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Christophe Jaffrelot, ed. *A History of Pakistan and Its Origins.* London: Anthem Press, 2002. 326 pp. $37.50 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-84331-030-3; $25.00 (paper), ISBN 978-1-84331-149-2.

Lawrence Ziring. *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History.* Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003. 383 pp. $39.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-85168-327-7.

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Pakistan: History and Politics

Given Pakistan's contemporary salience in world affairs, the almost simultaneous publication of two books on the rather untrodden field of Pakistani history and politics is indeed welcome. Both Christophe Jaffrelot's edited volume (first published in French in 2000) and Lawrence Ziring's work focus on the elusiveness and divisiveness of Pakistan's national identity in the years after its creation in 1947, and as Jaffrelot states in his introduction, attempt to bring out the "tension between unity and diversity to which Pakistan has been subject since its inception" (p. 6). Around the overarching theme of Pakistan as a failed state, the books thoroughly investigate not just Pakistan's origins, but also its domestic policies and problems, its external relations with its neighbors and other states, as well as its economic and social structures during the fifty-odd years of its existence.

The contributors to Jaffrelot's volume, which includes European and Pakistani scholars as well as a French diplomat, bring a multi-dimensional perspective to bear on historical and recent events in Pakistan around a variety of themes, including Islamic identity; regional affiliations; ethnic tensions; caste and tribal identities; relations between Pakistan and India, as well as between Pakistan and Central Asia and the Islamic world; economic development; language policies; and education. While focusing on different themes, each chapter re-asserts the main argument of the work: that the Pakistani state has found it difficult to articulate a coherent national identity that is not somehow seen as being artificial or a state imposition by one of the many constituent elements of its population. The sense of belonging within and to Pakistan, according to this volume, is so diffuse that even "Pakistanis themselves sometimes have difficulty in finding a sense of their history and heritage" (p. 4).

The first section of the volume brings this issue into sharper focus through a discussion of the relationship between Islam, ethnicity, and regional identity in Pakistan. The first chapter, by Jaffrelot himself, gives a general synopsis of the history of the movement for Pakistan under the auspices of the All India Muslim League as well as the various separatist and ethnic movements within Pakistan after its inception, coming to the now familiar conclusion that the Pakistani state has defined the Pakistani nation in Islamic terms, created a set of "others" (Hindus, Christians, Ahmadis, Indians, and so on), and launched campaigns against them in an attempt to unify the country in the face of regional movements, without, of course, much success. While his concluding sentence: "Pakistan, therefore, might well be a case of nationalism without a nation" (p. 38), is not misplaced in the case of Pakistan, it bears mention that Pakistan is hardly unique in the region, or even the world, in being home to a state-sponsored nationalism that systematically effaces difference and allows only for the existence of a single nation within the boundaries of the state.

Part 2 explores the intricacies of Pakistan's foreign policy in the context of the Cold War, the ups and downs of its relationship with India, its attempts at formulating a visible role in the Islamic world, and its changing global position after the September 11 attacks (although Ziring's later-published work does a much more com-

prehensive job of this). The three chapters in this section agree that Pakistan's foreign policy was formulated in the shadow of Partition and the resultant need felt by Pakistani leaders to assert a distinction between Pakistan as an Islamic country and India as a secular one; thus, "Pakistan remains a prisoner of history" (p. 132). Islam emerges again as the main feature of Pakistan's foreign policy, used, according to the authors, not only by its military leaders, but also its democratically elected ones. The section does a particularly good job of discussing Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's role in creating and perpetuating an Islamic identity for Pakistan. In the case of the conflict over Kashmir, the section seems to place the onus of its resolution in the hands of Pakistani leaders, as summed up in this question: "when will the leaders of Pakistan feel ready to rethink their regional policy and restore calm to their borders? " (p. 132).

The third section focuses on the economy and social structures of Pakistan since its inception, with lengthy discussions of demography, effects of migration, agriculture, industrial development, and so on. One of the chapters in the section is devoted to examining the impact of castes and tribes on the social structures of Pakistan and ends up dividing Pakistani society into distinct ethnic groups and tribes, reminiscent of British censuses and district gazetteers of the colonial period. It is correct in pointing out, however, that Pakistani society continues to be driven by ties of community, particularly those of blood and tribal brotherhood, and that these ties are gradually breaking down not only in urban areas, but also in the countryside. What is missing from this section, and the collection as a whole, is a discussion of the gendered aspects of Pakistani nationalism (especially since successive Pakistani regimes have used women as markers of nation and community); the resultant impact on the position of women in Pakistani society; and the regional and class differences among women in Pakistan.

Despite appearing to define Pakistan in singular, "Islamic" terms, the final section of the volume, appropriately titled "A Plural Culture? ", points to the country's extraordinary diversity, in terms of religion (Islam's sectarian and ideological divisions), region, language, and class. Chapter 11, perhaps one of the more interesting chapters in the collection, argues that while it might appear as though Islam has determined the course of Pakistani politics since its inception, the centrality of its role in political life was not a foregone conclusion in the first decade of Pakistan's inception. Through a detailed discussion of the constitutional debates in Pakistan between 1948 and 1956, Marc Gaborieau points out that Pakistan was hardly destined to become an Islamic state. The result of these debates was the 1956 constitution, which created a compromise between religious leaders, who wanted Islam to play a greater role in politics, and modernists, with more secular tendencies, and circumscribed Islam's role in political life to a great extent. The compromise, however, was gradually chipped away at by the political exigencies of successive Pakistani regimes, in particular Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who devised a new constitution in 1973 and pronounced Ahmadiyyas non-Muslims, thus creating a constitutional distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims (who were now to be second-class citizens). Despite this and other attempts at Islamizing the constitution, Gaborieau rightly argues, Islam's role in Pakistan's institutions and politics is limited, since "the state still has the last word, and has been adept at setting up a system of checks and balances to maintain its sovereignty" (p. 249).

A History of Pakistan and its Origins would serve as an excellent text for courses on South Asian or Pakistani history and politics, particularly due to its division into thematic chapters, even though it offers a fairly traditional reading of Pakistan's history. It is particularly strong in discussing the role of Islam in Pakistan's domestic life as well as its foreign policy, while also pointing out that Islam's importance was neither inevitable nor is all-important in Pakistani political and social life. The major lacuna of the work, as pointed out earlier, is the almost complete silence on gender and women's issues. This is particularly problematic since Pakistan's quest for a national identity cannot be understood without reference to its gendered aspects and the state's appropriation of women and, quite as much, men to fulfill its political and social agendas.

Lawrence Ziring's book, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*, is an expansion of his earlier work *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century*, which was published in 1997 as a Golden Jubilee volume. The current work, published only six years after this volume, attempts to account for and discuss the continued importance of Afghanistan in Pakistan's overall development, particularly after the events of September 11, 2001. Ziring, an old hand at Pakistan who has taught Pakistani history and politics for over twenty years, argues that the impact of September 11 on the country is too momentous to ignore. As he states in the preface to the book, "If Pakistan was ever judged remote and on the margins of history, 9/11 altered attitudes and perceptions–Pakistan today is a pivotal country–that can no longer be taken for granted or denied access to the inner sanctum of world powers" (p. xii). As much a

"brief history" as an "interpretive essay," the book brings together Pakistan's past and present and forecasts its future to understand the monumental challenges facing the country, in the hope that it "helps in the reformulation of ideas about what it means to be a Pakistani at the dawn of a new millennium" (p. xiv).

The first seven chapters of *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*, are a more concise version of chapters from the Golden Jubilee volume. Beginning with the origins of Pakistan in the movement led by the All India Muslim League under Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Ziring succinctly discusses the early years of Pakistan under Jinnah and then Ayub Khan; Yahya Khan's rule; the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 and its aftermath; Pakistan under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto; Islamization under Zia ul-Haq's military administration; and the revival of democracy under Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. In these chapters, as in the rest of the book, Ziring echoes the Jaffrelot volume in stating that Pakistan has been unable to articulate a cohesive national identity and remains an "incomplete idea," due to its long years of military rule, the failure of democratic institutions to take root in the polity, the growth of militant Islam, and most significantly, a failure of leadership.

The last four chapters of the book are the most important and interesting, since they offer a comprehensive scholarly reading of the impact of the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and September 11 on Pakistan's domestic development and foreign policy. Chapter 9 offers a fascinating account of General Pervez Musharraf's life and his rise to power through the ranks of the Pakistani military. It also argues that Pakistan was connected to worldwide terrorism through its support of militants in Indian-held Kashmir as well as its support of the Taliban in Afghanistan, long before the events of September 11, 2001, made Pakistan's activities a concern for Western countries. Chapters 10 and 11 are an in-depth discussion of Musharraf's attempts to balance Pakistan's domestic interests (particularly those of Islamist groups) alongside expressing a more important role for the country in the international arena in the wake of 9/11. Ziring argues that Musharraf made a strategic decision to assist America in the war against terrorism because he felt that the country had no choice if it wanted to survive in the fast-changing international order, not because he was particularly ideologically committed to the enterprise.

Nevertheless, in Ziring's view, these events provided Pakistan with a "new opportunity to examine its ethos and to decide what exactly it wanted for its future" (p. 317). The choice was between becoming a fortress of Islam or a secular democracy as envisioned by its founding fathers, Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan. Unfortunately, Musharraf's record in establishing the latter has been, as Ziring shows, checkered at best. While he has made a show of cracking down on militant groups, he has also chipped away at the already-weak elected institutions of the state in Pakistan. Ziring concludes that Musharraf's success as a leader will depend on whether he is able to balance the interests of stabilizing the country with reopening the democratic process, which have proven to be incompatible objectives in Pakistan, especially since Islamic parties have made great strides in the October 2002 elections. He leaves readers with a sobering thought on Pakistan's future: In the current international scenario, "Pakistani society will be compelled to choose between an army-dominated but secular political system, or an army-dominated government guided by theocratic ruminations," neither of which, he rightly points out, will satisfy the Pakistani public's yearning for democracy (p. 368-369). *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrents of History* is written in a more narrative style and follows chronology more closely than Jaffrelot's edited volume, but is still eminently readable, especially for the lay audience looking to acquaint itself with the country that is playing such an important role in world politics and the fight against terrorism. Some of its chapters could also be assigned as reading in undergraduate courses on South Asian politics, global terrorism, and international relations. Unfortunately, Ziring, much like Jaffrelot, does not incorporate gender or women, themes that would add a fascinating component to his otherwise comprehensive discussion of Pakistan's origins, its development in the post-colonial era, and its increasingly important role in contemporary global politics.

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