

is frightening. Another frequently undeveloped theme in NK studies is its post-Cold War mutation into a corrupt gangster state.

The cultural section too brings new information and arguments that Pyongyang kremlinologists overfocused on high politics will enjoy. There is much recent speculation that the flood of information about the outside world that partial marketization has brought will change NK hearts and minds. Indeed, it is often suggested this is the only way NK will change—through bottom-up social evolution and changing expectations—because the regime itself seems unusually close-knit in its support for Kim family royalism.

Finally, the discussion of NK's diplomacy tells the familiar but necessary story of the remarkably frustrating effort by outside powers to push NK into international norms. Indeed, NK is a case study of how a small power in a tough neighbourhood can play its hand remarkably well and avoid domination by much larger rivals. KIS was a master of this, as the essays demonstrate. But NK's continuing provocations, as well as the now-enormous gap between North and South, make it increasingly hard for NK to "weave" among its neighbours. Per Kang, NK simply lacks the credibility that SK has and is increasingly reliant solely on China for diplomatic and economic cover. NK would prefer to play the Six Parties off against each other, but those days are fading. As with economics, NK desperately needs a new diplomatic strategy to flourish going forward. Muddling through with grudging Chinese aid is clearly risky.

And this raises my only serious criticism of the book: it is not actually clear that NK is in transition. Clearly it should be. It is hopelessly isolated internationally and economically an "Upper Volta with nuclear weapons." But NK is remarkably consistent. The Kims are still with us. The regime shows no genuine interest in unity. Economic reforms have been facile. The tyranny of gulags, repression and indoctrination are still in place. That NK hangs on *without transitioning* is in fact its great puzzle to us.

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**SOUTH ASIAN SECURITY: 21st Century Discourses.** *Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series, 51. Edited by Sagrika Dutt and Alok Bansal.* London and New York: Routledge, 2012. xii, 286 pp. (Tables, maps.) US\$145.00, cloth. ISBN 978-0-415-61891-5.

South Asian security has gathered considerable salience and complexity with the beginning of the twenty-first century, in the context of the US global "war on terror" in Afghanistan and the rise of a number of insurgencies in South Asian countries. Sagrika Dutt and Alok Bansal's edited volume seems to be a response to these developments. The issues involved in South Asian security have been addressed in this volume at three levels: those related

to state-centric approaches; those emerging from insurgencies and ethno-nationalist movements; and lastly those concerned with human security. At the state-centric level, the situation in Afghanistan, India-Pakistan conflict on Kashmir and the nuclearization of these two regional adversaries and China's strategic assertion in South Asia have been covered. With regard to internal conflicts in South Asia, the volume addresses ethno-nationalist movements in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India's northeast as well as the emergence of Maoists in Nepal and Islamic identity in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. Lastly, to focus on the "changing security agenda," the authors discuss human security, climate change, energy politics and the performance of regional development organizations.

Most of the narratives in this volume present known facts in a descriptive format, with the exception of some contributions, like the one by Blarel on "Nuclear Weapons in South Asia" (chapter 3, 47–61), Bansal on "Ethno-nationalism in Pakistan" (chapter 7, 121–140) and by Dadwal on "Energy pipelines" (chapter 13, 235–244). In general, the volume lacks in the depth of understanding and the level of analysis of the themes discussed. The contributor on Sri Lanka (chapter 6) appears to be struggling to relate the Tamil-Sinhala ethnic conflict with the questions of democracy and development. The one on Nepal (chapter 9) misses the most important aspect of the Maoist ideological movement that relates to its convergence with ethno-nationalist faultlines simmering in the country for centuries. It is this convergence that has become a major obstacle in drafting a Constitution for the "New Nepal." There is another odd omission: given that the volume addresses the Maoist insurgency in Nepal, why does it not offer any contribution on the Maoist movement in India, which has officially been described as the most serious security challenge to the country by no less a person than the Indian prime minister himself. One fails to understand Kunal's argument on Islamism in South-Central Asia for there is no attempt to link the phenomenon of Islamic extremism with the problem of South Asian regional security or the global concern for terrorism. The narrative of India-Pakistan relations on Kashmir does not make any distinction between the stated and the real significance of the Kashmir question in terms of the identity or existential security of the contesting states; nor does it bring out the role of extra-regional powers and the Cold War that made the issue more complex than it deserved to be. One wonders if Pakistan is involved more in keeping the Kashmir issue alive to stoke the regional fires rather than seeking its judicious resolution.

Most of the chapters are dated, closing their narratives by 2009 or 2010 at the most. Subsequent developments in the respective South Asian countries have overtaken the arguments made in this volume. The chapters seem to stand alone, without any attempt having been made, either within the chapters or at the end of the volume to link their arguments with the overarching theme of regional security. The editors owe it to their readers,

and also to the contributors, to provide a summing-up chapter that presents the findings of each of the essays as part of a coherent argument regarding the problems and prospects of South Asian security as a whole.

The readers of this volume will find difficulty in comprehending its conceptual layout in two significant respects. The first is to do with the theoretical framework of regional security followed in the volume. Sagarika Dutt, in her theoretical discussion of the regional security concept, rightly observes that international security studies is “mainly a western subject with its roots in western political theory” (19). That being so, why should then the non-Western security puzzles, cast into radically different cultural and historical contexts, be sought to be solved through Western paradigms? Dutt has endorsed Buzan’s concept of “security complex.” The relevance of such concepts in the context of a rise in the security role of non-state actors and a fast globalising world has become severely constrained. Was it helpful in structuring this volume? No other chapter refers to Buzan in any serious manner. In fact Ayoob’s contribution, taken into account in Dutt’s chapter (13–14), offers much more relevant insight, which the contributors in the second section of this volume (on internal ethno-nationalist conflicts) could have made use of if alerted to it in advance by the editors. Ayoob has drawn clues from South Asian experiences to construct the notion of insecurity arising out of the nation and state-building processes.

The second difficulty with the structure of this volume is that the contours of South Asian security as they are unfolding in the twenty-first century cannot be neatly categorized into three clusters, separate from each other. Yet the book forces such a three-part distinction because of its structure. The real security cocktail in South Asia is made up of the spill-over from one cluster to the other. Both the human and non-traditional security triggers as well as the state-level conflicts feed into ethno-national insurgencies and conflicts. And it also works in reverse, where the insurgencies and internal conflicts vitiate inter-state engagements and complicate human security challenges. Further, there is a cluster beyond these three regionally confined clusters, at the global level, namely of extra-regional powers and their moves in and around South Asia. The imperatives of a rising and assertive China for South Asian security has been noted in some of the chapters (3, 5 and 6), somewhat casually. But no attempt has been made to delineate the US role in post-Cold War South Asia. The US has obviously been the game changer in Afghanistan, with its strong ripples in South and Central Asia. And now, the new US strategy of Asia-Pacific rebalancing has been set into motion, with India positioned as a “lynchpin.” To the extent that India decides to join the evolving new “great games” in post-2014 Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Asia-Pacific region (under US-China competition and rivalry), South Asian security would be affected through the reactions of China and Pakistan to the India-US strategic partnership. The implications of the big players’ strategic equations on internal turbulence in the South Asian countries will add new

dimensions to South Asian security. As such, the volume under review offers very little help in identifying the emerging security challenges in South Asia in the coming years and decades of the twenty-first century.

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**PRINCELY INDIA RE-IMAGINED: A Historical Anthropology of Mysore from 1799 to the Present.** *Routledge/Edinburgh South Asian Studies Series.* By *Aya Ikegame.* New York; London: Routledge, 2012, xvi, 212 pp. (Tables, figures, maps.) US\$145.00, cloth. ISBN 978-0-415-55449-7.

The nine chapters of this diligent reworking of a PhD thesis probe the rituals and ideas on which Indian kingship was founded, the way in which such things changed under British rule and the survival of “kingly” practices in the twenty-first century. Dr. Ikegame’s focus is Mysore, the second most populous of the 500-plus “princely states” preserved under British rule. Today, the best known aspect of the old Mysore state is that it contained the once-sleepy town of Bangalore, now Bengaluru, the booming centre of India’s cyber industries.

The thrust of the book’s argument is that kingly practices, well understood in pre-British times, survived and adapted to British rule and can still be detected in the conduct of politics and social interaction today. Dr. Ikegame emphasizes that the book is not intended as a “political and administrative history” of Mysore. Rather, it aims to understand how “the palace” operated: how it related to its peers, its subjects and to the British.

Chapters 2 to 8 form the core of the book, each analyzing a different aspect of princely experience in Mysore. Chapter 2, “The Palace,” attempts to understand the functions and finances of the ruler’s household as they evolved in the nineteenth century. Once the centre of genuine power, the palace became a “semi-governmental political body” (33), though it retained significant finances and ritual authority.

Chapter 3, “The Politics of Honour,” focuses on the symbolic ways in which Mysore rulers attempted to retain respect and authority among their subjects and to demonstrate such authority to British rulers. To do this, the rulers had to connect with local social institutions and ensure that such institutions acknowledged subservience to the ruler.

In Chapter 4, “Educating the Maharajas,” Dr. Ikegame examines the Mysore ruling family’s encounters with the education that the imperial power aimed at young princes to try to make them into English gentlemen. From the British perspective, boarding school and English language were desirable; insulation from the influence of female members of the ruling family was essential; and travel elsewhere in India and overseas was character-building.

“From Clansmen to Gentlemen” (chapter 5) asks how the ruling family