the Indian States (“Sheikh Abdullah’s Speech to the Constituent Assembly on 5 November 1951 *Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly Official Report* Vol 1. 1951-5, p. 97).

Such influences continued into the post-independence period – with contributions to the cultural front against foreign incursions as well as the policy of radical land reforms instituted by the National Conference in 1950s.

Why then, would a hypothesis of cultural or regional uniqueness and the proto-national consciousness of this alleged uniqueness be so readily entertained despite it being easily falsifiable empirically, and why would it be considered a justified criterion for national state-hood by commentators like Kaul? In other words, even if a separate regional identity predicated on various cultural artefacts and sensibilities exists/existed in Kashmir as is claimed, why do these commentators conceive of its natural point of realisation in the formation of a separate nation or State? After all, to use Eric Hobsbawm’s (1992, p. 8) phrasing, would not this unnecessarily “subordinate the complex and multiple ways in which human beings define and redefine themselves as members of groups, to a single option”? Since the *popular* longing of common men and women for self-determination (defined here as synonymous with the *willingness* of a population to organise themselves around the front of a national movement) is a concept that is remarkably hard to qualify or quantify, its denial through domination by military might or the suppression of a separate national culture, must therefore be represented by these accounts as the denial of a basic trans-historical human right. Yet as Hobsbawm (1977, p. 11) notes elsewhere while speaking of the multiplication of the national-form, the contemporary changed relationship between nation-states and global capitalist development requires a reconsideration of the link between anti-imperialism and national self-determination that developed during the era of the disintegration of formal empires through decolonisation. The reason for this is that imperialism in the post-colonial era, which operates through the globalising drive of finance capital, has a demonstrated tendency to weaken existing national sovereignties the world over, by primarily backing select ethnic-nationalisms possessing no



anti-imperial content in order to produce easily governable and manageable micro-territories (Karat 1999, pp. 44-45). This does not mean however, that globalisation simplistically seeks to disempower *all* the capacities of the State (it requires for example that States exert the considerable power of their repressive apparatus when it comes to various anti-capitalist mobilisations by the working classes) or that one might offhandedly discredit or welcome Kashmiri nationalism as always having been either reactionary or anti-imperialist. Indeed, the initial anti-feudalist project of the Kashmiri national movement as a product of historical relations has mutated (perhaps beyond recognition) over the post-independence years, much like its Indian counterpart, leaving scholars to grapple with its contrasting positions on nationhood and the national community. In these circumstances, it seems reasonable to adopt Hobsbawm's (1977, p. 13) restraint in cautioning that "whatever the assessment of the general historical tendency, the argument for the formation of any independent nation-state must always be an *ad hoc* argument, which undermines the case for *universal* self-determination by separatism".

### **2.3.3 Modern Nation-States and National Ideologies: The State-form as a Colonial**

#### **Import**

Others, such as Mridu Rai extend a historical permanence to the authoritarian conditions of the Dogra monarchy and the immanent shadow of British colonial permissiveness towards such princely despotism such that these conditions seem equally congruent with the ideology of the post-independence Indian State project (See Rai 2004, pp. 288 and 294). Akin to the period of Dogra-rule, in which earning legitimacy in the eyes of Kashmiri Muslim subjects was an area of least concern on account of the fact that the Dogra claim to rule stemmed from their identity as Hindu Rajputs (a feature which led to the societal, political and economic deprivation of Kashmiri Muslims), Indian-rule in Kashmir, according to Rai, was based on a similarly illegitimate "borrowed" paradigm of nationalism which "fix[ed]" identities through the imposition of the nation-State ideal – and thereby replicated the exclusion, subjection, and denial of rights characteristic of colonial and 'sub-imperial' rule (Rai 2004, p. 294; 2014, pp. 30-1). This stance, however, not only renders ambiguous the historical origins and ruling-class character of two distinct State-forms which were the products of different periods of capitalist development (feudal monarchy and liberal bourgeois state respectively), reduces all Indian nationalisms to but the Hindu fascist kind, but it also assumes, continuing the legacy of classical and contemporary British orientalism, that one essentially religious

(and specifically Hindu) core ideology lies behind the secular universalist posturing of the post-independence Indian nation-State.<sup>11</sup>

To counter the ahistorical claims to nationhood made by ‘mainstream’ Indian nationalism, Rai reiterates the stance of the Cambridge school of historiography, in which Britain appears to have “bestowed” and “invented” Indian nationhood (Ahmad 1995, p. 4; Habib 2014, p. 113). Rai (2011, p. 264) notes elsewhere, that the nation-State itself is a “straight-jacket” which is unable to house the “power, authority and sovereignty [found] in pre-colonial polities”. She attributes this to the “the historical reality in India that the territorialisation of sovereignty began only in the nineteenth century and... represented no native or indigenous impulse but was the preferred political arrangement of a colonial power”. The only difference in post-independence Kashmir in comparison to Kashmir under the Dogras is that there appears to be “the language of ‘constitutional rule.’” This too however, is endowed by an Indian nation “espousing a secularist credo” (Rai 2004, p. 290). Such a state of affairs allows Rai to claim elsewhere that:

[T]he so-called Indian nation-state exercises what has been termed ‘occupation’ over various parts of its geographical peripheries...in precisely the same terms of political marginalisation and cultural denigration as would be familiar to the practitioners of the British ‘High Noon’ of colonialism... While it claims to be post- colonial, mainstream nationalism shaped by and based on the power of middle to upper caste Hindus also makes India, for those outside this rather small circle, a colonising and subordinating power (Rai 2014, p. 33).

Since, mainstream Indian nationalism from its first invocation has only ever catered to middle and upper-caste Hindus, aspiring to secularity is “essentially to be Hindu in an Indian nation that has not acknowledged the tenuous nature of its own credentials” (Rai 2011, p. 277).

Rai’s assertion that colonial relations are embedded in the very nation-State which the Indian nationalists adopted post-independence seems to echo Kamala Visweswaran’s (2012, p. 442) proposition in a theoretical piece on military occupations, that nationalist movements’ “accession to the nation-state form” erased its pluralistic ethos leading to the routinized experience of the aphorism that one nation’s anti-colonialism would become another “(captive) nation’s experience of colonialism”. Theoretically however, the two analyses are distinct. Unlike Visweswaran whose

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<sup>11</sup> This part of Rai’s argument shares much in common with Perry Anderson’s indictment of what he sees as the conventional wisdom of the “Indian ideology” which is partially composed of a notion of “impartial secularity” (Anderson 2012). For a compelling critique of Anderson’s text, see Habib (2014).

censure of the nation-state is based upon its tendency to generate universalist rather than pluralist nationalisms, for Rai what is at stake is the retention of pre-colonial sovereignties which cannot be accommodated either within any modernist territorialising nationalisms which represent particular religious interests or within the rationalist form of the modern nation-State. The conflict between ‘internally oppressed nations’ and the State is thus framed as a result of these discursive contestations. Though not identical, Rai (2004; 2014) and Anjana Chatterji’s (2011a) perspectives then share a common supposition – the ideological aspirations of nationalism (that is – democracy, secularism and so on) and its rationalising territorial form in post-independence India are both seen as reflections and producers of Hindu majoritarian dominance by an upper-caste elite.

These readings of the Kashmir conflict follow a more general tendency in contemporary Indian social thought that the political economist Pranab Bardhan (1996, p. 140) has informally labelled “anarcho-communitarianism”, insofar as they condemn the characteristically modernist and rationalist project of Indian statehood for undermining the community rights of erstwhile pre-statist and pre-marketized social formations.<sup>12</sup> “Anarcho-communitarianism” does not encompass an altogether uniform body of literature, rather, the common feature is what Bardhan (2002, p. 187) categorises as its adherents’ affinity towards a specifically community-based logic of self-governance (whether defined by religious, kinship, ethnic or other parameters) as an antidote to the failures of the State without considering the possibility of “community failures”. In support of Bardhan’s critique, Stuart Corbridge and John Harriss (2006, p. 199) argue that the embedded anti-secularism of such theories mounts a feeble defence against Hindutva nationalism and is unable to account for the role of the institutional forms and ideologies of secularism in enfranchising large subsections of the poor in the early post-independence period. The demand for the decentralisation of the State in order to permit localised governance forms based on region or indigeneity also seems reminiscent of a process of scaling in response to the notion of a decaying nation-State. Unlike often economy-centric pro-market demands for decentralisation that aim to establish the primacy of the world-market over national economies through the process of re-scaling national institutions however, the anarcho-communitarian perspective delivers an autonomously political spin to the old argument. It

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<sup>12</sup> In this sense, they share remarkable commonalities with the conservative and traditionalist elements which so vociferously opposed the nation on the basis of its historical novelty at the early peak of bourgeois liberalism (See Hobsbawm 1992, p. 40).

proposes de-scaling in terms of governance, namely, shifting the scale of political power to more atomic entities, as a means of reducing the control exercised by the centralised State. As is apparent however, the devolution of political power downwards from the State and the ascendancy of the world-market over national economies go hand in hand despite the often anti-market stances of anarcho-communitarians – a process obfuscated by solely political interpretations of social conflict.

The complete renunciation and denunciation of the possibilities ensconced in a united Indian national scale of struggle in these texts is conducted through the conflation of the two very different ideologies that inform fascist and anti-imperialist (though in the Indian case quintessentially *liberal* bourgeois) forms of nationalism in India. On the basis that both of these nationalisms have perceived Kashmir and its lasting position in the Indian union as a question of “territorial integrity” (though for radically different reasons), readings such as those by Rai interpret them as part of the same repressive nationalist historical project and thus equally inimical to a politics of radical equality. Regrettably, this view collapses the different socio-political conditions, political projects, and class specificities, which have structured these diverse nationalisms through oversimplification. A particularly clarifying typology that counters this reductionism can be found in Bannerji’s critique of the discipline of subaltern studies. Anti-colonial nationalisms, Bannerji (2000, pp. 902-3 explains, might share an acceptance of private property but differ in the formal arrangements for the security of the rights of individual citizens through constitutional guarantees; liberal bourgeois democracies are identified by the presence of the latter feature, while illiberal national projects are characterised by its replacement with an ethno-religious notion of citizenship. The national liberation form of anti-colonial nationalism on the other hand, which the Nehruvian nationalists could never fully embrace, eschews the basis of private property, has fought against the domination of both local and foreign capital, and has a far wider class-base than the selective net of the national and petit-bourgeoisie. In any case, it was the first of these nationalisms that characterised the Nehruvian-State’s commitment to civic-nationalism and the second which is typical of the homogenising nationalisms of the Right which emerged onto the Indian political scene with the decline of the former.

I mention these distinctions not to invent a myth of originary innocence in service of the liberal nationalism of the Nehruvian State, but to stress that the political manoeuvrings of this State-form over time have been reflective of the structural inheritance of its form and of the Indian ruling elite of that historical moment, produced as it was, in explicitly colonial conditions. The formal

secularism of such a State-form as well as its integrity, as Aijaz Ahmad (2000, p. 41) has noted elsewhere, could only be sustained by containing the Rightist tendencies of other competing elite-nationalisms through either the retention of its position or alignment of the Centre towards the national liberation politics of the Left. It is a regrettable reality that in Kashmir, as elsewhere in India, the gradual acquiescence to the Hindutva communal lobby (representing the interests of post-partition landed gentry, agricultural elite and small-scale capitalists) “put the clock back to the 1930s” by creating the first of many fissures in the relationship between the Indian State and Kashmiri public (Chandra 1985, p. 51).

#### **2.3.4 Development as Security and the Autonomy of Politics**

The “imperialism” of the nation-State form which attempts to quell the Kashmiri nationalist movement is also thought to be consolidated through the discursive and strategic imperatives embedded in the Central and State governments’ developmental intervention schemes in the region. on the grounds that the transfer of capital through various forms of natural resource extraction have refashioned Kashmir as an *internal colony* within the parameters of the Indian state. In his study of the Kashmiri economy post-1947, Siddhartha Prakash traces the source of these narratives to the Centre’s considerable reduction of its aid policy, which funded 90 % of the state’s Five Year Plans from the 1950s, to 30% grants and 70% loans in the 1970s. This relocation of funds caused 50% of Jammu and Kashmir’s state expenditure to be comprised of debt and interest repayments.<sup>13</sup> Prakash notes that a side effect of the Centre’s initially substantive aid policy was Kashmir’s dependency on the Centre, as the region had little “impetus to mobilise its own resources for economic growth” (Prakash 2000, p. 320).

In addition to the removal of resource inflow to the state through Central aid, the popular state media, many civil society activists and scholars have identified national corporations such as the

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<sup>13</sup> These sentiments were not unique to Kashmir; a similar statistical breakdown of 50% of state spending accounting for central transfers was evident in Assam during the Fifth Five Year Plan, which as noted by Stuart Corbridge and John Harris (2006, p. 108), led the Congress to be confronted by a renewed spate of regionalism opposed to Assam’s “unnatural’ dependence on central transfers” during the 1980s. According to Gail Omvedt (1993, p. 183), this is proof that in each of these cases – whether in Assam, Punjab or Kashmir -- demands for autonomy were the product of a drive by local populations to assert control over their “economic and political life” in the context of the domination of the “centralised state-industrial machine of capital accumulation”.

National Hydro-electric Power Company (NHPC) as another instigator of colonial forms of dependency in Kashmir. Gull Mohammad Wani (2012, p. 139) notes for example that the state of Jammu & Kashmir contributes 1560MWs to the entire 5175 MWs of the company's generation capacity, though in contrast to other Indian states which share half the royalties from NHPC power projects the Jammu and Kashmir state government receives a meagre 12 percent of the share. From his interviews with traders and analyses of statements by separatist leaders Wani (pp. 139-40) determines the gradual orientation of the Kashmiri nationalist movement towards "economic nationalism" due to increased opposition to Kashmir's position as a dependant "market colony" of India prevented from deriving the benefits of direct participation in the global market and of globalisation more generally. Though Wani does not delve into the causal bases for the NHPC's actions in the region, Mona Bhan (2014b) articulates that dam construction in Kashmir is a strategic investment for the Indian government that provides further reinforcements for the ongoing counter-insurgency war in the region. Bhan (p. 202) calls this phenomenon a process of "hydraulic colonialism" meant to foster Kashmir's economic reliance on India and erode its sovereignty through invasive capitalist modernisation. In particular, Bhan (pp. 192-3, 196, 198-9, 210) identifies the deployment of "corporate moral narratives" of hard work, productivity, and repackaged Hindu spiritualism in order to integrate Kashmiris into India's "productive work culture", justify the dispossession of people from their land, encourage urbanisation, and create ideal citizens of a subversive populace. Bhan is one of few scholars to investigate Indian 'colonial' designs within the region through the lens of economic modernisation; the conflation of *post-colonial* developmental regimes aiding capitalist expansion and *colonial* forms of capitalism in her account therefore serves this interpretation. For Bhan the establishment of capitalist social relations through energy extraction schemes is ultimately another mode of 'soft' counter-insurgency working to ensure that the Indian State's strategic and territorial integrity is maintained and demands for self-determination are repressed. The interests of capital are subordinate to the political interests of a State that operates with the inherent securitised logic of territorial expansion. The processes that constitute the outcomes of development such as proletarianisation and the dispossession of the peasantry from their land are not defined by their role in enabling the pre-conditions for actually-existing capitalism in specific sites and locales but are characterised by their inherently 'colonial' form and predatory logic which follow the national ideology of expansionism – that is, to foster dependency and complement the extra-economic coercion of securitisation within the peripheries.

Alternately, in recent popular politics, centrally instituted economic policies have been castigated as being a part of a wider Indian settler-colonial project aimed at reducing the Muslim majority in Kashmir. For example, the proposed implementation of the state government's Industrial Policy of 2016, which included a later revoked clause permitting non-local private investment in industrial estates and IT parks, incited vocal protests from opposition leaders and separatist factions. All Parties *Hurriyat* Conference (APHC) allied factions such as *Dukhtaran-e-Millat's* Aasiya Andrabi have claimed that "an industrial policy inviting hundreds of Indian business tycoons and industrialists confirm a well thought out sequence of events and conspiracies aimed at changing the demography of Jammu and Kashmir" (Ali & Akmal 2016). Syed Ali Geelani of the Hurriyat Conference (G) and *Mirwaiz* Umar Farooq, chairman of the Hurriyat Conference (M), have also criticised what they believe to be a coordinated "Indian imperial policy" to change the state's demographic character and "Muslim majority identity" through synchronized schemes to build residential colonies for returning Kashmiri *Pandits* and ex-servicemen, settle refugees from West-Pakistan, and provide services and permanent homes to "non-local slum dwellers" (Ibn Yusuf 2016, Ul Khaliq 2016). Along with others, such as the independent MLA of Langate in Kupwara, Engineer Rasheed, these political leaders have read such actions as efforts to "erode the autonomy of the state" and dilute its disputed character (Ibn Yusuf 2016; *Kashmir Observer* 2016). These responses to the policies of the BJP- People's Democratic Party (PDP) coalition government are worth mentioning for a number of reasons. Opposition to the *economic* stipulations of central "imperialism" is not expressed in class terms but rather against the threat posed to the "demographic" integrity of the state and its "locals" – in other words, the developmental policies of the State are portrayed as serving the strategic and ethno-political rather than economic interests of the Indian State. At the same time, though there is limited literature on the class composition of these parliamentary opposition groups, what exists suggests their leadership was drawn from the intermediate ranks of society (some examples include Chandra 1985, p. 43; Ahmad 2000a, pp. 255-6, Behera 2007, p. 145). Regardless of their class origins, their rhetoric against the Industrial Policy, far from exhibiting protectionist tendencies, benefits the interests of the small-scale and local industrial classes. The point of contention, after all, is not with the involvement of private corporate bodies or the process of privatisation but with the unfavourable position of Kashmiri private entrepreneurs and industrialists in the face of policies facilitating the expansion of non-local entrepreneurship and centrally steered national conglomerates. Lastly, it can be inferred that in spite of appearances, what

is at stake to these actors is the contestation over the scales of governance and the perceived infringement of regional sovereignty by the state government's kowtowing to the centre, which finds expression in the terms of the defense of demographic (ethno-religious) integrity.

In spite of the spatially-embedded analyses that can be produced from an evaluation of the class interests served by popular political rhetoric, the academic literature which buttresses popular political analyses of (internal) colonialism as it is applied to the India-Kashmir relationship most often incorporates the non-material reasoning adopted by activists, political leaders and other non-academic groups without adequate critical analysis. Dibyesh Anand (2012, pp. 80-1) for example, reads development in the periphery as purely imperial strategy, intended to “domesticate” peripheral populations and to symbolise the Indian security State’s capacity for territorial expansionism to both those living across the border and its own “public in the core”. Even when the economic effects or causes of development are addressed, development itself is meant to propel the “suzerainty” and “writ of the centralising state” over all forms of production or resource extraction such that inherited borders can be maintained (Kaul S. 2011, p. 71). Development and militarisation are thus perceived as going hand in hand to “repress the socio-economic history since at least the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century...[of] the struggle of an impoverished majority for their economic, human and political rights,” which Suvir Kaul surmises can only be achieved through autonomous Kashmiri control of resources (Kaul S 2011, p. 73). Development in these accounts is no more than a malleable instrument of the State, the implementation of which serves greater political purpose than economic.

None of these texts directly reference the concept of ‘internal colonialism’, which was revised from its proto-theoretic origins in Gramsci’s Southern Question, rose to prominence in the 1960s and 1970s through the efforts of Central and Latin American Marxists to explain the pauperisation of indigenous groups in their countries, and was later adapted and permuted to explain disparate forms of *national* oppression (such as those of Black and Chicano peoples in the United States, “post-communist” micro-states of the disintegrated USSR, Tibetan and Uyghur nationalism in China and so on), often without any of the earlier Marxian theoretical suppositions.<sup>14</sup> In one way or

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<sup>14</sup> The pioneering Latin American adaptations were by two Mexican authors: Casanova (1965) and Stavenhagen (1965). Later non-Marxian interpretations of the model were inspired by Michael Hechter’s (1975) book on the relationship between Celtic separatist nationalism and poor industrial development.



another, however, these texts unmistakably attempt to theorise the coercive *political* and extra-economic domination of the imperial centre over the dissident peripheries amalgamated into the Indian State, much in the concept's tradition, and lend themselves to many of the same critiques of internal colonialism that scholars have articulated since the 1970s. To explain this claim, I now discuss some of broader theoretical suppositions that frame Anand and Kaul's interpretations of State-led developmental strategies in Kashmir alongside Michael Burawoy's (1974) influential critique of the application of the internal colonialism thesis to Apartheid-era South Africa. Firstly, it bears repeating that to both Anand and Kaul the main schism in Indian society is that between the intra-State poles of the centre (core) and the periphery. In Anand's case, collective ethnic identities and border populations map onto this spatial schema based on their relationship to the centre. In other words, social relations between different groups are determined by their degree of minoritization or marginalisation by the centre, which is the locus of the State's *political* power.<sup>15</sup> Anand (2012, p. 73) uses this model to differentiate between the imperial character of "post-colonial informal empires" such as India and China and ordinary multi-ethnic states by suggesting that in the former ethnicity-based inequalities are mainly an issue within "peripheral regions". If in Kaul's article, the focus on ethnicity is muted, the centre/periphery dichotomy as a metaphor for marginalisation is no less apparent. The more distant (both spatially as border populations and ideologically as those opposed to the national project) particular groups are from the centre, the more vulnerable they are to the violence of the "centralising" post-colonial State's repressive apparatus (Kaul S. 2011, p. 71). Like most deployments of the internal colonial model, these accounts minimise the role of economic factors and fail to view ethnic inequalities in their broader social context (Burawoy 1974, pp. 522-3). The use of extended spatial and scalar metaphors to disarticulate class distinctions such that the conflict in Kashmir is represented as a conflict between the political core and periphery or between the centralising Indian State and its unstratified

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<sup>15</sup> Although I have only specified a critique of the use of the concept of a political core and periphery model here due to the fact that even the discussion of the domestic economic policies of the State in these accounts is framed in terms of political strategy, the contentions made by Jim Glassman (2004, p. 585) regarding the absence of spatially homogenous economic core or periphery regions in so far as economic cores exist within larger economically peripheral regions of a country or *vice versa* within capitalist core countries or that the economically peripheral constituents of the core can benefit from the 'super-exploitation' of peripheral regions overall, puts into serious doubt the usefulness of the core/periphery model altogether.

constituents in the borderlands, results in the proposition that purely contingent internal factors are entirely adequate in explaining both unequal relations and reactive group formation (ethno-national or otherwise). Additionally, the concept of the “centre” is vague enough to either refer to the seat of political power in New Delhi (metropole) or to a more diffuse centre of ethnic representativeness in the Indian “mainland”, since the periphery within these definitions refers to a site of both political, locational, ethno-social marginality. This produces a considerable degree of confusion, since the relationship of Kashmir to either of these “cores” cannot be generalised; the perceived historic relationship between Kashmir and New Delhi for example is not that between Kashmir and say, Maharashtra.

Secondly, the prioritisation of these vertical relationships indicates that these authors assume not only the autonomy of the political sphere but its dominance over the economic base in the periphery, and thus argue that the “economic” policies of the State therein service political motives including the production of State legitimacy, the inculcation of State discipline, and geopolitical strategy. This in effect produces an analysis of how different elements of the superstructure interact with one another (Burawoy 1974, pp. 528-9). Each author is explicit about the extra-economic motivations of developmentalism for instance, stating its role in “domesticat[ing]” (Anand 2012, p. 80), “assimilating” (Bhan 2014, p.90), “normalising” (*Ibid.*, p.207), and “contain[ing]” (Kaul S. 2011, p. 73) subversive populations by binding them to the Indian polity through physical and symbolic means. Regarding polity and economy in conflict with each other, and the political system as self-generating however, enables a line of circular reasoning: politicised and militarised uneven development is used to make a population easier to control but the population is dissident in the first place because it has been subjected to decades of politicised development and brutal suppression.

On a third and related note, each work seems to impress upon the reader the seamless continuity of the domestic imbalance in power between the centre and periphery from the colonial era to the present, alongside the shift in the global hierarchy caused by the rise of former colonies in the contemporary world market. Anand (2012, pp. 68-9), in addressing the earlier point, disputes the applicability of the entire notion of the internationalising State in the modern era, suggesting rather that the decline of American power and the powerful insularity of the contemporary Indian polity has led the globalising bourgeoisie to “remain subservient to the political power of the securitised state”. In another instance, the centralising State replaces past colonial institutions domestically in

India by taking up their “crucial modes of governance” and negotiating a place under the sun for itself in the global market (Kaul S 2011, p. 67). Much of this tendency is rooted in what Burawoy (1974, p. 524) identifies as the lack of careful analysis of historical data and an overt reliance on current interpretations in models of internal colonialism. Ahistorical analyses in particular produce narratives of continuity while at the same time obfuscating cognition of a point of origin in conflicts. This is noticeable for example in the contradictory act of placing the nation-State within a transient and changing bi-modular world defined in economic terms, while stressing a changeless and static bimodularity within national boundaries defined by political power without any effort to connect the two. In other words, these accounts are unable to identify why the separate political logic of continuity in national modes of governance and economic logic of change in global relations of production are able to exist side by side.

Lastly, in their effort to disengage from ostensibly economistic analyses, these authors often take for granted the dictates of dominant ideology masquerading as “common sense” (defined as “the traditional popular conception of the world” in Gramsci 2011, p. 199). A particularly significant example of this occurs when Anand (2012) calls on the reader to:

Imagine the confusion in Chinese-controlled Tibet or Indian held Kashmir when you utter the word empire and do not talk of territorial occupation, brutalisation of people based on their collective identity not one related to their position within the (inter)national circuits of capital but to ethno-nationalism), militarised borders, and neglect (not appropriation) by the West (p. 71).

I draw attention to this example for two reasons: firstly, because it presumes the irrefragable authority of research participants’ accounts of social situations (in this case, that the description of empire must necessarily be broad enough to encapsulate this particular form of state violence) and secondly, because it takes at face value the assertion that the rationale behind this suppression is ethno-nationalist (on the part of the Hindutva nationalist State) rather than based on economic class and the relation of particular groups to the means of production. These assumptions then lead Anand to conclude that nationalism is “irreducible to a specific social and material condition” and is the ultimate determinant of the relationship of the centre to border regions (*Ibid*). In analyses of internal colonialism this affinity towards ‘folk’ theory, which often arose from the participant’s desire to portray a particular social structure in an idealist fashion (for example, undivided by class), had the unfortunate consequence of echoing the official view and offered only shallow understanding of historical change (Burawoy 1974, p. 524). Despite it being critical to Anand’s account, decontextualized

from both the historical actors and class interests involved in its production, and reduced to its discursive and symbolic value, the expansionist nationalism of the centre is thus an ultimately unsatisfying explanation for the rise and protraction of the conflict in Kashmir. Thus by downgrading class relations, disconnecting the political superstructure from the economic base, separating national politics from the wider influence of the global economic system, and reifying primordial nations and unrooted nationalisms through narratives of ethno-centric statehood, such applications of the theory of internal colonialism in Jammu and Kashmir have tended to reproduce in academic discourse what Domenico Losurdo (2000, p. 507) has remarked is an inclination of some factions of the 'Left' to construct an "(anarchistic) phenomenology of power that situates domination and oppression exclusively in the state, the centralized power, and the general social rules."<sup>16</sup>

## **2.4 Towards a Class- and State- theoretical Analysis of the Kashmir Conflict**

If the Indian State assumes the position of the imperialist in the post-colonial colonial encounter, the consequent substitutive step is to place Kashmiri nationalism in the position of the Indian independence movement regardless of the specific historical circumstances (phases of global capitalist development) in which either movement was formed or the social forces involved.<sup>17</sup> The implications of such an argument are moral rather than reflective of historical processes, and here lies what I argue is the principal rationale for the usage of the colonial analogy to describe Indian State violence in Kashmir– to appeal to morality and ethical sensibilities which portray the answer to the injustice (for example the "post-colonial informal empire" or internal colonialism) as liberal justice (national self-determination for sub-State

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<sup>16</sup> As Losurdo (2016, pp. 336-7) has written more recently, the immediate heritage of such (left-wing) populism can possibly be traced back to the culture of 1968, according to which "progressive and revolutionary class struggle coincided with rebellion from below against constituted government, which was inherently synonymous with oppression." As a result of "absolutizing the contradiction between masses and power," for instance through sloganeering on the basis of the aphorisms such as the "right to rebel" and "forbidden to forbid!", Losurdo argues (left-wing) populism was incapable of "drawing a line of demarcation between revolution and counter-revolution".

<sup>17</sup> As Hobsbawm (1992, p. 178) observes, "contrary to common belief, the principle of state-creation since World War II, unlike that after World War I, had nothing to do with Wilsonian national self-determination. It reflected three forces: decolonization, revolution and, of course, the intervention of outside powers".

peripheries or resistance against minoritisation).<sup>18</sup> Immorality appears in these accounts as a determining concept in the definition of colonialism and imperialism. That the values ensconced within a guaranteed universal precept of morality – “does any government have the right to take away people’s liberty with moral force?” asks Arundhati Roy for example (2011, p. 71) – appear as a conflict between moral inclinations and duty rather than a reflection and product of particular socio-economic relations.

This is revealed in the opposition voiced within these accounts towards any effort either politically or academically to study the economic motivations of the Indian ruling class policy in Kashmir or to evaluate the class content of Kashmiri nationalist ideologies, activists and their support bases and thus assess whether such a nationalism is predominantly progressive, regressive or both at once. Such efforts for the most part are dismissed as a policy of divide and rule, and thus an inherently colonial anathema. Fazili (2011, p. 223) claims for example, that Indian civil society groups in Kashmir are conceptually colonial in attempting to “identify or create their respective constituencies by promoting various *sub-marginalities*” through “Gandhian, the Left-leaning, and the Feminist” ideological parameters, and that such practices are “akin to British colonialists delegitimizing the Indian nationalist struggle on account of India’s backwardness, male chauvinism or caste oppression”. Similarly, according to Arif Ayaz Parrey (2011, p. 246), it is not that class differences do not exist between Kashmiris but that they “work in the space of sub- and meta-national paradigms.” Thus, to use class analyses to seek answers to nationalist and secessionist conflicts is a “purely

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<sup>18</sup> For a discussion on Marx’s critique of morality, see Michael Rosen’s “The Marxist Critique of Morality and the Theory of Ideology”. To Marx, the notion of ‘progressive’ change based on an appeal to morality in effect does little to address the roots of injustice; Rosen elaborates:

It is not that Marx thinks that exploitation, expropriation, oppression, slavery, misery (a few of the terms he applies to the capitalist system) are morally acceptable or that he believes that the language of ethical condemnation is epistemologically suspect. *He is, however, reluctant to use language that would suggest that these are forms of injustice for which "justice" (in the sense of giving "each their due") is the final and sufficient remedy.* The best understanding of Marx's view of morality, in my view, lies in appreciating that, for him, socialism and communism represent a form of social existence that is ethically superior to capitalism, one mark of whose superiority consists in the fact that it has gone beyond morality (2001, p. 36; italics mine).

sociological” enterprise that only “fuels the indignation of the Kashmiri people”. In so arguing, these accounts rescale class to the position of one of many ‘marginalities’ that configure Kashmiri society but need not be studied in relation to a mass movement based on a national ideology, and present the Kashmiri national liberation movement as though it is free of any class basis. It is the character of nationalism itself, as Hobsbawm (1977, p. 21) puts it, which emerges as an “independent variable” within this conceptual framework.

It is in reaction to the ontological moralism (or perhaps moralizing ontologies), ahistorical ethno-nationalist primordialism and an idealisation of cultural alterity, political overdeterminism, and the limitations of methodological regionalisms and nationalisms of many of the interpretations which I have analysed throughout this chapter, that I propose a historically materialist<sup>19</sup> approach to understanding the form taken by the Kashmiri national movement and nationalism and its relationship to the wider processes of State-making and capitalist development in India. Instead of deducing what is economic about the discursive processes of nation-formation or the expansion of national-consciousness, the objective is to recreate the economic environment of the relations of production within society wherein such ideas developed. To the extent that the insurgency in Kashmir is not a simple reflection of Kashmiri nationalism, while this approach explains the conflict of interests which led to the emergence of a national movement it does not suffice in explaining the “conflict” which emerged between this national movement and the Indian State, and thus must be contraposed alongside a “State-theoretical” account (contingent to specific iterations of the Indian State rather than any particular “theory of the state”) of Indian policy towards and regarding Jammu and Kashmir. To this latter approach, I add a further qualifier; I confine my analysis to the ‘security apparatus’ of the Indian State, which I broadly define as a combination of the State agencies concerned with defence and law-enforcement as well as foreign policy. This is on account of a number of factors, including that it is out of the reach of this thesis to attempt a holistic account of all of the Indian State’s policies regarding Kashmir, given that I analyse the processes of class and nation-formation in Kashmir in the context of both the Government of Kashmir and the Indian

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<sup>19</sup> By historical materialism, I make reference to Karl Marx’s (1904, pp. 11-2) method of historical analysis, which argues that it is “not the consciousness of men that determines their social being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness”; to unearth this consciousness then, one must then study “the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflict between the social productive forces and the relations of production.”

State's developmental "planning" apparatus, in Chapter 2, and most importantly because securitisation and the "security motive" has often been seen as the determining factor in the relationship between the Indian State and Kashmir.

The conceptual framework that I use, thus does not uniquely stem from my own limited "critique" of the post-structural and anti-foundational tradition or the internal-colonialism thesis as applied to the many explanatory accounts of the Kashmir conflict (in the sense that it is not simply negatively influenced), but also acknowledges an array of direct and indirect methodological and theoretical influences, including Miroslav Hroch and Eric Hobsbawm's historically materialist approaches to understanding the rise of different nationalist movements and forms of nationalism; the dispersed yet illuminating historiographical engagements of Aijaz Ahmad; and the traditions of Marxist State theory, particularly of the Gramscian variety. It is not my intention here, and is certainly out of the bounds of this project to produce an intellectual history or genealogy of these approaches (as helpful and productive an endeavour as that might be); thus to conclude this introductory chapter I will briefly discuss their theoretical or methodological contributions only in so far as they bear on the arguments and guiding premises of this thesis.

Although the Czech historian Miroslav Hroch is most well-known for his Phase A-B-C comparative model of nation-formation, I have found his concept of a "nationally relevant conflict of group interests" (1990, p. 110), which refers to the coincidence of social interest, linguistic, or religious conflicts, particularly useful in discussing the connections between, for instance, the out-competition of small-scale local producers in Kashmir upon the entry of large-scale industrial capital after the abolition of the customs duty for imports in 1953. Also of particular interest to me on a methodological level has been Hroch's (2010, p. 881) tendency to rely on "concrete human activities" and "concrete timing" and the structural empirical detail when speaking to people's social relations, which to recall Eric Hobsbawm's (1994, p. 57) words treats history as "an imaginative art...which does not invent, but arranges *objets trouvés*." This has been a crucial tool especially in the second chapter. However, despite these borrowings, it is important to clarify that Hroch's (1985) classic study as well as his later work has been regionally and nationally delimited in terms of geography and scale, as a study of the historical moment(s) within which European national movements developed, thus I do not conceive of Kashmir's relationship to India as in any way comparable to the structural relationship between "small-" and "state nations" in the sense of Hroch's original uses of these terms, as any account of modern nationalism and nation-formation in

India and Kashmir, if it is to be historically accurate, must take into account the particular experience of European colonisation and de-colonisation, as well as the present structure of global capitalism. Also unlike Hroch who mainly sought to understand the course of national movements and the spread of national consciousness, I am also interested in the relationship between the development of class structure and the ideas and discursive content of nationalism. To these ends, I have found the Indian Marxist, Aijaz Ahmad's (2000 a, b; 2004) work which grapples with the relationship between nationalism and culture in independent India, particularly indispensable in thinking through the relations between particular Indian State forms and their uses of ideology. Although Aijaz Ahmad is commonly renowned for his critiques of the post-colonial literary tradition, it is his distinct and related analyses of the peculiar modernism of communalist Indian Right-Wing ideology, the composition of its social bases, and its particular deployment of the nationalist paradigm that I reference throughout this thesis and most frequently in Chapter 3.

The last and perhaps central influence upon this thesis has been exerted by the work of the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci. In this light, it may be surprising to see references to him in this text are sparse. However, it is Gramsci's formulation of the "historical bloc", which critiques the divide between politics and economics, and makes an argument towards their co-consolidation that informs both my critique of political determinism and my proposition of a class-based and State-based alternative to the study of the Conflict. As Gramsci (2011, p. 377) notes "material forces are the content and ideologies are the form though this distinction between form and content has purely didactic value since the material forces would be inconceivable historically without form and ideologies would be individual fancies without the material forces". These relationships, he (p. 366) says, are characterised by their unevenness at different points in time, it is after all, "the complex, contradictory and discordant *ensemble* of the superstructures [which] is the reflection of the *ensemble* of the social relations of production...only a totalitarian system of ideologies give a rational reflection of the contradictions of structure and represents the existence of the objective conditions for the revolutionising of praxis." It is thus imperative that we do not assume the mechanical development of either.



## Chapter 3: On Class Relations and National Movements in Jammu and Kashmir

The purpose of the first, more sizeable part of this chapter is to explain some of the effects of the capitalist transition on Kashmir in order to understand what ruptures in socio-economic relations materialised both within the nascent Kashmiri bourgeoisie and between the Kashmiri and Indian national bourgeoisies after the controversial accession of the state to the Indian Union. I begin with a contextual summary of developments in the Indian State-capital nexus following the shift from the *dirigisme* of the Nehruvian period to the populist developmentalism of the 1960s and 70s and then the full-fledged support for a liberal policy regime in the early 1990s. I then proceed to the evaluation of the various inheritances of and changes in Kashmiri class-structure since accession as a function of state- and central-level economic planning. Although a large portion of this section is dedicated to unravelling the politico-economic effects of land reform policy on the agrarian structure of Kashmir, I also grapple with projects of institutional reform and financial integration, the absence of industrial development, hydro-electric capacity-building and its relationship to rural displacement, the relative acquiescence of organised labour movements, service-oriented growth, as well as bureaucratic partiality and the emergent politics of the middle-classes. The dates I use as bounding parameters for this discussion are 1950, which represents the year that formal economic planning in independent Kashmir began and 1989, which is commonly used to denote the starting point of the mass uprising or insurgency in Kashmir in both Kashmiri nationalist historiography and Indian nationalist historiography. The second, shorter component of this chapter builds off the first, which is concerned with the particular domestic economic context within which the “indigenous” component of the Kashmiri uprising developed, by briefly discussing how some of these internal contradictions as well as larger global forces came to bear upon the ideologies and directions of the Kashmiri nationalist movements involved in the protracted insurgency beginning in 1989. Since I cannot do justice to the variety of nationalist groupings which have cropped-up in the insurgency period, I have chosen to analyse three: the ethno-nationalist Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) which demands an independent Kashmiri nation-State, the confessional *Jama’at-i-Islami* of Jammu and Kashmir (JIJK) which demands that Kashmir join Pakistan, and the middle-of-the-road Jammu and Kashmir People’s Conference (JKPC) which seeks greater autonomy within the Indian

Union. Altogether, I argue that “new” Kashmiri nationalist movement(s) which aspired to hegemony after accession, arose neither as an inherent tendency nursed by an incompatibility with modern Statehood or ethno-religious diversity, nor as a unique consequence of heavy-handed governance or foreign interference, instead, as products of a particular set of socio-economic circumstances whereby the cross-national and sub-national inter-class and intra-class struggles of the emerging Kashmiri bourgeoisie were deployed along “nationally relevant” parameters in order to seize State power.

### **3.1 A Brief History of the State-Capital Nexus in India from Independence to Liberalisation**

Beginning to interpret the State-capital nexus as it has historically operated and continues to operate in contemporary Kashmir requires an understanding of some of the more general changes in the relationship between capital and the State in the Indian post-colony. As briefly mentioned earlier, some Marxist theoreticians have interrogated the spatio-temporal embeddedness of domestic and transnational class alliances within the State-form, as well as the State’s political-economic position in the context of the stratified global capitalist system, in order to discern the multi-scalar inter-linkages between class and the political economy of the State (see Chapter 1, p. 8) This distinction between the globally and domestically relevant determinants of the relationship between State and capital also informs the parameters of the State’s role. For example, the creative, corrective, and directive role of the State with respect to the market is limited to the territory under its sovereign control; on the other hand, a fourth role of the State – namely that of representing the *external* interests of *domestic* capital – is actualised beyond its boundaries, in internationalised form (Van Apeldoorn, de Graaff & Overbeek 2012, p. 474). Thus, the role of the State with respect to capital has as much to do with the internal balance of class forces of rising powers, as with what Matthew D. Stephen (2014, p. 916), evoking Gramsci, notes are “broader changes in the material structures of global capitalism and the nature of transnational class integration”. For instance, in the era of neoliberal globalisation wherein one can situate the rapid rise of Brazil, Russia, India and China (or collectively the BRICs), not only have erstwhile national processes of production assumed a transnational character with the growth of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stocks, multinational corporations, and the emergence of global value chains, but the unparalleled degree of transnational integration has led to a diminishment in very *capacity* of and *incentives* for the State to intervene in

decisions made within international corporate networks (Stephen 2014, p. 922 and p. 927). On the semi-peripheries of the traditional core of the capitalist world system, scholars observe that the original State-capital nexus characterised by ‘catch-up’ developmentalism, within which the directive function of the State was the strongest, has been incompletely replaced by “new statist strategies” distinguished by their “outward-looking, economically expansionist” stance, coupled with “integrated state capitalist state-society complexes” which preserved the State’s dominance (Van Apeldoorn, de Graaff & Overbeek 2012, pp. 481-2; Stephen 2014, p. 923). In short, rising States in the neoliberal era often continue to display a propensity towards systematic integration while eschewing hegemonic modes of ‘liberal’ governance.

In spite of the noticeably different relationships between the State and capital within these countries, it is premature to assert that the rise of the BRICs is somehow illustrative of a shift towards a deconcentrated multi-polar world system devoid of unipolar US hegemony. As Robert H. Wade (2011, p. 349) has noted in his study of the role of the BRICs within multilateral organisations, “economic weight and influence in governance are different things”. Not only is there the lack of a significant historical antecedent of the BRICS operating as a unit, but their entry, voting power and modes of participation in institutions of “global governance” such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and G20 have often been limited by demands for “hegemonic incorporation” by the countries of the advanced core (Wade 2011, p. 365). Additionally, the position of BRIC economies in the low-value-added tiers of global value chains and their dependence on primary or resource-based manufacturing exports, which are subject to price setting manipulations by advanced economies, indicate consternating areas of vulnerability (Chen 2012, p. 236). Whether these States necessarily contest or comply with the dictates of Western transnational capitalism is hard to gauge except on an ideal-type basis, and indeed, Van Apeldoorn (2012, p. 481) and his colleagues outline a useful rubric of possible manifestations from “Proto-states” to “Hobbesian contender states” with the aid of existing literature on Marxist State theory. Accounting for the degree of autonomy these states have from the global capitalist system is both a question of tracing whether the flow of surplus value enters into domestic iterations of State-society complexes or global circuits of capital, and examining whether the path taken to socio-economic development is national or transnational (Van Apeldoorn, de Graaff & Overbeek 2012; Stephen 2014).

Alternately described as an “indigenous variant of Keynesianism,” a “‘mixed-economy’ approach to development” (Ahmed 2009, p.38), and a unique blend of heavily regulated socialism

and Keynesianism (Peet 2010, p. 13), the economic model adopted by the Indian State in the early years of independence was the outcome of a fragmented ideological tradition which fused together the tenets of liberal democracy, Fabian socialism, feeble versions of Soviet-inspired central-planning, liberal communitarianism, Indian rationalism, political pragmatism, Gandhian rurality, Vedantic anti-materialism, and ‘soft’ populism, as the eminent historian C.A. Bayly (2015) has illustrated through his multiple intellectual biographies of prominent Indian policy-makers. The condition of global capitalism in the three decades preceding Indian independence was characterised by a retreat of capital to what Hobsbawm (1992, p. 132) called “the igloos of its nation-state economies and associated empires”. It was in partial response to its newly found position within the world-system of superior economies, collapsing formal empires, and rising neo-colonial empires as well as the class character of State’s political institutions, that the newly independent Indian State attempted to follow a programme of national economic development. The particular form of State intervention championed by Indian “catch-up” developmentalism focused on speeding up the rate of capital accumulation rather than managing its effects (Chibber 2003, p. 15). Land reform policy directed at the abolition of feudal fetters anticipated the restructuring of earlier agrarian relations through a combination of *zamindari* abolitionism, imposed land ceilings, and tenancy reform, but as we will see in Kashmir, also enabled many semi-feudal relationships to persist. Expediting the capitalist agrarian transition was a means to an end; agrarian reform policy was motivated by the notion that it would prepare the ground for rapid ‘balanced’ industrial growth.

This transformation into a modern industrial society was to be achieved through the National Congress-controlled State’s delivery of public subsidies and exertion of economic discipline, the latter of which would involve mobilising the State’s capacity for tax extraction as well as its regulative organisational resources such as nodal policy agencies and bureaucratic bases (Chibber 2003, p. 23). Yet, as Chibber (2003) has shown, the resistance that the business classes exercised against the State’s idea of disciplinary planning compounded with the contradictory nature of the import-substitution model, which made such resistance reasonable, arrested the State-building process by limiting its very capacity to make big industry conform to policy. The inherited and immediate place-based spatial interests of large-scale industrial capital not only solidified a discriminatory pattern of resource allocation which channeled industrial investment unevenly across the country on the basis of inherited industrial and manufacturing regions, but also generated (or

rather maintained) monopolies in target sectors<sup>20</sup>, a feature which incidentally affected patterns of economic diversification in Jammu and Kashmir and may have contributed to an ensuing sentiment of being sidelined within the Union in spite of the region's moderate levels of economic development. Though the very premise of the developmental State may not necessarily be "desirable" for progressive audiences, especially in the present context where the myth of the national bourgeoisie seems to have been debunked as Chibber (2009, p. 145) remarks elsewhere, the disinterest of the Indian developmental State in catering to the interests of different regional elite-local bourgeoisie alliances while pandering to large-scale private capital may very well have catalysed underlying sub-nationalist/separatist impulses in the realm of regional politics.

The process of financing these Planning endeavours landed the Indian government in considerable debt, which at least one apprehensive commentator wrote was tantamount to the extension of an invitation to the "monopoly capital of several imperialist powers to fleece the people in collaboration with the classes it represents" (Ghosh 1983, p. 2). Though the repercussions of this debt dependency were wide-ranging, one particular consequence was the production of an exchange-based relationship between geopolitical security considerations and the provision of developmental aid. As the American Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs wrote to the Secretary of State in 1950,

Economic aid, which only we can provide, is necessary if we are to assure increased stability of the non-Communist governments of this region and maintenance of and increase in their western orientation... I believe we should begin now to plan a program to enable the countries of South Asia—India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Afghanistan—beginning in FY 1952, to carry out developmental projects which would provide the basis for long-term progress in the economic sphere, particularly in agriculture (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950).

Although the plan for a significant aid programme to the Near East and South Asia was abandoned by the early 1950s, the entry of India and the non-aligned nations into the orbit of the Soviet Union's trade network and economic partnership programmes remained a source of worry for the US as Michael Latham (2010) has demonstrated. The economic penetration of the MIT Centre for

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<sup>20</sup> Much has been written on uneven regional development in India. For detail on industrial monopoly growth see Chibber 2003, p. 33 and 189. Scholars such as Sanjaya Baru (1988, p. 145) have argued that late colonial India already showed evidence of monopoly growth in industrial enterprise due to its heavy dependence on capital-intensive technological imports and institutional centralisation.

International Studies (CIS) lobby, which began to critically study India's Third Year Plan led to increasing calls for the reorientation of the India domestic market towards both manufacturing and agriculture in order to recreate Fordist "balanced growth" policies (Latham 2010, p. 73). However, for the most part, the Indian State's foreign policy decision-making remained largely independent of the US's geopolitical concerns, and in 1966, during peak aid, Indian criticism of the Vietnam War led to a severance of all food shipments to India by US President Lyndon Johnson (Latham 2010, p. 73). Yet, as Ali Nobil Ahmad and Hassan H. Karrar (2015, p. 57) have noted, relations of dependency and the wider comprador alliances between the South Asian business classes and global capitalism meant that neither India nor its western neighbour, Pakistan remained "passive bystanders of superpower conflict".

By the early 1960s, when the Green Revolution was in full swing, the Indian State began to experience the tremors of its weak disciplinary capacity which would eventually lead to a faltering of the erstwhile 'Nehruvian consensus'.<sup>21</sup> While Farshad Araghi (1995, pp. 356-9) notes that the 1970s signalled a period of global depeasantisation and deruralisation combined with increasingly lower rates of urbanisation, in India the decade announced the politico-economic rise of agrarian power and a contestation between dominant agrarian and urban classes. As Ashutosh Varshney (1998, pp. 101-6 and 114) has shown in much detail, by the end of this period the "rural voice" had quite

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<sup>21</sup> The 'Nehruvian consensus' was first theorised by Rajni Kothari (1969), who used it to refer to a political consensus between the parliamentary left and right during Nehru's rule. Kothari explained this through the subdivision of the 'consensus' into two further components: institutional (party and federal system) and ideological (domestic and foreign policy) components. Later political theorists have complicated and developed this concept, Sudipta Kaviraj (1990, p. 11) for instance, writes that Kothari "misjudged the nature of the consensus...and its possibilities" especially if he meant to imply there was an agreement in principle between proponents of different ideologies, rather, as a consensus of high politics:

It was a consensus of discourse, rather than of ideological positions. The institutional pattern that Nehru wished to put in place came up against serious ideological criticism from the left, especially the socialists and the communists. But there *was* still a commonality at a different level: they had very different things to say about the political world, its structure, purposes, ideals, but they shared a common way of arguing about these things. This seemed to create real divisions among them, which was what they primarily saw. But this also created underlying unities among them when looked at from outside this discourse, which is what must have impressed the other classes and groups in Indian society.

decisively entered into the realm of State decision-making as represented by the assent of the Janata Party in 1977, demands for the conversion of a price to incomes policy, and the incidence of “democratic peasant mobilisation. This agrarian turn, most acutely felt in Punjab and Haryana, was also coupled with what Chirashree Das Gupta (2016, p. 163) has called the “deepening of manufacturing enclaves,” with “new upstream and downstream small and medium-scale enterprises” developing in close proximity to established centres of industry.” Congress power was also affected by the shifts in scheduled-caste and tribe population support to parties such as the Bahujan Samaj Party and *Adivasi*-focused movements in Uttaranchal and Chhattisgarh. The BJP in this period continued to attract the support of the urban upper caste and rural middle-caste populations (Bandyopadhyaya 2009, pp. 9-10). While international shifts such as the break-up of the Soviet Union, which destroyed one of India’s largest export markets, might have finalised India’s neoliberal turn as Waqar Ahmed (2014) argues, a number of earlier factors including India’s external balance of payment’s crisis, agricultural crisis, the stagnation of private corporate investment, fiscal deficits, the implosion of ISI, and the consecutive oil price shocks of the 1970s created the foundations for the structural transformation of India’s economy (Vakulabharanam and De 2016, pp. 630-31). Much of the “*dirigiste* populism” aimed at the reduction of dependency in the 1970s such as bank nationalisation, the nationalisation of the coal, copper, and oil industries, the abolition of privy purses, and the public dismissal of transnational corporations, was reversed upon the onset of repeated crises, and the Indira Gandhi-led Congress adopted a pro-business stance in the early 1980s in the form of Operation Forward (*Ibid.*, pp. 629-33; Das Gupta 2016). As a result, earlier foreign aid dependency was replaced by foreign commercial borrowing, which produced “fiscal indiscipline” and required the limitation of the State’s direct role in accumulation, debt servicing, and low public investment (*Ibid.*, p. 634). The eventual investment crisis of 1991 and the ensuing IMF loan taken to mitigate it signalled the start of a new policy regime, whereby the productive resources previously employed in the creation surplus value in the public sector were opened up to the private sector, thus enabling the re-appropriation of fixed capital as well as a transformation in the nature of its realization (Ahmed 2014, p. 184). When combined with the emergence of a unipolar world-system, the bricolage of ideological traditions that nursed the early Indian State shifted to bring to the fore alternate pro-market imaginaries of development along the lines of Rostowian modernisation.

### 3.2 Some Features of the Capitalist Transformation in Kashmir 1950 – 1987

In the 1940s, agrarian transformation through land reform became a critical component of the National Conference's blueprint for a *watan* (nation) freed from the shackles of a feudal monarchy.<sup>22</sup> The eclectic origins of the proposed *Naya Kashmir* (1944) constitution lay in a collection of written statements from members of the National Conference, policy papers distributed in Soviet Central Asia, and the ideological cement offered by various subcontinental communists (Whitehead 2010, p. 147). Its action plan tackled far more than the limited catalogue of grievances of representation identified in the reports of the two organisations, the Riot Enquiry Committee (1931) and the Glancy Commission (1932) set up by the government after the demonstrations in Srinagar against Dogra rule in July 1931. In addition to providing a constitutional framework, campaigning for a representative legislature, grappling with the complexities of the language question in Kashmir, establishing a charter for women's rights including wage parity, and inaugurating a number of educational and social schemes for the poor and systematically oppressed populations, the document introduced a National Economic Plan with a fundamental land reforms component meant to redistribute the land procured from the abolition of landlordism to tenant cultivators in preparation for rapid industrialisation. Apart from attempting to accrue a mass support base through the legitimisation of popular demands for secure peasant proprietorship, the *Naya Kashmir* land reforms envisioned changes to the existing agrarian structure which would help prevent the development of relations of economic dependency between Kashmir and India after accession. As Sheikh Abdullah would later reflect in his autobiography, "a self-sufficient Kashmir was our goal and we were prepared to work towards it. We did not want to extend a begging bowl towards the centre" (1993,

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<sup>22</sup> This was a far cry from the early days of the Young Men's Muslim Association (founded in 1930), Fateh Kadal Reading Room Party (founded in 1930), and the original Muslim Conference (founded in 1932), whose political programmes and demands had reflected the interests of their patrons, a motley group of prominent social classes such *maulvis*, *jagirdars*,<sup>22</sup> and shawl-barons, till as late as the mid-1930s, namely to reform but not overthrow feudalism or princely rule (Dhar 1989, p. 175). This alliance between the urban-middle classes and traditional forces of feudal and mercantile capital in the reform movement meant that the Kashmiri Muslim leadership only began to agitate for horizontal rather than particularistic demands such as the extension of proprietary rights to existing *zamindars* or the expansion of administrative and governmental representation for the educated Muslim middle-classes, when the Muslim and National Conference went their separate ways in 1939 (Zutshi 2004, p. 244).



p. 109). As an exercise in (promised) semi-autonomous governance, the performance of the land reforms also had the potential to legitimise the very act of limited integration (financial or otherwise) into the Indian Union. When delivering his inaugural address to the J&K Constituent Assembly on November 5, 1951, Abdullah for example asked rhetorically whether such radical reforms would have found State-support across the border:

Land and all it means is an inestimable blessing to our peasants who have dragged [sic] along in servitude to the landlord and his allies for centuries... We have been able under present conditions to carry these reforms through; are we sure that in alliance with landlord-ridden Pakistan, with so many feudal privileges intact, that these economic reforms of ours will be tolerated? (Government of Jammu and Kashmir n.d., p. 106).<sup>23</sup>

Insofar as the anticipated answer was negative, it implied the allowances for independent decision-making with respect to the internal economic affairs of the region despite accession vindicated Kashmiri demands for ‘sub-national’ if not complete national sovereignty.

Perhaps unsurprisingly these land reforms instituted by the Kashmiri Government under the *Big Landed Estates Abolition Act* (1950) drew much ire from landed elites. A strongly worded appeal from several Kashmiri *zamindars* sent to the Indian Ministry of States in the same year attributed the radicalism of the terms and conditions to the infiltration of communists into government posts and ministries. In the eyes of these *zamindars*, such unsavoury agitators had sown the “seed of hatred” in Kashmiri society by provoking hitherto unfamiliar debates on questions of caste, tenurial, and labour rights, which were embodied in the recent movement towards the distribution of land to its actual cultivators. The telegram also portrayed the National Conference’s demands for a separate constitution for Kashmir, which would enable the state to bypass the requirements for compensation to landed proprietors, as an attempt to disparage the Indian constitution and to enable subservience to Soviet interests in the region. The rampant anti-communist fearmongering of the *zamindars* in this document had clear objectives. The Indian state had to be reminded not only of its duty to intervene in state matters which threatened to deviate from the established norms of liberal democracy by instituting concrete alterations to the levels of land ceilings and the remuneration of pensions and monetary compensation, but also of its duty in protecting landed class interests that had enabled its rise to power, through a defense of India’s national sovereignty.

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<sup>23</sup> Abdullah was not far off the mark; according to Josef Korbel (1954, p. 200) the *Azad* Kashmir government legally abolished feudalism in 1949 without any radical land reforms; land revenues were cut by 50 percent and some others were discontinued.

The formal statement from the Jammu and Kashmir Agriculturalist Association (1952) which followed, reiterated the previous warnings while advancing a political economic critique of the “haphazard, capricious and whimsical formulas” the Kashmiri state government had put into practice. Apart from objecting to the iniquitous percentage of the market value of each *kanal* [1 ha. = 19.768 *kanals*] of land determined as a subsidy, the landlords demanded at least twenty times the annual produce as additional rehabilitation expenses in line with what they called “the universal rule recognised all over the civilised world” and the appointment of an impartial Tribunal for the determination of land values composed of representatives of land owners in equal numbers to any Kashmiri government nominees selected therein. They argued that the failure to address their demands would not only mean the Indian government’s acquiescence to “dictatorial pressure...precipitating towards communism” but would also result in the abrogation of *popular* support towards India in favour of Pakistan, which had not undertaken any measures to liquidate landlordism since its independence. Indeed, the *zamindars* took care to identify their discontent with that of de-classed homogenous categories such as the “people” and emphasised the unprofitable terms of the reforms with the language of humanitarianism. Changes to the economic structure of the region, they claimed, were overturning a system that had been “enjoyed for generations”, and would simply replace one class of landowners with another. This latter point also doubled as an indictment of the Kashmiri government’s presumed communalism (sectarianism); the document took care to specify that the vast majority of the landowners affected by the land reforms were non-Muslims (specifically Hindu in this case) and to highlight the ruination that would befall ethnic minorities if such policies were allowed to proceed. According to at least two US government officials, the sentiments regarding the sectarianism of the reforms had spread to other parts of India, the assumption being that since, in contrast to the cases in the rest of the Indian states the element of compensation was markedly missing from the Kashmiri land reform policy, it represented an overt attempt at forcibly transferring the property of Hindu landlords to their Muslim tenants (Bekker 1951, p. 329; Park 1952, p. 115).

Notwithstanding the statement’s anti-communist and sectarian overtures, some of its criticisms and more empirical predictions were not entirely off the mark. There was the matter of obligatory royal assent, formalised as a part of the *Naya Kashmir* manifesto itself, which the *zamindars* pointed to as a sign of the contradictory political positioning adopted by the Kashmiri government – a viewpoint other social commentators unhappy with the National Conference’s political

manoeuvrings seemed to share. A prominent previous member of the National Conference, Prem Nath Bazaz, who had resigned in 1941 due to his disenchantment with the party's homogenising majoritarianism for example, was unimpressed with the political incongruities the document presented. He is quoted by Zutshi as remarking that *Naya Kashmir* was an "interesting though thoughtlessly drafted document, envisaging the establishment of a communist state yet, opportunistically enough, it guaranteed the perpetuation of alien Dogra rule in Kashmir" (Bazaz 1945, cited in Zutshi 2004, p. 291). Interestingly, the statement by the landlords also seems to have anticipated the advent of fragmented landholdings, which later analysts noted was a consequence of small land ceilings fixed in relation to individual units of cultivation which had parcelised the average farm size in Kashmir to well below the national average (Prakash 2000, p. 323).

The most recent statistics from the Agricultural Census shown in **Table 1 and 2** demonstrate a continued increase in the percentage of marginal landholdings (below < 1ha.) in J&K following nationally detectable trends. However, the percentage value of marginal-landholdings in J&K has noticeably exceeded the all-India average in each year from the 1995-96 to 2010-11 period. The value of the total area of marginal landholdings as a percentage of the total area of all reported landholdings in the region has also been consistently higher than the all-India average; indeed, marginal-land holdings occupy almost half of the entire land area owned or rented in J&K as opposed to semi-medium to medium-sized holdings in the rest of India. Though this indicates a decline in the concentration of land holdings in the hands of big landlords, scholars have reported that smaller farm sizes are markedly less productive than their larger counterparts (See examples discussed in Chattopadhyay 1973, p. 14). Despite the limited acreage and increase of marginal holdings, the area under agricultural production continued to increase from the 1950s onward, and the state as a whole produced a surplus of food grains prior to the 1990s (Dar 2015, p. 403). Thus the purported causality between the land reforms, fragmented landholdings, and low agricultural productivity in Kashmir, does not take into account the numerous other variables pertinent to both the region's particular and wider geo-political context outlined by Dar (2015) which may have contributed to agrarian underperformance, such as the occupation of arable land by the military, limited irrigation due to the terms of the Indus Waters Treaty, and the decline in agricultural expenditure by the Central government since the 1990s.

Size of Landholding (ha.)	1995-1996		2000-2001		2005-2006		2010-2011	
	Total Number of Holdings (%)	Total Area of Holdings (%)	Total Number of Holdings (%)	Total Area of Holdings (%)	Total Number of Holdings (%)	Total Area of Holdings (%)	Total Number of Holdings (%)	Total Area of Holdings (%)
Marginal (<1)	77.97	39.71	81.42	44.59	81.5	44.06	83.25	46.51
Small (1-2)	13.97	25.45	12.39	25.95	12.28	25.73	11.53	26.19
Semi-Medium (2-4)	6.63	23.41	5.27	20.98	5.18	20.9	4.39	19.05
Medium (4-10)	1.36	9.58	0.89	7.22	0.99	8.04	0.79	6.94
Large (>10)	0.07	1.85	0.04	1.26	0.05	1.27	0.04	1.31

**Table 1 Percentage of Total Number and Area of Holdings by Holding Size in J&K**

Size of Landholding (ha.)	1995-1996		2000-2001		2005-2006		2010-2011	
	Total Number of Holdings (%)	Total Area of Holdings (%)	Total Number of Holdings (%)	Total Area of Holdings (%)	Total Number of Holdings (%)	Total Area of Holdings (%)	Total Number of Holdings (%)	Total Area of Holdings (%)
Marginal (<1)	61.58	17.21	62.88	18.7	64.77	20.23	67.1	22.5
Small (1-2)	18.73	18.81	18.92	20.16	18.52	20.91	17.91	22.08
Semi-Medium (2-4)	12.34	23.85	11.69	23.96	10.93	23.94	10.04	23.63
Medium (4-10)	6.14	25.34	5.48	23.97	4.93	23.11	4.25	21.2
Large (>10)	1.22	14.79	1.03	13.22	0.85	11.82	0.7	10.59

**Table 2 Percentage of Total Number and Area of Holdings by Holding Size (All-India)**

**Source: Data adapted from Government of India, Agricultural Census Database.**

Although the National Conference's land reforms project stirred strong opposition from large-scale *zamindars* in the state, and according to Mohita Bhatia (2014, p. 947) largely if only temporarily benefitted Jammu's Scheduled Caste population in addition to the Kashmiri cultivators, its effects might not have been universally deleterious to landed and moneyed interests across the state. In fact, an anonymous reporter for the *Times of India* in August 1951 assessed the popular sentiment towards the reforms quite differently, "very few accuse the Kashmir Government of having run wild with revolutionary ideas. For instance, all those who owned 182 *kanals* or less were exempt from the first phase of land transfers. This saved the majority of the landlords in Jammu province where petty owners are predominant" (*Times of India* Aug 6 1951, p. 4). Yet such circumstances did not stop Karan Singh, the Dogra Prince who had been elected *Sadar-i-Riyasat* (Head of State) by the Constituent Assembly, from writing to Nehru on December 27, 1952 stating that the flat rate of 182 *kanals* imposed by the land reforms policy was entirely inadequate for free-holding or cultivation in Jammu and had thus "completely ruined" small land-owners and *jagirdars* (Alam (ed.) 2006, p. 80). Were such instances of geo-economic unevenness merely evidence of Kashmir-centric development planning within the state, which did not account for Jammu's (not to mention Ladakh's) different agrarian structure? See **Figure 1** for regional demarcations.



## Kashmir Region



Figure 1 Political Map of Regional Sub-Divisions in the state of Jammu and Kashmir

Source: Courtesy of University of Texas Libraries (2004).

When answering such a question, it seems important to call to mind Mohita Bhatia's (2014, p. 954) attestation that though the relative Kashmiri predominance in the political leadership of the state has often sidelined the demands of non-Kashmiri populations in other regions, such marginalisation in Jammu has in turn been coopted into "the dominant upper-caste Hindu idiom" most often to the detriment of Scheduled-Caste (SC) groups. The consequence of this tendency has been a radical delimitation of political space attributed to conflicts of class and caste in lieu of discourses on religion, region and nationalism (Bhatia 2014, pp. 943-4). Thus in spite of a propensity for petty-land ownership among the moneyed and upper-caste communities in Jammu, their ties to the Dogra regime led them to campaign vehemently against the land reforms instituted by the Kashmiri government through the vehicles of the *Praja Parishad* and *Jana Sangh*, groups that conversed publicly almost solely in the language of Hindu chauvinist religious persecution, although as Benjamin Zachariah (2013, pp. 62-3) has argued, at that point public legitimation for such language remained out of their grasp.<sup>24</sup> Such obscurantic manoeuvring to defend the interests of the dominant classes was however, neither limited to Jammu nor to socio-political debates.<sup>25</sup>

Among his findings from a research trip to Kashmir to evaluate the immediate effects of the reforms, the sympathetic economist Daniel Thorner (1953, p. 1001) recorded the observations of a

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<sup>24</sup> In a letter to Karan Singh on 21 November 1953, Nehru wrote for instance:

I am convinced that the Praja Parishad is in the hands of the most reactionary people in India who are exploiting it for their own ends, because they can get no adequate footing in the rest of India...I am equally convinced that this movement, or whatever it is, is not a movement of the common people, but rather of certain elements who naturally have suffered because of various changes. In every part of India, including my own province, Uttar Pradesh, big social changes and land reforms have affected small groups of people adversely, though they have been for the public good from a larger point of view...We cannot give up such reforms, because unfortunately some people suffer from that. The result would be ultimately far greater suffering for them when an upheaval comes (Alam (ed.) 2006, p. 145).

<sup>25</sup> Behera (2008, p. 610) for example, outlines how both local and national political actors have consistently deployed the rhetoric of Kashmir versus India. During Indira Gandhi's Prime Ministerial campaign, considerable effort was made to persuade Jammu that it was closer to a *Hindu* India and was relatively powerless in the confines of a *Muslim* Kashmir. The reaction from Farooq Abdullah and the National Conference was to conflate the National Congress (representing India) with Maharaja Hari Singh as equal partners in the enslavement of Kashmir.



Halqa president<sup>26</sup> on the emergence of a “new kind of *jagirdari*” whereby moneyed groups had begun cultivating the land of absentee landlords in order to receive tenurial rights. Speaking with other village level officials informed Thorner of the means by which gaps in the land reform policy had been manipulated to retain landed class interests through the legal breakage of joint families such that each adult male would be entitled to the 22.75 acre ceiling of land. The mainstay of the feudal administrative system, which allowed previous *tehsildars* of the State Revenue Department to continue performing local bureaucratic duties such as assigning the tracts and boundaries of land divisions without any peasant involvement, complemented this arrangement and often resulted in the distribution of marshy, poor quality land to landless labourers and sharecroppers.<sup>27</sup> The wretched state of affairs Thorner witnessed, led him to conclude that while the land reforms in Kashmir had removed large-scale landlordism and diminished the power of intermediaries, it had also “distinctly benefitted those individuals who at the village level were already more important and influential – it has done the least for petty tenants and landless labourers” (1951, p. 1002).

In as late as 1957, correspondents-on-location reported on the invisibility of the economic progress promised by the reforms. For instance, Kusum Nair of the Indian Council of World Affairs mused,

Outwardly it still looks as most villages anywhere in India do...As for the people, they are of a piece with the general shabbiness...Most of the land, however, is yet fallow, waiting to be sown. Some ploughs are still working, drawn by grossly undersized oxen...Mercifully, however, appearances are deceptive. Behind the façade of dirt and poverty, a profound change has already overtaken the life of the people. The man behind that plough, for instance, now for the first time in centuries, owns the land himself. He is no longer a mere landless labourer or a tenant to an absentee landlord (Government of India 1957a).

This may have been due to the persistence of *Halqa*-level delays with the transfer of land due to the opposition put up by the local elite identified by Thorner. A letter sent on April 8, 1952 from an

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<sup>26</sup> Local scale of representation for the National Conference.

<sup>27</sup> Sharecropping was one of the consequences of land settlement in Kashmir, emerging alongside *Asami* rights, which gave peasants the lawful right (rather than hereditary right) to occupy and cultivate arable land upon the payment of land revenue in 1889. Rights of proprietorship were extended to *Asami* tenants in 1933 and the full extension of proprietary rights to *jagirdars* over previously commonly-held or village property occurred in 1935 (See Dhar 1989; Kaw 2008).

anonymous source in Amirakadal, Srinagar which was intercepted by censors in the Military Intelligence Directorate paints a vivid picture of one such local dispute over land transfer in Sopore:

5000 men and 2000 women took out a procession at Sopor on 16th March. The processionists, who started marching towards Srinagar, were stopped at the Sopor bridge by the Tehsildar, a Pandit. A Pandit named Jagh Grasat, hurled a fire pit on him, the rest of the people beat him several times and he ran away from there in order to save his life. The processionists attacked the District Magistrate, who met them at the outskirts of Sopor, with lathis, broken the glasses of his car and made him to flee from there. Sofi Mohd Akbar did not dare to interfere with the processionists and ran away from the spot. When the procession reached Sangrama, the place where Sopor-road meets Srinagar-Baramula road, Ghulam Rasool Wandroo, Halqa President, came and prevailed upon the processionists to return to Sopor and wait for three days to see if the Govt gave them three traks of Shali per head and promised them that if the Govt did not take the necessary steps he shall also join them... Just now a friend of mine in the Militia,<sup>28</sup> who was in a hurry, told me that due to the good trouble the Govt had to post Militia at Anantnagh, Sopor, Baramula, Hazratbal, Ganderbal, Shahbad, Shopian and many other places. It has cost the Govt lacs of rupees. It has now been known that they are posting Militia at every Halqa as they are thinking to wind up these Halqa Committees, because they have been a source of trouble to them (Government of India, 1952b).

If we accept the veracity of this portrait of the implementation of land reforms policy on a local scale in Kashmir, it reveals some of the inefficiencies identified earlier. It indicates, firstly that unresolved land claims and the public demonstrations and strikes over them were routine enough for National Militias to have been deployed in several towns across Kashmir. The reliance on the State's repressive apparatus, not only to quell civic unrest but also alongside the bureaucracy on matters of civil administration, also exposes the weaknesses of the *Halqa*-level administration in coping with the opposition to the reforms shown by local heavyweights such as landlords and their clerks, insofar that peasants and townsfolk resorted to often turbulent public demonstrations in order to avail the share of land promised to them.

However, there is nothing to indicate that these limitations in the formulation and implementation of land reforms were unique to or particularly acute in Kashmir. Despite the official

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<sup>28</sup> These were initially independent militias set up by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir in 1948 for self-defence purposes; they were later placed under the direct authority of the State government. They bore no association with Central government militias and paramilitaries. See Whitehead (2010) for a compelling account of the tactical formation and compositions of both the male and female wings of the militia, and Khan (2010, pp. 133-5) for a short discussion of the women's wing and its particular significance.



policy of non-alignment embraced by the Indian government shortly after independence, land reforms in India as a rule followed a general pattern which Farshad Araghi (1995, p. 346) has dubbed “land-reform American style.” This model, characterised by the production of near-subsistence family-sized farm units as opposed to the collectivist initiatives adopted by the socialist governments of many anticolonial liberation movements in the 1945-73 era, stressed national developmentalism and “balanced internal growth” in the newly decolonised nation-states in line with the domestic strategies employed by the US during the early phases of the Cold War (*ibid.*, p. 345). As a historically specific type of bourgeois land reform which followed from global economic trends such as the collapse of the world-market, the decline in agricultural commodity prices, and the consolidation of US economic and political hegemony, this model sought to both counteract the popularity of socialist nationalisms and replace the feudal mode of production with state-led capitalism (*ibid.*, p. 345-6). Since high rents on land and the lack of tenurial security in the pre-capitalist agrarian system of India limited productivity due to peasant farmers being short on the investible surplus needed to expend on waged-workers and agricultural inputs, the strategy of capitalist development pursued by the post-independence Indian state sought to create “fluid land markets” conducive to agricultural entrepreneurship (Das 1999, p. 2107). The whole gamut of land reform policy including zamindari abolition, tenancy reform, imposition of land ceilings and surplus redistribution then, would elevate the purchasing power of the peasantry and thus its capacity for technical change, ensuring a rise in agricultural productivity and subsequently a shift in focus towards industrial development. However, the Indian ruling class was also conscious of the concurrent importance of preserving the political alliance between the Indian urban bourgeoisie and the landed gentry, which secured the reach and legitimacy of the governance structure. The result was that land reform policy in the majority of states which did not have powerful peasant movements and lower-class struggles such as Kerala and West Bengal was thoroughly tempered by a market-mediated and bureaucratised claim-making processes (Das 1999, p. 2109). By subsuming class identities into those of individual citizenship, creating conduits for the embourgeoisement of the rich peasantry through compensation and features such as the right to the resumption of land, and by keeping a firm hand on its repressive apparatus which could forcibly evict and discipline tenants, the state employed “the means of the law and the market” to safeguard private proprietorship (Chattopadhyay 1973, p. 4, Das 1999, p. 2111; Das 2007, pp. 424-5). In many cases, reform policy itself drew from the bureaucratic traditions of colonial governance, and disqualified

unrecorded or oral leases, giving landlords further incentive to eschew written contracts or further delay the process of requisition (Le MonsWalker 2008, p. 567). In doing so, Indian land-reform policy was able to serve both the political and economic interests of the ruling class by refashioning large-scale landowners, a class with an exclusive dependence on land, into agricultural entrepreneurs with the capacity for investment in Indian industrial capitalism (Chattopadhyay 1973, p. 20). The consequence, as Suniti Kumar Ghosh (1983, p. 5) puts it, was that the Indian form of industrial capitalism that these land reforms anticipated “grew not by defeating feudalism but by adjusting itself to it”.

Thus, notwithstanding the considerably more radical origins and terms of the Kashmiri land reforms, they were not exempt from the innate disincentives of land reform policy in the rest of India, such as loopholes in ceiling laws and the persistence of rent-seeking bureaucratic behaviour (Prakash 2000, pp. 321-2). The phenomena observed by Thorner in Kashmir was, for example, largely consistent with the experiences of other Indian states. According to Chattopadhyay (1973, pp. 10-12) land ceilings were routinely subverted through permits to transfer land to other families in Bihar, specialised lands such as tank fisheries and orchards, lands owned by religious institutions, and merchandised and cooperative farming lands were disqualified from ceiling regulations in numerous states, malafide transfers of land without the knowledge of transferee had been recorded in West Bengal, and a bevy of law-suits issued by large-scale landowners nation-wide often delayed the very process of redistribution. Similarly, by generously compensating intermediaries for the supposed elimination of their feudal burdens, the Indian land reforms placed minimal restrictions on their local village-level influence or informal tenancy agreements. Thus, although in Kashmir the vehement response of the landed-classes to the seizure of their lands without compensation and the decreasing concentration of large land-holdings over the years seemed to indicate that the new Kashmiri government had intentionally sought to restrict relations with the classes at the apex of the feudal order if not altogether alienate their support for the new regime, to observers such as Daniel Thorner it did not look as though the every-day village-level administrative practices of princely rule had been overhauled. Instead, Thorner (1953, p. 1001) declared “in New Kashmir the old bureaucracy still functioned”.

Statistically, Jammu and Kashmir had a record percentage of area distributed out of seized surplus lands by the 1960s at 98.8% (Chattopadhyay 1973, p. 8). Unlike other states which had high ratios of land distribution as a result of the struggles of powerful peasant movements under Leftist

parties such as West Bengal and Kerala, Kashmir's remarkable if anomalous progress has been credited to its geopolitical significance as a disputed territory, a feature which "led state power to be effectively utilised to bring about some real land distribution" (Das 1999, p. 2113). In order to account for the success of land reforms policy in Kashmir however, it bears remembering their importance in replacing the specific material basis of princely rule. The National Conference and its affiliates did not draft the original socio-economic programme encompassing the land reforms within a geopolitical context where accession to India or Pakistan was an immediate or even germane concern. Rather, a year after the 1931 revolt instigated by Muslim Conference, prominent landlords such as Nazir Hussain, Jagirdar Villayat Khan, and Akram Khan and the members of the Muslim clergy coalesced in support of the Maharaja against the Abdullah-led faction of the Conference (Chandra 1985, p. 40). In response to the emergence of this feudal bloc, by 1933 counter-hegemonic demonstrations by the Kashmiri Muslim popular leadership against the Dogra Regime had begun to employ the rhetoric of territorialism and increasingly imagined Kashmir as *watan* (nation) rather than *mulk* (land/place/homeland) (Zutshi 2004, p. 250). This did not result in the complete rejection of religiously charged discourse, but did entail a turn towards addressing the horizontal divisions of class across the nation rather than sectarian or communal divisions within it. This discursive turn coincided with a number of factors, including the augmentation of the parameters of mass engagement: in 1937 for example, the Muslim Conference declared it would focus on Kashmiri villages, which the leadership of the Muslim Conference had until then neglected in favour of the urban population (Wani 2007, p. 256). It was also at roughly this time that Abdullah had begun to attest leadership over the Kashmiri Pandits (Zutshi 2004, p. 246). As the party expanded its social base, it began to reconceptualise its visions of a nation freed from the socio-economic and political subjugation of princely rule. Insofar, the heart of feudalism entrenched within the agrarian structure was the logical target as it provided material basis for the oppositional power-bloc which had developed from the politico-economic alliance between the Maharaja and feudal lords.

Redistributive land reform policy was not the only form of regenerative agrarian change envisioned by the new government in Kashmir as an antidote to feudalism. However, other efforts including the institutional and infrastructural reform of food provision had mixed results. The "Grow-more Food Campaign" (1948) launched alongside the land reforms raised food production by approximately 75,000 quintals of food grains from 2500 hectares of redistributed cultivable

waste-land, through a composite process of agricultural transformation and rationalisation, tenancy and small-scale proprietorship protection, and cooperative marketing of agricultural produce (Bhat 2013, pp. 15-16). The establishment of the cooperative system was meant to “monopolise” the procurement and dispersal of grains at prices fixed by the Food Control Department, as well as to supply seeds, fertilisers, and credit to cultivators. The purpose of such organisations was multifold was to prevent producers from “falling into the clutches” of *wad-dars* (middlemen) and traditional grain dealers who were guilty of hoarding and reselling grains at their own discretion (Government of Jammu and Kashmir, 1971, p. 41). According to at least one Kashmiri migrant worker who used the Muzaffarabad-Teetwal route to cross into Indian-administered Kashmir in 1951 such initiatives were successful.<sup>29</sup> However, resentment towards the rationing and distribution continued to simmer more generally due to a combination of crop-failure in 1949-50 and 1950-51, as well as poor food distribution practices such as black-marketeering on the part of the Food Control Department (FCD) and cooperatives (Bamzai 1994, pp. 806-807). Inefficiencies in distribution of subsidies also reified the urban-rural divide in Kashmir which Siddhartha Prakash (2000, p. 324) identifies as having contributed to support for secessionist forces.

In the volatile political context of the early 1950s, the cooperatives’ monopoly of the procurement and dispersal of grains and consumer goods soon weakened. Indeed, a letter written by Rishi Sahib of Anantnag to the Secretary of the Kashmir Democratic Union (an opposition party established by Prem Nath Bazaz), at that time living in exile in *Faiz Bazar*, Old Delhi, points out the regular involvement of the state’s coercive apparatus in civilian matters such as the exaction of food grains from cultivators, possibly during humanitarian assistance arrangements with the government. Sahib noted that neither tenants nor landlords had been provided with rations to last six months, rather “[f]oodstuffs are forcibly taken away with the help of the Police and the Military...If anybody does say anything he is not let off without being punished heavily (Government of India 1951b). During this period, the FCD also began to act a creditor to the Indian army. An official letter from Government of Jammu and Kashmir’s Ministry of External Affairs to the Ministry of States sent in

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<sup>29</sup> Writing to a colleague at the Haji Ghulam Mehboobis Factory in Peshawar, Abdul Rahim Lone recounted the relative ease of his journey through the mountain passes to Indian-administered Kashmir and requested his company, remarking approvingly, “The conditions in Kashmir have greatly improved through the sincere efforts of the Government. There is an abundance of food this year” (Government of India 1951d).

in 1951, confirmed that the FCD had “unhesitatingly been issuing food grains on credit to the Labour Organisation,” which was responsible for obtaining porters and ponies for the Indian army (Government of Jammu and Kashmir, *Continuance of a Labour Organisation for the Procurement of Labour for the Army in the Jammu and Kashmir*, 1951). The consequences of such an arrangement were observed by one Colonel W M Wemyss Muir of Sonwara, Srinagar. He wrote,

The troops up here predominate and to all intents and purposes we are under a civil regime backed by the troops – an offshoot of martial law. Living is expensive, as the troops have first claim – prices are soaring, with the people starving. Roads are going to pieces and no repairs effected except in certain parts which the public are in the habit of frequenting. (Government of India 1951c).

Regardless of whether the army was actually prioritised in food grain distribution, such perspectives shed light on how state led-developmental initiatives in the early 1950s made use of both civil society actors and security personnel for the (in this case, mismanaged) delivery of government services and subsidies.

Many of the measures Abdullah had taken to ensure a modicum of self-sufficiency began to disappear soon after his arrest in 1953. In 1954, while the Government of India was pursuing its policy of incorporating the princely states into the Indian union, Jammu and Kashmir experienced a change in state government and formally declared its financial integration into the Indian Union, whose authority had previously been restricted to defence, communications and external affairs. As a part of financial integration, the customs duty, which had applied to all Indian goods entering Kashmir and accounted for around 25% of the state’s total revenue, was abolished. In repayment, the Government of India agreed to remunerate 40% of the net proceeds of the duties of excise duties until 1957 (Government of India 1957b, p. 42). The incoming Prime Minister of the state, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, who replaced the deposed Sheikh Abdullah, claimed on February 15, 1954 that the intent of the decision was to alleviate some of the significant tax burdens faced by the state’s poorer inhabitants:

We would not have been so heavily under debt if this step had been taken earlier. We have a heavier incidence of taxes than Bombay, Bengal and other States of India. All of these States have registered great progress in industrial as well agricultural fields. On the contrary, I am ashamed at the fact that the inhabitants of our State pay taxes from their meagre income earned by their sweat and blood. In these is included a tax that is a challenge to our human dignity which no self-respecting citizen can ignore. You know that if any citizen of our State crosses the Ravi and returns after just ten days the first welcome accorded to him is a challenge to his self-respect...Our people toil at the Banihal Tunnel, work in Poonch, Kishtwar, Delhi and Calcutta to earn a hand to mouth living but we snatch something from it also in the form of taxes...Today we are not

selling our country but are instead giving our countrymen their due rights (Government of Jammu and Kashmir n.d., p. 970).

The removal of the protective trade barrier between the state and the Union however, was not simply in the interest of catering to the welfare of the state's poor; indeed, it had been a regular topic of discussion within the political establishment and local business classes in the preceding years. In the letter that Karan Singh wrote to Nehru in protest of the unequal repercussions of land ceiling laws imposed on Jammu landlords, he made equal care to establish that the new Constitution ought to immediately abolish trade barriers to secure "substantial relief to all people of the State, especially the poor" and promote trade and commerce (1952, p. 79). Such demands might have been spurred by the Kashmiri mercantile community's claims that it was "working under the handicap of a customs barrier raised by the Kashmir government against the import of Indian goods" as the American political scientist Richard Leonard Park (1952, p. 116) observed in the same year. Later, when combined with the reversal of Central aid policy to a lower ratio of grants to loans, government finances saw a rapid increase in the proportion of debt and interest payments within the State's expenditures charged to revenue (Prakash 2000, p. 320; Directorate of Statistics 2015, pp. 540-3).

Additionally, while the abolition of customs may have empowered trans-local merchant capital in Kashmir temporarily, the dissolution of trade barriers represented an expansion of the space of the national economy. The flow of manufactured goods from Indian industrial hubs to Kashmir could now begin to circulate in the country's most remote markets and stifle small-scale regional industries. This pattern of market expansion, which essentially meant that small-scale manufacturing was outcompeted, could have exacerbated social polarisation and fragmentation and spurred its "attendant group anxieties" as Pranab Bardhan (1997, pp. 1385-7), in his political economic reading of ethnic-conflict, argues was the case in many underdeveloped countries. Although such evidence is indicative rather than conclusive, it is precisely such socio-economic interest based conflicts, between for example "small traders of purely local importance" (Hroch 1985, p. 134) in Kashmir and large-scale industrial and commercial bourgeoisie of the larger Indian polity, which may have produced what Hroch calls a "nationally relevant conflict of group interests" in favour of the expansion of national movement formation or even religiously-derived separatist movements in Kashmir.

The Kashmiri government's immediate next steps included the short-lived Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian Reforms Act (1972), which for the purpose of simplicity might be explained as an

effort to consolidate land holdings through a “planned adjustment and rearrangement of land parcels and their ownership to form large land holdings” as per Timothy Besley and Robin Burgess’s (2000, p. 398) typology of land reform legislation in India. Apart from transferring the ownership rights of land to those who engaged in personal cultivation, the Act announced an altered 100 *kanal* ceiling, redistributed land among the landless based on a variable range of 9 to 25 acres. However, after the 1975 Indira-Sheikh Accord, the incoming Sheikh Abdullah-led government of 1976 acquiesced to the grievances of landlords and tenants and further tempered these initiatives with a series of amendments which extended the accommodations made to orchard land and land under the ownership of religious institutions, and provided for the potential resumption of land by absentee landlords and intermediaries (Aslam 1977, p. 64; Singh 2004, pp. 147-151; Kaw 2008, p. 231). If the earlier reforms of the 1950s had the unfortunate side effect of establishing a ‘neo-jagirdari’ system, the continued exemptions to orchard land, allowances made to larger-scale landowners through raised land ceilings, and the reintroduction of proprietorship opportunities for previously ineligible groups in the land rights legislation of the 1970s, not only undermined the objectives of ceiling-based laws themselves, but enabled what several have called, an environment conducive to “kulakisation”. The fruit industry in particular emerged as a specialised occupation due to the eventual exemption of orchard land from any of the limits to holding-size in the revised Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian Reforms Act (1972) which had altered tenancy contracts (Dhar, p. 255). The Horticulture Department recorded an increase in the area under fruit cultivation from 3000 hectares in 1950-51 to 131, 000 hectares by 1980-1 (Government of Jammu and Kashmir 2016, p. 19). Fruit exports more than doubled within a decade of the reforms, from 1598600 quintals in 1973-4 to 3821700 in 1980-1 (Government of Jammu and Kashmir 2014, p. 365). By the time D.N. Dhar wrote his comprehensive survey of the Kashmiri peasantry in 1989, the difference in agricultural income generated by the majority of small peasants with landholdings of less than 2.5 acres and apple cultivators was large enough for him to conclude that the economic dominance of absentee landlords had effectively been usurped by kulaks who both employed manual agrarian labour and derived a considerable surplus off their holdings (p. 259). The manual labour hired by the kulaks on their farms was usually Bihari instead of local due to the ease of exploitation of a labour force which was far from home, unskilled, and thus seen as docile enough to accept lower wages and worse living conditions. A recent study on the apple industry in Sopore confirms the continued existence of a segmented labour market, with local labourers work as skilled labourers, while migrant

workers, normally Muslims from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa perform tasks such as spraying pesticides, tilling land, and loading cartons for transportation for significantly lower rates of remuneration (Sharma & Raouf 2016, p. 104).

But why did the state government engage in a concerted practice of encouraging rich peasants in Kashmir in the first place and how successful has this practice been in the long-run? Dhar (1989, pp. 260-1) advances two interlinked reasons – for the immediate gains they would bring to electoral campaigns and in order to win over the most influential sections of the peasantry. In Sopore, a small number of powerful families associated with apple production, have become notorious for their contributions to the campaigns of major political parties in the subdivision in order to a secure monopoly over local businesses (Sharma & Raouf 2016, p. 110). Almost all the apple growers professed to having sold their votes on the promise of favourable trading and technological contracts with Delhi-based wholesalers and pesticide companies (*Ibid.*, p. 111). In many ways, this pattern of prioritising the interests of small-scale agro-business was characteristic of the Indian federal compromise, which Pratyush Chandra (2003, p. 123) argued led to the overrepresentation of landed and small-scale capitalist interests in regional politics while Central or “national” planning continued to favour the big bourgeoisie. However, while many such horticulturalists were able to accumulate significant levels of surplus from their trade, Sharma and Raouf (2016) point to large subsections of growers in the Sopore apple industry who suffer from indebtedness due to the growth of a network of market functionaries, that is, pre-harvest contractors, who provide larger loans than banks, with no mortgage requirements but charge higher rates of interests, and commission agents, who broker transactions. Such regional agro-businesses however, have also been unable to escape consequences of the rollback in governmental aid. Sharma and Raouf (2016, p. 109) argue that patterns of deinstitutionalisation, such as the decrease subsidies to the J&K Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation Limited have led to the survival of only 2 of the 256 grower’s cooperatives established by the state government in 1971. Their replacement by private monopolies has contributed to the increasing inaccessibility of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, as well as dependence on inconsistent pricing levels, credit controls and marketing practices (*Ibid.*, p. 112).

In spite of the agrarian restructuring brought forth by the land reforms, Jammu and Kashmir was not deemed suitable for higher levels of industrial investment within the mandate of the Planning Commission; indeed, both budget provisions and state government expenditure on



industry (large, medium, village and small-scale combined) in the following periods of planning<sup>30</sup> remained overshadowed by a focus on expanding the infrastructural depth of the state through road building and transport facilities, as well as modernising agriculture through irrigation, and developing facilities for power-generation (Digest of Stats 2013-14, Table No. 31.00 to 31.03, pp. 554-61). The fact that the contours of India's planning policy produced serious regional disparities has been documented by multiple scholars. In most such cases, weak state capacity in disciplining private capital's gravitation towards metropolitan centres along with industries with strong-multiplier effects, resulted in the creation of what Suranjit K. Saha (1990, as quoted in Amedeo Maiello 1996, p. 105) has called, "localised, capital intensive and geographically disarticulated territorial production complexes" in the Indian heartland. Within this framework, to use the words of one consultant to the Planning Commission, Jammu and Kashmir was a "no-industry district", which was best discounted from economic policy unless the government was in pursuit of "the distribution of largesse" (Rabindra Kishen Hazari 1986, p. xxvi). In such circumstances, weaknesses in the Indian State's capacity to discipline big industrial business houses into setting-up shop in Kashmir and inability to allocate subsidies, credit and concessions to actual local 'infant' enterprises in underdeveloped regions, meant that industrial investment in Kashmir was all but considered a charitable afterthought. However, unlike other states such as Kerala which also grappled with low levels of industrialisation and the growth of a residual tertiary sector, Kashmir neither received the momentum produced by the funnelling of remittance payments from a large-scale migrant population, nor the bargaining pressure of an organised formal and informal sector, nor in fact, any democratisation of the local developmental budget, features which in Kerala catalysed the socio-economic system powerfully (Thomas 2003).

To state-planners, a focus on road-building and energy-generation related investment in Jammu and Kashmir would counteract the region's relative isolation from its earlier regional economic network after bifurcation, as well as from the wider Indian national economy (that is, from domestic centres of industry, trade and commerce). More generally, investment in transport

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<sup>30</sup> For Kashmir there was no industrial investment included in the first plan, which left really only two "planning" periods before the onset of liberalisation since Central plans three and four were widely seen as not having been launched with serious intentions of regulation and/as a public relations exercise (Chibber 2003, p. 171).

and power-generation by the government would provide the forms of material infrastructure individual capitalists could not (Chatterjee 2014, p. 210). The journalist Frank Moraes' comments after the construction of the Banihal Tunnel in 1956 give voice in this regard, to some the probable motives of the emphasis on infrastructural planning in Kashmir:

The Banihal tunnel has done much more than shorten the land route between Jammu and Kashmir. By providing an all-weather road between these two points it has ensured a ceaseless flow of trade and traffic throughout the year, and with the opening of the second and complementary tunnel in the near future the volume of both trade and traffic will increase. The effect promises to be revolutionary...The removal of this bottleneck in communication, apart from expanding the year-round flow of goods and traffic, removes the sense of isolation which has burdened Jammu and Kashmir in the past years, draws them nearer and opens the Valley to a tourist inflow throughout the year (Government of India 1957a).

Energy supply to consumers as well as regional control over natural resources in Jammu and Kashmir became another issue of acute concern when energy resources were nationalised in 1975 with the support of the World Bank and the birth of the National Hydro-Power Corporation (NHPC), which was meant to rectify the propensity for power theft and power loss in transit by introducing technology which would enable high-voltage transmission lines to carry energy over long distances rather than the limited small-scale power plants run by State Energy Boards (SEBs) (Kale 2014, p. 50). Many state governments apart from J&K protested that the centralisation of the energy sector would amount to developmental deinstitutionalisation in the states and strip state governments of the revenue they were entitled to, yet in many ways the shift towards nationalisation was precisely to exert what Chatterjee calls "fiscal discipline upon the profligate SEBs" which were complicit in distributing tariffs and energy subsidies to regional interest groups for political ends (Kale 2014, p. 51; Chatterjee 2014, pp. 212-3). An impact evaluation report by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, an international benefactor in the NHPC-led Uri Hydro-Electric Project in Baramulla, lends credence Tania Murray Lee's (2009, p. 70) warning that "to assume a link between dispossession, and the (re)production of a labour reserve is not just too linear, it is dangerously complacent." Indeed, many such large-scale infrastructural endeavours in Jammu and Kashmir, which were dependent upon the dislocation of rural communities from existing settlements, had limited immediate benefits to local residents in the long term and displaced them from their grazing lands, houses, and areas of cultivation. Although cash compensation and opportunities for relocation were provided to Project-Affected-Persons (PAPs), the Uri project for example, did not generate permanent local employment opportunities and marginal farmers suffered

from high rates of unemployment. The small percentage of locals who received work-place training had to move away to Delhi or the Middle-East to make use of these newly-learnt skills. Additionally, there was an observable decline in petty trade as well as the participation rate of women in agricultural labour (SIDA 2008, pp. 30, 72, and 74). In addition, cash compensation remained outstanding for 25 percent of displaced families fifteen years after it had been approved, indirect losses as a result of displacement and losses for residents without formal land-titles were not recompensed, no adequate grievance redressal systems for land-acquisition were put in place, and ‘trickle-down benefit’ assurances in terms of local housing, free education, and free power provision to affected families and villages, insurance-schemes for rehabilitation also remained unmet (*Ibid.*, pp. 155 and 159). Thus, such large-scale infrastructural projects, disconnected and disembedded from local economies, provided few incentives for locals, and displaced people from their existing livelihood sources.

The rural-to-urban migration process in Kashmir intensified after the passage of the Municipality Act of 1886 in Srinagar, which extended the parameters of the city and also led to a growth in the silk, wool, and tourism industries. The consequent famines of 1877-9 and the desire to escape forced labour requirements which most peasants were subjected to led to, a further increase in urban population numbers, largely employed in domestic service related jobs,<sup>31</sup> which according to Mohammed Amin Bhat (2003, p. 66) rose from 7.1% in 1911 to 18% by 1931. After the extension of proprietary rights to *jagirdars*, and the food crises of the post-1947 era, push factors such as the privatisation of land-ownership, the production of hired labour clusters, and food scarcity continued this process. As a result, Bhat (2003, p. 52) observes that a “vast scene of rurality” became discernable on the peripheries of urban landscapes of Srinagar, as well as almost of the small and medium-sized towns in the Valley. Such migratory patterns exacerbated the tendency towards unstable urban agglomerations – especially in Srinagar, though also in collection and distribution

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<sup>31</sup> I return to the topic service employment in the public sector later in this chapter. Kavita Pandit (1990), provides a useful survey of explanations regarding the incidence of tertiary sector hypertrophy in developing economies, including but not limited to: informal sector growth, the lower labour absorption of the secondary sector in peripheral economies as result of their distorted production structures and a highly competitive world-market for manufactured goods, bureaucratisation as a colonial heritage, State appeasement of the educated middle-classes, and patronage, while arguing that the specific reasons vary spatially across Less Developed Countries (LDC).

centres such as Baramulla and Anantnag (Bhat 2003, pp. 44-45). At the time of Bhat's survey in 2003, Srinagar itself accounted for 80.49% of the total urban population in the Kashmir region, the majority of which was engaged in the informal sector professions such as domestic service, manual labour, and street vending.

Srinagar initially had a history of being at the centre of the famous indigenous shawl manufacturing industry, which knitted together a wide trade network for raw material supplies encompassing Tibet, Ladakh, Yarkand, and Khoten and demand centres in the Indian mainland as well as other parts of Asia and Europe (U.K. Zutshi 1986, p. 117). As one scholar put it, "Luxurious Kashmiri shawl fabric was wound as men's turbans in Egypt, stitched into wealthy Iranian women's jackets, prized for men's coats in Turkestan, worn as sashes in Tibet, and gifted to both "dancing girls" and male nobles from Delhi to Istanbul" (Maskiell 2002, pp. 27-8). Yet continued famines, the increase in shawl wool prices after the extension of British rule, the mass production of European counterfeits, and the trade's subjection to the whims of the monetary economy resulted in the decline of the industry by the end of the nineteenth century (U.K. Zutshi 1986, pp. 62, 120, 147; Kaul 2003, p. 170). In fact, Chitralkha Zutshi (2004, p. 87) has documented that shawl merchants, who had once been one of the most powerful classes within the city, began to shift to other trades, such as the control of shrines by the late 1880s due to a loss of their principle sources of income. In spite of this, the textile industry still formed the nerve centre of manufacturing in Kashmir after independence, although Jammu and Kashmir had some of the lowest per capita annual earnings of factory workers in all of India during the 1970 to 1983 period indicating the high levels of underdevelopment in the industrial sector in Kashmir (Gani 1991, p. 162). Even though the quantity of unions increased post-independence, Kashmir's rich history of labour resistance in the form of the 1865 Zaldagar protest by shawl-weavers, 1924 Silk Factory Strikes, and 1937 Mazdoor Sabha-led procession of workers and peasants, which had produced small but important victories in the realm of worker's rights and sown the seeds of trade unionism itself, soon petered out due to a decline in the average membership of these unions and excessive State involvement in union affairs (Gani 1991, pp. 166, 175).<sup>32</sup> As the Managing Director of J&K Industries and J&K Minerals, Bazle Karim

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<sup>32</sup> The tendency towards what Bhattacharjee and Ackers (2010, p. 110), quoting Rudolph and Rudolph (1987, p. 269), argue was a form of 'involution pluralism', namely, the "replication of units whose increase in number was accompanied by a sense of decline in effectiveness," was a common

(1971, p. 269) noted in a seminar in Srinagar arranged by the Shri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations, there seemed to be a “very deep-rooted feeling in the community of the state that there should be no strike under any circumstances.” Karim (1971, p.270) attributed most industrial ‘unrest’ in the state to ‘new units’ of non-local labourers. Amongst local workers, the narrative was of prevailing industrial peace through the splitting of labour allegiances, as a result of the fact that most operating unions were locals, unaffiliated with larger and more powerful Central Unions, and highly politicised in favour of the National Conference (Gani 1991, p. 170). While direct workforce mobilisation catalysed the formation of unions such as the Communist Party of India-affiliated All India Trade Union Congress, which retained its prominence over the organised labour movement in India in the early years of the post-independence period, Gani (p. 163) notes that the trade union movement in Jammu and Kashmir remained tied to its origins in the first phase of the Kashmiri nationalist movement led by the National Conference. Thus, Kashmiri industrial relations largely replicated the party-to-union “chain of command” between the Congress-party and their “imposed” union, the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) (Bhattacharjee & Ackers 2010, pp. 107-8).

Still, limited labour mobilisation during the period appears quite surprising in light of legal scholar Santokh Ram’s (1981, pp. 36, 309) observations regarding the “tardy and sporadic” nature of the implementation of “adjudicatory procedures for settlement of labour management issues,” whereby Central Acts and important labour statutes were extended to the state much later than elsewhere in India, and upon extension, performed poorly due to institutional non-compliance by employers and the misuse of the government’s discretionary powers with regards to referrals. The largest and *only* notable indefinite strike prior to the 1970s was called by the All Jammu & Kashmir Low-Paid Government Servants Federation, a non-industrial union which comprised Government employees and teachers in Jammu, on November 17, 1967, after the demand for a dearness allowance at Central rates was not fully met by the Government (*Prakash v Jammu and Kashmir & ANR* [1968] 1970 AIR 1118). After an initial hunger strike on November 18, a mass meeting was held on November 27 and a pen-down strike was announced from December 4-10, followed by a general strike. On December 11, various industrial unions went on strike in solidarity with the

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trait of industrial relations in India from between 1967-79, as union growth had minimal effect in challenging the political centrism of the Nehruvian and Post-Nehruvian States.

Government service workers. The immediate aftermath of the strikes, according to the General Secretary of the Federation, Sampat Prakash (2006), who had been dismissed from his job, was mass-scale disciplining of the strikers, “Many trade union activists faced punitive measures like suspensions, transfers, attachment of properties, fines, and police repression at interrogation centres,” although according to Prakash the trade union movement in the state recovered within two years after the leadership was released from imprisonment. Another period of repression of the organised labour movement came following the National Emergency (1975-7), which Bhattacharjee and Ackers (2010, p. 109) argue “represented a failed attempt by the state to impose Latin American-style IR corporatism”. After this, Prakash notes the trade union movement resumed its organisational activities and earned the support of the wider Indian working class. Although Prakash claims to have had the “massive support of the educated youth and unemployed intelligentsia” behind him, which had incidentally changed the trade union movement in Kashmir into a “progressive radical left movement,” it was precisely this group that by most accounts was drawn to the new nationalist and opposition movements which rarely, if ever, used the language of class or proletarian consciousness, as we will see later. There is no evidence to indicate that for the large part of its post-independence history, trade unionism in Jammu and Kashmir reflected anything other than the desire for working-class solidarity or the immediate economic concerns of workers such as wage, allowance, or bonus increases. As Gani (1991, pp. 169 and 179-80) argues, despite the high coincidence of union and political membership the magnitude of the problem posed by rivalry within political factions in Jammu and Kashmir was insignificant compared to that of other Indian states such as West Bengal or Bihar. As this indicates, the new forms of nationalist agitation either did not attempt or were unable to repeat the National Conference’s success of mass mobilisation through widening working-class engagement and developed a different discourse of national consciousness altogether.

While such conditions of stunted industrial growth in Kashmir might have contributed to difficulties in the formation of what Aijaz Ahmad (2000, p. 156) has called “proletarian moralities,” increasingly large amounts of money began to be funnelled into the payment of wages for the performance of administrative duties, gradually resulting in the creation of the largest bureaucracy in the entire country, according to Siddhartha Prakash (2000, p. 326). Indeed, after debt and interest payments, the next largest block of expenditure from revenue accounts went into the administrative service, the amount increasing from 1071.31 lakhs (1 lakh = 100,000 rupees) in 1973-4 to 15716.41

lakhs by 1990-91 (Digest of Stats 2013-14, Table No. 30.02, p. 540). In the princely State, modern education, which was promoted by the British administration over ordinary *madrassas* and *pathshalas*, had resulted in the consolidation of a well-paid urban administrative elite especially on the level of municipal governance, drawn from Pandit, Sayyid, and Pir families who studied at Christian mission schools such as Nawakadel School, Maharaj Gunj School, and Basant Bagh School (Sharika Kaul 2003, pp. 170-2). As Zutshi (2004, pp. 62-7) reveals, the members of these social classes were not only exempt from forced labour, regular revenue assessments, and the taxes levied on cultivators, but were also gifted revenue-free land-grants in exchange for services to the State, and as city-dwellers benefitted from the “time-honoured economic system” of the sub-continent<sup>33</sup> whereby the peasant cultivator (or direct producer) supplied “not only the *darbar*, but the whole contingent of middlemen between himself and the state.” After the endowment of proprietary rights to *jagirdars* in 1935 their relationship to private capital through the ownership of *personal* rather than State-land was further solidified. As the discussion on land reform shows us, this interlinkage between bureaucratic function and control of the means of the production (specifically land) persisted to some extent after independence due to inconsistencies in the realm of actual implementation and the recycling of the old revenue administration, but was not reproduced ‘legally’ through entitlements as it had been during Dogra rule and did not in itself constitute an independent and fully-developed fraction of capital.

In the post-independence era, a number of policies facilitating the distribution of food, health, and educational services under the Abdullah regime not only lead to a 17% decrease in the poverty rate from between 1977-8 and 1983-4 but also raised the literacy rate by 43% between 1971-81 (Behera 2008, pp. 606-7). One could argue that such changes have exclusively contributed to an expansion in the lower- and middle-ranked components of the earlier administrative apparatus, dominated by non-gazetted and ‘inferior’ officers from the Kashmiri middle-classes (Digest of Stats 2013-14, Table 15.02, p. 310). Yet, we must also take into account the nationalisation of a number of ‘low-profit’ enterprises, which occurred in this period, and the substantial effect this had on the expansion of employment in the public sector (outlined in part by Pedersen 1992, pp. 623-4). The growth of the bureaucracy combined with the decline in Kashmir’s political and economic

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<sup>33</sup> Or, alternatively, the world according to Samir Amin’s (1976, p. 13) theory of the “tribute-paying” mode of production.

autonomy has been argued to have enabled an observable pattern of developmental fund embezzlement and rent-seeking behaviour by political middle-men, often working under the Central government's payroll (Ahmad 2000, p. 255; Prakash 2000, p. 330). One can add to this by noting that such inter-group competition for monopolies over rent was the result of the historical 'fixing' of geopolitical security values territorially upon Kashmir's physical and ideological landscape as a buffer zone on one of the boundaries of the Indian state. In such circumstances, low levels of wealth taxation and internal aid, dispersed into social programmes, patronage, and export-oriented production allowed the Kashmiri political classes to play the role of political contractor or power-broker with regional businesses, local elites, and the Indian ruling classes. The growth and influence of the bureaucracy has also been argued to have reproduced the societal prioritisation of government jobs, and thus had deleterious implications for Kashmiri agriculture by producing a relative disinterest in farming amongst middle-class educated youth from rural regions, though the degree of youth involvement in the primary sector has been shown to increase with the incidence of high-value crop cultivation (Sharma 2007, pp. 33-4).<sup>34</sup>

As Hobsbawm (1977, p. 19) reminds us however, to accept that the centralisation of bureaucracy *produced* nationalism and a specifically nationalist reaction is to "accept nationalism at its own valuation, or rather at that of the ideologists and politicians who claim to be its spokesmen; to recognise not problems and facts, but manifestos." In order to argue that there was a specifically "nationally relevant" struggle (for independence or secession) over political or administrative representation between the older socially-mobile middle-classes promoted to municipal and legislative assemblies and the newly educated middle-classes produced by land and social reform, we would have to evaluate the circumstances in which these inter-class struggles within the broader category of the "bureaucratic intelligentsia" or economic struggles for the attainment of "white-collar" work took on the specific character of a 'national' or 'separatist' struggle. Thus, it becomes

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<sup>34</sup> See also Gramsci (2011, pp. 212-3), "Does there exist, in a given country, a widespread social stratum in whose economic life and political self-assertion ... the bureaucratic career, either civil or military, is a very important element? In modern Europe this stratum can be identified in the medium and small rural bourgeoisie...Of course the bureaucratic career (civil and military) is not the monopoly of this social stratum; however, it is particularly well suited to the social function which this stratum carries out, and to the psychological tendencies which such a function produces or encourages... The members of this stratum are accustomed to direct command over nuclei of men...and to commanding 'politically' not 'economically'".



important to situate such popular and academic critiques of ‘bureaucratisation’ within their historical contexts. There have been two consistent threads of thought condemning the role of bureaucracy in post-independence India since the 1980s; one is the standard neo-liberal take which argues that the Indian bureaucracy has sponsored the stringent regulation of private industry, and is in short an inefficient, rent-seeking, and self-preserving body which has contributed deeply to India’s economic stagnation by limiting its potential for liberalisation; the other is the neo-Marxist or heterodox economics-inspired critique delivered by theorists such as Pranab Bardhan (1989), who have insisted that the bureaucracy (a component of the “professional class” to use Bardhan’s term) in India has emerged as a separate “dominant class” alongside rich farmers and the indigenous bourgeoisie, which by virtue of its *possession* of differentially remunerated human capital and *control* of the State’s regulatory instruments (including the allocation of economic benefits and licencing, and management of public sector enterprises) have appropriated social surplus and acted as a senior member of the ruling class in Indian society (for a more detailed survey of these approaches see Pedersen 1992). Both such arguments have crystallised in the form of what Jørgen Dige Pedersen (1992, p. 620) calls a “dominant consensus” around the principle that the interests of the bureaucracy are served by “preserving and expanding the public sector, especially employment opportunities; continuing and expanding the regulatory system; and in general enhancing opportunities for appropriating economic resources through administrative actions.”

It is Bardhan’s thesis on rent-seeking which Prakash (2000, p. 332) adapts with some modifications to explain the root causes of the politico-economic conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, although he identifies a flaw in Bardhan’s theory, namely, that there has been voracious support for the separatist militancy in Kashmir precisely from the “dominant proprietary classes, comprising of bureaucrats, businessmen and the rural elite who have benefitted from the rent-seeking governments”. This contradiction, then leads Prakash to a discussion on the limits of the political economy approach altogether which he says fails to offer a direct causality with militancy. Briefly diverting from my argument on bureaucracy, I wish to restate, I do not believe the purpose of adopting a historically materialist or class-based approach to studying the emergence of new forms of Kashmiri ethnic and religious nationalism, is to draw a causal relationship between “militancy” and changes in socio-economic relations in order to thus conclude that one led to another. Indeed, this would mean taking nationalism on its own terms, as an inherent social or psychological tendency that only has to be catalysed by a particular set of socio-economic conditions. Rather, my

point is to understand the ‘national relevance’ of inter-class or intra-group struggle as a function of nationalist agitation, which in itself is a bid for leadership over a particular politico-economic project. I will discuss some of the contours of these different politico-economic projects of nationalist or separatist groups in the next section, but for now, I return to my argument on bureaucracy. The reasoning behind the contradiction Prakash identifies might be more easily explained by reviewing the very notion that the bureaucracy participates in the private appropriation of capital despite the public nature of ownership, either as a class or collective social grouping, or as individual elites. To clarify this point, I draw from Hugh Roberts’s (1982, p. 40) informative study of factionalism in the Algerian bureaucracy, which also reacted to prominent “Left”-critiques of *the* bureaucracy as “a social category... credited with the defining characteristic of any social group, namely a collective material interest”. My grounds for comparing the critiques of the Indian (and also specifically Kashmiri) and Algerian bureaucracies and their assumed roles, are restricted to one common trait; namely, in each case critiques from the “Left” have emerged in the context of heated discussions in the political and academic circles of either country, regarding firstly, the applicability, inapplicability, or practicality of economic centralisation or State-led development, and secondly, the development of a bureaucratic or professional class in the public sector.

Hugh Roberts (1982, pp. 41-2) frames his argument against, on the one hand, the assertion that bureaucracies *collectively appropriate* surplus from the public sector (to accept this is to dismiss public ownership as a “fiction”); and on the other hand, the assertion that *individual managers* possess “real control” (that is, private control) over surplus value in the public sector (which carries the implication that criminality and racketeering form the pulse of capital accumulation by State enterprises). Instead of these approaches, Roberts (p. 43) pursues the claim that the class character of the bureaucracy is not only informed by its class situation (that is, the relationship to capital) but also by its class allegiances in the form of support for State-led development and the application of government policy; on this basis, Roberts argues a number of public servants in Algeria might certainly be considered bourgeois due to their relations with private capital and their private sector interests. However, to Roberts (pp. 44-5), the more important point is that the Algerian bureaucracy operates on a preferential basis due to the absence of two traits: a radical dichotomy between public and private sectors and the separation between politics and religion. What has emerged is the pervasion of the bureaucracy by *particular* rather than *general* interests, which have impeded “the coherent collective management of the public sector of the economy” (*Ibid.*, p. 46). While in the

private sector, the competing interests of private capital and labour are normalised, in the public, the existence of and competition between these private interests is “clandestine” and illegitimate. The recognition of their explicit existence comes only from their categorisation as nepotistic or corrupt, but they are not distinguished from general interests – which in Algeria has resulted in “massive popular cynicism” with the public sector itself (*Ibid.*, pp. 47-8). Roberts (p. 49) argues, that while these particular interests have often taken the shape of patron-client relationships based on traditional solidarities, the bureaucracy itself has fractured into different groups and takes decisions on the basis of these factional struggles, a feature which he calls “clannishness”. It is through these factional struggles, that Roberts (p. 49) argues the Algerian bourgeoisie is establishing itself as a “national class.” This is because of the fact that in Algeria, where the bourgeoisie as a class is still underdeveloped, the intra-class competition within it manifests in the search of State power and leadership of the ruling class. Roberts’ (p. 50) notes that, “Such competition is by definition, between social groups in transition, groups which have emerged from the previous social order and which are defined at least partially in terms of this order.”

Roberts analysis is applicable in many ways to both India and Kashmir. As Chibber (2003, p. 29) has demonstrated in detail, the very autonomy of the Indian bureaucracy or any nodal policy agencies of the State with respect to the control of subsidy or credit allocation in India was seriously impeded by the “highly disciplined and concerted offensive launched by the business class” within the first two decades of the developmental era as well as the State’s own deficiencies in disciplinary capacity. However, the personalisation of bureaucratic-private relations under Indira Gandhi’s rule eventually began to be blamed for the failure of State-led development in India. Chibber (2003, p. 249) writes however, that as the commitment to the developmental idea amongst the upper echelons of the early Indian state quickly deteriorated under Gandhi, so did “one of the essential conditions for the state to be reformed in the appropriate direction”. In the Indira-Sanjay era, not only was the state apparatus used to found clientelistic ties with industrial firms rather than as an instrument of discipline, but the prioritisation of personal loyalty meant that “internal conspiracy, Byzantine intrigues, shifting alliances...increased in magnitude tremendously” and the bureaucracy became effectively politicised to an extent that it had never before been (*Ibid.* p. 250). To reiterate, this did not mean the bureaucracy began to act as a unified class, according to Pedersen (1992, p. 628) for instance, “the administrative personnel at the top level ... behaved more like competing factions,” but instead, as Chibber (p. 251) eloquently puts it, that “the dynamics of patron-client relations [had

entered] into the very capillaries of the administrative structure.” The ensuing loss of popular legitimacy for State-led development became a key entry point into the State apparatus for its critics, such as right-wing parties with upper-caste, urban, middle-class, and “pro-business” support bases, which mobilised through the rhetoric of religion and religious-community building.

Religious politicking and the religious nature of patron-client relations between classes became deeply embedded in Kashmiri political culture in response to what Chitralkha Zutshi (2004, p. 139) observes was a “more interventionist and overtly Hindu Dogra state, and to an extent the British Residency”, and remained so after accession. While Kashmiri Muslims remained stratified into different classes, Zutshi (p. 148) has argued that, “in a political atmosphere that recognised them solely on the basis of their identification with a coherently defined religious collectivity, the identity and interests of the Kashmiri Muslim “community” became central to the public discourse of the period”. The result, as a number of scholars have shown, was a routine association of political parties with local religious authorities (who were themselves members of older privileged classes) in order to communicate in what were thought to be the only terms intelligible to the widest base of this community. One particularly recognisable example of politico-religious alliance-building resulted from the *Sher-Bakra* (Lion-Goat) Rivalry which developed shortly after the mass revolt of 1931, between the followers of the Sheikh Abdullah (*Sher*) and those of the Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah (*Bakra*) who later went on to form the *Azad* Kashmir government in Pakistan along with Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas. The *Mirwaiz* Yusuf Shah of the Jamia Masjid was at the time the more popular of two competitors for the title of High Preacher (and thus religious leader of the Kashmiri Muslims), his immediate rival being the *Mirwaiz* Hamadani of the Khanqah-e-Maula. Although neither had a reputation for revolutionary activity, having previously rescinded signatures from petitions regarding the welfare of common Muslims, their patronage had the effect of legitimising the struggles launched by politically oriented groups. Hence, after Abdullah attained leadership over the 1931 movement and then the Muslim Conference, Yusuf Shah apparently daunted by the challenge to his hegemony, and responsive to the interests of the Kashmiri mercantile capitalists who were his benefactors, used his religious authority to pronounce Abdullah a heretic (Zutshi 2004, p. 230; Khan 2010, p. 20; Copland 1991, p. 227). Abdullah responded by not only supporting the Mirwaiz Hamadani for the title of religious leader, but by accusing Khan of dishonesty, divisiveness, and

treachery (Zutshi 2004, p. 235).<sup>35</sup> This was not the end of the matter however, as Prem Nath Bazaz, then a supporter of the Conference, wrote,

This support [of the Mirwaiz Hamadani of Khanqah-e-Maula] was purchased by the leaders of the movement at a great cost...to gratify him, the movement gradually degenerated into a personal fight between the Mir Waiz Usuf Shah on the one side and the leaders of the movement on the other. For four years, more or less, Muslim politics became a battle-field of politicians in which muck-raking and mud-slinging were the chief weapons. But when wise counsels prevailed and better days returned...all activities were directed towards achievement of Responsible Government. Consequently the Mir Waiz of Khanqah-i-Mualla began to look small, and went slowly into the background, dwindling into insignificance...The party strife among the Muslims which was at its height in 1933 and continued right into the middle of the year 1935, was unedifying for the leaders of the popular movement (1941, p. 260).

Although Bazaz argued the feud had reached the end of its life by 1936, with the slow exit of *Mirwaiz* Hamadani from the political scene, this rivalry as well as associations with religious authorities continued to be upheld after governments formed (or rather, were allowed to form, following the end of princely rule), often through practices of bureaucratic entrenchment, and continued to figure heavily in political discourse. After a Muslim-League supporting faction within the newly renamed National Conference broke off in 1941 for instance, the leader of the breakaway

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<sup>35</sup> Prem Nath Bazaz wrote of the *Mirwaiz* Yusuf Shah's motives in the following terms:

Not realising the full significance and the implications of the struggle that was coming, both the Mir Waizes joined the mass movement of 1931 ... soon afterwards when the base of the movement broadened and the leadership passed on to the hands of other men [at the time the Muslim Conference] they were disillusioned ... The Mir Waiz of the Jamia Masjid till then the more popular of the two, was the first to take the reactionary step ... Apparently personal rivalry with the leaders of the Conference Party made him play the part he did. But a deeper meaning lies hidden in all his activities... It has fallen to his lot to oppose all that the leaders of the Kashmir movement have done to carry the people on their forward march. When the movement was conducted on communal lines, he came forward as the champion of the cause of nationalism, condemned the Conference leaders as Qadanis and the worst types of communalists, sided with Ahrars, invited Hindus to join him and started a progressive party known as the Azad Conference. When nationalism entered the portals of the Muslim Conference and the leaders broad-based the movement, the Mir Waiz became frankly and avowedly communal in outlook, repudiated all his previous slogan and declarations and charged his rivals [namely Sheikh Abdullah] with having proved traitors to the Muslim Community. (1941, pp. 257-9).

faction, Chaudhry Ghulam Abbas,<sup>36</sup> quickly garnered the spiritual support of *Mirwaiz* Yusuf Shah and the material support of his associates to revive the Muslim Conference with the motive of initially establishing a newly independent Kashmir with the Maharaja at the helm, and later, an amalgamated province under Pakistani control (Behera 2007, p. 20). It is telling for instance, that Mohammed Ali Jinnah delivered his speech counselling the Muslims of the province to support the Ghulam Abbas-led Muslim Conference instead of the National Conference in 1944 at the Jamia Masjid. Shah along with his supporters, eventually left the Valley to what is now Pakistani-administered or *Azad* Kashmir after Jinnah dismissed him as a viable leader for the revived Muslim Conference, and eventually changed his tune to one of support for an independent Kashmiri State (Copland 1991, p. 236). After the self-exile of the *Mirwaiz*, the contours of the Sher-Bakra rivalry shifted to mould the relationship between Shah's nephew Mohammad Farooq, who Abdullah's immediate successor Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed had promoted to the title of *Mirwaiz* while his father was still alive, and Abdullah, and continued to erupt at regular intervals, although perhaps most viciously during the 1977 elections (Abdullah 1993, p. 150).

Secondly, in Kashmir too, as in Algeria, it was/is not possible for us to speak of a developed indigenous bourgeoisie. As my account thus far has shown, post-accession, the emerging bourgeoisie (to the extent that it can be called that) encompassed groups of differing social origin, including newly "de-peasantised" orchardists, an old order of urban religious notables with commercial interests, and newly-educated socially-mobile urban middle-class, all of whom at different historical conjunctures either merged or diverged. Prominently absent was an industrial bourgeoisie, for reasons mentioned earlier. As the administrative apparatus and the public sector expanded, competition for entry into and advancement within the last of these groups increased and was accompanied by a competition for State power. The bureaucracy that emerged in this context was interpenetrated by multiple private or familial interests and engaged in "clannish" decision-making concerning public appointments and service distribution. While bureaucratic partiality

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<sup>36</sup> According to Behera (2007, p. 20), the base of this newly formed conference was quite limited geographically, although Ghulam Abbas, a non-Kashmiri speaking Muslim from Jammu, was popularly backed by middle- and upper-class groups from Jammu, Poonch, Rajouri, Mirpur and Bhaderwah.

became common knowledge and some degree of public cynicism emerged,<sup>37</sup> this cynicism was usually catalysed, a process in which opposition parties and other factions of the emerging bourgeoisie have played no small role, by more overt instances of governmental incompetence. The extensive popular protests that erupted in the Valley after the theft of the Holy Relic, the *moe-e-muqaddas* (a single strand of hair reputedly from the beard of the Prophet) from the Hazratbal Mosque in December 1963, provide one such example. Compounded with the existing frustration surrounding the well-known personalisation and politicisation of Bakshi's administration the loss of the relic spurred outrage over the ineptitude of the Bakshi-regime's political apparatus, built almost exclusively out of a coterie of family members and loyalists, in guarding an item of great cultural significance. In its initial weeks, the protests were, according to a British intelligence service telegram sent on January 11 1964, "surprisingly" devoid of communal leanings or nationalist rhetoric, "Hindus joined Muslims in agitation over loss of relic and neither community indulged in usual destruction of each other's property." Instead, the bulk of the frustration was directed against the National Conference and Ghulam Mohammed in particular, as the telegram stressed, "It is relevant that Union Government property in Srinagar was not (repeat not) damaged by the mob, and that Bakshi and family did not appear again in public after 28<sup>th</sup> December" (*Kashmir: internal situation* 1962-64, Document No. 25). After a month, different reports concerning the nature of the protests began to emerge. Rawle Knox of the Daily Telegraph and Morning Post sent a memorandum to the Foreign News Editor on February 8 stating, "I first went to Srinagar in 1950, and have since been back many times as a correspondent. I have never before known the situation anything like it is today. It has always been possible to seek out people who say they favour Pakistan, or independence for Kashmir, or a plebiscite. Now people run up and shout their anti-Indian opinions at you in the street, if you are a foreigner" (*Kashmir: internal situation* 1962-64, Document No. 38). Another month later, on March 6, 1964, the Foreign Office received an English-language pamphlet ostensibly published by the Muslim Action Committee, an association set up in the wake of the theft by

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<sup>37</sup> Although it is hard to gauge the extent of this cynicism, it bears recalling Jammu & Kashmir has been routinely ranked as one of the most corrupt states in India based on self-reported levels of federal and municipal corruption. A 2005 study from Transparency International India (p.136), reported that the corruption perception percentages for various departments were, Police (95%), Judiciary (92%), Land Administration (90%), Municipal Governance (89%) and Public Distribution System (87%).

Maulana Masoodi, the former general secretary of the National Conference, which reported that the theft was a plot engineered by India in collusion with its local puppet, Bakshi; and that according to the eye-witness accounts from Srinagar the uprising was an “open rebellion” by the people of Kashmir, against the Indian domination which had resulted in the sacrilege at the Hazratbal shrine and of the growing desire of the Kashmiri populace to merge with Pakistan (*Kashmir: internal situation* 1962-64, Document No. 85A).

### 3.3 The Rise of New Kashmiri Nationalist Movements

Some scholars have identified a moment of fissure in domestic politics that might have anticipated the emergence of an influential armed opposition in Kashmir. Deepa Ollapally (2008, p. 121), for example, uses the disparity between the popularly accepted elections results of 1977 and the distinctly controversial Jammu and Kashmir elections of 1987, to argue that the crises of legitimization faced by the governance structure within that period gave root to an atmosphere of rebellious disillusionment with the Indian Union. The Congress party’s rather unceremonious entrance into the Kashmiri political scene in 1983, when it first dismissed and then contrived an alliance with the Farooq Abdullah-led National Conference (the Farooq-Rajiv Accord of 1986) in order to gain a foothold in the region, implied increasing levels of central intervention into state politics. The popular identification of the Congress with the Indian state meant that such legacies of central dominance could have signified a rapid degeneration of the ‘Nehruvian consensus,’ which Ollapally (2008, p. 123) identifies as “the political embodiment of India’s secularism”. The National Conference, which had begun to portray its relationship with the Congress after independence as one of persecution and domination, could no longer command the political legitimacy it had in the past (Behera 2008, p. 614). The resultant politico-ideological context was one, which such scholars argue, left ample “space for alternative orientations” (Ollapally 2008, p. 124) or alternately, brought to the forefront the pre-existing “non-state” and “autonomous political space created by ethnic nationalist movements” which had been sidelined by mass electoral participation in 1977 (Cockell 2000, p. 326). The reaction took the immediate form of the Muslim United Front (MUF) – a coalition of pan-Islamic political parties such as the *Jama’at-i-Islami*, the *Ummat-e-Islami* and the *Anjuman-e Ittehad-ul-Musalmeen*, which sought entry into the closed circuit of parliamentary politics. Once the Indian State checked this response through electoral rigging, the stage was set for the rapid expansion of extra-parliamentary forms of socio-political contestation for “discursive hegemony”



over and within the Kashmiri political scene, now deeply divided into the “pro-India” camp, forces of Kashmiri ethnic nationalism, and religious nationalism (Sikand 2001, p. 231).

However, as discussed in Chapter 1, such accounts either privilege or confine analysis to the realm of the politico-ideological superstructure without interrogating the reciprocity of the political and economic relationships within any given “historical bloc” (Gramsci 2011, p. 366) or accounting for the larger global forces that influenced the thinking behind these movements and their expansion at a particular historical conjuncture. What I ask instead is, how did the processes of capitalist transformation in post-independence/accession Kashmir, and global geo-economic and geo-political change affect the rise of “new” nationalist movements? In doing so I follow to some extent Hroch’s (1985, p. 13) theoretical and methodological prompts, namely that, “The individual’s national consciousness, and patriotism, is determined on the one hand by general factors (objective relations) and on the other by the conditions of his own existence. To understand these determining conditions we have to study the ‘patriots’, the people who were most easily accessible to national consciousness and ready earlier than others to become national activists.” Although I do not pursue an independently researched study of Kashmiri patriots, along the lines of Miroslav Hroch (1985, p. 15) I attempt to follow his method by gathering a few specific pieces of information regarding patriots (namely their occupations, social origins, territorial distribution, places and districts of origin, and educational backgrounds) from secondary-sources and then extrapolating on their collective group memberships, namely classes, and then assuaging a relationship between their class situations and their degrees of support and participation in nationalist agitation. It is an unfortunate fact however, that despite the numerous books written on the topic thus far, little to no information exists on the social-composition of the earlier iterations of Kashmiri nationalist groups after accession, and the information which exists on the present-day groups deserves a great deal of scrutiny within respect to its sources. Secondly, to evaluate the content of the nationalist ideologies of these groups in terms response to domestic and transnational influences, I have used a mixture of primary and secondary sources, including the often defunct, but luckily archived websites of these groups and interviews from magazines and newspapers.

I rely on asymmetrically available information from disparate “opposition” groups, often with contradictory ideological positions and interpretations of Kashmir’s relationship with India and the region’s political future. Although I use the overarching term of ‘new nationalist movements’ to refer to such groups in order to designate the emergence of political ideologies which countered the

hegemonic nationalisms of the National Conference in Kashmir and Indian National Congress in India, some of these groups would oppose the ascription of a national basis to their struggle; for instance, *azadi* (freedom), as it is used in contemporary Kashmiri political thought, can have more than one practical connotation including independent statehood on the basis of ethnicity or a merger with neighbouring Pakistan on the basis of religion. It is not however illogical to study them in parallel, because although the actual support bases of religiously oriented and nationalist groups might vary considerably in terms of their class composition, alliances, and regional strongholds, the groups themselves were in competition for mass support and shared the same political constituencies, a feature which Hobsbawm (1992, p. 124) has observed as being a common trait of “new mass political movements”, whether nationalist or confessional, elsewhere in the world, specifically Ireland and Poland. Regardless, the following attempt to produce a picture of the generative processes that gave rise to these “new” national movements and the material interests that might have sought representation within their structures and geo-economic visions of the region neither implies the pre-existence of *political* unity within these groups nor makes pretensions towards an exhaustive analysis.

### 3.3.1 *Jama’at-i-Islami* of Jammu and Kashmir

In many ways, the *Jama’at-i-Islami* of Jammu and Kashmir (JIJK), which emerged as the earliest opposition group against the National Conference after it delinked itself from the all-India *Jama’at-i-Islami Hind* in 1952, capitalised on the effects of land reform policy, which had broken the monopoly of Dogra landlordism, constructing in its place a new petty bourgeoisie in the cities, a class of rich farmers including orchard owners in the countryside, and a younger generation with aspirations of social mobility comprised of their educated children (Sikand 2002, pp. 726 and 745; Behera 2008, pp. 612-3). As Yoginder Sikand’s research shows, the support bases of Islamist organisations in Kashmir such as the earlier *Ahl-i-Hadith* (established in 1925) and the newer *Jama’at-i-Islami* (1952) were drawn from the urban middle-classes, comprising traders, students, lower order government clerks, in short, some variety of the ‘intermediate classes’ (2001, p. 250; 2000, p. 723). In spite of the lack of a broad-based membership, both the *Jama’at* and its armed militia, the *Hizb-ul Mujahideen*, were in Paul Staniland’s words (2012, p. 166) “deeply embedded within and across local communities” (2012, p. 166). The leadership of a number of iconoclastic figures from prominent and socially revered former Sufi *Pir* families occupying influential roles within local religious and economic structures was a decisive factor behind the *Jama’at*’s authority within in specific

communities (Sikand 2002, p. 721; Staniland 2012, p. 166). Despite this, in as late as 1981, American intelligence sources in the region reported that the *Jama'at* was historically “little more than a paper organization ... [from which] Kashmiri peasants are alienated”, and whose increased visibility had taken both Abdullah and the Central government by surprise (CIA 1981).

Couching its objections in both politically and religiously reformist language, the *Jama'at* positioned itself against what it saw as the autocratic puppet government of the National Conference and the pre-modern asceticism of popular Kashmiri forms of Islam (Sikand 2002, pp. 725-6). Education played an important role in counteracting these aforementioned socio-political forces in earlier phases of *Jama'at* strategy and helped to consolidate its institutional depth in extra-state spaces. Navnita Chadha Behera (2008, p. 629) traces a process of reworking narratives of Kashmiri history through the “prism of religion” where the *Jama'at* began to portray the anti-monarchical strike of 1931 as a movement struggling for the establishment of a Pan-Islamic state. In the 1950s, the organisation also founded an alternative school system, which combined traditional theology with conventional “secular” disciplines, in order to “bring about a ‘silent revolution’” in Kashmiri society (Sikand 2002, p. 735). When the Kashmiri government prohibited these schools under the tenets of emergency law in 1975, the *Jama'at* transferred their administrative control to student associations such as the *Jami'at-i-Tulaba* (Islamic Union of Students) (Sikand 2002, p. 737). Additionally, the teachers employed in these *madrasas* were relocated to government schools, and the *madrasas* themselves were transformed into English-medium educational institutions (Behera 2008, p. 611). In the following years, collaboration with the *Jami'at-i-Tulaba* proved fruitful; the two groups launched a series of student agitations for compulsory Islamic education in 1979 along the lines of the Iranian Revolution, sought membership with international Islamic student groups such as the World Association of Muslim Youth and the International Islamic Federation of Student's Organisations, and hosted the International Seerat Conference on Muslim universalism and revolutionary religious struggle in Srinagar in 1980 (Sikand 2002, p. 738).

The *Jama'at's* support, was especially pronounced in small towns such as Anantnag which had the highest literacy rate in the Valley (Sikand 2002, p. 731). But what explains the special appeal that organisations such as the *Jama'at* held for the lower-intermediate sections of the population? In his micro-level analysis of individual and family-scale participation in Pakistani-based Islamist organisations operating in Afghanistan and Kashmir such as the *Jama'at*, *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, *Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami*, *Hiżbul Mujahideen*, and *Harkat-ul-Ansar*, Zubair Murshed (2003) identifies a number of

contemporary narratives employed for the purposes of recruitment and mobilisation of Kashmiri's from Indian-Administered Kashmir during and immediately after the Kashmiri uprising. Amongst the discourses figuring heavily within these publications were those produced by a history of agrarian gender relations, which prioritised the protection of symbolic female 'honour' and consequently familial honour as means of encouraging recruits to defend their "wronged" religious brethren in Kashmir from rapacious Indian soldiers (Murshed 2003, pp. 404-5). Entreaties to sentiments of religious, national, and personal kinship however, were not unique to broadly defined "Islamist" groups such as the *Jama'at*. Indeed, Cabeiri deBergh Robinson's (2013, pp. 79 and 93) interviews with Kashmiris who had crossed over from the Indian side of the LOC to Pakistani-administered AJK corroborate the wide-reaching impact and adoption of this rhetoric; migrant youth in refugee communities had increasingly begun to frame the "protection of the family as an act of warfare" and to emphasise the *farz* (duty) of securing their mothers and 'sisters' from victimisation. In qualitative and phenomenological research on surrendered militants in Kashmir, neither poverty nor a lack of education emerged as significant shared pre-militancy group characteristics, being superseded instead by "socio-cultural dysphoria" aggravated by "a breakdown of the social and symbolic order" and a "sense of personal and collective victimization arising from personal experience and from collective narratives of Indian oppression" (Sonpar 2008, p. 148). The political and economic primacy of land in agrarian societies may also have prompted references to the use of violence and bravery in its defence, and in the defense of an agrarian social structure unsullied by the corruptive forces of the cosmopolitan upper and middle classes (Murshed 2003, pp. 409-11). In spite of the agrarian origins of these spiritual ideologies, Murshed (p. 408) emphasises their specific appeal to young students who were not engaged in either the agrarian or the urban labour forces. Faced with joblessness, entry into such parties transformed the social power carried by these recruits within their community and family units. These organisations also often catered to the financial needs of adherents through the provision of various forms of payment in kind. Vehicles, weapons, food, travel, and the mundane concerns of livelihood could often be attained through the procurement of booty (Murshed 2003, p. 418). Though Murshed does not explicitly tie together these concepts, it is arguable that the valorisation of an implicit David-Goliath narrative, wherein small-scale individualised spiritual and militant 'resistance' was opposed to the immoral 'big-bully' nationalisms and armies of Russia in Afghanistan and India in Kashmir, similarly emphasised the moral fortitude and physical power of those without 'secular' forms of authority. Consequently,

such organisations may have stood in for the relative vacuum in State capacity by suggesting that ethno-religious authority would provide a more societally appropriate set of political and economic values than those upheld by the Indian State.

### 3.3.2 Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front

Many of the socio-political contestations which were formative in the production of a contemporary Kashmiri national and cultural identity occurred outside the “national homeland”. Several accounts locate the origins of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which was an offshoot of the militant underground arm of the Plebiscite Front, the Jammu and Kashmir National Liberation Front (NLF), and at one time the most popular of contemporary Kashmiri nationalist outfits, in Birmingham in the United Kingdom in 1977 (Ellis & Khan 1998, Ali 2002, Evans 2008, Mukherjee 2014). Perhaps unsurprisingly, given its transnational origins, a large part of the impetus behind the JKLF’s creation came from expatriate Kashmiris hailing from Pakistan-administered or *Azad* Kashmir<sup>38</sup> (AJK) who had migrated to the United Kingdom in the 1960s and 70s after the construction of the Mangla Dam, leading one author to dub the organisation “the most important manifestation of diasporic mobilization around the situation in Kashmir” (Mukherjee (2014, p. 53). The borough of Luton in Bedfordshire for example, contained a well-established familial and community network that Amanullah Khan, one of the founders of the JKLF, would draw from after his move to the United Kingdom in 1975, and eventually became the headquarters for the JKLF’s Zonal Office, the Kashmir House (Ali 2002, p. 152).

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<sup>38</sup> Alexander Evans notes that a rhetoric of Kashmiri exceptionalism (imposed by British colonial discourse and the Indian and Pakistani political establishments, and later adopted Kashmiri nationalists) had elevated the position of Valley Kashmiris relative to non-Koshur speaking ethno-linguistic groups in the region, and led a number of these latter groups to subscribe to some sense of Kashmiri-ness (originally associated only with people from the Valley) rather than traditional clan-based identities in order to amass social capital and political power (2008, pp.716 and 726-7). The JKLF for example, had a historically strong presence amongst *Sudhans* from Kotli, Mirpur and Poonch in Pakistani-administered *Azad* Kashmir and amongst Mirpuri Jats in the United Kingdom (*ibid.*, pp.729-33). In addition, NLF strategy in the 1960s and 70s primarily involved recruiting *Azad* Kashmiri youth to train and fight in Jammu and Kashmir which led to the disproportionately high participation of AJK personnel in the nationalist movement at that time; unfortunately, this had resulted in mass arrests of sympathisers in Jammu and Kashmir on account, and the eventual capture and execution of one of the key figures of the national movement, Maqbool Butt, in 1984 after ten years of imprisonment (JKLF1997, “Start of the Ared Freedom Struggle”).

However, although Ellis and Khan (1998, pp. 478-9) suggest that Kashmiri migrant participation in nationalist activism in the UK began in earnest in the immediate aftermath of the Kashmiri uprising of 1989 in Indian-administered Kashmir, an exposure to the strong support the Western powers had lent to the reconfiguration of borders and political institutions in Eastern Europe and Germany proved influential in delineating what parameters of political discourse were adopted in the UK and in Kashmir. New Kashmiri nationalist movements such as JKLF resurrected themselves at a temporal conjuncture in which the international system, with some exceptions, protected even feeble mini-states, and nationalism itself was of the separatist and not the unificatory variety (Hobsbawm 1977, p. 5). It also coincided with what Hobsbawm noted was the ‘balkanisation’ of world states and the decline of the national economy as the main building block of the world economy (p. 6). Indeed, Yasin Malik, the present leader of one of the two factions of the JKLF now operating in the Kashmir Valley, made reference to these very international trends when he stated in an interview delivered to Irtif Lone of *Kashmir Lit*, that the movement drew inspiration from the “people’s revolution against “big empires” such as the USSR, “It is only through peoples revolution that nations get their freedom and the big empires get destroyed. In the USSR when more than 1 million people sat for more than 16 days, Gorbachev decided the breakup of USSR. We have the example of Romanian people and example of Iranian revolution. So, I think the peoples revolution is more than 100 atom bombs.” Additionally, Sökefeld and Bolognani observe that the politicisation of Kashmiri ‘nationalist thought’ in Britain previously coincided with land-grabbing and the implications of developmental displacement, as well as the possibly preventative flooding of Mirpur in the aftermath of the construction of the Mangla Dam in Pakistani-administered Kashmir (2011, p. 116). Apart from this, Kashmiris in Britain who had been inspired by the Vietnam War and anti-imperialist resistance in Palestine united under “leftist and internationalist” organisations such as the United Kashmir Liberation Front (UKLF) and the Kashmiri Workers Association (KWA), which subsequently sided with the actions of the Plebiscite Front (Sökefeld and Bolognani 2011, p. 118). Thus, the original resolution to establish the JKLF as a foreign wing of the Plebiscite Front must have taken into consideration both the pre-existing clusters of Kashmiri political activism in Britain and inhospitable conditions in the homeland.

The leadership of the JKLF, like other organic intellectuals of nationalism before them, played a pivotal role in amalgamating what Nasreen Ali describes as an “almost folksy collection of beliefs and assumptions” about shared culture, community, and history with the notion of a common

homeland, encompassing all of Jammu, the Kashmir Valley, Ladakh, Baltistan, Gilgit and Aksai Chin, in order to “make *Kashmiriyat* hegemonic” (2002, p. 151).<sup>39</sup> The active dispersal of this idea occurred both in Jammu and Kashmir and *Azad* Kashmir itself, as well as abroad amongst diasporic communities. In each case, the continuous lineage of Kashmiri nationhood, marred by the dates of foreign rule and resistance featured heavily. The dates 1586, when the Mughals extended their empire to encompass the region, March 16, 1846, when the British signed away the proprietary rights over Kashmir to the Dogra king Gulab Singh through the Treaty of Amritsar, and July 13, 1931, or “National Martyr’s Day”, when twenty-two people were killed by the Dogra army during the protests at Central Jail, for instance, remained rooted within these imaginaries, much as it had for the National Conference, but this was now compounded with another more recent event, namely 1947, when in Amanullah Khan’s words, “Kashmiris...like the proverbial fish that had struggled its way out of the frying pan but had fallen into the fire, were pounced upon by a bigger monster, India” (n.d, “July-13: The Kashmir Martyr’s Day & The Present Freedom Struggle of Kashmir”). A letter written by Maqbool Butt in 1973 to Azra Mir, the daughter of the former president of the NLF, from Camp Prison in Lahore, also sheds light on the connection between social concerns and nationalism in the NLF and JKLF-led struggles for national independence would counteract (JKLF 2001, “Maqbool Butt – Shaheed – Vision of Tomorrow”).<sup>40</sup> Butt’s letters frame the act of partition generally, and the partition of Kashmir specifically as a vivisection of the body-politic; the bloodshed produced by it is said to be forever inscribed in the very topographies of the Kashmiri nation, “Hundreds of thousands of old and young as well as children were martyred. The blood of those unaccountable children along with the older members of our nation flows into the plains of Jammu and Valley, in the hills of Poonch, Muzaffarabad and Mirpur in the mountains and of Kargil and

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<sup>39</sup> While the opposition of Jammu and Ladakh towards integration into this imagined homeland has regularly been portrayed as solely communal, the JKLF’s aspiration for Kashmiri regional or national unity hardly encompasses the campaign of Gilgit-Baltistanis either for full integration into Pakistan (rather than association with Jammu and Kashmir), as evidenced by both contemporary demonstrations as well as the historical revolt of the Gilgit Scouts against *maharaja* which led to the liberation of the Gilgit Agency and Baltistan from the erstwhile princely state and declaration of accession to the newly-formed Pakistan State, or the demands of Gilgit-Baltistani nationalist groups for independence from Pakistan and Jammu and Kashmir altogether (Sökefeld 2015, pp. 251-2).

<sup>40</sup> Three such letters extracted from Saeed Asad’s compilation of Butt’s letters in Urdu called *Shaour-e-Farda* were made available on the JKLF website in their translated form.

Ladakh.” The resultant division, Butt also writes, condemned a people to the “shadows of slavery” and the abject political poverty of “slave nations” and impeded the conditions for the social reproduction of the nation by denying its children “the essential provisions for [their] good growth and upbringing”. Although Butt frames the events of 1931 as an active confrontation between on the one hand, “rulers, and their puppet officials, feudal lords and capitalists”, and on the other, “the subjugated and wretched peoples of Kashmir”, it is hard to find references to class as a socio-economic relation in Butt’s post-1947 narrative of national persecution. The term instead is used to refer to the general relationship between the oppressed and the oppressors or the “ruling class”; encompassing “repressors and their quislings” and the class of the “*mujahids*” or freedom fighters who do not tolerate repression. Since these intellectuals were not exiles, recurrent trips between Azad Kashmir and Britain facilitated a two-way transmission of ideas through multiple platforms including the formal political party, but also extra-state spaces such as welfare or humanitarian organisations and research groups (Ali 2002, p. 153). In the UK itself, the two Plebiscite Fronts that had arisen on either side of the Cease-Fire Line were able to communicate through Kashmiris in Britain (Sökefeld & Bolognani 2011, p. 117). Additionally, emotional attachments amongst elders, a sense of charitable guilt amongst relatively economically privileged migrants, and the combined experiences of racialisation within British society and cultural marginalisation within Punjabi Pakistani communities, ensured diasporic recruitment to the JKLF and often contributed to the funnelling of remittances into political organisations ‘back home’ and to their own *biraderi* (Ali 2002, pp. 154-7; Sökefeld & Bolognani 2011, p. 126). In either case, commitment and belief in the existence of a nation was thought to be pre-given, the focus was thus on its politicisation such that older ties to the land and the sense of societal oppression could be translated into the pro-forma national movement which would voice and realise such connections in the final act of establishing Statehood and the control of State power.

Direct action and an experiential knowledge of state-society relations in Jammu and Kashmir defined much of the JKLF’s political strategy after its revival in the region by the HAJY group in the 1980s comprising Hamid Sheikh, Ashfaq Majid Wani, Javed Mir, and Yasin Malik (Chadha Behera 2008, p. 616). Owing to the distinction between the National Conference’s demand for autonomy within the federation and the JKLF’s demand for complete independence (*Azadi*), the two organisations conceptualised the spaces of political activism differently. Unlike the National Conference, which converged its politics around the parliamentary system, the JKLF viewed state-



level official political institutions as extensions of the Centre's strategic weaponry (Chadha Behera 2008, p. 617). In response to the proposed elections for the lower house of the state legislature, Amanullah Khan (1995) described the "impotent" J&K Legislative Assembly as a "puppet in the hands of [the] Indian government" and Indian elections venture itself as a "double-edged sword ... against the Kashmiris". To consent to such an enterprise, Khan continued, would be tantamount to the legal acceptance of India's hold on Kashmir and to moral treason for any "patriotic, self-respecting and conscientious Kashmiri". This characterisation also applied to financial institutions and national corporations and culminated in directives urging the Kashmiri populace to transfer their money from Indian to semi-private Kashmiri Banks (such as the Jammu and Kashmir Bank), write "WWF" (We Want Freedom) on all circulating currency, and organise collective work strikes on Fridays (Chadha Behera 2008, p. 618). A broad collection of civil society organisations including the medical community, the All Kashmiri Engineering Department Employees Union, lawyers, IAS officers, who began protesting against police and military brutality, arbitrary detention and "forced disappearances" of their colleagues added weight to the objections brought forth by the JKLF against the Indian state (*ibid.*, pp. 621-2). Information on the wider social origins of the early agitators of Kashmiri nationalism who filled ranks of the Plebiscite Front, the NLF, and the early JKLF is unfortunately sparse; although biographical information exists on the early life of leading figures such as Maqbool Butt, Amanullah Khan, G.M. Lone and others, it is impossible to produce any observations of value from such a small representative sample. For future scholars interested in the social bases of the early iterations of Kashmiri nationalist movements, this might be an illuminating area of study. On the other hand, multiple sources indicate that the resurrected JKLF of the Kashmir Valley attracted an overwhelmingly urban, Srinagar-based college- or university-educated middle-class cadre from the second and third ranks of the intelligentsia including lawyers, professors, teachers, and physicians, as well as a large body of students. The consequence of this, as noted by Paul Staniland (2012, p. 159) was an absence of the group's "embeddedness in the local communities in whose name they struggled".

### **3.3.3 Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference**

Other organisations such as the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference (JKPC) established in 1978, which sought to redefine Kashmir's status rather than invoking the more radical splits imagined by the JKLF and the *Jama'at*, seem to have been especially influenced by the decline of the

region's economic autonomy and the Indian government's gatekeeping role with respect to the region's interaction with the international market. Before his assassination in 2002, Abdul Ghani Lone, the leader of the JKPC recounted this parable to an interviewer to describe the ideology and methods of the JKPC as supportive of a graduated project of self-determination and the creation of an independent Kashmiri State, based firstly on the recognition of the territory's "disputed" nature,

When I was a young man, my father liked to tell an old Kashmiri story. He would tell people about an old man who had one son. Winter was approaching. The father and son sat together and decided that they should prepare a blanket. It would be cold soon. The family needed a blanket. A decision had to be made about its dimensions. The father said it should be five yards long. The son said it should be seven. They started quarrelling. A wise man came and asked them why they were quarrelling. The father explained that they wanted to make a blanket and that his son wanted it to be seven yards long and he wanted it to be five. The wise man said, "Don't quarrel". He said bring me the material and I'll see whether it is fit for five yards or seven yards. They said we have no material. The wise man said, "Why are you poor people fighting? First, get the material and then decide what the length will be." I placed this old story before my colleagues. I said, "Why should we break our heads on this issue. Our Kashmir is with India. They say it is an 'integral part' of India. Why should we as Kashmiris fight over whether Kashmir should 'accede to Pakistan' or be 'independent'? It is with them. Let us first persuade the Indians that they should concede that Kashmir is a disputed territory and its future is yet to be decided. Once they do it, then comes the question of how we will solve the issue of this disputed territory. To me this is the logical approach. (Lifschultz 2002, p. 3230).

Abdul Ghani Lone had been a well-known lawyer whose political history included participation and then disillusionment in the state-factions of the National Conference and Janata Party, involvement then exclusion from the Muslim United Front (MUF), and eventual prominence in the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) opposition coalition as a member of its seven-person executive committee and suspected involvement in the Kashmiri armed uprising, although this latter period was also characterised by disagreements over the question of secession to Pakistan versus independence. The JKPC (now led by Ghani's son, Sajjad Ghani Lone, who incidentally is married to the daughter of the JKLF's Amanullah Khan) released a predictive document called *Achievable Nationhood* (2006) which proposed the amalgamation of Indian- and Pakistani-administered Kashmir into a cohesive economic union as a means of attaining economic independence. Although an absence of information about the extent of popular support for its suggestions engenders skepticism about its overall influence and representational qualities with respect to the objectives of any significant *strand* of Kashmiri nationalism, the document's distinctive emphasis on Jammu and

Kashmir's imaginable economic prospects is a valuable source in a conflict that is so routinely portrayed as having solely geopolitical and ethno-religious ambitions.

In *Achievable Nationhood*, Lone (2006) declares that the (re)unification of Kashmir's economic space would enable a long-overdue transformation in the state's economic structure into "a trade-friendly area with liberal laws; a nodal trading and production base, designed to service both the Indian and Pakistani economies as well as international markets" (2006, p. 240). On the "far end of optimism" the document envisions a free-market utopia of sorts, characterised by a deregulated economic regime, replete with a vigorous flow of foreign direct investments and "extremely low levels of taxation" (*Ibid.*, pp. 240-1). Lone goes on to identify several "thrust areas" for potential internationalisation and regionalisation, ranging from silk-manufacturing to hydro-electricity, out of which he pinpoints the services-sector as the most promising in the long-term (*Ibid.*, p. 242). In suggesting that a unified post-conflict Kashmir replicate the post-reform "Indian model" as a means of enabling integration into the global market, the *Achievable Nationhood* document envisions an autonomous Kashmir which would occupy its own specialised function within the regional chain of production and interact with transnational capitalism on its own terms. As Hobsbawm (1992, pp. 7-8) has observed however, the multiplication of states that we see after the subdivision of the USSR and Yugoslavia, "have changed the "sense of the term 'independence' for most of them into a synonym for dependence – both on the world economy, and on great powers and transnational corporations – this is in fact optimal for neocolonialism for their size and novelty limits their regulatory power."

## Chapter 4: On the Material Lives of Security: State-formation and

### Liberalisation in India and Kashmir

I now focus on the parallel histories of national security discourse and policy formation in Jammu and Kashmir, which, while moving away from the effects of the capitalist transformation on class-formation in Kashmiri society and the materialisation of different class-relevant projects explored in Chapter 2, both embeds and explains the process of securitisation as a function of the changing politico-economic projects which have captured State power and control over the process of Indian State-building. This involves unearthing the role of securitisation in both the reproduction and often the displacement of a particular set of conditions for capitalist development, rather than in the simple fulfillment of the abstract needs of “national” domination or subjugation in and of itself. By questioning the material “life” of securitisation in this manner, I hope to produce a *causal* and more-than-expository account of the State’s ‘repressive capacity’ in Kashmir, and in India more generally, in order to counteract the limitations of *epiphenomenal* analyses of the juridical, legal, and political logic of the State which, as I have evaluated in detail in Chapter 1 and as has been noted by critics of Agambenian theories of State violence and military geography, assume a socio-economically impoverished autonomy of the political (Colatrella 2011; Boukalas 2014). Thus in contrast to the literature describing the contours of brute force, rights-violating exceptionalism, territorial expansionism, “imperial” strategy, and centralising impulses behind securitisation in Kashmir, here, I explore how securitisation, as a process involving the use of a variety of State institutions and agents though perhaps most predominantly those associated with the military, policing and foreign policy “functions”, has historically set the stage for the penetration of pre-existing social formations by multi-scalar capital flows in Jammu and Kashmir specifically but also in India more generally. To do this, I evaluate both the temporary and long-term effects of securitisation the social life of citizens, as well as changing relationships between security, State and capital. In the most general terms I argue that different politico-economic projects, which are themselves the manifestation of a particular balance of class forces at the level of the State, employ different forms of securitisation in order to consolidate what they imagine are the immediate or long-term needs of the national economy. More specifically, I argue the protraction of the insurgency in Kashmir can be understood by tracing the histories of State-sponsored securitisation

as a process which initially worked to consolidate the borders of a national economy and induce national integration in pursuit of State-led development with variable social impacts, but increasingly began to be deployed to induce the militarisation of internal politics, the creation of security ‘spectacles’ for public consumption, and the militarisation of civil society along existing societal fault-lines in response to the liberalisation of the Indian economy.

#### **4.1 Securitisation and the Consolidation of National Economic Space**

While touring the Kashmiri countryside in late 1951, the English journalist Taya Zinkin (p. 6) lauded in glowing terms, the tendency of the Indian armed forces “to keep as much out of the way as a large force can hope to in a small country”. Her portrayal depicted the army as part-time employer and an “aloof” peacekeeper, which trod lightly and provided the local population with well-paid employment in the infrastructural projects under its supervision. Zinkin was particularly appreciative of the freedom with which she saw *Bakarawals* (principally goat- and sheepherders) discuss the grazing patterns of their livestock in Pakistan and frequent trips therein, within close proximity of Indian soldiers who did not bat an eyelid. In spite of their striking detail, these observations underestimated the degree of embeddedness the security apparatus would assume within Kashmiri society over the years. As the previous section has shown, the capitalist transition which Kashmir underwent after freedom from Dogra rule had profound impacts on the class structure and patterns of class formation within Kashmiri society, which in combination with an array of wider geo-political and geo-economic forces, informed the character of the political opposition which developed in the state. As I will show in this segment, in Kashmir the localisation of Indian national security discourse and policy, which itself developed in relation to the cultural and ideological shifts engendered by the different economic projects adopted by the Indian polity, took the form of a prolonged and yet mutable security presence in the region, which initially targeted the consolidation of the national border and the connection of frontier spaces to the capitalist economy. This presence had considerable effects on the re-organisation of existing socio-economic processes and relations and the production of new working arrangements to suit the needs of the national economy. In interrogating these material consequences of securitisation in Kashmir, I will historicise the connection between the security apparatus and the wider state-capital project in India.

Priya Chacko’s (2014, pp. 328-30) study of Indian geo-economics argues that during the Nehruvian era, the perceived external threats to state security (themselves largely informed by the

colonial encounter, the perception of an imperialist world-system, and regional concerns brought about by the Cold War), not only instructed its geopolitical imaginaries, but were transposed onto the creation of a particular “geo-economic social form” characterised by an embourgeoised, multi-confessional, centrally-planned social democracy. Although I might contest the narrative of causality in Chacko’s interpretation, the practice of pre-liberalisation *discursive* state-building, far from being a simplistic question of empty rhetoric versus reality in service of the security state, provided what Bob Jessop (2003 cited in Chacko 2014 p. 328) has called the “political, intellectual and moral guidelines” of state building through both foreign policy and domestic economic decision making. According to Satish Deshpande (1995, pp. 3222-3; italics mine), the Nehruvian national-space imaginary envisioned nationhood as “a community of patriotic producers... [and] could identify as ‘other’ only the *non-worker* (ie. the shirker) or the *non-national*.” Whether or not such strategies succeeded in representing particular class interests as the general interests of all citizens, Hae-Yung Song’s (2013, p. 1270) observations indicate that the assumption of such “class-neutral” appearances regarding national development in itself should not be confused with the developmental State’s neutrality and rather “entails a class-content” by itself, in so far that the slogan of a productive worker/loyal citizen worked both to “protect the national bourgeoisie from competition from more advanced bourgeoisie and to grant the national bourgeoisie the freedom to exploit domestic labour, typically by “super exploitation.” In addition to this, Jayantanuja Bandyopadhyaya (2009, p. 6) notes that Indian foreign policy in the period adopted a position of ideological and strategic ambivalence in the form of non-alignment policy, both as a result of the combination of the anti-imperialist and anti-racist character of the mass movement facilitating the rise of the Congress, and also to maintain an internal structure of caste and class hierarchies, as the Congress remained a party of the propertied classes. Thus, the principal “(in)securities of ‘catching up’ as a modern nation” as Runa Das’s (2010, p. 153) puts it, both troubled and influenced Nehruvian national identity and domestic political practice. While the *internal* enemy of the Indian State during this period was the non-worker or unproductive worker, the geographies of security adopted by the State as a means of positioning a “national” social constituency consequently demarcated an *external* antagonist, outside the physical and ideological borders of the Nehruvian nation-space, which sought to interfere with and challenge the socio-political visions of the independent Indian State and divide its body-politic.

The publicity broadcasts devised by the Indian government to thwart propaganda tactics used by the raiders from Waziristan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and by the Pakistani and Azad-Kashmiri

governments during the Indo-Pakistani war of 1948, illustrate some of the ideological suppositions underlying security policy in Kashmir during this era. In May 1948, M.A. Hussain of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting argued that India ought to take a serious approach regarding internal publicity considerations in Jammu and Kashmir on account of the inability of the state government, which was already spending Rs. 3 lakhs on psychological propaganda and the installation of a radio station in Srinagar, to allocate more resources to such matters, and due to the immediate threat posed by the sporadic dropping of leaflets by raiders and cross-border radio transmissions (Government of India 1948a). Hussain noted that psychological propaganda would be crucial in garnering the co-operation and support of the local population by informing them of the present intentions and policies of the government and by preparing favourable grounds for any future plebiscite. Hussain also recognised that such initiatives would be particularly helpful in alleviating the task of the security forces and in economising the Indian government's expenditure on military operations. By July 31, 1948, fifteen community receivers were operative in Srinagar itself, thirty more in the cities and 'liberated areas' surrounding Srinagar, and a further consignment of fifty were in the pre-installation phase, having been received quite recently from New Delhi (Government of India 1948b). A series of 5-10 minute programmes interspersed with "very entertaining music" served as an "effective counter to the stream of clever propaganda poured out by Azad Kashmir" (*Ibid.*). According to intelligence reports, their impact was considerable; approximately one to three thousand people were seen congregating around each listening centre. The programming line-up consisted of titles such as "*Jhoot ke Paon Nahin*" (Falsehood has no legs to stand on), "*Sachcha Mujahid Kaun*" (What is a 'true crusader'), "*Shariat Ki Kasauti*" (The touchstone of true religion), "*Ab Jigar Tham ke Baitho*" (Now listen with rapt attention), "*Hind se Apna Nata*" (Kashmir's links with India), "*Unki Kham Khayali*" ([The enemy's] immature and wishful thinking,) and "*Khali Pheeke Naare*" (Hollow and Feeble Slogans), and "*Shahidan-i-Watan*" (Martyrs of the nation). In effect, questions of religious morality and dichotomies between true and false ideology were used to chastise the misinterpretation of religious tenets and the self-interested motives of the governments of Pakistan and Azad-Kashmir (formed when approximately 60,000 demobilised soldiers in the Jammu province revolted against the state's accession to India with the aid of tribal raiders and the Pakistani army). Community-building exercises were pursued through recounting of stories of trauma and war and the remembrance of martyrs. Moreover, recitations of historical ties and measures promising socio-economic justice emphasized the benevolent attachments between the new state government, the

Indian government, and the people of Kashmir. Considered collectively, these themes designated an *external* enemy which could not traverse the traditional bonds of religious kinship, and created the notion of a national community bounded by shared principles, historical links, and a commitment to social welfare. As we will see, in newly independent India this imaginary of a unified national entity was a matter of utmost importance in ensuring a self-sufficient economic space within which the revenue derived from the purchase of labour power from State citizens and the price of land could be consolidated nationally, and local markets expanded.

#### **4.1.1 Demarcating the Bounds**

The reinforcement and material ‘implementation’ of the border would be crucial to the security of the economic imperatives of such an enterprise, and in Jammu and Kashmir, this task was largely the responsibility of the armed forces on either side of it. However, as in the case of other border-states such as Mizoram (at that time under the governance of Assam), where according to Sajal Nag (2016, p. 68), a history of curfews and lengthy identity checks at gate-passes skewed traditional crop cultivation patterns such as *jboom* (slash-and-burn) wet-rice cultivation on account of the limitations to the time spent in fields in order to respect curfew times, the slow decline of scattered habitation arrangements, the redirection of male labour-power into constructive industries or militarised wage labour, the militarised maintenance of the ‘security’ of the border running through Kashmir not only affected seasonal patterns of labour migration and subdivided individual farms as I will discuss, but also transformed the general economic spaces which people regularly engaged with and interacted within, shifted the routes of trade, rerouted flows of capital, and expanded the boundaries of the regional and national market. To Shubh Mathur (2013, p. 434), these changes abruptly distorted the economy of Kashmir, which, at one point, “a crossroads and cultural centre in its own right...became an isolated periphery, cut off from its former routes of trade and cultural exchange.” To others, such as Debidatta Mahapatra (2015, p. 171), the maintenance of the border thrust unwelcome identities on the state subjects who lived adjacent to it, such as that of the “borderlander”, at the literal and figurative margins of the state and of society. Alternatively, according to Radhika Gupta (2013, p. 68), the fissures the border created on the imagined territorial entity of Jammu and Kashmir may have had the paradoxical effect of placing the frontier “at the heart of the sociological project of the nation-state.” Although such accounts are all in some sense correct as the proto-capitalist economy of Kashmir was certainly characterised by the presence of long-distance trade with the Central and Western Asia (not to mention the Indian sub-



continent), as well a certain degree of exchange between the “hinterland” and urban centres in adjoining territories, the peripheralisation of the Kashmiri economy as a whole had begun long before the actual act of partition due to the consequences of British colonialism. To provide just one example, Warikoo (1996) notes that the circuitous Srinagar-Punjab-Afghanistan-Bukhara and the Leh-Yarkand-Kashghar-Kokand trade routes became increasingly vulnerable to the unstable political conditions engendered by the Anglo-Russian rivalry over Central Asia. After the Tsarist ban on British goods in Central Asian markets which dealt a blow to incoming trade from Kashmir, “the restrictions imposed by the British on exports of essential commodities like cloth, leather etc. from India to Central Asia during the height of Anglo-Soviet tensions [after the Bolshevik Revolution]...inhibited...whatever little commercial connection existed between Central Asia and Kashmir” (Warikoo 1996, p. 123). It might be more specific thus, to indicate the border disrupted shorter internal trade routes and patterns of seasonal labour migration between the Valley and what became Azad-Kashmir, as well as portions of Western Punjab. Consequently, the redirection of such economic flows into the Indian national economy was to a large extent performed by the security apparatus and processes of securitisation.

Regardless of whether the security forces permitted certain instances of unobstructed movement across the border, or as Zinkin’s article suggests, overlooked them, evidence from memorandums and communiques between the Ministry of States and the Kashmiri government reveal that such indifference would not be compatible with protocol in the early days of independence. In accordance with the conditions of the Pakistan (Control of Entry) Ordinance (1948), the Indian government pronounced that those wishing to travel from Indian-administered Kashmir to Pakistan would only be allowed to do so on receipt of a permit from the Pakistani High Commissioner or their Deputy. The rules for Kashmiri Muslims were more stringent; the Ordinance specifically barred egress (exit from Indian-administered Kashmir) unless the traveller obtained both a ‘No Objection Certificate’ from the Kashmiri Government as well as a travel permit from the Pakistani Government (Government of India 1950). Letters exchanged between Vishnu Sahay (Ministry of States) and the then-Deputy Prime Minister of Kashmir, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, demonstrate that while ingress (that is, entry into Indian-administered Kashmir from across the border) without certification was also a punishable offence, it might have been less of a ‘security concern’. Sahay’s letters, which emphasised the Pakistani Government’s unwillingness to grant travel documents to Kashmiri Muslims for fear of population transfer, for example sought pardon for

those prisoners who passed cross-examination by government representatives. Similar rules were made applicable to the inhabitants of frontier zones who desired to settle on agricultural lands within the state. Warning the Ministry of States of the potential security issues posed by such settlements and the exploitable “medium” for sabotage provided by such “infiltrators,” a note from the Deputy Director of Intelligence Bureau at the Ministry of Home Affairs pledged prompt action and, if necessary, the “use of force” (Government of India 1954a). Statements collected from three Kashmiri Muslims held in Jullundur Jail in the Punjab, attest to the fact that the violators of such early general ordinances restricting ingress and egress were often itinerant labourers escaping the low levels of unemployment and food crises that besieged the state. In this particular case, the prisoners had travelled to West Punjab, Pakistan to seek employment, found none, and then attempted to return, in which instance they were “convicted and sentenced to 6 months of R.I. [Rigorous Imprisonment] under Section 5 of the Influx from Pakistan Control (Act)” (Government of India 1952a). A destination for seasonal migration after the agricultural cycle, pre-partition Punjab had historically seen an influx of Kashmiri unskilled labourers, small-scale traders and producers, as well as professional muleteers during the winter when employment in the Valley was scarce, who returned with portable commodities and consumable goods such as food grains, sugar, salt, fruits, and cotton (Bamzai 1987, pp. 238-42). The imposed restrictions on the movement of agricultural and non-agricultural labourers and traders following the implementation of a non-porous and highly militarised international border disrupted these patterns of economic connectivity between the Kashmiri region and its neighbours. Interestingly, the Indian government’s centralisation of the permit regulation system, which eventually also required authorisation from the seat of the State in New Delhi for entry from and exit to other Indian states, had the side effect of also stranding Kashmiri labour migrants in Eastern Punjab. An urgent letter from the Chief Secretariat of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir requesting assistance from the Ministry of States, details one such situation when three hundred Kashmiri labourers, who had obtained permits for the forward journey into Eastern Punjab during the winter but not the return, found themselves temporarily detained in Pathankot before the start of the agricultural season while returning from Amritsar, due to the increased stringency of intra-state mobility legislation between Kashmir and the rest of India, and the absence of local permit offices (Government of India, 1949a).

An interview conducted by the political scientist Sumona Das Gupta (2012) with two agricultural workers from Suchetgarh, a small border town in Jammu, discloses the continuing

socially disruptive effects of the international cease-fire line demarcating the Indian and Pakistani-administered portions of Kashmir. While recording the experiences of these women in her field notes, Dasgupta (2012, p. 88) observed that they underwent the "tribulations of having to duck bullets when cross-firing happens," navigated a "system of 'gate passes'" which produced "uncertainty and tension in the lives of cultivators and especially among women," and were subject to the inconsistencies of wire fences which were not coterminous with the border, and overzealously ran through fertile paddy fields, limiting the entry of cultivators to designated locations and times. Additionally, according to a political representative from the state, because the opening and closure of the gates within the fencing is subject to the wishes of army officials, work routines, such as carrying daily meals to the fields, and transporting agricultural inputs, seeds, and tools from one location to another, have been disrupted (*Rajya Sabha* 204 April 27, 2005, p. 241). Approximately 74 such villages and 1550 square kilometres of land lie between the LOC and the barbed-wire fence which physically denotes it (*Rajya Sabha* 203 December 22, 2004, p. 53). Apart from the general threat of being caught between cross-border fire, cultivators in borderland regions are also susceptible to the loss of land quality as a result of frequent shelling and embedded Anti-Personnel Mines, which is particularly concerning given that most of the borderland population continues to be economically reliant on farming or animal husbandry (Mahapatra 2015, p. 178) Dixit & Yasir 2015, p. 39). The vulnerability of life and livelihood in such circumstances have precipitated a "temporary but recurring" pattern of population displacement<sup>41</sup>, the duration of which has ranged anywhere from days to years (Mahapatra 2011, p. 7). For the displaced residents of those villages which were at the epicentre of aerial bombardment for multiple wars, such as Matayen in the Kargil district, returning to homes, common lands, and grazing areas reduced to rubble was often less practical than staying back at undersupplied displacement camps, which for all their deficiencies usually hosted medical centres (Bhagat 2002, pp. 99-100). When these villagers decided or felt compelled to return, they would have to build their houses and irrigation canals from the ground up, ordinarily with a fraction of the monetary resources they once possessed (*Ibid.*, p.100).

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<sup>41</sup> Elsewhere, Mahapatra (2015, p. 173) identifies eight such instances: 1940s-47, 1947-8, 1965, 1971, 1987, 1999, 2001, 2002 and most recently 2014, when cross-border gunfire forced hundreds of families to flee.

If, however, Antia Mato Bouzas's (2012, p. 878) comments on inward migration from border-sites in Gilgit-Baltistan are applicable to Jammu and Kashmir's "fragmented whole" (Sökefeld 2015, p. 253), displacement may not simply be collateral damage incurred by unpredictable bouts of cross-border firing. Rather, the practical needs of the security apparatus in terms of labour power or land for army bases might have had an equal hand in the frequent dislocation of borderland populations. Such initiatives recur in the annals of Indian military policy. North-East India has had a history of Village (Re)-grouping Plans whereby the armed forces encouraged the displacement and relocation of villagers from regions deemed to be of strategic importance to militants and to the defence of the border. In 1957 for example, the armed forces shifted the population of Mangmetong in present-day Nagaland to Longkhum after a week's notice and guarded them in an area fenced by bamboo and surrounded by spikes, where they were subject to further internal segregation to diminish morale (Nag 2016, p. 66). Later, in another instance at the height of the Mizo insurgency in 1966, Lt Gen Sam Manekshaw suggested "grouping" villagers along a 10-mile belt on each side of the Vairengte-Aizawl Lungleh Road to force the Mizo National Army fighters to retreat into depopulated areas with less territorial cover, increase the 'security' of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) operations in the area, and to employ villagers on BRO construction projects (Nag 2016, p. 63). The use of military strategy such as (re)grouping, as noted by Ranabir Samadhar (2016, p. 37), was justified on explicitly economic grounds such as the transformation of the "indigenous peasant" into a "rational economic actor" and the commercialisation of forests to create a local economic class-structure comprised of dealers, contractors, and leasers who would be tied to the national economy.

Although there is no documentation of the (re)grouping of villages having been employed as an official tactic in Jammu and Kashmir, the army's employment of villagers evacuated from sites of shelling as porters and helpers has been relatively common. Despite the fact that the enlistment of men for such purposes might have provided a small supplementary income to displaced families if waged, hazardous work conditions, typical to such employment were reproduced by a lack of work-relevant supplies, often resulting in permanent injuries and physical disabilities if not death. Zara, one of the women interviewed by the Delhi-based researcher Pamela Bhagat (2002, p. 102) for a report on women's health as a part of an Oxfam project on conflict-related violence, reveals that during the Kargil War, her husband, a truck driver, along with 45 other men from the village of Pandrass which was shifted to Gagangir, were taken to Bhimbet to carry guns, ammunition and supplies to a remote high-mountain post. For fear of exposure, the men could only work during the

night and received inadequate food, improper clothing, and footwear; as a result, many suffered from frostbite and chronic pain, and on some occasions potentially required the amputation of their limbs which affected their later participation in household income-generation. Moreover, even the payment of a wage for portage is not a guarantee; the extraction of forced labour from villagers in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh has been recorded in a report by a local human-rights organisation, the State Human Rights Commission of Jammu and Kashmir (SHRC) and in multiple media testimonials. The specific case recorded by the SHRC is said to have occurred in the early 1990s, in the village of Qalamabad in the District of Kupwara near the LOC, where men were rounded up and told to perform a number of duties including axing trees, assembling tents, constructing bunkers, rebuilding destroyed infrastructure, clearing snow, supplying water, detecting explosives, and carrying firewood (Jaleel 2010; Mirani 2010; Hakhoo 2012; Thakur 2012). In some ways this practice of engaging border populations in portage is reminiscent of the feudal extraction of *corvée* labour from the countryside for the transport of grains and supplies for troops,<sup>42</sup> a practice which remained institutionalised in the state under the title of the Jammu and Kashmir State Transport Control Order several years after independence/accession, due to the accommodation of independent economic legislation in Jammu and Kashmir under the initial conditions of the autonomy agreement (Government of India 1953).<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, as Mona Bhan (2008) has shown

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<sup>42</sup> For more on *begar* (forced labour) and *corvée* labour in Jammu and Kashmir see Mushtaq Ahmad Kaw (1990) and John Bray (2008).

<sup>43</sup> The note KNV Nambisan of the Ministry of States, Kashmir Branch wrote to the Ministry of Labour on 12 May 1953, reveals some hesitation in asking Jammu and Kashmir to accept ILO dictates on the abolition of forced labour:

To implement the decision it will however, be necessary to enact legislation in Parliament which even though legally valid will be difficult to enforce without the entire co-operation of the State government. As the Jammu and Kashmir Govt. have clearly declared themselves opposed to the abolition of the existing system, it will be desirable as a matter of policy to avoid a state of affairs which may involve friction and disharmony between the Centre and State Government. Fortunately it seems possible to exclude any specific territory from the scope of the Convention when it is ratified, and we think that this should be done in regard to J&K. Fortunately, it seems possible to exclude any specific territory from the scope of the Convention when it is ratified, and we think that this should be done in regard to J&K.

in her study of the material practices of producing nationhood within borderland regions such as Kashmir, many populations, such as the Brogpas of Batalik, incorporated the labour demands of the army into traditional labour division patterns such as *kehral* (mandatory labour) in order to ‘reimburse’ the Indian government for its developmental budget and other social services. Whether in the case of the army’s extraction of forced labour (*begar*) or mandatory labour (*kehral*) from displaced villages or from settlements close to army camps, it is interesting to note the role of the army, as an extra-economic institution, in coopting the absence of what Tom Brass (2011, p. 87) has called a “relational transformation” in the form of labour (that is, from unwaged to waged labour) or actually even reversing the process temporarily and on a smaller-scale for the performance of logistical tasks, as a result of the limited extent of the capitalist transition in many such remote borderland societies.

In other cases, displacement resulted from the appropriation of (what is often) arable and inhabited land by the military. Although there has been little scholarly research on the land acquisitions process in Kashmir, some preliminary observations can be compiled to better understand the often-fraught relationship between militarisation and resource-use in Kashmir more generally. The latest estimates indicate that approximately 22338.51 acres of land is currently under the ownership of the Ministry of Defence, and 71266.6 acres in total, is in its “possession” when acquired, requisitioned, ex-state force, hired, and to-be-regularised land in the state is accounted for (PIB 2016; *Rajya Sabha* 228 September 26, 2013, p. 136). Furthermore, the consolidation of rental agreements between the Ministry of Defence and private as well as state agencies in the Kashmir sub-region specifically, is pending in 125 cases, with Kupwara and Baramulla respectively, having the largest number of such unresolved cases as of 2013 (*Rajya Sabha* 230 December 18, 2013). It also bears mentioning, that the Ministry of Defence has claimed that no exact statistical data is available on the number of buildings (including schools and industrial establishments) allocated to army and paramilitary units, or on the rent paid in occupying such premises, on account of the “dynamic” nature of internal counter-insurgency operations (*Rajya Sabha* 180, March 12, 1997, pp. 105-6).

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Five months later on 13 October 1953, the Minister of External Affairs, RF Isar, asked Nambisan to reconsider the request for an exemption for Jammu and Kashmir remarking “These days, feudal practices cannot be justified on the grounds of administrative convenience.”

According to the earliest records detailing land-use, historically requisitioned army land did not simply include *banjar* (“unproductive” or fallow) land, but also “Class I” and “Class II” land, that is, land classified as suitable for the growing of paddy wheat and other crops (Government of India 1951a). Of course, such statistics do not speak for themselves in isolation and can only hint at the causes of public anxiety when one situates them within the context of the regional land-use pattern in Kashmir where cultivable land constitutes only 9 % of the entire geographical area of the state (GOJK 2016, *Jammu and Kashmir in Indian Economy – 2016*, p. 3). Apart from the ethical issues of cordoning off potentially productive land in a land-poor region, Gautam Navlakha (2007, p. 1243) has also detected that the “a-priori possession of economic assets ... [can] result in the armed forces acquiring a ‘vested interest’” in prolonged security- or development-related projects. Cumulatively, the impact of land-grabbing is most acute on those entirely dependent on agriculture. Its effects, as noted in one recent study, range from “dispossession, de-peasantisation, loss of livelihoods, forced commoditisation, [to] severely affecting food sovereignty of the peasantry in rural Kashmir” (Ghulam Nabi and Ye 2015, p. 62). Such forms of displacement in border regions in/around rural areas can produce a surplus population akin to the coercive land acquisitions process elsewhere in India, in spite of the fact that militarised land-grabs may not serve any immediate commercial purposes (See for example Le Mons Walker 2008 and Levien 2015).

#### **4.1.2 Connecting the Frontier: A Case Study of Security Infrastructure**

The military has historically been involved in both independent and co-administered developmental programmes as a part of the ‘peace-time’ strategy of social (re)construction beyond humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Analysts of militarised-development programmes in Kashmir have made the argument that such strategies have existed alongside traditionally repressive counterinsurgency tactics including mass arrests, crackdowns, stop and frisk searches, and preventative detentions, and exert a similar disciplinary pressure on the political aspirations of subject populations (Ghulam Nabi and Ye 2015, p. 59). According to Aggarwal and Bhan (2009, p. 520) the technique behind this approach rests in the deployment of an ambiguous concoction of “armed violence for national security” and the “rhetoric of ‘disarming violence’” through ‘soft tactics’ such as the promise of democratic governance and economic development. To these scholars, the purpose of militarised-development, being after all ‘militarised’, appears to be the propagation of the State’s political interests, the expected outcome being the prevention of alienation, concealment of coercion, encouragement of ‘rational self-interest’, or the production of

fear as Paul Dixon (2009) has suggested was the case in the original British counter-insurgency doctrine of “Winning Hearts and Minds” (WHAM). At different times in Kashmir, these targeted outcomes have certainly been used to normalise the elections environment, engage in counterpropaganda through education, and allegedly conduct “secret state” functions such as the transfer of political power through the negotiation of monetary contracts with regional interest groups (Aggarwal & Bhan 2009, pp. 528-30; Ghulam Nabi and Ye 2015, pp. 60-2). Elsewhere, in the remote expanses of central and eastern India which one scholar describes “a peripheral ‘frontier’ zone on the fringes of state-making projects in India’s central Gangetic plain,” progressively militarised institutions of civil administration such as the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Indian paramilitaries have routinely amalgamated developmental tasks such as rural road construction, the protection of government contractors, and ground clearing within their wider anti-Maoist counter-insurgency war (Spacek 2017, p. 2).

However, these accounts of the development-security complex in J&K, the North East or in the Red Corridor and have propagated the notion that development within these frontiers is either “dominated by national security imperatives” as Duncan McDuie-Ra (2008, p. 193) suggests in his study of Meghalaya, “consolidate[s] the military in democratic societies and lead[s] to further retrenchment of its power base” (Aggarwal & Bhan 2009, p. 520), or crafts “a backbone enabling muscular state expansion into restive areas”(Spacek 2017, p. 11) for the purposes of stabilisation. The economic function of ‘militarised’ *capitalist* development is said to remain subordinate to the territorial logic of the state, which undertakes nation-building in regions which threaten the immediate reach of its bureaucratic and institutional limbs. Extending the metaphor of the national ‘frontier’ in a similarly politically reductionist sense, also leaves unexplored the wider economic context of capitalism and the fact that these regions also have specific functions within the operation of networks of domestic and global capital accumulation. The idea that the integration of peripheral regions into the nation-state mainly serves the *extra-economic* purposes of securitisation, whether it is through the explicit employment of the coercive apparatus or concatenated forms of securitised development for the purposes of stabilisation, ignores on one hand the commodification of security and on the other reifies the notion that the ‘disturbed’ peripheries of the State are defined by their propensity towards conflict and political struggle. In order to eschew an exclusively politically determinist analysis of statecraft it is necessary to position the relationship between development and securitisation in Kashmir within the wider state –capital –security nexus.



Apart from the ‘psychological warfare’ of WHAM initiatives such as Operation *Sadbhavana*, the promise of development allowed the Indian State to entrench the infrastructure of the security apparatus alongside the connective transport infrastructure of the national economy instead of merely demarcating its bounds. This overlap of market and non-market institutions embedded the security apparatus within the economic life of a number of borderland regions in India. In Arunachal Pradesh for instance, Deepak K Mishra (2015) noted the emergence of a number of multifaceted interactions between the military and civil society. In addition to the fact that region’s “market infrastructure” became closely attached to the army’s supply networks and shopping districts, Mishra (2015, pp. 92 and 100) reveals the crucial role the army played in the very creation of the spaces of business and exchange by directing the settlement of traders and shopkeepers, training local entrepreneurs in the management of contracts, rendering protective services to tourist industries, and employing local and non-local civilians. Although the army is not the largest employer in Jammu and Kashmir, researching securitised-development initiatives<sup>44</sup> is especially helpful in determining how the logic of the State and capital have come together on issues of national ‘security’. At present, only a miniscule number of localised and longitudinal field studies on changing work arrangements in the state of Jammu and Kashmir exist, which leads to difficulties in determining aggregate impact. Although rich in ethnographic data, most of these studies either do not distinguish between initiatives under civilian leadership and those under the jurisdiction of the armed forces, or focus entirely on one distinct geo-physical sub-region of the state, namely Ladakh, which makes extrapolation based on their regional relevance tenuous. At least one of the reasons for the focus on Ladakh in particular is probably due to the marked ease of conducting research there in comparison to the Valley, where research permits for the study of national security matters can be few and far between. However, although Ladakh has been witness to multiple inter-state skirmishes

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<sup>44</sup> Although this section is a case study of one particular interaction between security and economic imperatives, it is important to remember it is not the only instance of such a relationship. These acts are in fact, multitudinous and can be discussed at length. One instance, in which the coercive power of the security apparatus was deployed to these ends during the Nehruvian period, for example, was the act of arresting Abdullah in 1953, which allowed the Indian government to quell the pressures which had prevented it from extending the spaces of the national economy to encompass autonomous sub-national regions such as Kashmir.

as well as full-fledged war, it mostly remains unburdened by the violence of the insurgency in the Valley. Regardless, the data that exists on road-development projects initiated by the semi-military Border Roads Organisation (BRO) helps provide a small but illuminating glimpse at how the security-apparatus and the labour-intensive infrastructural development it brings in its wake, has affected local labour relations through the arrival of seasonal migrant labourers, the regulation of the available labour pool, and alterations to the existing division of labour in Jammu and Kashmir's border communities.

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has been associated with the notion of militarised-infrastructural development since its origins in May 1960. Responding to a need for the administrative centralisation of road development in order to “open up the hinterland,” Nehru introduced an inter-ministerial Border Roads Development Board in March 1960, which set about addressing the potential risks to national security posed by the lack of roads in the country's border regions. In a few months, this board changed management and transformed into BRO, a civil-engineering sector of the armed forces under the Ministry of Defence, which worked alongside civil, mechanical, and electrical engineers from the General Reserve Engineer Force (GREF). Since then, the BRO has adopted two specific peacetime functions within border areas: the expansion and maintenance of road infrastructure and agency projects (including but not limited to bridges, tunnels, and airfields), and the socio-economic development of the environs in which it works (BRO 2017, *Vision*).<sup>45</sup> By the admission of a previous Director General of the organisation, such pursuits are necessary in order to “bring the people of these areas closer to the mainstream” and “exploit the natural resources of the areas” (Soin 1977, p. 53). At present, the BRO is engaged in the construction and improvement of 231 new roads in Jammu and Kashmir under the Projects Beacon, Himank (Ladakh) and Sampark (Jammu), amounting to a length of 7122.47 km (PIB, 2017, *Roads Along Border Areas*). Project Beacon (originally headquartered in Srinagar) was set-up as one of the BRO's two pilot projects alongside Project Tusker (renamed Vartak in 1963), and eventually split up into the three projects currently in operation in Jammu and Kashmir. Marketed as nation-building exercises to produce “life-lines” in Jammu and Kashmir, the BRO's projects specifically target issues of connectivity between the

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<sup>45</sup> The mandate of the BRO has now also expanded to encompass projects in “friendly neighbouring countries,” such as Bhutan, Myanmar, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan, in the name of furthering Indian foreign policy ambitions (BRO 2017, “BRO Movie”).

various parts of the state (Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh) and aspire to provide substantial temporary employment to skilled and ‘unskilled’ labourers (See for example BRO 2017, *Beacon*). By the latest estimates, the BRO employs 21402 Casual Paid Labourers (CPLs) in Jammu and Kashmir alone, and 87, 549 CPLs in total (*Lok Sabha Debate XV* September 3, 2012).

The BRO distinguishes itself from the Public Works Department (PWD) and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) by virtue of its organisational structure, which it has inherited from the military, and its specific ‘security’-infrastructure related functions. The Organisation’s publicity material discursively reproduces this inheritance by characterising roadbuilding as part of a developing nation’s war against the elements, insurgency, and economic backwardness (BRO 2017, “Movie”). But such assertions of a militarised structure are not merely discursive, indeed, the BRO and the mass of civilian workers under its jurisdiction are subject to the restrictions of army rules and the Army Act (Demenge 2011, p. 307). As such, they are ineligible for the rights entitled under the Minimum Wages Act, the Industrial Disputes Act, and are virtually denied the right to form labour unions and informal worker’s associations (*Ibid.*). Subsequently, the organisation has engaged in a number of noted repressive labour practices, the news of which has travelled as far as the ILO (*Ibid.*, p. 308). Apart from the denial of the rights to unionisation and slightly lower rates of pay than the local average, the BRO’s labour contracts do not provide the benefits entitled to army personnel despite operation under the auspices of defence/security-related recruitment. Since workers are employed under casual contracts with daily or monthly rates of pay, in regions where the BRO runs multiple simultaneous or consecutive projects or suspends projects due to a lack of funding, occupational stability remains a concern as contracts can often be terminated early or renewed indefinitely (Demenge 2011, p. 307). Although some of these traits of BRO hiring policy and employment practice, such as the denial of labour mobility or higher income levels even to “casual” workers who have been employed every summer for multiple years (Sabhlok, Cheung and Mishra 2015, p. 77), are not unique to securitised development programmes, and recur within construction industry employment country-wide, it is only as a result of the military-control over this developmental project that employees for instance, do not receive the labour rights of other public sector employees.

The BRO’s projects in the state tended to import migrant workers from Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal (“Imported Casual Paid Labour” in recruitment terminology) due to a shortage of “local” labourers (“Casual Paid Labour”). The hires used to fill the former category of ICPL are

often drawn from specific regions with histories of circular out-migration due to uneven development, such as Dumka in Jharkhand (Sabhlok, Cheung and Mishra 2015, p. 74). The caste-based division of labour within these contexts is reproduced thousands of kilometres away from home, as construction work, being the domain of “bodies accustomed to hard labour” primarily employs tribal, Dalit or Muslim labour from economically disadvantaged regions of the country (*Ibid.*, p. 77). Labour for latter category of CPL is procured from a semi-permanent work force of Nepali migrants or local Ladakhi workers, who have usually had previous connections to the security apparatus working as porters (Demenge 2011, p. 310; Bhan 2014a, p. 106). The semi-permanence of the former group is a result of expenditures due to an extra-ordinarily high cost of living in the region, which shrivels migrants accumulated savings, and facilitates their entry into a “limitless pool” of construction workers who shuffle from construction project to project (Demenge 2011, p. 320). This group in particular is often recruited into the most dangerous of the jobs in the construction and maintenance of roads – drilling, which is responsible for a number of workplace deaths and injuries (*Ibid.*, p. 310). On the other hand, it is the appeal of military duty, and the traits associated with it – masculine bravado, loyalty, and national service – which motivate young local labourers to seek employment with the BRO (Bhan 2014a, p. 105). The BRO is not the first choice of employment for the latter group, who prefer to work as soldiers on the front lines – yet, the stringent height, weight, and chest width requirements for military service, and army’s noted preference for installing local applicants within cheap labour reserve pools for various odd-jobs, often limit their opportunities for military service (Bhan 2014a, pp. 103 and 105).

The income generated from employment in army’s infrastructural works, is often not enough to sustain either ICPLs or CPLs in the region. The enormous costs of accommodation and buying food rations from the black market, has meant that migrants with families often rely on supplementing their income from construction with the petty commodity production of alcoholic beverages such as *chaang* and *raksi* (Demenge 2011, p. 311). The army’s demand for fresh fruits, vegetables and poultry has also led to the development of small-scale farming ventures on the part of the families of local labourers with access to plots of land. Bhan (2014a, p. 107) observes that such farming is almost entirely feminised due to the changes in the division of labour inside households. In many villages, no men are visible in the fields performing agricultural duties, and many have migrated to urban centres (Aggarwal 2004, p. 219). Societal militarisation has induced a transformation from shared and interdependent cultures of agricultural work, to its devaluation in

comparison to “masculine” endeavours such as military enlistment (Bhan 2014a, pp. 109 and 111). Additionally, the workers for these security-infrastructure projects often view the precarious nature of their employment and the sheer arduousness of their daily duties through the lens of their own disposability. Demenge (2011, p. 322) records Bihari workers from Jharkhand expressing the wish that the Indian State would spend as much money as it did developing Jammu and Kashmir in Jharkhand so that they might obtain livelihood opportunities back home. This cognition of the structural neglect of their home regions, which compels them to migrate elsewhere for work, is combined with a sense of their systemic neglect as members of the lower classes. Although the workers do not use the language of class-consciousness, Sabhlok, Cheung and Mishra (2015, p. 77) observe that their experiences labouring for the BRO have made them aware of the disinterest with which the local extensions of State institutions (such as the military, bureaucracy, health services) treat casual labourers’ health and economic concerns.

As such preliminary observations reveal, ‘security apparatus’ in Kashmir has performed functions that are crucial to the consolidation of national economic space through both the “implementation” of the border, as well as the construction of lines of arterial infrastructure inwards from “frontier” economic regions towards the “mainland”. With respect to the latter point we can note for example, that the frontier in this case does not simply represent “border-land” regions as such, but rather the economic frontier between capitalist and pre-capitalist spaces. The role of the security apparatus in facilitating the circulation of capital flows and their interpenetration into regional economies for instance can be felt in the processes outlined above, namely through the introduction of external economic demand, migrant labour flows originating in other regions of the country, the introduction of particular forms of waged-labour, the denial of constitutional labour rights, and multitudinous processes of deruralisation. In recent years however, a series of budget cuts to the BRO and a regular transfer of previously BRO-administered infrastructural projects to the NHAI and PWD might indicate decline in this function in terms of its primacy in security policy.

#### **4.2 The Transition to Liberalisation and its effects on National Security Policy in India**

The volatile post-Nehruvian period of internal contradictions was characterised by Indira Gandhi’s expected ascent to the seat of Congress and State power; a gradual decline in the legitimacy of import-substitution as a national economic model; an ensuing turn to national economic reform after an initial policy of protectionism and nationalisation of industries; a rapid centralisation of State power; and a domestic security policy of crisis governance and engineering ethno-religious

boundary-making especially in the Punjab (which incidentally paved the way for the Khalistan movement and Gandhi's assassination in the hands of Sikh militants in 1984). As Bandyopadhyaya (2009, p. 9) has noted, grand strategies of non-alignment which had been solidly embedded in foreign policy initiatives in the preceding decades began to give away to the pressures of economic openness starting in the 1980s in the last years of Gandhi's rule, and became even more "retrograde" under the BJP. As conceptions of national development began to be tied to the notion of economic openness, the protection of the fluidity of foreign capital entry and econo-centric threat perception, namely the protection of the interests of private capital and the new geo-economic social, which would directly benefit from such actions, became central to State policy. The ideology of Hindutva, which rose to prominence during the process of economic liberalisation in India, thus articulated itself both in direct opposition to the Nehruvian-nation-space imaginary of "placeless' universalism" and post-Nehruvian personalised citizenship loyalties, and in part used strategic manipulations of sacred sites, bucolic localities and processional routes to create internal cartographies of enmity against religious minorities and communists who were/are viewed as threats to the particularistic cultural essence of the Hindu nation (Deshpande 1995, p. 3223). Indeed, within this smear-campaign against secular bourgeois nationalism, rested the proposition that the failings of the Nehruvian project were the result of its eschewal of the political and economic ideology of an essentially Hindu (and thus automatically Indian) civilisation (Corbridge 1999, p. 231). Although this brand of religious revivalism and cultural proto-fascism might rhetorically hail a simplistic tradition/modernity binary, it instead relies fundamentally on what Ahmad (2000, p. 177), drawing on Gramsci calls, "a certain kind of widespread [societal] 'common sense' that has been prepared for them already," which while predicated on the upper-caste and upper- and middle-class intellectual fantasies of *national* culture is temporally contemporary. The role played by such "cultures of cruelty" is less than passive according to Ahmad (2004, p. 78), "The Hindutva brigade is not only an agent and a perpetrator, it is also a beneficiary. If it acts *upon* the wider culture so as to brutalise it, the pre-existing cultures of cruelty also serve to sustain its projects". The anti-rationalist definition of nationhood by Hindutva forces led to equally anti-rationalist delineations of what could count as being internal or external to the national project envisioned; as a result, "the instituted boundary [no longer corresponded to] the sanctioned extent of the secular nation state" (Svensson 2009, pp. 29-30). However, apart from expansionist desires such as those found in the writings of Hindutva ideologues such as Savarkar and Gowalkar, this also meant the material reification of internal boundaries through a process of

rescaling and descaling. Universal nationhood had to be replaced by a *personalisation* of the national bond along community lines and the erasure of the public presence of other “non-communal” historical lineages as ‘misinterpretations’ of history (for examples see Oza 2006; Joshi 2010; Joshy & Seethi 2015). Terror, for instance, began to be portrayed as the product of a phantasmal Islamic force – constituting of a combination of geographical fixity and historical continuity, which paradoxically extended past the parameters of the nation state, while also atomised itself as a psychological compulsion within the mindsets of entire subsets of the national population.

What explains the reasons and tactical considerations behind the partnership between the forces of the reactionary Hindu cultural and ideological Right and the specific economic project of liberalisation in India which began in the late-1970s and early 1980s? A number of interlinked propositions can help us answer this question. Neoliberalism, as Shankar Gopalakrishnan (2008) notes, has historically associated itself with the forces of “hyper-nationalism” in different geographical regions since its inception. Gopalakrishnan hypothesises that in India, neoliberalism and Hindutva forces have congregated around a tactical alliance based on privatisation, repression of social movements, the opening of the Indian economy to investment from Non-Resident-Indians and anti-terror. Others, such as Ahmad (2000, pp. 159 and 181-2) and Joshy and Seethi (2015, p. 162) have argued that as an inadequate bourgeois answer to economic stagnation and the financial crises of the 1970s, neoliberalism generated various forms of social insecurity which Hindutva, being both historically *available* and *empowered* as a politico-cultural ideology in the face of the declining legitimacy of the Nehruvian promise of embourgeoisement following the Emergency and the already weakened Left, could and did exploit through a reification of the political identities of the majority Hindu community in order to initiate a war of rapid manoeuvre to consolidate a wider social base. In doing so, the Hindutva-neoliberal nexus used “cultural invocation” instead of “projects of radical economic change” to secure through consent/coercion (and in some cases deception) the compliance of the marginalised classes to its politico-economic project of proto-fascistic “calibrated globalisation” (Ahmad 2000, p. 148; Joshy and Seethi 2015, p. 145). As we will see, these rapid transformations in the cultural, political, and economic alliances also had particular implications in terms of the ‘high’ and ‘low’ State policies of national security in India.

#### **4.2.1 The Burgeoning Security-Apparatus: The Military Budget and Import-Dependence**

Although Indian military expenditure as a percentage of government spending dropped from 15.7% in 1988 to 8.9% in 2016, levels of gross non-nuclear security expenditure, including spending

on paramilitary forces such as the Border Security Force (BSF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Assam Rifles, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), have continued to increase in the same period from 17.9 billion to 55.6 billion at constant USD prices (SIPRI 2017). In spite of the associated assurances of technological ‘indigenisation’ and its spillover effects on adjacent sector growth through commercial arms exports, speculation around the development of an “infant” military-industrial complex in India, has done little to eliminate dependence on foreign armaments (Varman 2015; Kinsella and Chima 2001; Srikanth 1993). Indeed, by 2015, only three Indian companies featured amongst the Top 100 arms-producing and military services companies in the world: Hindustan Aeronautics, Indian Ordnance Factories, and Bharat Electronics (SIPRI 2016). While Russia remains the most important source of arms transfers after the fall of the USSR, military acquisitions and procurement in recent years has served as a means of political and economic alliance-building with the west, particularly the United States and Israel, through the consolidation of arms deals and co-operative manufacturing and training ventures, the assumption of a larger regional security role in contrast with earlier aspirations of non-alignment and strategic autonomy, and a greater permissiveness to foreign investment in the defence sector following the liberalisation of the economy. The ‘Make in India’ programme, formally launched in 2014, is one of the latest of such strategic partnerships between India and the US which endeavours to attract both national and foreign investment to India in order to create a global manufacturing hub in the country. Of the twenty-five focus areas identified by the initiative, one is defence manufacturing as a part of the Defense Technology Trade Initiative (DTTI), which promises geostrategic, industrial, and business ties between the two countries, in addition to encouraging India’s great-power ambitions within the South Asian context. Importantly, this scheme relies on essential US support (foreign direct investment can now account for 49% of the capital inflow in the defence sector) and pledges co-production of defense technology with the eventuality of technology transfer (Mabee 2016, pp. 12-13).

Yet dependence is not the only significant consequence of the growth of the Indian security-apparatus. Militarisation, whether through arms transfers or expenditure allotments, can be justified as being socially necessary by not only pinpointing genuine political threats to national sovereignty but by deploying what Rahul Varman (2015) calls the conceptual “logic of war” *inwards*. In effect, the discourses and material policies of internal securitisation have been integrated into what Aijaz Ahmad (2000b, pp. 43-44) has identified as the offensive of the post-liberalised state against rural



and urban labour. In addition to coercively disciplining the peasantry and indigenous groups to quell resistance against dispossession and resource expropriation in rural areas, and organising slum clearances to reclaim prime real-estate among a variety of other actions, Varman (2015) shows that the intertwined strategies of internal securitisation and military capacity-building have also produced a “closed loop system” of security modernisation and military procurement which is increasingly distanced from the needs of the masses and prioritised over social expenditure on health, education, and employment generation.

#### **4.2.2 The “Militarisation” of Politics: Internal Military Deployment and Problems of Representation**

From the 1980s, the Indian State began to bid the armed forces to intervene more frequently in matters of internal “law and order” previously handled by the central and regional police and paramilitary. As Sumona Dasgupta (1998, p. 441) observes, this step was largely in response to the increasing intensity of communal and casteist disturbances, as well as the growth of militant regionalisms, as in the cases of Kashmir, Punjab, and Assam, though one might add to this observation by taking note of what Mary Kaldor (2003) has identified as the increasingly global, transnational, and diasporic bases of some such conflicts. The turn towards the “militarisation of politics,” to use Dasgupta’s term for it, whereby volatile political situations began to be routinely dealt with through military action, was largely uncharacteristic of previous security policy, with the notable exception of the use militarised counter-insurgency strategy and even aerial bombardment on Aizawl during the Mizo National Front-led attempted *coup-d’état* of 1966.<sup>46</sup> This was because, according to Steven I. Wilkinson (2015), the newly independent Indian government had made several efforts to disentangle the interlocked civilian-military functions of the colonial establishment by instituting structural changes such as the introduction of separate command structures for the army, reducing the relative prestige of senior military positions in comparison to elected ministers and civil servants, eliminating the illustrious Commander-in-Chief position altogether, and decentralising the army’s power by ushering in paramilitaries (militarised police) such as the Border

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<sup>46</sup> Both the Indian and Assamese government initially denied the strafing of Aizawl, which killed 13 people (Sundar 2011, p. 51). The recourse to bombing was justified by military establishment as result of inability to land heliborne reinforcements in face of heavy firing from Mizo National Front guerillas (Ahmed 2011, p. 14).

Security Forces (BSF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). Although these reforms ensured the firm hand of the State over military matters and thus curtailed its potential political aspirations, they were largely ineffective in dealing with issues of ethnic diversification, allowing the military to continue recruitment on the basis of colonially-rooted notions of martial suitability tied to class (peasant rank and file and propertied officers), caste, and ethnic group in preference of Punjabis, Pathans, Sikhs, Dogras, Marathas and Gurkhas which had been enacted by the British administration following the Indian Rebellion of 1857 (*Ibid.*, p. 7; Barua 1992, p. 125; Bandyopadhyaya 2009, p. 5).

What might have been the implications of deploying security forces of this composition in Kashmir? In the months following the large-scale outbreak of militancy in 1989, when there seemed to be no indication of the movement subsiding, the Central Government grew increasingly distrustful of the capacities and loyalties of the 34,000 local policemen working in Kashmir, and suspected their familial and kinship links with militant groups (Biberman 2016, p. 22). As a result, the number of central paramilitary forces such as the BSF and CRPF deployed in the region grew by nearly ten times during the 1989-93 period. After 1993, the number Rashtriya Rifles contingents, an elite army unit, posted in Jammu and Kashmir also expanded considerably. Despite Wilkinson's (2015, p. 218) optimistic assessment of the Indian State's ability to overcome the potentially politically disruptive and putschist tendencies exerted by ethnic imbalances in the army through institutional reform, its large-scale internal deployment may very well have reinforced notions of a foreign occupation and racialized oppression especially when combined with alleged and proven human rights abuses in regional contexts such as Jammu and Kashmir, where native Kashmiris were poorly represented in both the armed forces and the paramilitaries. These problems of representation persisted with the increase in the proportion of paramilitary forces during peak insurgency periods to relieve the military of its internal burdens, when nearly half of the army's infantry were actively engaged in counter-insurgency missions (Wilkinson 2015, p. 144). Although paramilitary forces were selected from a wider cross-section of the Indian population and meant to perform "delicate and politically fraught internal policing duties," a lack of rigorous army training and ethnic dissimilarities between the forces and populations they were meant to "police" as a means of coup-proofing, had deleterious effects on their rapport with civilian populations in 'insurgency-prone' regions and contributed to excesses in the use of punitive violence and other disciplinary measures (*Ibid.*, p. 126 and 145).

### 4.2.3 The Power Politics of the Security Spectacle

A concomitant aspect of targeting security strategy towards the identification and ‘neutralisation’ of internal enemies and the power politics of defense deals and military-capacity building outlined above is its amplification through the means of the public spectacle. Aijaz Ahmad (2000, p. 167) for example, has discussed in detail the “methodological staging of mass hysteria and orgiastic destruction” during and after the VHP-BJP-led *Ram Rath Yatra* (chariot procession) calling for the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992. Another example that stands out in terms of Indian grand strategy is the testing of the Pokhran II nuclear bomb in 1998, which for all accounts and purposes was “authorised by and for the BJP” with the sole objective of amassing parliamentary and popular support as noted by Stuart Corbridge (1999, p. 244). The media event of the BJP bomb was both historically and symbolically significant. It made several interventions, as identified by David Todd Kinsella and Jugdep S. Chima (2001, pp. 356-8); it attested to the BJP-led Indian government’s autonomy in foreign affairs, its elevated international status, and its powerful domestic image. All the while, Indian domestic capital forged increasingly closer ties with the global capitalist system. Indeed, as Sumit Sarkar (1998, p. 1737) incisively remarked, “the anti-US rhetoric used to justify rejection of the CTBT [Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty] - and now, to defend the Indian bomb - consorts very oddly with the obvious growing subservience to the west in every other matter, notably economic policies, precisely during the same years.”

It is interesting to note that the widely publicised post-Pokhran II national pronouncements by the BJP government attesting to the country’s regional might with respect to Jammu and Kashmir, and Pakistan’s retaliatory detonation of Chagai I and II, also had the effect of reintroducing the Kashmir Conflict to the global stage (and to American attention) in contravention of India’s long-standing policy stance which had maintained that it was a matter of ‘internal’ security (Ahmad 2000a, p.249). Such consequences do not represent the fallibility of the security spectacle as grand-strategy of State-building,<sup>47</sup> as one might think, but must be read alongside the internalisation of supposedly “global” (but resoundingly American) security imperatives. Only three years after

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<sup>47</sup> Which has striking parallels to Gustav Le Bon’s thesis in *Crowd Psychology*, which Losurdo (2016, p. 144) notes was based on taking advantage of the perceived inability of the “crowd” (mass or mobs) to exercise critical thought, so that it could be “summoned to loyally follow its ‘Caesar’ in impending bellicose adventures”.

Pokhran II for instance, the BJP open backed American militarism, as exemplified by support for the US National Missile Defence System launched in 2001, the Vajpayee government's "unsolicited and unqualified" encouragement of the use of India's air space, air forces, intelligence and logistics post-2001, as well as the initial reluctance to even condemn the US invasion of Iraq, as noted by Bandyopadhyaya (2009, p. 17). In this context, the constant reportage on the complex local and regional clashes in Kashmir including: proven and suspected human abuses engendered by counter-insurgency warfare, authoritarian legislative devices employed by the State, mass-scale or public mourning of slain militants, daily street-fighting between Kashmiri youth and the various component factions of the Indian security apparatus, massive protests and counter-protests over land transfers and developmental projects, and of course the omnipotent terrorist threat in Kashmir, all seem to bear the hallmark of a conflict spectacle (even when not televised), in a "low-scale insurgency" format. Such spectacles, which often use the language of religious and ethnic conflict, not only legitimise the use of counter-insurgent and insurgent violence and rebuild particular political constituencies by disseminating new forms of social subject-hood, but act as showcases for the revivalist forms of cultural protection and boundary-making characteristic of proto-fascist visions of capitalist modernity. In this sense, it is through the artificial reproduction of multi-scalar 'civilizational' conflicts (between Kashmir and India, India and Pakistan, and/ India and the 'West') that the BJP-led liberalised State form has attempted to engage popular support and legitimise its claims to State power.

#### **4.2.4 Societal Militarisation**

Although some scholars, such as Sanjay Chaturvedi (2000, p. 241) have argued that the 'cartographically anxious' quest for territorial integrity expressed in the national security discourses and policies of the Nehruvian, post-Nehruvian, and the BJP-led Indian State have historically reproduced what are essentially the same territorial boundaries, Ashutosh Varshney (1993, p. 229) notes that such similar aspirations towards territorial integrity must not be confused as being rooted in common ideological visions or methodologies. Varshney (p. 230) distinguishes between the nation-building-related focus of secular nationalism on the theoretical unity of all ethnic and religious groups by reiterating a common pluralist aphorism which might be said to typify the outlook of secular nationalism, that is, "One can be a good Muslim or a good Bengali and a good Indian at the same time". On the other hand, Hindu nationalism specifies that "[Hinduism] alone can provide national cohesiveness" (*Ibid.*) through the dual processes of "building a united India as

well as “Hinduizing” the polity and the nation” (*Ibid.*, p. 232). With this framework in mind, I identify a crucial difference between the limited universalising tendencies of the liberal democratic State in early Indian republic, and the strong-arm homogenising and assimilative tendencies of Hindutva nationalism which informs the present State-form and their differential impacts on national security policy.

In the first instance, the post-colonial form of liberalism advocated by the National Congress was never the “pure” or “classical liberal tradition” inherited directly from John Locke, Adam Smith or the French Revolution which Domenico Losurdo (2011) explores in meticulous detail as a part of his counter-history of Liberal thought. Instead, what we may refer to as the liberal bourgeois Indian State-form propagated by the Indian ruling classes post-decolonisation was the product of its historical moment of anti-colonial struggle and arose replete with many of the *democratic* advancements and “progressive” measures of theoretical universal citizenship, equality before the law, and universal liberty from colonial subordination as a result of the various painfully attained and non-linear “struggle[s] for recognition,” to use Losurdo’s term (p. 328 and 341), waged by a mass movement of peasants, workers, the oppressed classes, and women who had been excluded from political and economic participation. Unsurprisingly, this State-form, being at its core liberal bourgeois, never produced the “true” universalism or “radical” democracy (Losurdo 2011, p. 195) which would result from the process of economic *redistribution* and the removal of the principal inequality of socio-economic relations. The point of national securitisation this era, as I have explored earlier in this chapter, was to reinforce and protect this limited democratisation through the physical and ideological reinforcement of the borders of the national economy and the production of national unity based on a geographically-linked citizenry committed to the political project of “collective” embourgeoisement as opposed to the radical democracies of communism and the exploitative globalisation of imperial and neo-imperial capitalism. Under the proto-fascist or fascist nationalisms of the Indian Right, which incidentally were also a part of the quintessentially Liberal tradition, as evidenced by both their desire for *laissez-faire* deregulation as well as their classically Liberal takes on natural societal hierarchy and civilizational supremacy, what one began to see was the desire to significantly revoke even these partial compromises of recognition in order to harness specifically un-democratic and unfettered forms of capitalist expropriation which had previously been weakly challenged by the quasi-developmental state. Within this context, national security was increasingly reformulated in terms of securing the interests of a specific sub-national community

who were supposedly the essence and representation of the entire modern nation. To preserve the social order of national society which was superimposed onto notions of the territorial integrity of the nation, national security had to both formally atomise the universal subject into discrete categories through internal-boundary making and through assimilation into non-civic and anti-material forms of belonging.

Apart from the expansion of the formal security apparatus and its penetration into matters of internal politics, and spectacular displays of weaponised State power, the era of liberalisation has both engendered and stood witness to distinct forms of violent societal militarisation against ‘incompletely’ assimilated citizens such as religious minorities, oppressed castes and tribes, and women. This is not to infer that such targeted violence, either in the actual interactional practices of the military, police, and other State repressive agencies (as opposed to radical constitutional vision of the State), or in fact in civil society itself, did not exist in the Nehruvian era. As I noted at the beginning of this section, Ahmad’s (2000a) analyses of the patterns of Hindutva right-wing mobilisation have indicated that the societal “common-sense” of the Indian upper-castes, and upper- and middle-classes routinely acted as a solvent for these ideologies of sanitary or homogenising violence. This ‘common sense’ is not some ahistorical essence or a sign of pre-modernity, but the product of the particular form of modern politics permitted in India under colonialism, which enabled political organisation along societal fault-lines rather than citizenship, and the domination of said representational categories by caste and religious elites (Ahmad 2000b, p. 34; 2004, pp. 79-80). Such an intellectual heritage necessarily meant that the cultural nationalism and the culturally nationalist fantasies of the privileged intelligentsia would assume some form of societal primacy before it was replaced by the civic virtues of secularism (Ahmad 2004, pp. 80-81). Although Ahmad argues convincingly, that this transition was never quite complete due to a combination of factors including a lack of state capacity, the resounding persistence of this common-sense societally, or even the original sin of its colonially-rooted creation, the point I am trying to make is that rarely, if ever, did the Nehruvian State exploit and re-generate these “cultures of cruelty” as an active part of its State project in a manner analogous to the post-Nehruvian and Hindutva nationalist State.

One of the clearest examples of the militarisation of society in contemporary Jammu and Kashmir is in the State security apparatus’s incorporation of surrendered, captured, or “reformed” militants into private militias such as the Special Task Force (STF) and Special Operations Group

(SOG), which have included the infamous *Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon* (Brotherhood) and Awami League.<sup>48</sup> As noted by Alexander Evans (1999, pp. 153-5), this practice started in around 1994 following the Afghan wars (specifically the Soviet-Afghan War and the Afghan ‘Civil’ War), when an influx of ‘guest’ or transnational mercenaries subcontracted by the Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, began to enter Kashmir and enlist in the insurgency. Evans (p. 150) observes that captured indigenous renegades were both paid and armed by the government, in a manner similar to the “pseudo-gangs” employed by the British during the Mau-Mau rebellion, in order to conduct assassinations and induce societal terror as a means of stamping out the uprising. In other parts of the State such as Jammu, Indian security forces worked with local populations deemed “more likely to collaborate” to set up armed Village Defence Committees (VDCs) (Biberman 2016). It is particularly interesting to note that in 1996, the BJP and RSS, which had strong support in Jammu, volunteered in the VDC system and advocated local support for the cause (*Ibid.*, p. 26) Frequently recruited from the minority ethnic communities of the region, either due to their lack of support for the militancy or due to the existing predominance of ethnicised recruitment discussed earlier in this chapter, VDCs both operated simultaneously alongside traditional military units and on their own (Evans, p. 150). Amongst the ordinary folk of Jammu and Kashmir’s villages, compulsions for survival and the ill-fated combination of State- and non-State (militant) violence (Husain & Manchanda 2013), often led to the exit of destitute populations from the labour-reserve in favour of employment in state-sponsored armed-militias such as the *ikhwan* or insurgent groups, both of which were assisted in the reproduction of their fighting forces, that is, in terms of recruitment, mobilisation and financing, by the milieu of societal militarisation. It is also crucial to remember that although these irregular security assemblages might have been arranged on the basis of the political or military strategy of ‘meeting-terror-with-terror’, their functions and influence did not remain restricted to those parameters. Public interest organisations for instance, have documented the *Ikhwan*’s connections to illicit trade such as timber smuggling (Indian Environment Portal 1995). In combination with historic difficulties in fulfilling the security forces’ demand for timber,<sup>49</sup> whether

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<sup>48</sup> Not to be confused with the notorious Saudi Arabian nomadic militia of the same name that was eventually revamped into the Saudi Arabian National Guard.

<sup>49</sup> Archival documents indicate multiple requests for extra timber supplies on the part of the armed forces in Kashmir. In 1949, N. N. Wanchoo of the Ministry of Defence wrote to the Secretary for

for the purposes of infrastructural development, firewood, or weapons indigenisation, and publicised cases of military involvement in local smuggling schemes in collaboration with district officials, allows an educated guess about the possibility of State agencies meeting their resource demands from their wider security proxies' network-links with the illicit or invisible economy.

Elsewhere, parallels exist in how societal militarisation remains crucial to facilitating the penetration of transnational capital into the Indian mining belt by “clearing” dissident elements and settlements from to-be-privatised land, and working as contracted security for multi-national corporations. As one might infer from the absence of institutional sanction for such measures at the level of the Central government, the power to make decisions regarding regional/internal security had also been devolved to the state governments in accordance with the practice of ‘democratic decentralisation’ in political decision-making which accompanied the turn towards liberalisation. Nandini Sundar (2013, p. 160), notes that starting in 2006, socio-economic struggles which the State had previously categorised as the product of uneven development such as the Maoist movement in Central India, began to be portrayed in political discourse as a major security issue. In doing so, the concerns which had been at the core of the Nehruvian State’s ideological narratives of developmental uplift and embourgeoisement were effectively “externalised and rendered unintelligible” (*Ibid.*, p. 164). As a consequence of the ‘securitisation’ of the Maoist movement, state-governments such as the BJP-led government of Chhattisgarh (which enlisted the active support of the state-level Congress party), began to appoint local youth to private militias and ‘volunteer’ forces such as VDCs and Nagrik Suraksha Samitis (NSSs) as Special Police Officers (SPOs) (*Ibid.*, p. 162).

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Kashmir Affairs V. Sahay, that procuring maximum quantities of walnut timber was a matter of “national importance” on account of the low stocks of timber supplied in half-wroughts from Kashmir, “Not only is it necessary that we should make the maximum use of indigenous materials, but our requirements have actually increased as a result of modernisation and expansion of the Defence forces and consequent increase in the production of small arms” (Government of India 1949a). Another example comes from a conversation between the Ministry of States, Army Command and Government of Jammu and Kashmir in 1951, when the Undersecretary of the Ministry of States, R.S. Vohura, asked the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to assist local military authorities by allocating sufficient firewood stocks to troops stationed in the area. A letter from the Headquarters of the Western Command on July 4 noted however that the land provided by the Conservator of Forests was woefully inadequate, “below specification...[and] served NO useful purpose”. The GoJK later replied stating that in the face of an ongoing fuel crisis were unable to exceed the allocated limits, and suggested the Army turn to decontrolled firewood as it had been doing for the past three years (Government of India 1951e).



Chhattisgarh was particularly notorious for *Salwa Judum*, which the state government claimed arose spontaneously although evidence now demonstrates that it was comprised of villagers mobilised with the threat of fines and beatings, local youth recruited as SPOs and the security forces. *Salwa Judum*, which the Supreme Court of India later condemned as the product of the state's "abdication of constitutional responsibility...and abandonment of [its] primordial function" (Nandini Sundar and Ors as quoted in Sundar 2013, p. 163), was responsible for looting and burning 644 villages in the state, killing several hundred people, as well as raping an unknown number of local women.

### 4.3 Conclusion

In this thesis, I have argued that many of the approaches which have sought to expose the "causes" of the Kashmir conflict and its indefinite protraction have been crucially flawed due to their reliance on ontologically moralist paradigms, idealisation of ahistorical ethno-nationalist primordialisms and cultural alterity, as well as tendencies towards political over-determinism and variously limited forms of methodological regionalism and nationalism. I have instead suggested two preliminary approaches to counteract these tendencies, the first of which seeks to understand the significant class- and class-relevant forces which have emerged in Kashmiri society in the years after independence, and how wider ruptures both within the emerging Kashmiri bourgeoisie and factions of the Indian bourgeoisie may have generated a series of "nationally relevant conflicts of interest".

Capitalist transformation, that is, the transition from feudalism to the capitalist mode of production occurred largely after Kashmir's accession to India, an act, which the National Conference later justified on the basis of the possibility of land reform and the common sociopolitical goals it seemed to share with the Congress. In the volatile years before Partition, the National Conference had extended its reach from being a representative of the rights of the newly educated, aspiring middle-classes of Kashmiri society in the context of sub-imperial domination by Dogra princes instated by the British, to being a mass-movement which articulated particularly "national" forms of social belonging which to no small extent integrated the Kashmiri working classes and displayed a commitment towards the "tillers of the soil". However, when enacted, the land reforms brought forth vituperative opposition from the feudal elite and added fire to the intra-state separatisms of the state's constituent regions. In spite of the relative radicalism of the reforms (they distributed the largest percentage of land of any state in the Union and were characterised by the denial of compensation to landowners), they resulted in a system of fragmented landholdings and marginal farms in the region, did not institute much needed bureaucratic reform especially at the

village-level, and involved little peasant participation in decision-making, thus remaining susceptible to exploitation by landed interests and locally influential classes. In addition to this, weak food distribution policies, food crises, and crop failures continued to cement some degree of rural resentment. A gradual reduction of self-sufficiency followed after Abdullah's arrest and removal on account of the almost simultaneous abolition of customs duties on imports. Although this helped the interests of older mercantile classes temporarily, local producers were out-competed by the entry of goods produced by the traditional Indian business houses, and the move also induced an ever-rising percentage of state government debt due to the elimination of a crucial revenue source for the local government and its reliance on a loans and grants system offered by the Indian government. Extensive accommodations made to orchard land and land under the ownership of religious institutions, as well as provisions for the potential resumption of land by absentee landlords and intermediaries, awarded further incentives to landed interests, and consolidated a class of rich peasants and farmers in the countryside, although such classes were also the subject of internal stratification. A lack of industrialisation on account of the regionally uneven considerations of central planning policy and food shortages spurred patterns of rural-to-urban migration, and the growth of an informal service sector. The organised working classes, largely under public sector employment remained quiescent and affiliated almost wholly with the National Conference. Yet patterns of educational reform and increasing levels of literacy also fostered a demand for white-collar government service employment over traditional occupations. The clannish nature of the bureaucratic apparatus, both, on account of the deep embeddedness of religious politicking and due to the underdevelopment of the bourgeoisie in Kashmir, continued to reinforce a wide array of "nationally relevant conflicts of interest". I have used an empirically limited analysis to show the various ways in which the process of the capitalist transformation discussed above and its creation of a particularly divided emerging Kashmiri bourgeoisie, along with the contingencies of a particular geo-economic and geo-political condition generated and allowed for the resurfacing of particular forms of nationalist movements in Kashmir.

The second approach I suggest is to embed and explain the process of securitisation as a function of the changing politico-economic projects which have captured State power and control over the process of Indian State-building. Thus, I have argued that, in contrast to recent anti-foundational accounts of the conflict which have portrayed securitisation as the simple fulfilment of the abstract needs of "national" domination or subjugation in and of itself, securitisation not only

reflects the particular historically contingent politico-economic projects of the State, but as a part of the State apparatus, also consolidates these projects by reproducing a particular set of conditions for capitalist development. Securitisation in the Nehruvian period of State-led development was largely guided by considerations of a civic national polity which perceived largely external threats to society which sought to interfere with or challenge the socio-political visions of the State and divide its body-politic, and internal threats of labour unproductivity and communalism. This guided securitisation processes which both sought to demarcate and implement the national border in order to enclose a national economic space, and to connect the “frontiers” of State-space not only through the physical development of infrastructure but through the interpenetration of pre-capitalist spaces by external economic demand imperatives, migrant labour flows, the introduction of waged-labour, capitalist forms of extra-legal labour repression, and deruralisation. I have studied the impacts of such security policies in Jammu and Kashmir by focussing on publicity broadcasts, restrictions on the cross-border movement of itinerant labour, the prevalence of portage, displacement of populations and land-grabbing, and the activities of the Border Roads Organisation. In the turn towards liberalisation, State security interests were redirected towards the protection of the fluidity of foreign capital entry, the protection of the interests of private capital, and the protection of the new geo-economic social, the middle- and upper- classes and castes, who would directly benefit from such actions. Thus, threat perception was largely redirected towards religious minorities and communists. The ensuing securitisation process was both characterised by the gradual militarisation of politics, the creation of spectacular expressions of violence, and processes of social militarisation along pre-existing societal fault-lines. I have studied these securitisation processes in Jammu and Kashmir by considering the larger percentages of military deployment, the attempts to internationalise internal security concerns, and the formation of private militias such as the Special Task Force, Special Operations Group, and Village Defence Committees.

Despite the values of such approaches, my *own* application of class- and State-centric analysis misses much of the actual messiness of the State-capital nexus, at what Barbara Harriss-White (2003, pp. 72, 74, and 77) calls, “the lower level of abstraction” or at the “local level of the national State” or between “the official State and a very large ‘shadow State’” especially when it comes to discussing the State in current form, and in the present day. This is undoubtedly due the lack of detailed ethnographic research in this thesis and the paucity in general of field economic research on Jammu and Kashmir, which can shed added light on the disordered realities of State practice. This is largely

the reason for the absence of an adequate discussion of the informal economy in Jammu and Kashmir in this thesis. This brings to me second point, which is that although I have chosen to focus almost *exclusively* on the impact of the various iterations of the Indian central or Kashmir state government's economic planning policy or securitisation processes upon the region, economic change and class-formation is not only the product of formal institutional decision-making and implementation but also results from the various pressures exerted by and relationships between social groups. Third, this thesis does not purport to explain the causes of the differential rise of nationalist sentiment and nationalist movements in Pakistan-administered regions such as Gilgit-Baltistan and *Azad* Kashmir. In order to study such tendencies one would have to interact fulsomely with discussions on various Pakistani State-forms since independence, which has not been possibly in the limited space of this thesis. Lastly, there remains an important question of the generalisability of the arguments made herein, I do not purport for instance to explain all the causes of ethno-nationalism, religious nationalism, or demands for political autonomy in post-colonial States, rather this study refers to the specific relationships between class forces, State-forms, ideologies, and politico-economic projects in the case of the Kashmir conflict, and particularly that aspect of it which is indigenous to the Indian-administered portion of the region. The presence of these large gaps while detracting from the strength of my arguments, hopefully do not entirely nullify its theses, and rather provide a fertile terrain for further research on the topic.

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