political spaces rooted in empathy and respect for the diverse experiences of those around us.

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Pakistan's Pathway to the Bomb: Ambitions, Politics, and Rivalries

Mansoor Ahmed. Washington, DC, Georgetown University Press, 2022. 304 pp. Paper, $44.95.

Mansoor Ahmed has written a revisionist volume that re-examines the various influential persons who gave form to Pakistan's nuclear weapons program between 1968 and the May 1998 nuclear tests. Ahmed is much more motivated by the determinants of the process by which Pakistan pursued vertical nuclear proliferation rather than the external drivers of the same. While accepting that it was the security dilemma with India that fundamentally motivated Pakistan's pursuit of nuclear weapons, he argues that the varied and often competing political equities of Pakistan's rivaling nuclear elites determined the trajectory of Pakistan's nuclear program. One of the overarching goals of this book is to explicitly destabilize the prevailing belief that Abdul Qadeer Khan was the most consequential person who shaped Pakistan's path to a nuclear weapon. Moreover, Ahmed contends that the extant literature cannot explain how Khan's illicit proliferation network was able to emerge from Pakistan's centrifuge-enrichment project in the 1980s and perdure for more than a decade. His book instead dilates upon the importance of Munir A. Khan, who was a nuclear power engineer and chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission from 1972 to 1991, as well as the author's uncle.

In this book, Ahmed aims to dispel eight purported conventional wisdoms. I will briefly discuss each in turn.

First, he revisits the popular claim that security primarily accounts for Pakistan's nuclear decisions. He presents this revisionist account of Pakistan's emergence as a nuclear power in two ways: he highlights individual contributions of scientists who have been eclipsed by the persistent focus upon A.Q. Khan, and while doing so, he contests several enduring myths associated with Pakistan's nuclear program.

Second, he claims that Pakistan's pursuit of a nuclear weapon was not driven by India's nuclear test in 1974, as many scholars widely profess. According to evidence Ahmed marshals, Pakistan's nuclear elite pushed for a dual-use latent

nuclear capability throughout the 1960s—long before India's so-called 1974 peaceful nuclear explosion.

Third, he takes aim at the prevailing belief that Pakistan's nuclear weapons program is principally the outcome of A.Q. Khan's illicit nuclear proliferation network as well as support from advanced states and independent suppliers, including China, Canada, and several European countries, as well as private entities in those countries.

Fourth, he posits that while the first wave of literature on Pakistan's program excessively dilated upon the historiography of A.Q. Khan, the second wave delves into technical aspects of the program that inaccurately promote a narrative that Pakistan pursued two separate and distinct routes to a nuclear weapon. According to this narrative, Pakistan pursued two routes of fissile material production—highly enriched uranium on the one hand and plutonium on the other—which were mutually exclusive competing routes. Instead, he contends that both routes were integral to Pakistan's mastery of the fuel cycle.

Fifth, he takes aim at the ostensible conventional wisdom that Pakistan would have successfully mastered the plutonium route earlier had the French not reneged on its commitment to the Chashma reprocessing plant until pressure from the United States under President Jimmy Carter. The French Chashma reprocessing plant symbolized Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's ambitions to bequeath a nuclear deterrent to Pakistan. Critics of Pakistan's program, according to Ahmed, speciously assert that Pakistan had hoped to use this commercial-scale reprocessing plant to illegally divert plutonium from Karachi Nuclear Power Plant-I (KANUPP-1). Both Chashma and KANUPP-1 were under safeguards. Instead, he claims that Chashma's primary purpose was to acquire technology while building a civilian nuclear power infrastructure.

Sixth, relating to the third conventional wisdom he seeks to dispel, Ahmed disputes the belief that Pakistan's successful acquisition of a nuclear weapon is attributed to A.Q. Khan's theft of classified centrifuge designs from the Dutch Uranium Enrichment Corporation and to A.Q. Khan's centrifuge program.

Seventh, he seeks to eviscerate the contention bolstered by A.Q. Khan's own claims that Pakistan's centrifuge-enrichment project was stalled long before A.Q. Khan revivified it. Ahmed argues for a more complicated history of this important program with an equally complex cast of characters who gave it shape.

Finally, he disputes the prevailing belief that Pakistan's army controlled the nuclear program prior to 1998. Instead, he avows that that nuclear decision-making was ad hoc and that the heads of both the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and Khan Research Laboratory reported to the country's chief executive rather than the army chief until 1998.

To advance these arguments, Ahmed employs an expositional strategy that does not serve his purposes well. Instead of having chapters specifically dedicated to challenging these conventional wisdoms, the nine chapters of this book contribute in various ways to addressing these eight popular beliefs. The reader is left to thread the needles of Ahmed's arguments, which is really the burden of the author. The first two chapters detail the factors that explain Pakistan's success in launching a small civilian nuclear program between 1956 and 1972 as well as the early turf wars that hindered its progress. The third

chapter assesses Pakistan's acquisition of safeguarded nuclear-cycle facilities between 1972 and 1974. Chapter 4 explains Pakistan's rational for pursuing centrifuge enrichment of uranium after the Indian 1974 nuclear tests. Chapter 5, placing in its sights the posited myths surrounding A.Q. Khan, exposits the genesis of Pakistan's import procurement chain for the centrifuge project before and after Khan's arrival in Pakistan from the Netherlands. Chapter 6 focuses upon the various controversies and challenges that Pakistan encountered in building its centrifuge program between 1975 and 1980. Chapter 7 turns to the reasons for the French decision to retrench from its agreement to assist Chashma in 1978, addressing both the domestic and international politics that motivated this decision. Chapter 8 delineates Pakistan's parallel ambitions to design, develop, and test nuclear weapons while also establishing a nuclear fuel cycle. Chapter 9 illustrates how the various rivalries described throughout the book also affected Pakistan's ballistic missile and conventional weapons program throughout the 1990s. Ahmed avers that these rivalries actually peaked around the time of Pakistan's May 1998 tests.

While this chapter structure does little to help Ahmed cogently undermine the eight myths he noted in the introduction, the biggest empirical challenge to this book is the author's own bias that motivated this research in the first place. As the author acknowledges, one of the seminal motivations for this book was an interview with Munir Khan one month prior to his death in March 1999. Notably, Munir Khan is the author's uncle. The author actually prompted Munir Khan to give this interview after the heated public debates that followed Pakistan's 1998 nuclear tests. His other interviews came about because of his ties to Munir Khan. Given that this rivalry between Munir Khan and A.Q. Khan was well known, those persons granting the author interviews may have anticipated that he would advance their equities while downplaying the contributions of A.Q. Khan. The degree to which his personal-subject position undermines or advances his scholarly commitments is to be judged by the reader.

While there is much in this book to appreciate, there are some issues that make the book inaccessible even to seasoned scholars of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. First, the book often feels tedious as the author overtly privileges the contributions of Munir Khan and his associates while deprecating those of others. This tendency to champion Munir Khan niggles because of the author's nonobjective relationship with this research generally and his relationship with Munir Khan specifically. (The author is to be credited with acknowledging this relationship forthrightly. In contrast, Feroz Hassan Khan did not disclose his ties to President Musharraf in his own *Eating Grass*.) Second, the chapters are extremely detailed, whether the author is discussing specific personalities or specific technical issues in Pakistan's program. While these trees are an important story, the reader is rarely given a glimpse of the forest because the author rarely offers an overview of why any particular cluster of details is important. He consistently refuses to oblige the reader with an overarching "so what?" that brings that collection of facts into clarion focus. Third, the author has really important and helpful information in the appendices that should have been incorporated into the text to mitigate some of the perplexing miasma of technical jargon that undermines the fluidity and readability of the chapters.

Despite these serious shortcomings in motivation, data collection, exposition, and organization, scholars of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program particularly and nuclear proliferation generally will benefit from this volume.

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African Interventions: State Militaries, Foreign Powers, and Rebel Forces

Emizet F. Kisangani and Jeffrey Pickering. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2021. 292 pp. $84.99.

It is difficult to overstate the significance of understanding interstate military interventions in Africa, given interventions' prevalence and the continent's demographic, economic, geopolitical, and security importance. In their theoretically and empirically rich *African Interventions: State Militaries, Foreign Powers, and Rebel Forces*, Kisangani and Pickering present an ambitious and groundbreaking work focusing on the distinct nature of military interventions in Africa.

In *African Interventions*, the authors conceptualize interstate military interventions as moving national troops or forces into another country to achieve various objectives. Other types of state support extended to a government or rebel group, such as providing funding or equipment and covert support, are excluded from this conceptualization. The concentration on interstate military interventions also excludes actions taken by intergovernmental organizations, although the authors occasionally side note some intergovernmental organization actions by the African Union, the European Union, and the United Nations within the broader narrative.

Theoretically, the authors uniquely combine classic approaches to international relations with more recent civil war and intervention literature. The Westphalian understanding of sovereignty and border fixity damaged postcolonial African states in many ways. Starting from this historical reality, the authors lay out three theories that shape the causes of intervention in Africa. First, they apply classic diversionary theories of war to military intervention. They argue that superpowers, European colonial states, and African states are equally predisposed to using military intervention when they suffer from economic and political unrest. Border fixity renders military interventions a low-cost distraction for the domestic audience because it almost removes the existential threat a state may pose to another state.