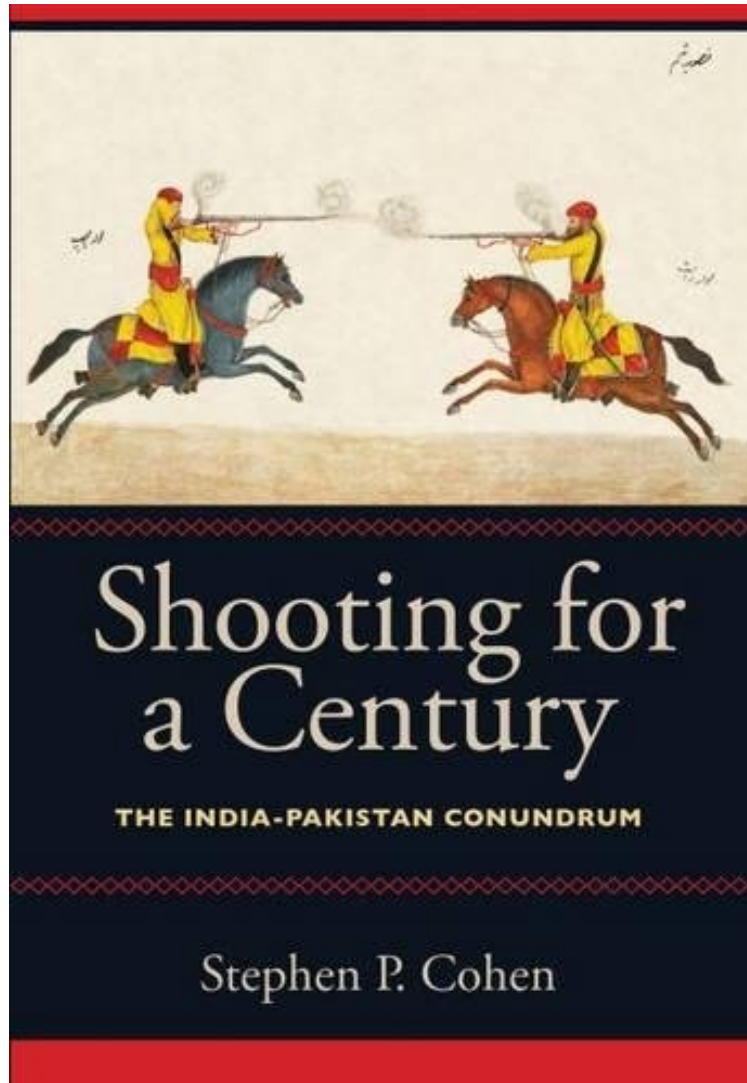


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Shooting for a Century: The India-Pakistan Conundrum

Stephen P. Cohen

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Stephen P. Cohen : Shooting for a Century: The India-Pakistan Conundrum before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shooting for a Century: The India-Pakistan Conundrum:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An excellent overviewBy Jonathan BaumIf you're looking for a pithy and to-the-point summation of one of the modern world's longest-lasting rivalries, look no further. One of Professor Cohen's little tongue-in-cheek observations is that several American Presidents have taken it upon themselves to try and solve the India-Pakistan conflict, perhaps with visions of a Nobel Peace Prize dancing before their eyes. In the end, they go on to try and deal with something simple, like the Arab-Israeli struggle. This is one of

those international problems that simply refuses to go away, and the causes are many: culture, territorial conflict, a long memory of real and perceived insults and defeats, religion, etc. Add a healthy dose of nuclear weapons, mutual proxy warfare and plenty of nationalist rhetoric and you have a situation that keeps people up at night, not least in the two countries involved. Cohen points out that the difference between the antagonists would seem to play heavily into India's hand, and Pakistan's weaknesses other than military place it almost in the "failed state" category; a struggle that Pakistan can't win and India can't lose. And while some Indians might be willing to simply wait until Pakistan's "inevitable" collapse takes place, Cohen is probably right to point out that Pakistan is "too nuclear to fail." Are there chances for the situation ameliorating? No, probably not, but work can be done to keep it from getting much worse.⁹

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. An Outstanding Book By T.V. Paul This is an outstanding book; one of the rare intellectual projects that attempts to understand the reasons for the persistence of the India-Pakistan rivalry for nearly 65 years. It is a major advancement in our understanding of the complex factors involved in the India-Pakistan conflict dynamics. It also offers multiple pathways through which this conflict could be resolved or prolonged. Although the book is not a theory-driven work, it does use some relevant theories, especially towards the end. Its strength lies in bringing out the deep empirical factors, especially from the decades of understanding Prof. Cohen has developed as a result of his interactions with the protagonists from the region as well as US policymakers. It deftly uses published materials from the region to show the differing perspectives of the actors in both countries. South Asia regional specialists, policymakers, and all others interested in enduring rivalries, especially among international relations scholars must take this book seriously. T.V. Paul, James McGill Professor of International Relations, McGill University and author of *The Warrior State: Pakistan in the Contemporary World* Oxford University Press, 2013.⁶

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Exceptionally Clear Analysis By E. Slavitt This is an exceptionally clear and cogent analysis of a part of the world that does not get sufficient attention in the United States. India and Pakistan have been in conflict since their inception and there appears to be no prospect for resolution. The history of wars between them is made even more threatening by their possession of nuclear weapons. Mr. Cohen does a masterful job of distilling down his deep knowledge of the region into an organized and insightful analysis accessible even to readers unfamiliar with the region and its history. It is a fascinating story of two countries which profoundly misunderstand each other and, to some extent, themselves. I recommend it highly.

The rivalry between India and Pakistan has proven to be one of the world's most intractable international conflicts, ever since 1947 when the British botched their departure from the South Asian subcontinent. And the enmity is likely to continue for another thirty-five years, reaching the century mark. This has critical implications for both countries and the rest of the world. Renowned South Asia expert Stephen P. Cohen explains why he expects this rivalry to continue in this first comprehensive survey of the deep historical, cultural, and strategic differences that underpin the hostility. In recent years the stakes have increased as India and Pakistan have each acquired a hundred or more nuclear weapons, blundered into several serious crises, and become victims of terrorism, some of it from across their borders. America is puzzled by the problem of dealing with a rising India and a struggling Pakistan, and Cohen offers a fresh approach for U.S. policy in dealing with these two powers. Drawing on his rich experience in South Asia to explore the character, depth, and origin of Indian and Pakistani attitudes toward each other, Cohen develops a comprehensive theory of why the dispute between New Delhi and Islamabad is likely to persist. He also describes the terrible cost of this animosity for the citizens of India and Pakistan, including the region's high levels of violence and low level of economic integration. On a more hopeful note, however, he goes on to suggest developments that could ameliorate the tension, including a more active role for the United States in addressing a range of issues that divide the nations. Kashmir is one of these issues, but as much a consequence as a cause of the rivalry. Can India and Pakistan resolve their many territorial and identity issues? Perhaps the best they can expect in the near term is a limited degree of normalization, including bottom-up ideas generated by the peace and business communities, as well as a realistic assessment by strategic elites of the two states' shared common interests. "Right now, full normalization seems unlikely," Cohen writes in the preface, "so this book is suffused with conditional pessimism: normalization would be desirable, but there are worse futures than a projection of the present rivalry for another thirty years or more."

"The approach...is fresh and the treatment forthright: both worth noting in a scholar-practitioner whose 50-year career of writing on India and Pakistan might have left him with little new to say about bridging the divide between the two countries. That Cohen is able to take up the challenge stems from his frank admission that the 'full normalization' of relations between India and Pakistan is unlikely for at least another generation: they could still be shooting at each other a century after partition." *International Affairs* About the Author Stephen P. Cohen is a senior fellow in Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution. Long considered one of America's premier experts on South Asia, he has a number of books to his credit, including *India: Emerging Power*, *The Idea of Pakistan*, and *Arming without Aiming: India's Military Modernization* (with Sunil Dasgupta).