

Pacific Affairs, Forthcoming, by Ishtiaq Ahmed.

**THE WARRIOR STATE: Pakistan in the Contemporary World. By T.V. Paul. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. xii, 253 pp. (Tables, maps.) US\$27.95, cloth. ISBN 978-0-19-932223-7.**

Several books have recently tried to shed light on the role of the Pakistan army in Pakistani politics. Paul's contribution receives strong endorsement from the Washington-based think-tank gatekeepers on Pakistan: Stephen Cohen, Hussain Haqqani, Bruce Riedel, Shuja Nawaz and Teresita Schaffer. The point the author wants to make is that historically war preparation and war in Europe proved to be an engine of economic development, but in Pakistan it has not. So, "the puzzle is why not" (2), he remarks.

However, when he reviews the literature from European contexts the evidence is mixed. Successful were those countries which while facing external threats engaged in economic, technological and political modernization and as a result became centralized, bureaucratized entities extracting taxes and other services from their populations and in return providing not only security but gradually also welfare. Expansion through conquest during the colonial period additionally provided material for economic development. The two examples of war preparation, war and development he gives are Germany and Italy. This is quite peculiar, because the reason they survived as developed states even after being defeated in World War II was that they were helped through the Marshall Plan to remain and grow as industrial powers. He admits that the war preparation, war and economic development thesis does not hold in all cases. Besides mentioning minor European states as failures he refers to Austria-Hungary and the Soviet Union as failed

warrior states. What is perhaps most crucial is that in case of defeat the prevailing powers do not let such states fail.

With regard to the developing world, the war preparation, war and development hypothesis becomes even more problematic. The author says that in the developing world “war and war preparation have not produced similar instances of positive results” (8). The reason should not be difficult to guess: no African or Asian state was industrialized when it became an independent state. They were mainly agrarian societies dominated by small urban elites. Moreover, any scope for economic development through conquest and expansion did not exist. So, the relevance of the war preparation, war and development thesis is rather weak when it comes to the developing world.

Paul does not mention the only really successful example in the developing world where not just war preparation but actual war-making, conquest, annexation and occupation have fuelled dramatic development: Israel. The United States and other Western powers’ help and patronage have been crucial for Israel to be a successful developmental warrior state. It has attained a highly sophisticated level of technological competence and has become one of the leading arms exporters of the world. The author prefers to refer to Israel in another context—as a “democracy”—in contrast to authoritarian states such as South Korea and Taiwan, which have, through war preparation, successfully pursued economic development with great determination.

The most interesting part of the book is the comparison between Pakistan and Muslim states such as Turkey, Egypt and Indonesia. Pakistan’s obsessive concern for security deriving mainly from the perceived threat posed by the bigger and industrially more advanced India generated a garrison mentality. Additionally Islamism, with its extremist

and expansionist jargon, became part of the national project and identity. Lacking indigenous resources Pakistan exploited its geostrategic location to solicit economic and military aid from foreign powers. Such aid strengthened the military vis-à-vis the civilian branches of the state. It corrupted the military establishment; consequently economic and human development was neglected. Therefore the geostrategic location became a geostrategic curse.

Such a curse, Paul asserts, also afflicts Egypt though the nationalist army under Nasser did not cultivate Islamism. After the defeat in 1967 and particularly 1973, Egypt abandoned its ambition to defeat Israel and be the leader of the Arab world. It established peace with Israel which brought in huge amounts of US military and economic aid, yet the geostrategic location of Egypt proved to be a curse because economic development was not pursued with determination and commitment.

With regard to Turkey, he mentions that the strong nationalist, modernistic roots and traditions of its army and the exclusion of backward-looking Islamism from ideology provided the balance between war preparation and economic development. As far as Indonesia is concerned, the army too has its roots in the national liberation movement. It became the core player acting as the guardian of the country's security but without hobnobbing ideologically with political Islam. Instead it made economic development a major concern of state policy.

I have shown in my book, *Pakistan: The Garrison State—Origins, Evolution, Consequences (1947-2011)* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2013), that the British military backed Pakistan's creation (as a dependent state) to act as a buffer against Soviet communism in south Asia. The United States co-opted Pakistan in that role through military

pacts with the latter (1954; 1959), but quickly realized that the reason Pakistan wanted to acquire American arms was to assert itself against India and not to help contain the Soviet Union in South Asia. This incongruence of interests had a decisive bearing on Pakistan's prospects as a warrior state. Thus when Pakistan waged wars against India the United States did not extend it any help because in US calculations India was the paramount power in South Asia and not Pakistan. Therefore India could not be alienated; rather it had to be supported as a counterweight, for the containment of Chinese Communism in South Asia. Pakistan reacted by moving closer to China. As a result US-Pakistan relations remained strained during the 1960s but after the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan their military alliance of the 1950s came back to life and Pakistan was armed and abetted to the hilt: Pakistan could even pursue its clandestine nuclear programme notwithstanding concerns of some members of the US Congress. Some of the Washington-based experts played no small role in extenuating the Islamist character of the Pakistani warrior state. Therefore, the war preparation, war and development thesis needs to be qualified by another pre-condition: does a warrior state in the developing world enjoy the trust and support of powerful external patrons and donors or not? Israel has enjoyed such patronage but not Pakistan. I sent my book to some of the gatekeepers in Washington mentioned above but never heard a word from them. I am not surprised.

My book figures in Paul's work but only as an obscure reference to the failure of existing literature on Pakistan to take notice of the war and development literature. As I have shown, it is not very helpful to understand Pakistan's predicaments as a postcolonial garrison state. One chapter in his book is entitled, "The Garrison State." My work is not

reviewed or commented upon, which is a disappointment. On the whole, the book is interesting and instructive. Pakistan's obsessive focus on security and military preparation has meant a flagrant disregard of economic development. Such remiss should be blamed essentially on the Pakistani power elite's flawed priorities and ambitions.

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