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■ Ahmed, Nafeez Mosaddeq, 2005. *The War on Truth: 9/11, Disinformation, and the Anatomy of Terrorism*. Northampton, MA: Olive Branch. xiv + 461 pp. ISBN 1566565960.

In this volume, Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed has collected a large amount of material about the US grand design for a new American world order, and particularly about the role of Osama bin Laden, 11 September 2001, and the intelligence networks of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and the West. This volume tries to understand 21st-century terrorism, not primarily as a replacement for the Cold War Soviet Union, but as a Western disinformation campaign to control raw materials and populations on a global scale. Ahmed documents the close ties between Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and a number of intelligence services. He also documents policies for provoking terrorists into action to justify military responses. The frequent use of terrorism to alter the political agenda and to manipulate public opinion has seemingly created a 'hyperreality' that covers the true actors behind the scene. The 'Global War on Terror' is, to Ahmed, as much a 'war on truth' as it is a war against any terrorists. I do not necessarily agree with Ahmed's interpretation of the 11 September events, but his contribution is necessary for anyone who wants to write about the Global War on Terror and US preoccupation with terrorism in the 21st century. The book is also important for the understanding of the present war in Afghanistan. Ahmed is the Director of Policy Research & Development at the University of Sussex, and he has written extensively on terrorism.

Ola Tunander

■ Csergo, Zsuzsa, 2007. *Talk of the Nation: Language and Conflict in Romania and Slovakia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 228 pp. ISBN 9780801445378.

This book examines negotiation over language use in the newly democratic states of Romania and Slovakia, to improve understanding of how cultural differences are resolved by both international and domestic actors in multi-ethnic,

democratic societies. Csergo argues that international influence does not alone shape the dynamics of ethnic competition in such states; rather, domestic political actors are the key agents of change in these societies. National languages are important means of national cultural reproduction, which is facilitated by the overlap of language and physical territory, so critical to the solidification of the Westphalian state. Thus, as Csergo claims, debates and conflicts over the use of minority languages in Eastern and Central Europe are 'debates about the right to pursue cultural reproduction and sovereignty' (p. 18) in states where significant minority groups do not necessarily control territory or the organization of political control. The book explores how, in the years after the fall of communism, language debates were part of larger debates about national sovereignty, debates in which both international actors and domestic minority and majority political actors worked together to reach consensus. The book then delves into three key areas of contestation – education, public spaces, and self-government – that arose in the debates over language use and language relations. Conflicts in these areas were resolved, in part, through strong adherence to the democratic process by domestic political actors. This book is a valuable read for those interested in the politics of language use, minority rights, and cultural reproduction.

Kendra Dupuy

■ Drogin, Bob, 2007. *Curveball*. London: Random House. xxi + 330 pp. ISBN 9780091923020.

Bob Drogin, a journalist, has written an interesting and meticulously researched account of the use and abuse of intelligence in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Curveball was the code name for an Iraqi defector in Germany who provided his handlers with intelligence on Iraq's bio-warfare capacity. One of his most sensational claims was the existence of mobile bio-warfare labs, pictures of which were used to dramatic effect by Colin Powell before the UN. *Curveball* has three interlocking focuses. The first is the

defection and interrogation of the Iraqi source. The second and most interesting is the account of disputes within the CIA about how Curveball's information should be used. Drogin states that one faction, mainly field officers, viewed him as being unreliable. Another faction, the desk analysts, believed his accounts and vigorously asserted the risk from Iraq's bio-weapons programme. Drogin recounts how the intelligence was progressively 'hardened' as it passed up the CIA hierarchy – summaries of interviews with an uncorroborated source in Germany that the CIA was not allowed to interview progressively became high-quality intelligence from a trusted source as they moved up the organization. Last, Drogin recounts the efforts in occupied Iraq to find the truth. Unsurprisingly, Curveball was a fabricator. Moreover, Drogin reveals that he got most of his information from UN reports on the Internet – and those same reports were later used to 'corroborate' his stories. The book provides a fascinating account of the epistemology of (the Bush) government – people decided upon the 'truth' and then found the 'facts' to support it, rather than the other way round. But ultimately it may not have mattered – Drogin reports that the administration was determined to invade, no matter what the intelligence was.

Nicholas Marsh

■ Giustozzi, Antonio, 2007. *Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan*. London: Hurst. 259 pp. ISBN 9781850658733.

This is the first book that systematically analyzes the re-emergence of the Taliban after the 2001 US-led intervention in Afghanistan. Giustozzi is a historian who, since the early 1990s, has worked on military formations in Afghanistan. He has also served for the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan. The book is structured in six chapters plus introduction and conclusion. Chapter 1 addresses the 'sources' of the Taliban and emphasizes ideology and the role of external sponsors, as well as the weakness of the new Afghan government. The second chapter, on recruitment, demonstrates how a radical Taliban core managed to tap into religious and tribal networks, playing on a variety of local grievances and expanding the insurgency step by step. Chapter 3 looks at organization and argues that a flexible structure has served the Taliban well, preventing huge internal differences from developing into

divisions. Chapter 4 disentangles the Taliban's strategies and Chapter 5 deals with its tactics, while the sixth chapter is a review of the 'counter-insurgency effort'. Giustozzi argues that the Taliban, tactical setbacks notwithstanding, has been strategically consistent throughout. In contrast, the government and its international collaborators have undermined all attempts at institutionalizing governance through simultaneously pursuing classic patronage politics. Giustozzi deserves praise for also confronting issues where the evidence is, as he admits, inconclusive. Yet, a discussion of methodological issues, including the author's background in the international operation, would have been merited. The book bears marks – both analytical and technical – of being done in haste, to meet a pressing demand. Yet, it remains analytically challenging and is empirically very rich. It is a must-read for anybody wanting to understand post-2001 developments in Afghanistan.

Kristian Berg Harpviken

■ Kirsten, Adèle, 2007. *A Nation Without Guns? The Story of Gun Free South Africa*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. xx + 244 pp. ISBN 9781869141356.

■ Feinstein, Andrew, 2007. *After the Party: A Personal and Political Journey Inside the ANC*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Bull. xiv + 287 pp. ISBN 9781868422623.

From very different standpoints, these authors have written two fascinating accounts of South African politics during the decade after the country's first democratic election in 1994. Andrew Feinstein was an MP who led the ANC's representation in the parliament's Public Accounts Committee. At first, his book is auto-biographical and outlines his upbringing, education, activism and marriage. But most the chapters describe how the initial optimism and commitment to democracy of the ANC government were replaced with growing authoritarianism and corruption. Feinstein details the intellectual corruption of Thabo Mbeki's Aids denialism and financial corruption of the arms deal. He records how the ANC leadership prevented an investigation into the deal – which is worth some US\$ 7.5 billion – even though the European arms manufacturers have been investigated by their governments for corruption associated with it. His most striking allegation is that one of the

main beneficiaries of the multi-million dollar bribes was the ANC itself – it used the money to fight the 1999 election campaign. Attempts at parliamentary scrutiny were quashed by an ANC leadership which replaced the vigorous discussion of the opposition years with a rigid insistence on loyalty to the party, and Feinstein states that the prevention of an investigation into the deal led him to resign in 2001. As Feinstein concedes, such antics will hold few surprises for those who have followed the careers of Blair, Mitterrand or Berlusconi. But South Africa cannot afford a leadership which denies treatment to the some five million people infected with HIV and squanders billions on weapons. Kirsten has written an insider account of the NGO Gun Free South Africa (GFSA), an organization dedicated to preventing violence by reducing the number of guns available in South Africa. Kirsten was GFSA's national coordinator between 1995 and 2002. The book outlines the history of GFSA and explains its strategy. It starts in 1994, and Kirsten asserts that gun-control initiatives were an important component of peacebuilding. Handing in weapons was a powerful symbol that the armed struggle was over, and GFSA organized a national firearms amnesty in December 1994, after the first democratic elections. GFSA then embarked upon an ambitious three-part strategy. First, at the grass-roots level, it supported the establishment of gun-free zones – by which buildings or communities would declare themselves to be gun free. Second, it organized an ambitious media campaign, and some of the advertisements are included in the book. Last, and perhaps most successfully, it lobbied for a change in South African firearms legislation. From the outset, GFSA took a pragmatic strategy. It decided, early on, to aim to reduce the number of firearms rather than to eradicate guns. Moreover, Kirsten states that it focused upon short-term projects that were designed to achieve long-term goals. The book provides many insights into South Africa in the years after apartheid – the NGO sector was developed along with the country's nascent democracy. Kirsten also notes the importance of research. GFSA placed an early emphasis upon obtaining, in partnership with the health sector, the data it used to make its case. If Feinstein details how the country's optimism was betrayed, Kirsten shows that progressive causes could succeed in South Africa's vibrant democratic spaces. The books reveal two facets of a country still remaking itself after the end of a unique and still unravelling conflict.

Nicholas Marsh

■ Macdonald, David, 2007. *Drugs in Afghanistan: Opium, Outlaws and Scorpion Tales*. London & Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto. xxii + 295 pp. ISBN 074532617X (pbk); ISBN 0745326188 (hbk).

David Macdonald writes about the complexity of poppy production and opium use in Afghanistan, from the very limited production for local markets before 1979 to today's total dominance of the global market, with a production that covers more than 90% of the global market. Macdonald describes the role of warlords and farmers, heroin producers and traffickers, the use of the heroin trade to finance the anti-Soviet war and the civil war, and the role of criminal networks and state agencies. Macdonald is a sociologist and former UN drugs adviser with background from UNODC (United Nations Office on Drug and Crime). He has 20 years of experience in drug control and has worked with the UN drugs control programme in Afghanistan. This book presents the complexity of Afghan society, the importance of drugs in the Afghan tradition, and the limited role of the farmers in this larger picture. However, the book is not able to explain the recent explosion of opium production and the specific role of the criminal networks inside and outside governments as a real driving force for this change. In one chapter, 'Heroin producers and traffickers', he touches on the problem of wars and intelligence agencies for opium production, but the problem of finding empirical evidence for the players in the shadow, in Pakistan, Turkey, Europe and the USA, may have made the author neglect the real problem and disregard the dynamics between war and opium production in general.

Ola Tunander

■ Mearsheimer, John J. & Stephen M. Walt, 2007. *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 490 pp. ISBN 0374177724.

When the *London Review of Books* published 'The Israel Lobby' article in March 2006, there was an outburst of controversy. The two respected American academics were even called anti-Semites by their most ferocious opponents. Other more moderate critics criticized them for simplifying a complex issue. Given this public rage, the authors were left with two options – lie low or tackle the issue head on. They chose the latter,

and the result is this book. The choice was perhaps the right one, but the result not adequately so. Whereas the article had its strength in that it challenged a silence by opening questions, the book attempts to reinstitute that silence by delivering the final answers. The main thesis is that US policy in the Middle East today has no good rationale in terms of US interests. The war in Iraq, the support for Israel, the refusal to negotiate with Iran, etc. are all actions that contradict the real interests of the US government: access to oil and protection from terror. Further, Israel is not existentially threatened. The only valid explanation for this discrepancy between actions and interests, argue the authors, is the massive influence of the pro-Israel lobby on the US body politic. There is clearly *some* truth to this thesis, as other academic works previously have illustrated, yet this cannot be *the* truth. The issue is complex, and it is, therefore, unfortunate that the authors try to close off the problem, and that, by a simple flick of the wrist, they write off the influence of lobby groups, such as the arms and oil lobby, and other complexities of US interests.

Jørgen Jensehaugen

■ Mohamedou Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould, Antonio, 2007. *Understanding Al-Qaeda: The Transformation of War*. London: Pluto. 136 pp. ISBN 9780745325927.

This book is thought-provokingly important. Mohamedou claims that Al-Qaeda's *casus belli*, its justification for violence, has been systematically neglected by analysts and policymakers alike. The book consists of a brief introduction plus five chapters. In the first chapter, Mohamedou lays out Al-Qaeda's *casus belli*: the injustice produced by US policies in the Middle East. The second chapter analyses the new mode of war, as pursued by Al-Qaeda, engaging offensively, privatizing the means of violence, transcending traditional state boundaries. The legitimate conduct of war becomes a concern, but here Al-Qaeda has developed an argument that all citizens stand responsible for the actions of their government: a 'democratization of responsibility'. Chapter 3 examines the organization of Al-Qaeda. Post-2001, the organization has been restructured, yet it maintains a coherent centre with considerable control over semi-independent entities worldwide. A basic tenet for Mohamedou is that a clinical, rational – even 'secular' – understanding of Al-Qaeda is required, but also strongly resisted.

The reasons for this resistance are the subject of Chapter 4. The fifth and final chapter concludes that the solution in the confrontation between Al-Qaeda and the West lies not in continued warfare in the Islamic world, but in understanding – and ultimately accommodating – the movement's political objectives. To Mohamedou, the aim to universalize Western values and forms of political organization is at the root of the conflict. Yet, he fails to reflect upon what an alternative polity, acceptable to Al-Qaeda, would look like and how it is perceived by its prospective citizens. In conclusion, however, Mohamedou offers an original analysis of what makes Al-Qaeda tick, and he is likely to persuade many of his readers to nuance their views of global terrorism.

Kristian Berg Harpviken

■ Nasr, Vali, 2007. *The Shia Revival: How Conflict Within Islam Will Shape the Future*. New York: Norton. ix + 310 pp. ISBN 9780393329681.

The recent reality shift in the Middle East exposes the prevalent sectarian politics shaping the future of the region and its prospects for democracy and peace. The geopolitics and the provocative factors of power hindering the co-existence of the Shia and the Sunni find their roots in historical grievances and in the re-enactment of struggles for power. Nasr articulates that competing theologies and the crystallization of tribal and ethnic identities are the factors that fuel violence and magnify differences in the Middle East. The ideologies of identity politics, power, and narratives of struggle contours the geopolitical realities within which the Shia and the Sunni co-exist. Nasr not only pinpoints the dynamics unleashed by the Iraq war but also attempts to provide an answer to the question of why the Shia and the Sunni are embracing a new approach of violence to reshape the future of the Middle East and the Muslim world. New political realities are being formed based on the meaning of Islam, Islamic history, and what Islam represents to those who follow the faith. The complexity of the matter stems from the unbreakable ties between Islam and politics. These ties are of great interest to the West. This book invites the reader to a fresh debate about the perplexing realities of the Middle East and the recurring violence that is dampening the prospects for peace. Nasr identifies the dilemmas that connect the Middle East, the Muslim world, and the West. However, Nasr's analysis of the

Shia–Sunni conflict, although insightful, does not provide possible alternatives for resolution.

Fatima Hadji

■ Porter, Elisabeth, 2007. *Peacebuilding: Women in International Perspective*. Routledge Advances in International Relations and Global Politics. London & New York: Routledge. ix + 233 pp. ISBN 041539791X.

Elisabeth Porter's new book is a most welcome addition to a growing body of literature on women, peace and security. Much of the current literature within this particular issue area is based on empirical studies and filled with anecdotes. Porter also refers to concrete examples of women's agency in the field, but her book differs in making an effort at theorizing. She is critical of the peacebuilding concept as it is understood today by organizations such as the UN and leading scholars within IR and peace studies. A narrow understanding of peacebuilding, as activities applied to the post-conflict phase together with the emphasis on only formal peace processes, has several negative consequences, in Porter's view. One of them is the continued marginalization of women from peacebuilding processes. According to Porter, the ways many women in conflict-ridden societies understand peace processes tend to differ from the norm set by the international community. As long as this is not acknowledged by the UN, efforts at implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security will most likely fail. And so will the prospects of successful peacebuilding in the long term. Porter's book is well written and thought-provoking. Authors that include 'women' or 'gender' in their book titles tend to find their audience among gender scholars and practitioners with a particular interest in women's issues. This book really deserves a much broader distribution among diplomats, policymakers and conventional scholars.

Torunn L. Tryggstad

■ Rittberger, Volker & Bernhard Zangl, 2006. *International Organization: Polity, Politics and Policies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. 246 pp. ISBN 0333721284.

International organizations are becoming increasingly important actors in politics. This is true with respect to both international nongovernmental organizations and international governmental

agencies such as the United Nations and European Union. Since the end of World War II, and, in particular, since the end of the Cold War, international organizations have become a central pillar of global governance. Among the central questions posed here are: Why are international organizations created in the first place? How do international organizations impact collective decision-making processes? Does the establishment of international organizations herald a basic transformation of the structure of international relations? While the answers to these questions are far from simple, this volume nevertheless manages to go a long way in addressing these issues. In so doing, we are taken through a useful discussion of theoretical approaches to international organization, and we are provided with a historical overview of how transnational organizations have developed and the way in which they go about shaping and influencing policy. The latter half of this volume is dedicated to analyses of some of the more significant current campaigns, such as those promoting security, the environment and human rights. These are presented against the theoretical backdrop of the global governance model. According to the authors, this model is most apt in describing the role of international organizations in transforming today's global governance structures, and the conclusion is that new norms and rules are, more often than not, generated and implemented with the support of international organizations. Taken as a whole, this work constitutes an invaluable, theoretically informed and empirically substantiated contribution to the literature on international organizations.

Kjell Erling Kjellman

■ Rotberg, Robert I., ed., 2007. *Worst of the Worst: Dealing with Repressive and Rogue Nations*. Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation; Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press. ix + 342 pp. ISBN 9780815775669.

Nation-state repression and tyranny can be overtly violent, as in Zimbabwe, Burma, or Uzbekistan, or relatively peaceful, as in Turkmenistan, Belarus, or Syria. Yet, all repressive regimes are manipulative, coercive, and abusive. The book, *Worst of the Worst*, is a compilation of a series of case-studies united by a common theoretical discussion of repressive and aggressive states. In this superbly edited volume, Robert Rotberg, Director of the Program on Intrastate Conflict and Conflict Resolution at Harvard University and

President of the World Peace Foundation, attempts to define the meaning and attributes of a rogue state. The first three chapters clarify central concepts, providing diverse dimensions to the understanding of the rogue states and in-depth comparative analysis of 14 countries. For example, Caprioli and Trumbore, in their chapter, seek to develop a scale to identify rogue states. The rogue state index has the potential to serve as a tool to assess states' persistent violation of human rights and their threat to international security. The other chapters present a thorough analysis of nine cases. The choice of cases demonstrates the contentious matter of defining a rogue state amidst the wide variety in the rogue repertoire of aggressive or repressive actions. Some of the chapters provide policy considerations, which make the book more practice-oriented and relevant to policymaking readers. Although not all chapters of this book are equally compelling and nuanced, readers interested in failed and/or oppressive states, international security, or in the case-study countries will find this book engaging and informative.

Ekaterina Romanova

■ Scott, Peter Dale, 2007. *The Road to 9/11: Wealth, Empire, and the Future of America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. xvii + 423 pp. ISBN 9780520237735.

Peter Dale Scott exposes a shadow world of terrorism, drug trade and arms deals, of oil, covert financing and parallel security structures – from the Cold War to today – not just as a 'criminal underworld' but also as a 'wealthy overworld' and as a US extra-legal 'deep state', able to manipulate democratic politics. This is an ambitious empirical study of the dark side of US politics. It is also able to analyze the general characteristics of the US state as a 'dual state' with an extra-legal 'deep state' in parallel to the regular 'public state' ruled by law. Wealthy extra-legal networks inside and outside the state have run the drug trade, made huge profits on arms deals and been directly involved in terrorism. Scott shows how such parallel forces in the United States have been able to dominate the agenda of the George W. Bush administration, and that statements and actions made by Vice-President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld before, during and after 11 September 2001, present

evidence for such an American 'deep state' and for the so-called 'Continuity of Government' (COG) in parallel to the regular 'public state'. Scott's brilliant work not only reveals the overwhelming importance of these parallel forces but also presents elements of a strategy for restraining their influence to win back the 'public state', the American democracy.

Ola Tunander

■ Sidel, John T., 2007. *The Islamist Threat in Southeast Asia: A Reassessment*. Washington, DC: East-West Center Washington, Policy Studies 37 (Southeast Asia). 73 pp. ISBN 9789812304896.

The book offers a critical re-examination of the alarmist picture of Southeast Asian terrorism. It opposes the idea of an Islamic offensive in Southeast Asia and the actor-centred and ideological analysis of the mainstream study represented by Zachary Abuza, Ken Conboy, Sidney Jones and Rohan Gunaratna. The author gives two reasons for the overly alarmist analysis of the situation: one related to 'source criticism', the other to 'selection bias'. On the one hand, according to Sidel, scholarship on Southeast Asian terrorism relies too much on official sources from the security services. The special character of counter-terrorism's secrecy and manipulation makes reliance on official sources problematic. Furthermore, security apparatuses have a professional interest in exaggerating the danger. Finally, Sidel feels that several individuals in Southeast Asian security apparatuses have personal and ideological reasons for not telling the truth. Sidel's finger points squarely at the former Chief of the Indonesian National Intelligence Agency, Lt. Gen. A.M. Hendropriyono. The selection bias Sidel refers to means that analysts look at perpetrators with an Islamic justification for violence, while ignoring the leads offered by analysis of the specific timing, locations, targets and forms of violence, as well as the lack of violence in other forms and locations, against other targets. The bias leads the mainstream to conclude that Islamic terrorism is part of a larger Islamic revival, and that it is strengthening. Sidel, instead, offers a picture of Islamic terrorism as signalling weakness and the existential threat in the movement. Sidel sides with Olivier Roy, Michele Wiviorka and others who see terror as the last resort and as a weapon of the weak.

Timo Kivimäki

■ Smith, Hazel & Paul Stares, eds, 2007. *Diasporas in Conflict: Peace Makers or Peace Wreckers*. New York: United Nations University Press. 318 pp. ISBN 9789280811407.

Contemporary international conflicts are increasingly becoming unrestricted, involving non-state actors such as refugees and other diaspora groups. Thus, it would no longer be enough to try to understand global violent conflict dynamics without incorporating the migrant community. Edited by Hazel Smith, a professor of International Relations at the University of Warwick, UK, and Paul Stares, director of the Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention at the United States Institute of Peace, *Diasporas in Conflict: Peace Makers or Peace Wreckers* examines the political mobilization of diasporas and their roles in their homeland peace and conflict. What the book attempts to answer is: How do diasporas respond to their homeland conflicts? When do they play a negative role and engage in fuelling the conflict or play a positive role and engage in peacemaking and peacebuilding? Although the book purposely targets policymakers and/or peace scholars, it is written accessibly, so anyone can grasp the message. It is a well-rounded book, with multidisciplinary approaches from the fields of political science, anthropology, sociology, and feminist theory, and with diaspora cases studies on Jews, Palestinians, Armenians, Eritreans, Colombians, Cubans, Sri Lankans, Kurds, Croatians, and Cambodians. Readers will gain an understanding of the complexity of these diverse groups, their increasing ability and power to influence the outcome of their homeland conflicts, and the challenges faced by international peacemakers where diaspora issues are neglected or understudied. While the choices of the case studies have global representation, it could be enriched by including more cases, especially from Africa, as it is a continent entrenched with continued intrastate conflicts with active diaspora community involvement.

Anam Gnabo

■ Spellman, Kathryn, 2006. *Religion and Nation: Iranian Local and Transnational Networks in Britain*. Oxford & New York: Berghahn. viii + 235 pp. ISBN 1571815775.

In this book, Spellman sets out to study Iranian local and transnational networks in Britain

through a description of their everyday religious practices. In three extremely detailed ethnographic chapters, she describes the *sofreh*, a Shia Muslim ritual for Iranian women; the Iranian Sufi orders in London; and Iranians who converted to Christianity. The main point that she makes, based on these core chapters, is that Iranians engage in various religious practices in order to remain Iranian while adapting to their host country. Furthermore, Spellman argues that concepts like religion, culture and nation should not be used in an essentialist way, but rather they describe a process, something that is constantly changing, contested and interpreted in multiple ways. These rather general points do not merit the overwhelming detail in each chapter, describing everything that happens during certain religious ceremonies she attends which seems of interest to her, but of which the relevance remains unclear to the reader. Rather, it would have been far more rewarding if, throughout her book, Spellman pursued a key issue she points to in her conclusion (p. 210): because they stem from a sacred heritage and lineage, are followed in active Iranian chapters, and link like-minded Iranians around the globe, some of these religious traditions can be considered 'forces which create a powerful sense of being a part of both a real and "imagined" community, and were thought to bypass clearly the contaminated religion of the Islamic regime and other politicised notions of Islam'. A fully fledged analysis supporting this interesting observation would have done more justice to the title of this book and the rich material collected for it.

Cindy Horst

■ Stassen, Glen Harold & Lawrence S. Wittner, eds, 2007. *Peace Action: Past, Present and Future*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm. 170 pp. ISBN 9781594513336.

This edited volume examines anti-nuclear activism in the United States from its beginnings in the 1950s to the present. The collected essays chronicle the development of the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) and its evolution into Peace Action by the 1990s. Here, we are offered detailed accounts of the experiences of activists, highlighting issues such as the importance of grassroots campaigning and the role of women's participation. While this volume primarily takes a historical perspective, it also offers

some reflections on the future and seeks to inspire and renew commitment to working towards a nuclear-free world. The essays describe SANE's beginnings in the context of the Cold War, chronicle its development during the Vietnam War and its revitalization in the 1980s, a galvanization brought about by the policies of Ronald Reagan and the new Cold War. We are also enlightened as to how grassroots mobilizations were successful in promoting their message, the development of tactical and strategic choices, the role of faith-based networks, and the manner in which SANE was able to forge transnational coalitions. By 1993, SANE had been renamed Peace Action, while continuing to address issues of human security and, in particular, the new escalation of the nuclear arms race in the 2000s. Taken as a whole, the essays will be of interest to those concerned with issues of activism in general, human rights, international politics and human security. Social scientists looking for theoretically guided analyses of social mobilizations will want to look elsewhere; students of social activism seeking highly readable and descriptive accounts of anti-nuclear campaigning in the United States will find this volume both rich and rewarding.

Kjell Erling Kjellman

■ Tan, See Seng, 2007. *The Role of Knowledge Communities in Constructing Asia-Pacific Security: How Thoughts and Talk Make War and Peace*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen. x + 263 pp. ISBN 9780773454422.

The book's major contribution lies in building theoretical foundations providing alternative conceptions of security discourse between Track Two diplomacy and official policy process in the Asia-Pacific. Knowledge communities in question are primarily the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) and the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS). The author takes a radical constructivist view of the discourses of such knowledge communities, arguing that Track Two diplomacy and its practices are neither autonomous subjects nor passive recipients; they are not agents freely shaping national and regional security through instrumental actions or simply preserving prior structural functions and identities. Rather, the regional knowledge communities reconstitute the state via discourses of which they too are a part. They have thus constructed and, through discourse, both as a function and legitimating authority,

instantiated the Asia-Pacific as a political, diplomatic, economic, military, and cultural entity in the post-Cold War era. The book serves as a building block for theorizing the role of the knowledge communities, both as a manifestation and an authorizer of the Asia-Pacific security discourse. Given the broad emphasis on texts and discourses, the next step would be to pursue more specificity, taking into account sociocultural variance within the vast networks of the knowledge communities and sociopolitical variance in different agents' constitutive power of discourse. That way, the author's call for more critical self-awareness within the knowledge communities in constructing multilateral ASEAN security model will be given further attention.

Tetsushi Ogata

■ van Baarda, Th. A. & D. E. M. Verweij, eds, 2006. *Military Ethics: The Dutch Approach. A Practical Guide*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff. xv + 395 pp. ISBN 900415440X.

The subject matter of military ethics has a long history, yet, as the authors of this book point out, it is relatively new as a branch of science, and this book is an expression of the increased attention to the topic of military ethics over the last decades. It deals with the practical application of the ethical rules and principles at the level of *jus in bello* (justice in war) and employs several cases from international military operations, including the recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, with special focus on the experiences of Dutch soldiers. The authors, who include people with direct practical expertise as well as Dutch scholars within military ethics, employ a plurality of perspectives. A main strength of the book is that it demonstrates the urgent need for a wide attention to military ethics by pointing out the many ethical issues and dilemmas that military personnel need to face, either as parties to a conflict or as peacekeeping forces aiming to bring it to an end, and this is done in a precise and comprehensible manner. It also includes interesting chapters that deal with the more specific ethical issues that may arise in different services, and also within various offices, such as medical personnel, psychologists, social workers and counsellors. Although mainly directed at junior and senior officers, as well as teachers of military ethics, this timely book should be of interest to all those concerned with the subject of military ethics, including the non-Dutch reader.

Helene Christiansen Ingierd

■ Volkan, Vamik. 2006. *Killing in the Name of Identity: A Study of Bloody Conflicts*. Charlottesville, VA: Pitchstone. 307 pp. ISBN 097288 7571.

This book addresses one of the key challenges in the field of peace and conflict studies: identity-based conflicts. By studying the links between massive trauma, political ideologies, and new tragedies, Volkan provides the reader with a new vision and strategies for peaceful solutions to some of the most intractable conflicts. He is pessimistic about the prospects of achieving a peaceful world, not only because of humans' innate aggression (highlighted earlier by Freud), but also because of the psychology of large groups that share a common identity and the psychological need to find common allies and enemies. His background in research and as a psychoanalyst offers remarkable insights into large-group identity and a methodological approach ('Tree Model') based on a psychological analysis of a group and its ability to coexist peacefully with others. Different identities per se do not lead to conflict. It is the combination of large-group identities with political ideologies and struggles for power that accentuates the differences and stereotyping between groups. Volkan notes insightfully that simply changing the political system is no guarantor of peace. Democracy cannot erase identity issues, and, in fact, these often persist through various changes in political systems. The links established between massive traumas, political ideologies, and new tragedies could be relevant elements to alert the international community, governmental officials, and the general public about the need to identify and run conflict prevention initiatives in places where the political management of identity issues may lead to violent conflict. Volkan convincingly elucidates the strong psychological dimension of identity conflicts; however, he leaves consideration of cultural aspects of identity conflicts unexplored in this book.

Adriana Salcedo

■ Wenger, Andreas & Reto Wollenmann, eds, 2007. *Bioterrorism: Confronting a Complex Threat*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. x+ 241 pp. ISBN 9781588265258.

This edited volume aims to inform debate about the threat of bioterrorism by analyzing the nature and relevance of the threat of biological weapons

to our societies and the challenges faced in designing appropriate policy responses to what remains a largely unsubstantiated threat (p. 1). In so doing, it moves beyond a focus on specific technical aspects of the bioterrorism threat to map the broader context of bioterrorism by considering the extent and nature of the risk it poses, how it is likely to evolve and the implications this has for how security policy is formulated in response (p. 2). The book is divided into three parts: part one focuses on actors and capabilities and traces the bioterrorism threat from the history of state biological weapons programmes to the implications the continued advancements in biosciences have for the nature and evolution of the threat. Part two addresses the differing perceptions of the bioterrorism threat and the intrinsic uncertainty that shrouds it, and part three discusses the policy challenges that emerge as a result. The strength of the book lies in the juxtaposition of the analyses made by the various contributors to the volume, all scholars in the fields of public policy and security with expertise in subject-matter. The diversity of the content provides a well-balanced assessment of the core issues surrounding the bioterrorism debate, highlighting the inherent challenges in assessing, managing and ultimately knowing what is and will remain a complex and elusive threat. The volume is an insightful read for both researchers and policymakers alike.

Sonja Kittelsen

■ Winslow, Philip, 2007. *Victory for Us Is To See You Suffer: In the West Bank with the Palestinians and the Israelis*. Boston, MA: Beacon. 224 pp. ISBN 9780807069066.

In this book, the author – a former support officer for the United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestinian Refugees – recounts his experiences while working in the West Bank between 2001 and 2004, a period marred with vicious violence between Israelis and Palestinians. What sets this book apart from other books written on the subject is its emphasis on one aspect of the conflict: the detailed account of the maltreatment of Palestinians at Israeli checkpoints which littered the West Bank and made Palestinian life excruciatingly difficult. Most of the stories that make up the 19 chapters of the book (some are only three pages long) chronicle the author's encounters with Palestinians and Israelis while monitoring or mediating at countless checkpoints. The book is primarily focused on depicting Palestinian

suffering and the unimaginable conditions, along with the ingenious ways people devised to cope with these Israeli-imposed movement restrictions. The reader will also find that the author does bring up frequent accounts of his encounters with Israeli citizens and soldiers, who are also affected by the tense situation at the checkpoints and elsewhere in Israel. The stories are depressing, but the author always ends each chapter with optimism. He accentuates how Palestinians are resilient and determined to go on with their lives despite their plight. But, perhaps more importantly, the author does stress how the brutality of violence has masked many acts of humanity and heroism – on both sides – that go unnoticed and take place sometimes, ironically, at these checkpoints. It is this shared humanity, lurking beneath the conflict, that the author hopes will bring peace someday to the Palestinians and Israelis.

Basel Saleh

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