

Abstract

Pakistan and Afghanistan, two Muslim neighbors, have never had cordial relations since the beginning in 1947. There were two contentious issues which set the trajectory of their early relations were, the issue of *Pashtunistan* and Afghanistan's refusal to accord the Durand Line the status of international boundary between the two countries. They continued to be the dominant theme of their relationship till 1970s. Two significant developments that took place in Afghanistan towards the end of the decade further complicated their relations: the *Saur* Revolution of 1978 and the entry of Soviet forces into Afghanistan in December 1979. The event was a watershed happening because it brought about, inter alia, a qualitative change in Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan. The United States and its allies deciphered the Soviet move an attempt to expand its influence to areas vital for Washington's interests. America knitted an informal alliance of its allies to put freeze on Moscow's advance. Pakistan was coopted in as a 'frontline state' played a vital role in the eviction of the Soviet forces. This paved the way for broadening of traditional paradigm of Islamabad's Afghan policy. But after the Soviet military exit Pakistan was unable to capitalize on the situation to its advantage and consequently had to suffer from negative political and strategic implications. The implications are attributed to structural deficits in Pakistan's Afghan policy during the decade long stay of Red Army on Afghanistan's soil.