

*Power and Diplomacy: India's Foreign Policies during the Cold War.* By ZORAWAR DAULET SINGH. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2019. xv, 398 pp. ISBN: 9780199489640 (cloth). doi:10.1017/S0021911819001682

It is only within the past decade that India has chosen to open a substantial segment of its foreign affairs archives to scholars. Researchers now enjoy considerable, if not unfettered, entrée into a substantial archival trove. As a consequence, academics working on Indian foreign policy are no longer restricted to their past reliance on newspaper accounts, memoirs, and elite interviews. This, in turn, has produced a new wave of historically informed scholarship on India's foreign and security policies.

In this context, Zorawar Daulet Singh's *Power and Diplomacy* constitutes an important contribution to the extant literature on India's foreign policy during much of the Cold War years. The book, primarily based on the meticulous use of Indian archives and ably augmented with the use of recently declassified American documents, constitutes a path-breaking use of archival sources. It is also to Singh's credit that he has placed much of the historical discussion within the context of the pertinent literature on foreign policy decision-making.

One of the most striking features of the book is its reconstruction of Indian foreign policy debates and decision-making at key historical junctures. To that end, it focuses on a number of important crises and developments in Indian foreign policy during the Cold War years. Specifically, it discusses the Indo-Pakistani crisis of 1950, the forging of the US-Pakistan alliance in 1954, the Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1955, India's initial reactions to the escalation of the war in Vietnam, the break-up of Pakistan in 1971, and India's decision to incorporate the Himalayan kingdom of Sikkim.

The initial section of the book deals extensively with Prime Minister Nehru's worldview. Nehru, who was convinced of the power of what the American scholar Andrew Bingham Kennedy has characterized as "moral efficacy," sought for, and to some degree enabled, India to play a role in global affairs well beyond what its material capabilities might have permitted. To that end, Singh clearly shows how Nehru sought to defuse the 1950 crisis with Pakistan—one that had emerged because of the attacks on minorities on both sides of the border.

Attempting to neutralize a crisis close to home through deft diplomacy was obviously an act of admirable statesmanship, especially given the prevailing emotions in both countries at the time. However, attempting to prevent a serious military escalation in the Taiwan Strait was a matter of a wholly different magnitude. On this occasion, despite his herculean efforts and those of his acolyte, Krishna Menon, Nehru's ability to influence the resolution of the crisis proved to be limited. Singh, who obviously holds Nehru's diplomatic efforts in extremely high regard, grudgingly concedes that this episode underscored the distinct limits of Nehru's approach to conflict resolution. In effect, Nehru's vision of Asia as an "area of peace," however well meaning, simply was not realized. Indeed, while Singh does not discuss the case, the entire diplomatic edifice that Nehru had sought to construct with his persistent engagement of the People's Republic of China would collapse along India's Himalayan border in 1962. With border negotiations at an impasse the battle-hardened People's Republican Army attacked in October, routing a determined but ill-equipped and vastly outgunned Indian Army.

Singh also demonstrates that the intellectual underpinnings of India's foreign policy orientation underwent a significant shift when Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, assumed

the mantle of the premiership following the untimely death of Nehru's immediate successor, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. Singh correctly argues that she, unlike her father, was far more comfortable with the utility of force in international politics. More to the point, she was far more concerned with ensuring India's security in the subcontinent. These shifts in foreign policy orientation were evident from her response to President Johnson's escalation of the war in Vietnam. Although vestiges of the Nehruvian approach to peacemaking were present within Indira Gandhi's foreign policy coterie, Singh argues that more pragmatic considerations, such as extracting suitable benefits from both superpowers, were her principal motivations when intervening in this crisis.

Such a spate of scholarship has recently emerged on the next episode that Singh discusses—India's role in the 1971 war—that there is little that is especially novel in this chapter. As others have argued, Gandhi, along with some of her key advisers, saw this crisis as a unique opportunity to significantly degrade Pakistan's military capabilities and bolster India's dominant position in the subcontinent. Similarly, India's decision to integrate Sikkim into India reflected India's growing security concerns. These misgivings arose when the ruler of the country, the Chogyal, evinced growing interest in moving closer to China and possibly to the United States.

The strengths of *Power and Diplomacy* are evident. It is a carefully researched, cogently argued, and well-organized work. Yet it is possible to raise a small but significant quibble. Singh offers no explicit rationale for the choice of his cases. In what way were these cases exemplary of the conduct of India's foreign policy during the Cold War? Might the choice of other cases have led him to similar if not identical conclusions? These questions aside, the sheer amount of historical detail that Singh has unearthed makes a careful perusal of this book a worthwhile endeavor for any scholar of India's foreign policy.

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*A Garland of Bones: Child Runaways in India.* By JONAH STEINBERG. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2019. xi, 337 pp. ISBN: 9780300222807 (cloth).

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If one looks closely enough in the cities of the United States, one can find children living on the streets. Often, these children are accompanied by parents and siblings, and are the victims of poverty, unemployment, and eviction. But in cities like New Delhi, where the historical legacies of empire and exploitation continue to reverberate throughout daily life, the presence of street children is not only ubiquitous, it is purposeful. In many cases, it is something that the children choose for themselves. Faced with various problems and with aspirations for more promising futures, these children leave their village homes and families, venture to the city, and try to make a life for themselves amid incredibly precarious and often life-threatening environments. The central questions animating Jonah Steinberg's fascinating new book *A Garland of Bones* are: How are we to understand this? What can child runaways in India teach us about the way that "some of the most vulnerable, least powerful people in the world live history" and also make it on their own terms (p. vii)?