

BOOK REVIEWS

K. Warikoo, ed., *Himalayan Frontiers of India: Historical, Geo-Political and Strategic Perspectives*
(New York: Routledge, 2009), 220.

No doubt, the Himalayas are “mythical mountains” referred to in ancient Hindu scriptures of the Vedic age, but the mountain range has had a formative influence on countries that lie in its lap: Bhutan, Nepal and northern parts of India and Pakistan. It is also the main source of river systems watering these countries. Mahayana Buddhism spread to different countries in Central Asia and beyond mostly from territories which are part of Pakistan and India. The editor, K. Warikoo, Professor in School of International Studies in Jawaharlal University, is right when he says “the boundaries of Tajikistan, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, India and Myanmar converge along with Himalayas [which] lends a unique geo-strategic importance” to the region. An “ethnic-religious jigsaw” prevails in the “Himalayas and trans-Himalayas where people of Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic faiths are concentrated”. (p.ix). The title of the book should therefore have been “Himalayan Frontiers of South Asia” and not “Himalayan Frontiers of India” because the mountain demarcates the frontiers of several independent states of South Asia and not just India, and the work discusses all these countries. In fact, a larger portion of the Himalayas provides a frontier mainly to Nepal and Bhutan.

The work is a collection of 13 articles written by various writers, including the first two by the editor himself. All writers belong to India and therefore, naturally, they have projected mainly the Indian viewpoint. For instance, the editor while referring to India’s several wars with Pakistan and a solitary one with China blames Pakistan and China and not India for all these wars (p.x-xi). This is a reflection on his objectivity. The first two chapters discuss trans-Himalayan trade and cultural movements in Kashmir and Ladakh with adjoining Xinjiang and Tibet during British supremacy in South Asia from 1846 to 1947. Then there is a reference to the “Great Game”, i.e., the Anglo-Russian rivalry in the frontier territories of Gilgit, Hunza, Nagar, Chitral and the North Western Frontier Province. Incidentally, all these territories now form part of Pakistan.

P.N. Jalali, a journalist from Kashmir, in Chapter 3, while reflecting on the events of 1946-47 in Kashmir and Northern Areas (which include Gilgit, Hunza, Nagar, Puniyal, Yasin, Kuh, Ghizar, Ishkoman and Chilas), shows his bias by ascribing the control of Northern Areas by Pakistan to “invading Pakistani troops under a sordid deal” and refers to Pakistan government as military rulers (p.45). He is either ignorant or has deliberately concealed the fact that the people of Northern Areas voluntarily joined Pakistan when there was a civilian democratic government in Pakistan. The next chapter written by Vijay Kapur, Professor in the Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi, advocates that the Government of India should adopt an aggressive and proactive approach against states bordering Himalayas as was done by the British during their colonial period in India.

Maj. Gen. (ret'd) Afsir Karim, in Chapter 5, thinks that the “Great Game” has been revived after 9/11, because the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), NATO, the American-led coalition in Afghanistan and the terrorist organizations and movements are active in the region. He rightly suggests that “India has to create an amicable environment and establish friendly ties with both Pakistan and China” to have better interaction in the region (p.65). In the next chapter, Sat Paul Sahni, a journalist from Kashmir, is of the opinion that the public opinion in both India and Pakistan is changing towards accepting the existing line of control in Jammu and Kashmir as the international border, but feels that it would take a long time to make it a reality.

In Chapter 7, B. Raman, a former Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, New Delhi, rightly recognizes that the Northern Areas of Pakistan are important to India, China, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the U.S. He ascribes the movement for the right to self-determination and independence in the region to changes in demographic composition, absence of democracy, and lack of economic development.

M.M. Khajooria, former Director General, Police, in Indian held Kashmir, in Chapter 8, focuses on militancy, insurgency and terrorism in the state of Kashmir, which he blames on Pakistan entirely. He goes to the extent of calling the Two-Nation Theory, which is the basis and *raison d'être* for Pakistan, as “pernicious” (p.89). He is oblivious to the fact that the state of Jammu and Kashmir is a “disputed territory” and, according to the UN Security Council resolutions, its future awaits a plebiscite under UN auspices.

Chapter 9 written by P. Stobdan, former Director of the Centre for Regional and Strategic Studies, Jammu, highlights the formation of radical groups inside Tibet (p.107). At the same time he acknowledges that at the popular level, Tibetans “despise India ... much akin to the sentiments shared by neighbouring Nepalis, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans” (p.110). He is worried that the Tibetan refugees in India are concentrating in the Indian Himalayan belt and that “Tibet will always remain vital to India’s security interests” (p.120-121).

Chapter 10 by B.C. Upreti, Director of the Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, seeks to focus on various positive and negative effects of Indo-Nepal open border, such as smuggling, uncontrolled migration as well as mutual benefits to the population of border areas, and recommends proper border management by the Indian Government. The next chapter by Rajesh Kharat, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Mumbai, focuses on Indo-Bhutan and Sino-Bhutan relations. As per Indo-Bhutan Treaty of 1949, Bhutan had agreed to be guided by Indian advice in its external relations. Bhutan conducts its trade through Indian Territory. It now wants to liberalise the interpretation of the 1949 treaty, and to have proper relations with China, besides India, because of its geo-political, economic and strategic compulsions.

Chapter 12 by Bibhuti Bhusan Nandy, former Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, New Delhi, discusses cross-border movements in the Himalayan region, especially illegal migrations along borders of Bangladesh and Burma and insurgents movements in Jammu and Kashmir and in northeast India getting assistance from neighbouring countries. It recommends an “effective border management and surveillance” and requires Bangladesh Government to ensure the safety and security of the religious and ethnic minorities so that they do not migrate. Similarly, in the last chapter, Air Marshal (retd) Vinod Patney, feels that “inherent differences between India and Pakistan are unlikely to disappear in the near future” and there is a border dispute with China (p.180). Thus, the surveillance of borders, the gathering of intelligence especially through sensor platforms and aerostats, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and space satellites is necessary. He lays emphasis on modern weapon systems, space technology, miniaturization, and continued research on development of products to improve surveillance and remote sensing.

In a nutshell, the various articles concentrate on problems and the strategic importance of Himalayan frontier to the relevant states of South

Asia, especially India. The work, though seen through an Indian prism, makes an interesting reading and provides useful information about the Himalayan belt in historical, geo-political and strategic perspectives. ■

Dr Noor ul Haq, Research Fellow, IPRI

Islam Karimov, *The Global Financial-Economic Crisis: Ways and Measures to Overcome it in the Conditions of Uzbekistan*
(Tashkent: Publishing House, 2009), 38.

The ongoing financial and economic crisis is re-shaping the world in many ways. The crisis, which surfaced last year, first in the United States and later spread all over the globe, is the latest version of the economic recession of the 1930s. Political leaders, corporate intelligentsia, and economists have been trying to explain the global financial and economic meltdown as they perceive it in order to suggest measures to overcome it. The intellectual contribution made by Islam Karimov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, came in the form of *The Global Financial-Economic Crisis: Ways and Measures to Overcome it in the Conditions of Uzbekistan*. The work has been widely appreciated at home and abroad. The author explains the global financial crisis in the context of Uzbekistan and suggests measures to tackle its implications for the Uzbek economy. The essence of the work is the objective examination of the ongoing economic crisis and the practical solution it suggests. The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the impact of the crisis on the Uzbek economy and the factors that are cushioning it against the adverse effects. The second part deals with the banking sector, modernization, diversification of production, and innovative steps adopted to soften the impact on the Uzbek economy. So far no leader of any country has made such an intellectual contribution about the financial meltdown, which makes President Karimov's analysis unique, interesting, and timely.

It is interesting to note that Uzbekistan inherited an economy that was totally non-market-driven, cost-orientated, and non-sensitive to external pressures. Nevertheless, the economic performance of Uzbekistan has been a tested case for the past 18 years since its independence in 1991. The Uzbek Government is following a prudent and far-sighted economic and financial policy under President Karimov. It has embarked upon a programme of market reforms, free enterprise, and gradual privatization keeping in mind the domestic environment of the

country. Karimov has laid stress on sustainability and home-grown solutions while moving into the global market and opening the economy. He suggests equilibrium between social-oriented development and free market forces. This balance absorbs internal and external shocks and provides a strong base for growth to the national economy.

The central point of the author's thesis revolves around two points: No State could get away from the effects of the financial crisis, and that prescriptions to address them should be home-grown, domestic, and country-specific. The social-oriented development policy and programme of Uzbekistan is based on five principles: De-ideologicalisation of the economy, State as the chief planner and reformer, rule of law, strong social policy, and gradual and evolutionary approach toward economic change. Adherence to these principles has made Uzbekistan's development phenomenal and dynamic. Within three years, its GDP has doubled from U.S.\$ 14.3 billion in 2005 to U.S.\$28 billion in 2008.

President Karimov thinks that financial and economic solutions depend on a country's particular situation, its degree of stability, sustainability, financial resources, economic and banking systems, among other factors. He suggests a national and indigenous approach as the solution; a national shock therapy and a gradual and incremental approach towards reforms. President Karimov believes in the State as the main actor in the process of reforms. While bringing reforms in the banking sector prudent policies are followed to ensure the safety of deposits. He suggests that long-term investment-oriented loans should be contracted with foreign lenders instead of short-term loans.

Thanks to the economic vision of President Karimov, Uzbek economy has remained largely unaffected by the global financial meltdown except for minor constraints in some sectors. The pragmatic measures he suggests to consolidate the economy include: attracting foreign investment, initiating priority projects, diversifying the export-base, promoting rural development and small businesses, enhancing transportation and energy projects, textile development, and initiating mega projects. Education and services areas are other sectors that should receive attention. Enhancing industrial competitiveness, introducing new enterprises, and stimulating local demand are part of his economic strategy.

Realizing the worst ever implications of the global financial meltdown, it is time to rebuild the global financial and economic system

and bury the 30 years' old hegemony of the capitalist orthodoxy, Thatcherism, the U.S.-led West Consensus, and the out-dated prescriptions of the international institutions. No more should transnational corporations override the sovereign governments; and democratic politics should not be made subservient to corporate interests. It is time to return to the social-oriented peoples-led development as pursued by President Karimov and advocated by social democrats in the West. A neo-globalization should be taking place based on social market forces.

Concise and to the point in analysis, President Karimov's book appears to be an outline of the economic and financial way forward for the Uzbek economy. The book answers questions being raised about the global economic crisis. There is a message here of economic recovery for the Western policy-makers and East Asian leaders. The book testifies to the policy and programme launched by President Karimov some 18 years ago. He did not create a boom, but a gradual modernization, industrialization, development, and progress that continues. Policy-makers across the world should read President Karimov's analysis in order to get a deeper insight into how an infant national economy has performed well while more developed nations both in the West and East have come under the severe grip of the financial and economic meltdown. If the present macro-economic stability continues in Uzbekistan during the economic crisis, there is a possibility Uzbekistan may emerge as the Central Asian economic tiger in the post-crisis era. ■

Dr Ahmad Rashid Malik, Research Fellow, IPRI.

Edward D. Mansfield & Jack Snyder, eds., *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War*
(London, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2007), 300.

It is generally believed that democracy brings peace and prosperity in the world. But Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder have challenged this notion. They are of the opinion that incomplete democracies with dysfunctional institutions are more prone to go to war than non democratic orders. In their book, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War*, the authors have presented a very cogent argument in favor of their contention. Mansfield is the Hum Rosen Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania and co-writer Snyder is the Robert and Renée Belfer Professor of International

Relations at Columbia University. The book contains nine chapters with its focus on emerging democracies.

The writers hold that though democracy remains to be the best option yet the democratization process is conflict prone. The transitional phase from non-democratic dispensations to democratic order can be dangerous if not handled carefully, which is often the case since leaders of the change do not possess the required skills to control and lead the process towards the desired goal. Mansfield and Snyder, with the help of statistical data, analyze the situations in which political institutions could not play their due role, resulting in internal conflicts. They have “demonstrated the dangers that can arise when democratic transitions do not follow an auspicious sequence”. Mansfield and Snyder also warn that a state that is democratizing in an incomplete way may ultimately revert to autocracy.

The writers hold the view that the peace character of democracy played its role only in the presence of effective institutions which prevented democracies from choosing the war option. In mature democracies strong institutions that are accountable to the electorate would prefer the peace option in contrast to democratizing states with weak institutions that are more likely to choose war. Then nascent democracies are very much vulnerable to external factors while strong democratic institutions make the government accountable to the taxpayer who bears the cost of war.

The writers further argue that democracies have certain advantages when facing non-democracies on the field of battle. A number of studies have found that mixed regimes or newly transitional regimes are also at a heightened risk of civil war or internal ethnic conflicts. And an incomplete democratization process may lead to atrocities and massive human rights violations. Although genocide and other atrocities take place in autocracies yet some case studies do show that they also take place in states undergoing incomplete democratization.

According to the writers, economic reform is an issue that has drawn much attention on the part of social scientists, but virtually no attention has been paid to the effects of incomplete democratization on economic policy. So, the institution of “economics” should be dealt with on priority while a country is transitioning from non-democracy to democracy.

The writers have formulated the following questions in answering which they explain as to why their doubts about inadequate democratic

processes and the dangers to peace that are involved have a strong enough basis.

- How many wars of democratization were fought?
- What conditions make the democratization process less dangerous?
- When and how democratization increases the chance of war?
- What will be the future challenges of democratization and war?
- And how to promote democracy in the face of risk?

The book has relevance for countries like Pakistan where the democratic process has been stopped in its tracks a number of times. This has resulted in the weakening of institutions that the authors consider to be essential for democracy to take root in any society. It is also a fact and corroborates the authors' view that countries where democratic institutions are weak generally experience internal and external crises. The book helps us to understand the problems faced by new governments while going through democratic transition coupled with suggesting “do’s and don’ts” during the completion of the democratic process.

The book is of particular relevance at a time when democratization is being “sold as a panacea” for all the troubles of the world. Its advocates want it to be introduced particularly in countries where democratic traditions have never or seldom existed and which have no institutions to sustain it. It is rightly highlighted in the book that it is very necessary that the democratic institutions of a country should be powerful enough to sustain it. In the present troubled times when an undefined war is being waged against an amorphous enemy without frontiers Mansfield and Snyder have presented a well-argued position about risks and dangers involved in pushing half-baked democratic programmes in countries used to absolute and autocratic rule. It recommends many policy options for emerging democracies and notes “potential pitfalls and prescribes tactics to avoid them” like focusing on institution building first and then creating a proper climate and soil for democracy to take roots.■

Khalid Chandio, Assistant Research Officer, IPRI.

Adrian Guelke, *The New Age of Terrorism and the International Political System*

(London: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 238.

Dr Adrian Guelke's latest book "*The New Age of Terrorism and the International Political System*" is the updated sequel to his previous work "*The Age of Terrorism and the International Political System*" that appeared in 1995. Dr Adrian's work is destined to be controversial as it challenges the received wisdom on the subject. A specialist in the comparative study of ethnic conflicts in Northern Ireland, his native South Africa and Kashmir, he employs his insights to deconstruct some widely-held assumptions, perceptions, myths and paradoxes regarding the mechanics of the terrorist phenomenon. He exposes the degree of ethnocentrism in the realist orthodoxy about terrorism and the liberal state from both theoretical and empirical perspectives. Analysing Alex Schmid's celebrated work "*Political Terrorism*" and Dobson's and Payne's chronological study "*The Never-Ending War*" Guelke enunciates three approaches to distinguish terrorism from other forms of violence: first, normative; second, indicative (of the level of violence); and third, descriptive (of the types of violence). From these, he infers that terrorism follows from terrorism and that it is virtually impossible to judge any act of violence simply as a means without reference to the end that provides the motivation for the deed. Regarding the nature and causes of terrorism, the author busts the ten most popular propositions -- terrorism as a war on the West, terrorism as an auxiliary of the modern society, terrorism as a pathological phenomenon, terrorism as the most eminent threat to the liberal democracies, terrorism as a product of the democratization of violence, terrorism as a weapon of the weak, terrorism as a blunt tool of killing relatively few people, terrorism as a reaction to state terrorism, terrorism as a response to the failure of mass political movement, and terrorism as a phenomenon of late 1960s. He goes on to prove that the complexity of the notion of terrorism itself does not allow any of these propositions to satisfy the explanation of terrorism.

Juxtaposing the most crucial occurrences of the 1960s -- the Six-Day Arab-Israel War of June 1967, the death of Che Guevara in 1967, student revolt in France in 1968, the clashes between police and civil rights activists in Londonderry in 1968 and West Germany's National Democratic Party's failure to secure representation in federal elections in

1969--against the established categories of terrorism based on these events, Guelke rejects any direct link between any of the cases and the outbreak of political violence which is thought as marking the advent of the age of terrorism. Not only that, he even rejects any indirect connection between these events and particular groups that came to be labeled as terrorist or even particular categories of terrorism. To him, these events, if anything, are important only to the extent of identifying political trends with one or the other category of terrorism.

The writer examines mass movements and the resultant fall of regimes in countries like Iran, the Philippines, France and China, and concludes that the opposition could rob the incumbent regime of the legitimacy by outmatching it in mobilizing large number of people, thus putting its existence in jeopardy. He holds that garnering mass public support against imperialism is difficult than mobilizing people against colonialism. He illustrates this point by observing that both the relationship between means and ends is relatively clear in the battle against colonialism, whereas the relationship between means and ends and its political limits are far from clear in the struggle against imperialism. Examining various armed resistance movements against the system in Western nations, especially West Germany, where a small self-purported anti-imperialist group, the RAF (Red Army Faction) ran a subversive campaign for over a decade, Guelke notes that the option of non-violent forms of protest available to people in a liberal and stable democracy makes any kind of political violence very difficult to gain currency. The author dedicates a complete chapter to the conflict in Northern Ireland which has left little impact on the literature on terrorism because academic analysts had scant appreciation of the gravity of the conflict while politicians wanted accommodation between the warring communities. Discussing the relationship between violence and inequality in the developing world, the writer highlights that political violence in the late 1960s and early 1970s was not characterized as terrorism since such violence was understood as a response to inequality or lack of democracy within the states affected by it. However, the involvement of some organizations such as Fatah and Hizbollah in acts of international or transnational terrorism simply provided the basis for the extension of the term 'terrorism' to domestic political violence.

Dilating on the issue of self-defence in the context of international terrorism, he points out that a state can plead self-defence as a justification for covert warfare by its agents. He cites the double standards of the

Reagan administration with respect to the application of the concept of self-defence; Reagan administration condoned the Israeli covert cross-border operations inside Lebanon by calling them acts of self-defence while condemning similar operations carried out by the Soviet-backed Afghan government by designating them as international terrorism.

Elucidating the issue of exponential increase in the terrorist threat, he indicates that the notion of terrorism with its overtones of absolute illegitimacy has made the achievement of any accommodation between contending groups more difficult since this conviction has portrayed the enemy in demonic terms. He compares this conception regarding terrorism and its perpetrators with the rejectionist approach of the U.S. foreign policy during the greater part of the Cold-War, which considered negotiations with the leaders of the Soviet Union a non-starter for their being untrustworthy. He observes that the precept has been applied anew in the field of terrorism as it had, earlier, lost its credibility when President Nixon started an era of negotiations with his Soviet counterpart. He argues that this trend did not come into practice abruptly as the Western governments, which would negotiate with the perpetrators of hijackings and kidnappings to secure the release of the victims, have ceased to engage them after they discovered an alternative in the shape of specialist military forces to tackle them.

On the negative side, the scope of the study may not be called wide-ranging since it does not examine some violent resistance movements that are highly crucial to global peace and security, especially the Kashmiri armed struggle in South Asia. Nonetheless, one cannot but agree with the writer's final pronouncement on the character of terrorism being a political phenomenon. The last sentence of the book "But what should also be rejected is the fatalistic attitude that politics is incapable of bringing an end to terrorist campaigns" is not merely cautionary. It gives hope.■

Yasir Imtiaz, former Research Officer, IPRI.

Dr. Hafeez Malik, *U.S. Relations with Afghanistan and Pakistan: The Imperial Dimension*
(Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 308.

The events of 9/11 in America have had a profound influence on developments in south and central Asia. Afghanistan and Pakistan have got deeply embroiled in the U.S. "war on terror" since the ouster of the

Taliban regime in Kabul. U.S.-Afghan and Pakistan relations have become a pivotal triangle in the strategic picture of South, Central and West Asia. The region which is characterized by economic, political and strategic problems has witnessed the settlement of few old issues while new ones continue to raise their head. Diplomacy and strategy in the region have become both important and complicated.

The book "*U.S. Relations with Afghanistan and Pakistan: an Imperial Dimension*," is an analysis of U.S.-Afghan-Pakistan relations. The author, Hafeez Malik, teaches Political Science at the University of Villanova, U.S. He has also worked as a journalist attached to White House staff when Eisenhower and Kennedy were presidents. This gives his work considerable insight into the working of American policy in Asia. He evaluates U.S. interests and perceived threats in the Asian region lucidly. The book has eight chapters. The introduction and the epilogue read together present a comprehensive enough gist of his argument.

The book attempts to define America as an empire on the basis of its power and ability to exercise control over other countries and though she does not intend to acquire colonies her present role in world affairs resembles that of the British in the 19th century. The American empire has four kinds of territories: Outlying territories like Alaska and Hawaii, 2: Dependencies 3: Leased territories and 4: Nominally Independent Dependencies

In support of his argument he draws a parallel with the Roman Empire but points out that the U.S. as an empire is of even greater stature due to its economic power and technological development. Further imperialism derives strength from some ideology. Hans J.Morganthau has said that a dynamic imperialism needs a dynamic ideology based on a superior psychology as "the white man's burden". The American political culture has a distinct mindset of "Americanism", i.e., America is exceptional and is a superior entity signified by its institutions of democracy, liberty, human rights and justice.

After 1991 the U.S. became the main power in a unipolar world. Such a position was not enjoyed even by Great Britain at its zenith. One prominent reason for America's strength is its "meritocracy".

Since 1776 the U.S. has acquired all the assets of a modern empire: (pg 46)

1. Extensive contiguous and non-contiguous territories.
2. A remarkable, well developed economy and an educated population.

3. Highly developed scientific and industrial enterprises and financial institutions that influence the economies of foreign states.
4. Military command structures to guarantee its security.

The writer has highlighted the power of American institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. That gives the U.S. a political leverage in world politics.

After 9/11, 2001 American security concerns turned towards Afghanistan to curb the *Al Qaeda* network. Though apparently this policy gives the impression of a war against terror but U.S. is actually grappling with the issues like rising China and an unstable Pakistan. In the foreseeable future American global security policy will be Asia-centric revolving around India, Pakistan, China and Afghanistan. No doubt America economically, politically and socially is most stable and a powerful player on the world stage of affairs but there are a few lessons that history has left concerning the great empires. First, that no empire lasts forever, it must decline sooner or later. Second, the empire can exist for as long as it follows humanistic values of rule.

The grand imperatives of imperial geo strategy have historically been to prevent collusion and maintain security dependence among the vassals, to keep tributaries pliant and protected and to keep the barbarians from coming together. The countries within the American empire account for 70 per cent of the world gross product. As far as South Asia is concerned, India is going to be helped in development and industry by the U.S. for at least the next ten years. Pakistan is a state which is always willing to be a part of the American empire. Afghanistan, which remained out of U.S. reach for a long time has now eventually been brought into the fold by the force of arms. America's sole worry in the region is China with its high growth rate during the last two decades and its increasing dependence on oil imports.

The U.S. suspects that China is intruding into areas which were until recently within its economic and political orbit. China knows America is exercising a soft containment policy towards her while her response can be termed pre-emptive counter containment. U.S. policy towards Pakistan and India is seen in this perspective: India is to be groomed as a countervailing force against China and a fighter against Islamic fundamentalism and terror in the Middle East whereas Pakistan must settle its disputes with India and join in the power system designed

to contain China. To entice India into this game, the U.S. repudiated its own non-proliferation policy and invited India to join the nuclear club which was denied to Pakistan. The author cites other examples of this kind from history: British help to Japan in 19th century to contain the expansion of Czarist Russia.

In a discussion that mercifully remains focused and therefore brief. The author gives a fairly objective account of what it calls the American imperial policy in Asia, evaluating the present regional situation through analyses of the roles the various countries of the region are supposed to be playing in this context. Students of international politics may find some fresh approaches in this study. ■

Nargis Zahra, Assistant Research Officer, IPRI.

Tore Bjorgo and John Horgan, eds., *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*
(London: Routledge, 2009), 326.

The book “*Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement*” is the latest in the literature that has been published in recent years on political violence and terrorism. Edited and contributed by Tore Bjorgo, Professor at the Norwegian Police University College and Senior Researcher at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and John Horgan, Director of the International Center for the Study of Terrorism at the Pennsylvania State University, the book presents authentic accounts of terrorist activities in different parts of the world to examine issues of individual and group disengagement and de-radicalization as well as organizational collapse of extremist set ups.

Contributed by fifteen prominent and widely-respected leading experts on terrorism, the book has been arranged into three parts. Opening with an introduction by the editors, the motivation behind the work, aims and objectives of the effort, are outlined. The remaining chapters are grouped in two main sections: the first addressing processes of disengagement and de-radicalization and the second describing or assessing programmes of disengagement and de-radicalization.

The first half of the book provides insight into the processes by which disengagement takes place, how terrorist movements end and how and why individuals and groups disengage from terrorism. Some of the vital questions lying at the core of the disengagement and de-radicalisation debate are discussed followed by a sociological examination of an Italian

case by Donatella della Porta and identification of certain strategic and organizational dynamics by Rogelio Alonso that had motivated the Irish Republic Army to renounce terrorism. Daa Rashwan's case study illustrates cases of collective disengagement from Jihadi terrorism in Egypt.

The second half of the book enumerates and assesses the effectiveness of government policies, designed to bring a turn around in the mindset of terrorist elements. Tore Bajorgo, Jaap van Donselaar and Sara Grunenbergh shed light on the growing number of disengagement and de-radicalisation programmes currently under development in Europe, followed by Marcella Ribetti's case study of demobilization in Columbia. Targeting religious terrorists and extremists in the Muslim world, Laila Bokhari and Richard Barrett provide a brief critique of different relevant case studies. The Jihadi debate has also been brought into focus in the epilogue by three contributors: Christopher Boucek, Shazadi Beg, and John Horgan. Zachary Abuza dwells on the rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah detainees in South East Asia, while Christopher Boucek elaborates one of the most innovative and comprehensive programme citing references from Saudi Arabia. Shazadi Beg and Laila Bokhari attempt to explain Jihadi culture in Pakistan with particular focus on reducing religious terrorism.

The work provides a wealth of information on the socio-psychological causes that lead terrorists to renounce violence. The importance of disengagement and de-radicalization overlooked in counter-terrorism policies of governments and in research related to terrorism has received focused treatment in the different essays included in the compilation.

The book explores ways to check the reformed extremists' from returning to the terrorist fold and prevent the violent outfits from regrouping and recruiting fresh manpower. It suggests strategies to absorb and reintegrate the reformed individuals or groups into the mainstream through incentives like fruitful employment, educational opportunities and economic support. The study breaks new ground keeping in view both regional and conceptual approaches that have been suggested elsewhere in research on the subject.

Initiatives in this respect tried in different countries -- Italy, Northern Ireland, Egypt, Norway, Sweden, Germany, Colombia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan -- provide empirical data for comparing and assessing their strengths and weaknesses. They have been

studied in some detail to find lessons in these cases in counter-terrorism strategies.

Diverse extremist groups and organizations have been chosen for study such as racists, neo-Nazis, followers of cults, criminal mafias, leftist revolutionaries and violence-oriented right-wing parties and international *Jibadi* outfits active under the umbrella of *Al-Qaeda*. The studies point out areas of tension, contradictions and conflicts within the outfits that ultimately lead to members' disaffection and desertion from the organization resulting often in individual disengagement, and sometimes, in collective disintegration. Counter terrorism strategies have space here for employing intellectual interventions that exploit ideological rigidities within adherents to widen differences and promote dissension and ultimate disengagement of some of them.

The contributors emphasize the need for deeper analyses of the bad experiences of former terrorists, autobiographies, interviews of family members, communiqués, and statements issued by the movements, postings on internet etc which can provide useful information about the process of de-radicalization and disengagement. By supplementing theory with practical illustrations and comparative and historical analysis the writers have provided a useful material to anti-terror strategists.

Practical programmes initiated by different governments in the face of diverse challenges, local threat environments and political settings cover much space in the study and highlight the commonalities. These programmes are designed to offer space and opportunity to dissidents in society for venting frustration; ways for the rehabilitation and aftercare; amnesty and re-education of the disengaged elements.

The writers oppose the "one size fits all" approach and favour comprehensive multifaceted programmes that take into account the whole range of local variations. The authors believe that these distinctions should define the format of the de-radicalization and disengagement programmes that include emphasis on changing society's attitude towards the militant group and change in the latter's ideological tenets. Well-structured intellectual intervention striking at the core of the militants' ideology can significantly shrink the size of the militant organizations.

The concluding lines drawn up by the editors summarise main ideas and central findings of the compendium, in addition to, providing captivating case studies and empirical data based on lessons learnt from

the various disengagement and de-radicalisation programmes. Finally, the editors propose an agenda for further research and practice.

The work will be of great interest to students of the terrorism phenomenon as well as professionals in the field of counter-terrorism. It is an invaluable source book for academic research and has significant implications for evidence-based policy analysis and development. ■

Muhammad Nawaz Khan Verdag, Assistant Research Officer, IPRI.

Anthony Vinci, *Armed Groups and the Balance of Power*
(London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 167.

Armed Groups and the Balance of Power by Anthony Vinci explains the role of armed groups in international relations using the realist perspective. The main theme of the book is that armed groups have gained so much importance in international relations that theories related to the latter field can be used to comprehend the former entity and formulate policies to counter it. The author examines three armed groups: the Somali war lords and militia, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and *Al-Qaeda*. The book also suggests methodologies to tackle these armed groups.

There is plenty of literature available which deals with armed groups and terrorism, as well as much material on realism, balance of power, and neo-realism. Vinci's work is probably more focused and comprehensive. He says that counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism have become a challenge for the state in international relations within the context of realism. Vinci uses a neorealist framework to examine these groups and specifically deals with their impact on the working of the international system.

Vinci explains why these groups are so important and why should they be discussed in the framework of international relations? The author realizes the fact that applying the theories of international relations to understand the armed groups has not been attempted before. He looks into the structure of armed groups to find out what makes them different from states which engage in international relations.

Vinci starts with failed States and then discusses armed groups and territory. He gives an unconventional view of the concept of territory and maintains that territorial control is not always as important as authority over people. (p.13). He says that in order to gain power these groups acquire material resources such as troops, weapons, land, cash and

recognition (p.36). While comparing states and armed groups as units, Vinci believes that these groups are motivated more by their hunger for power than their struggle for survival.

In subsequent chapters (the book has seven) the author focuses on case studies of Somali warlords and militias, the Lord's Resistance Army, and *Al-Qaeda*. The aim is to test the applicability of the balance of power concept and neorealist theory to armed groups. While discussing the Somali warlords and militias, Vinci discusses the historical background of the fall of the Somalian state following anarchic conditions in the wake of the collapse of the central authority and the ensuing civil war between different militias. The case study shows the interaction of these militias with United Nations intervention forces as well as with Ethiopia. The Somali National Front (SNF) alliance against *Al-Ittibad* is seen in the perspective of balance of power. The application of balance of power approach to Somalia has been justified since the actors are armed and autonomous and thrive in the anarchy of a collapsed State. (p.88).

The case of the LRA is different from that of Somali warlords and militias. This group is more close to the terrorist group category and it is mostly based in Sudan but has spread to the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. The group has unclear motives. It is not clear whether the group actually wants to take over the Ugandan State, defend the Acholi's, or do the bidding of Sudan with whom it is allied. (p.94). The organization does not have a definite political goal, but grievances and greed might be the motivating factors. To deal with this complicated situation, the author has adopted the multi-unit balance of power approach between autonomous actors which include LRA, Uganda, Sudan, and Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Al-Qaeda is described as a complex organization and relatively difficult to understand from other armed groups in this study. The author describes it as a unique organization within world politics and system. The author calls *Al-Qaeda* an empirically sovereign, unitary actor and a very complex organization with a highly cellular structure. It operates in such clandestine ways that it is difficult to say if at all it is a unitary organization. (p.111). The history of the organization, its structure, motivations and related issues have been addressed logically. Discussing its top leadership's communications problems with its sub-groups he points out that the problem is acute for *Al-Qaeda* because the leadership is under constant pressure from the U.S. and Pakistani military (p.115). However, the presence of educated cadres has provided *Al-Qaeda* with

modern means of communication. The group takes full advantage of online websites to advertise its cause, recruit new members and otherwise carry out operations (p.116). In this its behaviour is no different to a state's. It is trying to strengthen its internal structure, military abilities, and has created alliances in Iraq, the fighting Islamic group in Libya, Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia and many other organizations. Vinci says that since the organization is bonded with different other armed groups, weakening of these groups will weaken *Al-Qaeda*.

While summarising Vinci says that due to some limitations he has not been able to completely prove the applicability of the theory of neo-realism to understand when these armed groups would obtain autonomy. (p.133). He leaves this topic for future researchers. Nevertheless, he suggests that the study of armed groups should become a separate area of study in international relations. Scholars and students in the disciplines of international relations, the phenomenon of terrorism and foreign policy, as well as diplomats and military practitioners will find useful information in this book. ■

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