

book also speaks directly to theoretical and empirical issues in urban political ecology, while Snell-Rood's is relevant to urban public health and women and gender studies.

ANNE RADEMACHER
New York University
ar131@nyu.edu

The Army and Democracy: Military Politics in Pakistan. By AQIL SHAH. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014. 416 pp. ISBN: 9780674728936 (cloth).

Army and Nation: The Military and Indian Democracy since Independence. By STEVEN I. WILKINSON. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2015. 304 pp. ISBN: 9780674728806 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911816001923

In *The Army and Democracy* and *Army and Nation*, Aqil Shah and Steven Wilkinson offer complementary, though methodologically distinct, approaches to civil military affairs in India and Pakistan. At the time of independence, both armies had an overrepresentation of Punjabis due to the British belief in “martial classes.” Wilkinson, in his volume, asks “why India, which inherited a deeply imbalanced colonial army, a ‘mercenary army’ as nationalists sometimes derisively called it before independence” (Wilkinson, p. 3) has remained free of coups and has successfully subordinated the army to the will of the civilian leadership, while Pakistan and many other neocolonial states that inherited similarly ethnically unrepresentative armies have failed to do so. Instead of taking the standard approach of explaining the differences between India and Pakistan as differences in their inheritances from the Raj, he actually looks at how the Indian and Pakistani armies shared many putatively problematic characteristics and examines what Indian and Pakistani leadership did or did not do that explains the different outcomes.

Most of Wilkinson's book focuses upon India and draws extensively from the dataset he heroically compiled on the changing composition of the Indian army. India's success is all the more surprising when one learns that the promises made by the Indian government in 1949 to change the basis of recruitment in the army to reflect the country's diversity have remained unfulfilled. In fact, his data demonstrates that “far from dismantling its colonial-style army, independent India instead doubled the number of its ‘martial class’ units by the beginning of the 1970s” (Wilkinson, p. 7). In fact, the massive expansion of the Indian army happened through existing regiments and their traditional recruitment bases. So what then explains India's success?

Wilkinson's argument is complex and has multiple dimensions. First, India benefited from partition. After partition, many Punjabis in the British Indian army who were Muslim chose to sign up with the Pakistan army. This reduced the overall imbalance of Punjabis within the Indian army. Moreover, for reasons noted below, these Punjabis were divided by religious (Hindu versus Sikh) and caste lines. India also retained—at considerable financial cost—many of the Gorkha regiments from Nepal as an additional hedge.

Second, the Congress Party under Nehru was very aware of the “army problem” for at least three decades prior to independence, and began formulating prescient policies that would attenuate the potential for coups in an independent India. In contrast,

Pakistan's political leadership, the Muslim League, did not see the army as a problem to be managed. As Wilkinson argues, this was not a matter of chance; rather, it reflected the fact that the Congress Party had a large constituency from those areas with the biggest "deficit" of representation in the army (i.e., Madras, Orissa, and Bengal). It also reflected the party's linkages with scholars who put forward working papers on this and other issues. After independence, the party's broad religious and ethnic base as well as India's federal structure positioned Congress advantageously to make better decisions on religious, linguistic, and caste matters. Failure to successfully navigate these controversial subjects could have drawn the military into politics in the early years of independence.

The Congress Party also made two important decisions to build in cross-cutting cleavages: maintain caste-based reservations and reorganize the states along ethno-linguistic lines. Thus Indian political interests would be mobilized by caste and ethnic identities rather than religious ones.

Third, the Congress Party undertook specific coup-proofing strategies to balance the power of the military, especially during the crucial first decade of India's existence. Radical restructuring was taken off the table due to military threats posed by Pakistan, China, and even Burma. However, the government did undertake very important changes that made coups less likely. Nehru first changed the symbolic civil-military power structure by revising the "warrant of precedence" to ensure that the rank of top generals is below that of senior civil servants and elected representatives and by restricting military personnel from wearing their uniforms. Nehru also personally took over the commander-in-chief's house as the new residence for the prime minister.

To militate against potential coordination of military action against the state, Nehru retained the British system of keeping most of the army's infantry battalions "structured in 'fixed class' units, in which each of the four companies was ethnically cohesive, but the battalion as a whole contained at least two different ethnic groups" (Wilkinson, p. 21). He also refused the calls of state politics to set up provincial regiments, which could act as a focal point for provincial conflicts.

Under Nehru, the Ministry of Defense introduced several changes within the military high command to make it less cohesive and more responsive to civilian control. In 1947, the commander-in-chief was removed from the cabinet and subordinated to the Minister of Defense. This meant that the ministry, not the particular services, made expenditure decisions. In 1955, the position of "commander in chief" was downgraded to "army chief" with a rank equal to that of the other service chiefs. This allowed civilians to pit the service chiefs against one another and inhibit their ability to successfully coordinate against the civilian leadership. The Congress leadership also encouraged ethnic heterogeneity of the officer corps. For example, to prevent Sikhs (who were about 26 percent of the army) from being able to mobilize their influence against the political leadership, there was rarely a Sikh chief of army staff. From 1947 to 1977, only one army chief came from the Punjab. They also limited the tenures of senior officers and dispatched many retired officers to diplomatic posts abroad. At the same time, they enhanced the professionalism of the army by setting up training academies for junior and mid-career personnel, and ensured that the Intelligence Bureau kept a close watch on serving and retired generals and the rest of the army.

Wilkinson concedes that such aggressive coup-proofing may have had impacts upon the military's effectiveness.² While assessing this is difficult, he suggests that coup

²This is what Caitlin Talmadge concluded in her work *The Dictator's Army: Battlefield Effectiveness in Authoritarian Regimes* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2015).

proofing did impact military effectiveness in several ways. He believes that it explains the weakening of the military before India's disastrous war with China in 1962. It also created an unwieldy defense bureaucracy with redundancy and an unwillingness to share information (as witnessed during the 1999 Kargil Crisis) and, by curbing compensation and perquisites, has contributed to the current officer shortage because the army cannot compete for quality personnel with India's vibrant private sector.

In chapter 6 (pp. 162–216), Wilkinson turns to Pakistan. Partition bequeathed to Pakistan a more ethnically imbalanced army: West Punjab had only 25 percent of the population but comprised nearly 75 percent of the infantry. In contrast, East Pakistan—dominated by ethnic Bengalis—had virtually no representation in the army despite being over half of Pakistan's total population. This no doubt contributed to Pakistan's eventual loss of East Pakistan. Whereas the Congress Party took an early and active role in restructuring the army, the Muslim League never understood that this was a problem, much less considered remediating steps. Unlike the Congress Party with its national footprint, the Muslim League was a transplanted party whose constituency was in those areas that remained in North India. The League immediately had to focus upon building a state from scratch. “The combination of bad inheritances [and] a weak political party ... left Pakistan unable to make the significant changes to the civil-military balance from 1947 to 1958 that might have coup proofed the new state” (Wilkinson, p. 194). Pakistan did have another chance to dispatch the army back to its barracks in 1971 after the loss of East Pakistan. Unfortunately, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was more interested in sustaining his tenure as civilian autocrat and did little to change the balance of power. In fact, his abuse of power and of the armed forces paved the way for the coup of 1977. Since then, there has been no serious effort to restructure the civil-military balance.

Shah's explanation of civil-military affairs is less data-driven than that of Wilkinson. Instead, he relies upon thick description. Shah wants to “explain military politics in Pakistan from the neglected viewpoint of the military's belief system” (Shah, p. 8). Like in my work,³ he makes use of interviews and the military's professional journal, training curricula, and strategy documents from the National Defense University.

For Shah, Pakistan's course was determined by the early decision to wage war in India over Kashmir in 1947–48. Notably, by the time the army was already into this war, the Muslim League was still struggling to build the apparatus of state. In that war, Pakistan's army seized about one-third of Kashmir. Pakistan would fight wars again over Kashmir in 1965 and 1999 with no substantive change in territorial control. However, this early conflict with India and Pakistan's insistence upon seeing India as an existential threat spurred the militarization of the state and empowered the generals to increase their influence in domestic politics and national security.

Shah's account and that of Wilkinson converge upon the observation that subsequent Pakistani civilian leaders have been unable or unwilling to impose coup-proofing strategies. Pakistani civilians contributed negatively to the civil-military imbalance. Early choices to disenfranchise the Bengalis in East Pakistan and steadfast refusal to address the various ethnic disgruntlements created opportunities for Pakistan's enemies (India and Afghanistan) to exploit these internal fissures. Thus, early on, Pakistan's internal and external security policies became interlinked. Given the Muslim League's weaknesses *ab initio* and its own fervent efforts to limit the political strength of Bengalis in

³C. Christine Fair, *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

East Pakistan, it did little to attenuate the ever-growing role of the military in politics. In this sense, Shah's argument will be familiar to those who have read the work of Ayesha Jalal, Stephen Cohen, and Husain Haqqani.

C. CHRISTINE FAIR
Georgetown University
c_christine_fair@yahoo.com

SINGLE-BOOK ESSAYS

The Spectral Wound: Sexual Violence, Public Memories, and the Bangladesh War of 1971. By NAYANIKA MOOKHERJEE. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2015. 352 pp. ISBN: 9780822359494 (cloth, also available in paper).
doi:10.1017/S0021911816001935

Following two recent landmark feminist publications on the Bangladesh War of Liberation—Bina D'Costa's *Nationbuilding, Gender and War Crimes in South Asia* (London: Routledge, 2011) and Yasmin Saikia's *Women, War, and the Making of Bangladesh: Remembering 1971* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2011)—Nayanika Mookherjee's monograph *The Spectral Wound: Sexual Violence, Public Memories, and the Bangladesh War of 1971* stands apart in its methodological and theoretical contributions. Ethical storytelling as political and analytical projects infuses the process of interrogating and reflecting upon the otherwise extractive nature of ethnography. It is noteworthy that Mookherjee chose Enayetpur as the site of her research, because there reside the women who have already experienced public exposure, having been summoned to Dhaka to give testimonies at the People's Tribunal of 1992. Remarkably, Mookherjee does not inquire directly about the events of 1971; rather, by focusing on the everyday "fragments" and narrations she conveys a "talkable history" of war and its circulations. Mookherjee's meticulous attention to women's narrations of the minutiae of suffering illuminates the social construction of trauma, its nonlinear and relational manifestations. Even as individual women's stories are highlighted, these very singular experiences are shown to be shaped by a confluence of social forces, including patriarchy, poverty, ethnicity, and religion.

There are no easy answers to questions raised in this critical book. "What does ethnography offer to complicate narrative and to engender ethical activism?" "Can human rights narratives accommodate the complexities of *birangonas*'/victims' experiences?" "How can activists recognize sexual violence without stigmatizing the experience as a wound?" Demystifying national mythologies that erect figures such as the virtuous *birangona* and the detestable collaborator, Mookherjee unpacks war's complicities and contradictions. Symbolic violence against women, coupled with demasculinization of men, feminization of the colonized, and the irreducible historical and racialized differences in a society at a particular time shape the contours of each war, such that each atrocity remains mired in its unique historical and political conditions. While this review can never do justice to this multifaceted ethnography, I will organize my remarks around the following themes: gendered trauma and the question of silence.