

Drifts and Dynamics: Russia's Ukraine War and Northeast Asia. Edited by *Sriparna Pathak and Manoj Kumar Panigrahi*; (Pentagon Press LLP, New Delhi, January 2023), Pages: 152; Price: Rs 995; ISBN-9390095643

It is a war no one expected and it is difficult to fathom its full consequences. With Russia unable to secure an easy victory and Ukraine failing to mount unbearable costs on Moscow, the conflict has blurred strategic signaling with no clear red lines. But it has shot up, in an unprecedented manner, energy and food prices, seriously affecting almost all the world.

The Russian invasion has also led to several tectonic changes not only in Europe but also in the rest of the world. Indeed, the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which began on 24 February this year but shows no early signs of ending, is threatening to engulf the whole world. Acutely affected is the Northeast Asian Region, which is home to China, South Korea, North Korea, Japan and Taiwan. This book, by mostly young experts, explores the region's dilemma and answers some tough questions in the wake of the war.

China, increasingly showing absolute lack of respect for set global norms, has neither publicly supported Russia's war nor denounced the military assault on Ukraine. As Sriparna Pathak says China may not have been aware of Putin's plans for Ukraine, but the war has proved that Moscow and Beijing have found a large ground for alignment against the West. China echoes all the Russian claims about the war.

Diplomatically, China is purposely maintaining ambiguity. Its promises to send humanitarian supplies to Ukraine are dubious because it is an attempt to cover up its lack of neutrality in the fighting. China relies on Ukraine for a significant portion of its food security, and Ukraine is also an important country in Beijing's dream Belt and Road Initiative project. Naturally, it does not want to completely burn its bridges with Ukraine. But there is definitely collusion between Russia and China in trying to orchestrate an alternative model of international relations.

Manoj Kumar Panigrahi warns that Chinese leaders have more to lose if they try to use force against Taiwan at this current stage. Given Taiwan's hold over semiconductors globally, an armed conflict between Beijing and Taipei will create ripple effects

worldwide. Taiwan has been under tremendous pressure ever since Xi Jinping took power in China in 2013. Xi's rule has, however, seen an increasing number of Taiwanese companies quitting China. If this trend continues, India could emerge as an alternative to Taiwanese business manufacturing units now in China.

South Korea's worry is the kind of impact Russia's invasion of Ukraine will have on North Korea's designs in the Korean Peninsula. The Ukraine war has reinforced the North's idea that it must develop its nuclear arsenal to protect itself as support from China is considered unreliable. Jettisoning the past, South Korea has taken a strong stance vis-à-vis Russia over the Ukraine mess. PalakMaheshwari feels this is South Korea's long-awaited middle power moment; Seoul has a unique chance to leverage the Ukraine crisis to polish its foreign policy by taking on a more significant leadership role in the global sphere.

After what happened to Ukraine, can North Korea denuclearise? Ashu Mann underlines that the Russian invasion has further emboldened the North's claims to nuclear weapons as a necessity for survival. After all, regime security has always been paramount to Pyongyang. By 2027, the North could have around 200 nuclear weapons and hundreds of ballistic missiles in its stockpile. And unlike in the Cold War, Russia may no more support denuclearisation.

The Ukraine conflict has sparked plenty of worries in Japan – on what China may have in mind for Taiwan or the Senkaku islands. After the Russian invasion, Japan took the unprecedented step of announcing that it would accept refugees and even sent bulletproof vests to Ukraine. According to Ashutosh Kumar, there is a realisation that Japan cannot take its national security for granted. While the crisis may not herald a sea of changes of in the overall Japanese security architecture, it does make a turning point in policy towards China and Russia.

Nishant Dilip Sharma exposes the cyber warfare and disinformation campaign by Russia and China. Several attacks were initiated in January and February this year on government and civilian organisations in Ukraine before the start of the war. They were well planned, targeted and coordinated but they failed to achieve their strategic objectives. There is also ample evidence of a Russia-China alliance on the disinformation front. The Chinese

state media has been adopting Russian propaganda without due fact-checking. For China, exposing the so-called Western hypocrisy has become the perfect tool to hide Russian human rights abuses in the battlefield.

What is clear is a strong Russia-China axis which is bound to bring about profound global changes. The European security architecture has undergone strains not seen since the Cold War. Whatever the war's outcome, Europe's security and deterrence with reference to Russia would undergo significant changes. Moscow, argues Sukanya Bali, has primarily challenged the stability of Europe, which might leave a revisionist Russia once again in isolation. This at a time when China has emerged stronger after the Covid-19 pandemic than almost all other countries.

Mr MR Narayan Swamy

Lucknow 1857. By Rosie Llewellyn-Jones ;(Harper Collins, May 2022);Pages: 172, Price: 399; ISBN- 9354894054.

Dr Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, MBE, studied Urdu and Hindi at the School of Oriental and African Studies. Her PhD was subsequently published as 'A Fatal Friendship: The Nawabs, the British and the City of Lucknow' in 1985. She has also written the highly acclaimed 'The Last King of India'. 'Lucknow, 1857' is part of a new series of books on India's historic battles written by historian Rosie Llewellyn-Jones and the series editor of which is Squadron Leader Rana Chhina, the book examines the conflict in detail, from the British annexation of Awadh to the Indian response and the subsequent revolt by sepoys. The book is aimed at 'acquainting the reader with the rich tapestry of India's military history and to generate interest in the physical spaces linked with it'.

The book has a few distinct sections. One deals with the overall background of the mutiny. The other deals with the victors of Lucknow, Brigadier General Sir Henry Lawrence; 'the newly appointed Chief Commissioner of Awadh', Field Marshal Colin Campbell,' who recaptured the city; Brigadier General Sir Henry Havelock, who repeatedly attempted to reach the besieged Residency and finally succeeded; Major General Sir James Outram who recaptured the city and Brigadier William Hodson' who died during this and lies buried in La Martiniere School in Lucknow. The most important section of course is the account of the battles;

'Battle Sites': Chinhat, first and second reliefs, and the final recapture of Lucknow.

There is also a section which enumerates the events between June 1857 to March 1858 in a concise manner. The Indian commanders like Begum Hazrat Mahal, who became the chief figure of the resistance ' a divorced Queen with a teenage son Birjis Qadr who became the King ' Raja Nawabali Khan of Mahmudabad the maulvi Ahmadullah Shah also known as Danka Shah, Raja Jai Lal Singh ; occupy the space that's due to them in such an account. The last section contains brief descriptions of tourist places of historical importance in Lucknow.

On 30 June, under the overall command of Sir Henry Lawrence, the British forces had failed in a preliminary skirmish at Chinhat where Sir Henry Lawrence with six hundred soldiers were defeated and retreated into the residency at Lucknow, which immediately came under siege. Here, nearly 3,000 people ; British, Indian and Anglo-Indian – held out for four and a half months. The winter saw huge defensive barricades being built around Lucknow, but with their superior firepower, the British recapture was the inevitable outcome. This book deals with that siege and is written from the British point of view.

The uprising in Lucknow must be seen in the context of the annexation of the kingdom of Oudh by the Governor General, Lord Dalhousie, in 1856 and his ushering in 'radical and unpopular reforms'. He had been deposing rulers and attaching kingdoms including Punjab and 'wanted to add Awadh to his tally before he went'. Having covered this in the background and introduced the principal players on both sides, Llewellyn-Jones concludes Chapter 2 of Lucknow 1857 by providing detailed and valuable summary of the troops who were opposing each other during the various stages of the conflict. The 'Orders of Battle' provides an excellent breakdown of the manpower deployed by both sides in terms of cavalry, infantry, artillery, and gives out the numbers and types of guns, numbers of men, regiments and the names of commanders. The book is worth reading just for that.

Awadh had been ruled by Nawab Wazirs on behalf of the Mughals since 1720. When Burhan ul Malik realised that the Mughals were losing their grip on power it was one of the three provinces apart from Bengal and Hyderabad that became

independent of the Empire. His descendants ruled the area till December 1855 when Sir James Outram the British Resident offered the 'Last King' Wajid Ali Shah the 'unpalatable choice of voluntarily stepping down or having his kingdom forcibly annexed'. The King refused to step down and his kingdom was annexed on 07 February 1856 and he was exiled to Calcutta. Thirty thousand of his soldiers were discharged from service but allowed to keep their arms which they had brought when they signed up for the Army. These soldiers would form part of the fighting force against the Company a year later. They were to become rebels 'through no fault of their own'.

The other party who fought against the British were the taluqdars; the 'land holders of Awadh' who had lost much of their land and revenue due to the 'Summary land Settlement Act of 1856' and were now in debt as they could not meet the Company's demands'. Were some of the largest land holding taluqdars such as Raja Jai Lal Singh, Raja Nawab Ali Khan of Mahmudabad, Raja Beni Madho Singh of Amethi and Loni Singh of Mithauli joined Begum Hazrat Mahal their private armies came with them. As per the author the 'uprising in Awadh was not an attempt to expel the East India Company from India.' She views it as a domestic affair to get the old regime back and cancel the outrageous revenue demands'. She feels it was restricted to the area in North India around Delhi as there was no uprising in the Deccan or Bengal.

However, on 01 May 1857 recruits of 7th Oudh Irregular Infantry at Mariaon Cantonment had refused cartridges and twenty of them were hung at Machi Bhawan. Subsequently, Mariaon Cantonment was set on fire on 30 May 1857 and members of the royal family were arrested. On 03 June units mutinied at Sitapur, 50 miles North of Lucknow and fourteen Europeans were killed.

After the recapture of Lucknow Begum Hazrat Mahal fled to Nepal with her son where Jang Bahadur her former opponent reluctantly gave her shelter, his reluctance being eased by the jewels they carried and she is buried there while Birjis Qadr returned in 1887 and was poisoned by jealous relatives.

The author refers to the events as the Indian Mutiny, which is how the British called it, though they also use the term 'Sepoy Rebellion' whereas it is referred to as the First War of Independence by most Indian writers while a neutral term could be The Great

Uprising of 1857. Of course there are also those who refer to it as the 'Revolt of 1857'.

The questions remains is whether in May 1857 they wanted to achieve a symbolic and psychological victory by frightening the British who had ruled Awadh and were now confined to thirty three acres in the Residency to surrender or should the rebels have killed those confined to the residency as was done in Kanpur.

The city of Lucknow is covered in great detail. One is given a glimpse of the splendour of the buildings to include the palaces of Qadam - Rasool which housed a 'footprint of the Prophet' and had been 'converted into a powder magazine by the British', Chattr Manzil and Qaiserbagh which featured prominently during this period. Most of the fighting took place around Hazratganj, the Residency at the end of Hazratganj and Machhi Bhawan. The Gomti River and Haider canal with the Charbagh Bridge figure prominently. There are of course historic illustrations and photographs by Felice Beato and photographs by Anil Mehrotra. Incidentally. The fighting here took place in urban spaces, along residential streets, in religious buildings in palace gardens and schools on a bridge in houses and sometimes from room to room.

The book of course is a condensed version of the events giving out most details and is more like a 'battlefield tourist guide' to generate interest for the traveller who has an interest in history. The authors' brief was to condense the relevant history into 30,000 words. What is remarkable is how much detailed narrative and practical information has been successfully incorporated in the book while achieving this goal.

There is no denying the fact that this marked an important milestone in the history of India and resulted in the British government taking over from the 'East India Company' ushering in colonisation and 'British Raj'.

This richly illustrated book draws on Llewellyn-Jones's intimate knowledge of Lucknow. There is no denying that it is a scholarly narrative of a part of our history. While academic rigour has been applied the tone of the narrative is intended to appeal to the lay reader who wishes to visit Lucknow and intend 'to walk the ground', as well meeting the requirements of the discerning academician and historian.

Maj Gen Jagatbir Singh, VSM (Retd)

Arms and the Woman: The Shattered Glass Ceiling. By Maj Gen VK Shrivastava, VSM ; (Vij Books India Pvt Ltd, Delhi, October 2022); Page;115, Price ; Rs.950/- ISBN: 9393499330.

The 21st century is decidedly automated. Science, Politics, Literature, Public discourse, Entertainment, Sports and Professional spheres have seen some remarkable changes in terms of innovation, communication, acceptance of diverse cultural & social practices, and leadership roles. A significant part of these changes is the rate with which women are partaking an active role in all these spheres. The lens with which a woman had been hitherto looked upon is breaking, thanks to the weight of uncountable achievements those women all across the regions are conquering. The author dives deep into the professional domain of military to unearth the historical and current account of women participation over the years. By prolifically writing about the conformist gender roles that women were subjected to, to literally shattering the ceilings and becoming number one in their respective fields. The book is a must read especially for all young girls who dream of serving the nation at par with their fellow comrades.

The book begins by dissecting the evolution of women in arms and takes the reader through the prehistoric times, when early humans hunted for survival. The author clearly negates the myth that women were endowed only with the child bearing capacity or they were restricted to nurture the social group which they belong to. Rather he cites the findings from various archeological sources to establish that inspite of biological differences; there was “equality of labor” amongst the nomadic people. The excavations have now revealed that woman were hunters too.

The author gives an interesting take with regard to the status of women during the Vedic period in context of India, and mentions the excerpts of the Vedas which had a significant contribution from female scholars like, Maitreyi and Gargi. Women also had the freedom to choose their own husband (Swayamwar), Widow Remarriage also existed as an alternative. Apart from this women also took full charge of financial decisions pertaining to household activities. It also differentiated the position of women in comparison to western civilisations, distinctly the Indian society during the ancient period harbored much greater respect, freedom and equality towards women. It is true that every civilisation brought

with itself certain norms and practices that are still being accepted and preserved for, as a mark of deep respect to their ancestors and the larger idea of their existence, some may occur to be bizarre and discriminatory towards a certain gender to an outsider but may hold regard for some or is still being perpetuated for self-interests, take for example the practice of “Female Genital Mutilation” that exists even today.

In the subsequent chapters, the book gives insight into a women’s profile as a soldier on and off the battlefield as a nurse/communication operators/part of the auxiliary arms and finally in the combat role. It is disheartening to see the impediment women candidates had to go through to prove their worth. Despite that it will make the reader especially young girls proud and optimistic about the fact that grit and determination will always pay. Although many western countries now, have accepted females in combat roles; Israel in particular stands out as it allowed females in the conscription system by underscoring that they should also have “equal right” and also “contribute” in a similar way that men do, till now almost 500 female soldiers have laid down their lives in defending the honor of their state. As for India the women till 1950s were only restricted to the role of Medics, it was only in 1992 that women were granted “Short Service Commission” in Administrative and Logistics capacity. However, women officers battled the entire shortcoming their way and excelled in their capacities. Flt Lt Gunjan Saxena flew operational sorties during the Kargil War, Shivangi Singh has become India’s first woman pilot to fly Rafale fighter jet, Capt Tanya Shergill the first Parade Adjutant to lead an all-man contingent in the Republic Day Parade are some of the accomplishments at their way. Female officers had to challenge the union legally at many instances whether it was about being given permanent commission or quashing unreal fitness standards these women stood their ground, as a result NDA, RIMC are now welcoming their first batch of female candidates. The inherent challenges of a male dominated field remains deeply entrenched and also gives the reader a food for a thought about the debate of making these female candidates accepted for what they are. The author in addition to the unbiased reporting of the constraints; sets the record straight that although military remains a professional force it cannot be the realm to contest debates on the emancipatory issues, it first and last objective remains the security of the nation alone.

The book concludes on a positive note; author pens down a heartfelt message that rings consonance with the underlying theme of the book. There is a lot that has been done and there will be times when women will be doing a lot more setting the bar high time and again, the word has spread and the tides will rule in favour of the worthy regardless of the gender.

Ms Surbhi Chakraborty

The Pashtuns : A Contested History. By Tilak Devasher; (Harper Collins, India, Sept 2022); Pages: 304; Price: Rs.519; ISBN-9394407634.

The Pashtuns are perhaps the largest ethnic group in the world without a country of their own. They inhabit a continuous stretch of land from the Hindu Kush to the Indus, across Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan used the Pashtun-dominated areas in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) as a launching pad against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s and later during the US-led War on Terror. In the process FATA was kept in a constitutional and informational black hole. The discontent finally burst in 2018 when the extra-judicial killing of a Pashtun youth led to widespread protests.

Through his book, the author attempts to expand the geopolitical understanding of South Asia, particularly about the Pashtuns. Using his expertise in security and strategic studies, Devasher explores the shifting power structures in Afghanistan after the US' withdrawal last year.

The book (The Pashtuns: A Contested History) looks upon the Pashtuns inhabiting a single piece of real estate though divided into two countries – Afghanistan and Pakistan – by the artificial Durand Line. Their commonality of descent, religion, language, historical memories, cultural and familial bonds and a common code, Pashtunwali (the way of the Pashtun), makes it easy to do so. The 500-page-long book examines the region inhabited by the Pashtuns, the rise of the Taliban and al-Qaeda in the region. The Pashtuns inhabit lands across borders and countries. From the Hindu Kush to the Indus, the community straddles Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The book details how, in the 1980s, Pakistan used the Pashtun-dominated regions in the Federally Administered Tribal

Areas (FATA) as launching pads against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and also during the US-led 'War on Terror' years later.

The book's rich narrative includes the *origin* of the Pashtuns, the initial contours of the Pashtun empire which stretched from the Indus River to the Hindu Kush range, the first empire set up by Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1747, the subsequent breakup of the Pashtun land and its inclusion into Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Sikh empire, the British takeover, and finally the newly created state where "Pakistan inherited the British portion of Pashtunistan in 1947." Devasher explains *Pashtunwali* as "the defining tribal code that distinguishes Pashtuns from other ethnic groups", the relationship of Pashtunwali with Islam and the influence of Sufism and Barelvi practices on Pashtuns. He discusses the contested Durand Line of 1893 and the subsequent demand for Pashtunistan, and brings the reader to the current day, drawing from the historical and cultural linkages between Pashtuns in Afghanistan and Pakistan, to Islamabad's insecurities with Pashtun nationalism, Pakistan's dubious role in dividing the Pashtuns and the rise and resurgence of the Taliban.

The author also talks about the US withdrawal in Afghanistan; sophistication with which the entire plan was carried by the Taliban, who through their extensive propaganda machinery that specifically targeted to attain the sympathy and consideration of not only the west but the entire Muslim brethren. The cherry on the cake being Sirajuddin Haqqani's article that got published in The New York Times; where he brazenly spun a cocoon of lies about the role he wants the west to play in the reconstruction of Afghanistan that will include each and every citizen, where no one would be deliberately left out. The talk of women's right & education was part of the paraphernalia too; where as the author asserts through reports that the track record of the Taliban rule laid bare open in a Report published by Human Right's Watch about the blatant violation of the Human rights in the province dominated by the Taliban. Author also poses some valid challenges ahead not only for the Taliban ruling the state but international ramifications too in the form of; Firstly, the rising challenge to eradicate economic and social situation of the Afghans, even for a basic service it would nearly require \$8.5 Billion per year for sustaining the

activities. UNICEF and World Food Programme have given devastated figures in term of unavailability of food and a large percentage of malnourished children and families. Second challenge emanates from the constitution of tribal leadership, to simply put which group consolidates more power, Thirdly consonance between the Political and on ground leadership of the Taliban, Fourth “Terrorism” that stems in the philosophy of the ruling entity and its impact in Asia, specifically central Asia and concerns of an enhanced network based operations with inclusion of ex members of Afghanistan’s intelligence services and lastly the dream to be recognized officially by the global bodies and especially the UNSC that is determined to thrash the acceptance of a formal state if conditions are not fulfilled by the ruling entity.

The book is packed with relevant questions and offers an insight into the mind of these rulers who wish to morally bind the society at the cost of an unprecedented humanitarian crisis at the cusp of total breakdown.

Dr Jyoti Yadav

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Second	06817T Lt Cdr Anmol Pathak Locker Number- 653 C/o Navy Wing, DSSC, Wellington, Tamil Nadu-643 231 Email : anmol.pathak@navy.gov.in Mob: 9885948489	Cash Award of 10,000/- & entry accepted for publication.

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OUR ACTIVITIES

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The library holds over 68,000 books, and journals, including some books of 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, on an astonishing variety of subjects. While the principal emphasis is on strategy and defence, there are a large number of works on different vistas of Indian life. There are memoirs, biographies, recollections, diaries, journals, manuscripts for scholars and researchers. The reading room is air-conditioned, spacious and well stocked in terms of current reading material. Library was automated in 2002.

Correspondence Courses

The Institution runs regular correspondence courses for officers of the Armed Forces to assist them in preparing for promotion examinations, and for the entrance examinations to the Defence Services Staff College and Technical Staff College. Over the years, this has been a significant and well-received activity.

USI Journal

The *USI Journal* is the oldest surviving defence journal in the country and in Asia, having first appeared in 1871. In an era when there is a feeling that free expression of views by Defence personnel is not looked upon kindly by the establishment, the Journal in fact provides just such a forum, without regard to seniority and length of service in the Armed Forces, subject of course, to propriety and quality of the written work.

Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation

The erstwhile Centre for Research and its resources have been merged into the new Centre named as USI Centre for Strategic Studies and Simulation (USI-CS3) wef 01 January 2005. The Centre aims at conducting detailed and comprehensive enquiry, research and analyses of national and international security related issues, and gaming and simulation of strategic scenarios, to evolve options for wider discussion and consideration.

USI Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK)

The Centre was established in 2000 and functioned with USI till Aug 2014, when it moved out of USI premises and was delinked from USI. Its aims were organising workshops, seminars and training capsules for peacekeepers, observers and staff officers – both

Indian and foreign. It also oversaw the practical training of Indian contingents. It functioned under a Board of Management headed by the Vice Chief of the Army Staff and worked in close coordination with the Service Headquarters and the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence. In August 2014, CUNPK moved out to the accommodation allotted by the Army HQ.

Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (CMHCS)

The USI-Centre for Military History and Conflict Studies (USI-CMHCS) was established in December 2000 at the behest of the three Service Headquarters for encouraging an objective study of all facets of Indian military history with a special emphasis on the history of the Indian Armed Forces. It focuses on diverse aspects of the history of Indian military evolution, policies and practices-strategic, tactical, logistical, organisational, socio-economic, as well as the field of contemporary conflict studies in the broader sense.

Gold Medal Essay Competition

Every year the Institution organises a gold medal essay competition open to all officers. These essays, the first one of which was introduced in 1871, constitute a barometer of opinion on matters that affect national security in general and the defence forces in particular.

USI-War Wounded Foundation Joint Essay Competition

This essay competition was instituted in 2021 after signing of the MoU between USI and the War Wounded Foundation. The competition is open to all across the globe and must be on the subject of issues relating to the experiences and/or rehabilitation of war disabled personnel of the Armed Forces of India.

Lt Gen SL Menezes Memorial Essay Competition

This has been instituted from 2015 on a subject related to Armed Forces Historical Research. The Essay Competition is open to all across the globe.

Lectures, Discussions and Seminars

A series of lectures, discussions and seminars on service matters, international affairs, and topics of general interest to the Services, are organised for the benefit of local members in Delhi.

MacGregor Medal

This medal is awarded to Armed Forces personnel for valuable reconnaissance and adventure activity they may have undertaken.

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