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Raghavan, Srinath, *War and Peace in Modern India*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.

Srinath Raghavan has written a classic. This book is a meticulously researched account of the most important diplomacy in disputes with Pakistan and China from India's first fifteen years, including Junagadh, Hyderabad and Bengal whose details are little known except by historians specializing in the partition of India. He brings together diplomatic and military history, focusing more on the former. His narrative stops in 1962.

In the main, this is India's policy in its most realist form – as it usually has been in India's dealings with its neighbors. What Raghavan does with particular skill is to weave together the domestic and international features of these crises. The first three – Junagadh, Hyderabad and Kashmir – occurred as India was working to clarify the precise contours of partition and integrate into the union over five hundred princely states, striving for uniformity across a broad and diverse landscape. These circumstances constrained India's choice of solutions. It achieved its goals in the first two cases. Raghavan believes Nehru's success in those two cases derives partly from his ability to take things one step at a time, "probing the will of [his] adversary" (p. 315) rather than following a predetermined template.

The Kashmir story is better known and more often told. Raghavan recounts it at length, without getting lost in the details. This part of the book suffers somewhat from his choice of an end date. So much has happened in Kashmir since that time – the 1965 war, the Simla Agreement, the crises of the early and late 1990s. It is more difficult to look at the early years in isolation as a result.

The two chapters on China are particularly pertinent to those interested in India's changing relations with the other Asian giant. Here, one sees glimpses of the idealistic side of India's foreign policy, as Nehru and especially Krishna Menon try to preserve the dream of two friendly Asian powerhouses. But the heart of the India-China negotiations was a long term, often unacknowledged negotiation in which both countries tried to turn their claims into settled historical fact by presenting them unilaterally. Nehru's penchant for high level correspondence put India in the position of making repeated offers and having them ignored. What really weakened his hand was, once again, domestic politics. Seeking a show of public support against Chinese demands, he wound up constrained by Indian public opinion.

Raghavan's concluding chapter highlights lessons India can usefully learn from these early disputes. He argues that in its crises of the past ten years, India has misconstrued what is needed for diplomatic success. Persuasion does not depend "solely on the ability to impose military costs on the adversary." Rather, it requires a more comprehensive and subtle understanding and use of both power and influence, and the management of the political forces at work, domestic and international, rather than "the mere management of violence." (both quotes from p. 319) This is especially true in a nuclear world. Raghavan urges India to learn these arts from Nehru's successes. There are arguably lessons to learn as well from Nehru's failures, of which China was surely one. This book will help us all do that.

Tankel, Stephen, *Storming the World Stage: The Story of Lashkar-e-Taiba*, London: Hurst & Co., 2011.

In this readable, carefully researched and immensely useful account, Stephen Tankel focuses on what is perhaps the most problematic of the many militant groups active in Pakistan, India and Afghanistan: Lashkar-e-Taiba. In contrast to many of the other groups that work the same territory, Lashkar is primarily Punjabi, not Pashtun. Its ideological roots are not in the extremist seminaries of Deoband but in Ahl-e-Hadith, a group normally regarded as dedicated to individual Islamic piety. And its primary conflict zone revolves around Kashmir. Lashkar, Tankel argues, is formed by two “defining dualities” (p. 2). It is both a militant organization and a missionary group committed to its interpretation of Ahl-e-Hadith. And it is both a proxy of Pakistan’s army and intelligence services against India and a pan-Islamic combatant organization.

Tankel provides a remarkably clear account of the group’s history and the way it interprets the sometimes quietist Ahl-e-Hadith philosophy. In particular, the Lashkar holds that militant and violent *jihad* is an obligation of all Muslims and not, as some authorities posit, a metaphor for mastery over one’s own baser passions. Tankel argues convincingly that Lashkar looks on Kashmir as the most legitimate territory for fulfilling this obligation. Indeed, despite a move into Afghanistan in recent years, it has been primarily Kashmir-centric in its activities. Lashkar is also deeply sectarian, regarding Shias and other Muslims who deviate from its teachings as less than authentically Islamic.

The Kashmir focus of course endeared Lashkar to the Pakistani military and intelligence “establishment,” which starting in the mid-1990s helped it build up its network of contacts and its infrastructure for militancy. The Pakistani authorities also protected Lashkar, encouraging it to change its name when the organization was banned by the Musharraf government. Its relationship with the Pakistani state is Lashkar’s most troublesome feature – and perhaps the most dangerous of Pakistan’s policies. Tankel’s book makes a compelling case that Pakistan has been playing a double game at least since 9/11, with Lashkar as a critical element. Pakistani governments have clamped down on militancy in Kashmir and more broadly in India on numerous occasions, but have never been willing to include Lashkar in the crackdown. Leaders have been arrested – but have always been released within a short time.

Tankel cites two reasons for this ambivalence. First, he argues that the Pakistan army believes that Lashkar is Pakistan’s most effective form of pressure against India. Especially given the growing power disparity between the two countries, the Pakistan military is unwilling to give up a proxy that is so useful. Second, he argues – bolstered by interviews with Pakistani officials – that Pakistan is incapable of shutting down Lashkar and managing the likely backlash that would result. He quotes Pakistani officials as saying that Lashkar has not threatened the Pakistani state – and yet he also demonstrates Lashkar involvement in assassination attempts against President Musharraf.

Tankel concludes that Pakistan is unlikely to give up the use of militant proxies, including Lashkar. I wish I could argue with him. But this is likely to remain at the heart of the strategic disconnect between Pakistan and its Western friends. The July 2012 agreement between Pakistan and the United States restoring ground access to Afghanistan will not eliminate the difference in strategic objectives that has poisoned their bilateral relationship, and the other countries involved in Afghanistan share this problem. Tankel has not found a “silver bullet” to solve it, but he has illuminated one of its most important features.

This is a valuable and important book. It is also, alas, riddled with typos and grammatical glitches. It deserved better from the publishers.