

the Muhajir-dominated Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) and the Sindh-dominated Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in Karachi, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in Punjab, and the Awami National Party (ANP) in KP. In so doing, Siddiqui relies on significant fieldwork involving hundreds of interviews, documentary evidence in English and Urdu, and surveys of politicians and voters. Aficionados of causal inference will be gratified to find a sophisticated conjoint experiment that explores the key mechanism of audience cost. Siddiqui's analytical approach is greater than the sum of its parts; the book deftly deploys different kinds of data and methods to address different dimensions of the argument and the specificity of cases. Siddiqui also shows a deep knowledge of Pakistani politics. I was particularly impressed by her facility in engaging with respondents and capturing the dynamics in radically different political contexts—from the violent ethnic machine politics of Karachi to the elite patronage networks of rural Punjab.

As with any piece of self-aware scholarship, the clarity of the book's framework allows us to see both what can be explained and what cannot. As Siddiqui herself notes, Pakistan is a case in which history is quickly moving, providing us with new cases and dynamics to be explained. Her research mostly focused on the period between the buildup to the 2013 elections and the aftermath of the 2018 elections, which saw a peak of insurgent violence associated with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and the crucible of conflict in Karachi, as well as the remarkable emergence of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), which

formed a coalition government that ruled between 2018 and 2022. The PTI is briefly treated as a "out-of-sample" case in a broader comparative chapter. In the year since the publication of the book, the PTI was forced from power, and PTI activists have engaged in sustained contentious violence on the streets of Lahore, Islamabad, and Rawalpindi. This culminated in two waves of intense riots following Imran Khan's arrest in May 2023 in which military installations were attacked, dozens of civilians were killed, and thousands were arrested. These three cities are sites where the state holds a monopoly on violence, and the PTI is famously an organizationally weak, personalistic party: it is a vehicle for Imran Khan's ambitions. This episode suggests an emerging type of party-implicated violence: decentralized, contentious in nature, targeted against the state, and driven as much by ideological conviction as by strategic calculus. The PTI-implicated violence in May 2023 has resonances with the January 2020 riots at the US Capitol in Washington, DC, and related incidents in Berlin and Brasilia.

This in turn raises some hard questions for the direction of the research agenda, which Siddiqui's excellent book might help us understand. Is the study of electoral violence primarily about elections? If so, party-implicated violence then seems a dark but inevitable consequence of the heightened stakes of political competition. Or is it primarily about violence, in which case the independent strategies of violent entrepreneurs sometimes ally with, work for, or even take the form of parties in pursuit of their independent objectives.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Complex Rivalry: The Dynamics of India-Pakistan

Conflict. By Surinder Mohan. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2022. 420p. \$85.00 cloth. \$39.95 paper.
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For good reason, the seemingly intractable dispute between India and Pakistan, which is largely but not exclusively focused on Kashmir, has attracted considerable scholarly attention. There is now an extensive body of literature on its causes and its course, as well as on schemes for its resolution. Every crisis, every diplomatic initiative, every shift in the posture and relative power of India and Pakistan has been scrutinized and keenly debated inside and outside both countries by scholars, think tank analysts, politicians, and journalists. Yet for all this effort, the dispute appears no closer to a lasting conclusion than it was in January 1949, when a UN-brokered ceasefire brought the first war between the two South Asian states to a close.

In this context, new studies face significant challenges, especially in generating fresh insights. Surinder Mohan's *Complex Rivalry* rises to this task by drawing heavily on the large and growing body of scholarship on interstate disputes and dyadic rivalries. With tools taken from this work, he constructs a "multivariate cross-paradigmatic framework" and a model of what he terms "complex rivalry," which the remainder of the book then tests in pursuit of a "holistic" account of the India-Pakistan conflict (p. 3).

Mohan defines rivalry as a situation in which two states engage in multiple militarized disputes within a given time period; in other words, where there is a certain density of disputes. He posits too that the development of the India-Pakistan rivalry since the late 1940s is best characterized in terms of a punctuated equilibrium, as endogenous and exogenous shocks affect their relations. Finally, he argues that the original cause of the rivalry is not, as others argue, historic Hindu-Muslim animosity or the late colonial tussle for dominance between the Hindu-dominated Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, but rather the "internalization of power politics

practices and the formation of [a] security dilemma” at the point of decolonization (p. 56).

On these foundations, Mohan builds his model of complex rivalry, with a hub and four spokes. Perhaps confusingly, in terms of the earlier denial that Hindu–Muslim tensions were in play at the start of the rivalry, the hub of the rivalry is what he terms the “ethno-territorial” problem of Kashmir (p. 60). The spokes—or “temporal factors”—are a mixture of internal and external factors: the regime type of India and Pakistan, their relative power, great power behavior, and what Mohan calls “rivalry linkage”; namely, other issues in which either India or Pakistan or both have some interest (p. 62).

Mohan uses this hub-and-spokes model to analyze four phases of the rivalry over four chapters: the first from Partition in 1947 to Pakistan’s first military coup in 1958; the second from 1959 to the conclusion of the Simla Agreement in 1972, in the aftermath of the war in what was then East Pakistan; the third from 1972 to the end of the Cold War in 1989; and the last from 1990 until 2021. In each, Mohan explores the main militarized disputes between India and Pakistan and then the roles played by the great powers and linked issues, as well as the military balance and domestic politics of both states. Having explained the persistence of this complex rivalry, he turns in the conclusion to examining the prospects for its resolution.

This is a rich book and one that repays careful reading. Mohan has assembled and assessed an impressive amount of evidence. He provides useful tables of every major and minor militarized dispute that occurred between 1947 and 2021, defense spending, and various political indicators, taken from the *Correlates of War* and other major databases. His ambitious model also draws attention to both drivers of the dispute and its turning points.

Complex Rivalry has shortcomings, however. Some are theoretical and others empirical. Parsimony and arguably also clarity are lost in the effort to be “holistic” and “cross-paradigmatic” (p. 3) and draw together many theories into one model. It is not clear why the model should have hubs and spokes or why that metaphor is useful in this context. Alternative heuristics—levels of analysis, for example—might have been more helpful. Promising ideas, such as the applicability of the concept of punctuated equilibrium to the rivalry, are picked up and then left behind, leaving the reader wondering why. Others appear to have been misapplied. The use of power transition theory to explain aspects of the rivalry in the 1950s, for example, is difficult to comprehend. But the biggest problem concerns causation: the model is constructed in a way that makes identifying which variable caused what effect unclear.

There are some issues too with the cases. Political opinions not wholly supported by evidence skew the analysis, especially concerning the United States. In his analysis of the 1950s, Mohan argues that the West was

partly to blame for the onset of the rivalry, pointing to “irreconcilable differences” (p. 99) with India arising early in the decade. He blames Washington for the “blatant recruitment” of Pakistan to the anticommunist cause and for supporting Islamabad’s “revisionist” agenda for Kashmir (p. 103). In the 1960s, he finds the United States “arming Pakistan against India” (p. 122) and suggests that both the Southeast Asian and Central Asian treaty organizations were aimed, at least in part, at India (pp. 133–34). In the 1990s, he maintains that the United States sought to “contain” both India and Pakistan (p. 233). These views are contentious and have been found wanting by several recent studies, including Rudra Chaudhuri’s *Forged in Crisis: India and the United States since 1947* (2014) and Tanvi Madan’s *Fateful Triangle: How China Shaped U.S.-India Relations during the Cold War* (2020).

In the book’s conclusion, Mohan explores potential ways of ending India and Pakistan’s rivalry. He observes—with justification—that the rivalry has weathered multiple political and international shocks and suggests that, without drastic action to address its underlying causes, this situation will likely persist. What is needed, he thinks, is a change of mindset in both New Delhi and Islamabad, a move away from “realpolitik” and some “unpopular and risky decisions” (p. 285). With the right kind of leadership, he goes on, Kashmir could become another Alsace-Lorraine, a territory contested for more than 70 years, now at the symbolic center of a prosperous and peaceful European Union that grew out of Franco–German reconciliation (pp. 50, 284–85).

That comparison will strike some readers as odd, but it is also revealing. The status of Alsace-Lorraine was settled not by bold leadership and even-handed negotiation but by comprehensive defeat in war, followed by a dictated peace. The example points to a more plausible and parsimonious explanation for the persistence of the India–Pakistan rivalry unexplored in the book: the inability of either party to find a way to impose its will on the other. Despite this weakness, *Complex Rivalry* is a creative and thoughtful contribution to our understanding of this apparently unending contest for territory.

Dangerous Instrument: Political Polarization and US Civil-Military Relations.

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The United States is a highly polarized country. Its contemporary politics are characterized by “us versus them” thinking and hostility toward members of the opposite party. Meanwhile, civil–military relations in the United States have, in recent times, been the subject of