

Tom Miller, *China's Asian Dream: Empire Building along the New Silk Road* (London: Zed Books, 2017), 248.

Reviewed by Dr Muhammad Munir, Assistant Professor, Strategic Studies Department, Faculty of Contemporary Studies (FCS), National Defence University (NDU), Islamabad, Pakistan.

China's foreign policy has seen some major shifts since Xi Jinping became President in 2012. He gave a new vision of 'Making China Great Again' and enhancing its influence through economic diplomacy. In order to build a 'community of shared destiny' in Asia, he increased investment in the region for building an infrastructure for connectivity, industrial development and trade. As these policies will have regional and global implications, therefore, a lot of work is being done on analysing their impact. The book under review is one such effort.

Tom Miller's book, *China's Asian Dream: Empire Building along the New Silk Road* is divided into eight chapters including the introduction and conclusion. The second and third chapter focus on Chinese diplomacy of win-win cooperation and building a 'community of shared destiny' in Asia through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), especially BRI in the Chinese Xinjiang region that links China with Central Asia, Russia and Europe. Chapter four examines China's economic and trade cooperation with its near neighbours such as Laos and Cambodia. The subsequent chapter concentrates on China's troubled relations with Myanmar as the gateway to the Bay of Bengal, followed by China's strategy in the Indian Ocean (IO) and its relations with Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka. The final chapter examines China's posture in the South China Sea, especially its strained relations with Vietnam.

The BRI is the Chinese tool to enhance its influence in the region which Miller has referred to as 'Empire Building along the New Silk Road'. He argues that China does not have imperial ambitions other than

Book Reviews

restoring its place as a leading power in Asia. He guardedly hints that China is not aspiring to challenge the United States' (US) super power status; however, it does wish to safeguard its national honour and dignity. Miller adds that this does not automatically mean that China has ambitions to conquer foreign lands beyond the turbulent waters of the South China Sea, he affirms this point by suggesting that there is no evidence of its intention to do this either. Nevertheless, the explanations on the nature of the BRI vary; many scholars, commentators and experts consider the initiative as a trade and an infrastructure development project, whilst, Western analysts view it through the prism of geopolitics:

China's aim is to use economic incentives to build closer relationships with its neighbours, drawing them ever tighter into its embrace. In return for delivering roads and power lines, it expects its partners to respect its 'core interests', including its territorial claims in the South China Sea (p. 19).

The book concludes with Miller's argument that China's investment in its neighbours is meant to promote its own geopolitical interests, that perhaps the country's win-win cooperation is not a win-win on an equal basis with its smaller neighbours.

The regional analysis makes this book a useful resource as it captures China's multidimensional relations with its neighbouring countries. The analysis points out that China and Russia have positive long-term cooperation, but the former's engagement in Central Asia is beginning to disturb this balanced cooperation.

Furthermore, the author notes that China's role in Southeast Asia is hampered by Japan which is its major rival. Miller points out that in the IO, China's engagement has increased, resulting in Chinese companies building ports in Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. The flagship project of BRI i.e., China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is progressing. India has shown no enthusiasm in building the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM). This may be, as Miller suggests, due to Chinese involvement in the region which raises concerns in India as it believes that CPEC is passing through the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and this would have long-term implications for its sovereignty.

Book Reviews

This is a thought-provoking book and explains various aspects of China's Asian Dream through its proactive foreign policy initiatives in regional infrastructure development. However, the BRI is overly projected as a geostrategic and political project, while Miller neglects the US' Pivot to Asia policy of containing China. Challenges to BRI are highlighted, while ignoring other benefits it will bring for smaller countries in Asia. ■

Tim Marshall, *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps that Tell You Everything You Need to Know about Global Politics* (London: Elliott and Thompson, 2016), 303.

Reviewed by Khalid Hussain Chandio, an expert on the US's foreign and defence policy, Pak-US relations, role of lobbies, and domestic politics of the country.

The book under review, written by a former Diplomatic Editor at *Sky News*, Tim Marshall, is the story of ten maps — Russia, China, United States of America (USA), Western Europe, India and Pakistan, Korea and Japan, Latin America, and the Arctic — which explains how physical surroundings play a key role in determining the security and prosperity of these countries. It explains how geography has helped, and at the same time, made the above-mentioned countries and regions victims of the same.

About Russia, the writer believes that its geography has always been immense and is seeped in the world's collective consciousness. Given its landmass, the country is both Asian and European. Marshall attaches more importance to Poland as a corridor both for Russia to reach Europe, and vice versa making it a double-edged sword for Moscow. Napoleon in 1812 and Hitler in 1941 failed to conquer the capital given Russia's snowy and hazardous terrain which acted as a natural defender. This may be true when one talks about conventional warfare, but in the present era of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), geography seems to have somehow lost its importance as a natural defender. On China, Marshall opines that it was always a land power, rather than a naval power. However, China opened its coastal regions for trade with European countries such as Spain and Portugal. He discusses that development in China is unique, as the inland regions remained neglected, while the coastal regions prospered, citing the example of Shanghai, a coastal city. However, this assertion by the author is not entirely true. Over the last four decades, China's inland regions have also flourished — Beijing is one of the many examples. On controlling outside attacks, the author writes that in the Twenty-first century, countries like Russia and China adopted the strategy to attack only for defence, citing the example

Book Reviews

of China's defensive strategy when confronted with powerful Mongolian warrior tribes, who continuously targeted its mainland.

In the chapter on the US, the author considers its location as the most favourable in its stride towards becoming a 'Super Power'. Geographical depth with two huge seas, i.e., the Atlantic and Pacific have provided an added edge and dissuaded outsiders from attacking the country. It is interesting to note that during the two bloodiest World Wars, not a single bullet was fired on the US mainland, which proves the author's assertion about the country's unique geography. Marshall believes that World War II turned the US' fortunes as almost all major European states had exhausted themselves in the war, while the former kept on developing. The author disagrees with the popular debate and predictions about US decline, for numerous reasons: young people in the US outnumber its ageing population unlike Europe and Japan; it makes huge investment in Research and Development (R&D); it is self-sufficient in energy resources; it remains the number one economy in the world; and its academic institutions are way ahead than other countries. However, the author admits that China, Europe and Russia pose a challenge to the US' hegemony. China, according to Marshall, poses the most tangible threat to the US' hegemony in the world, even if he feels it will take a century to materialise.

Discussing Western Europe, Marshall holds that it was European 'enlightenment', which led to the Industrial Revolution and the modern nation-state system. Western Europe's climate is suitable for cultivation, and is a 'post-conflict' region due to the trauma of the two World Wars. Since the end of World War II and after the dissolution of former Soviet Union, Western Europe witnessed peace. However, citing the Ukrainian conflict, the author believes that chances of conflict between the Europeans and Russians still remains.

In the chapter on India and Pakistan, the author deduces that both states agree on one thing and that is neither wants the 'other one around' (p. 184). 'Emotions run hot' in this part of the world called South Asia. In this chapter, the writer mainly narrates the crises between the two nuclear states and how they came into being by tracing the history, culture, and religion of the subcontinent. These two nations have been victims of geographical proximity.

Book Reviews

The Middle East, Africa, Korea and Japan, Latin America, and the Arctic have also been discussed in detail by the author vis-à-vis their geographical salience in the world in subsequent chapters. This book can be used as a historical 'reference guide' by students, scholars, policymakers, and practitioners who are interested in geography and geopolitics. It is a worthy thesis to highlight the importance of geopolitics and geoeconomics. ■

Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Press, 2017), 389.

Reviewed by Maryam Nazir, MPhil in Peace and Conflict Studies from National Defence University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Graham Allison is Director of the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and the best-selling co-author of *Lee Kuan Yew: The Grand Master's Insights on China, the United States, and the World* (2012); author of *Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe* (2004); and *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (1971).

In his recent publication, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?*, Allison hypothesizes the probability of war between China and the United States (US) and their ability to escape this possibility in the future. The basic argument of the book is based upon the notion that, 'when a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power, alarm bell should sound: danger ahead (p. 4).' Allison believes that:

As an ascending China challenges America's accustomed predominance, these two nations risk falling into a deadly trap first identified by the ancient Greek historian Thucydides (p. 4).

While referring to the case of Athens and Sparta, he explains that 'historically it was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made war inevitable.' He reviews the record of the past 500 years and finds 16 cases in which a major nation's rise disrupted the position of a dominant state; and elaborates that 12 of these rivalries ended in war (p. 4).

For seven decades since World War II, a rule-based framework led by the US defined the world order and produced an era (which many term as a rare 'long peace'). However, the rise of China would not only impact the US and established world order, but also throw into question the sustained peace, generations have taken for granted. Allison goes over the

Book Reviews

work of leading China watcher, Lee Kuan Yew, and notes that ‘the size of China’s displacement of the world balance is such that the world must find a new balance. It is not possible to pretend that this is just another big player. This is the biggest player in the history of the world (p. 18).’ With China’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increasing from USD 300 million in 1980 to USD 11 billion in 2015, the world is experiencing an elementary arithmetic shift which calls for an urgent ‘rebalancing’ strategy. In this lieu, an important ‘pivot’ was announced in the US’ foreign policy in 2011 which was seen:

...as an effort to redirect Washington’s attention and resources from the Middle East to Asia while it never happened. It is believed that while Americans have been debating whether to put more weight on their left foot (Middle East) or the right (Asia), China grew at three times the US rate. And as a consequence, America’s side of the seesaw has tilted to the point that soon both feet will be dangling entirely off the ground (p. 20).

In between the mantra of the US economy’s ‘recovering’ and Chinese economy ‘slowing down’, analysts who describe GDP as the substructure of national power by keeping history as their guide, are now seeing how the influence of nations with larger GDPs is shaping international affairs:

China’s transcendence from Asian to Global power brings us to an inference that like its economic progress, China’s military advances are rapidly undercutting America’s status as a global hegemon and are forcing US leaders to confront ugly truths about the limits of American power (p. 30).

Allison quotes a 2015 RAND Corporation study which deduces that over the next 5-15 years, ‘Asia will witness a progressively receding frontier of the US dominance.’ He believes that in an international system when a state becomes a global power, it works to assert its influence over contemporary mechanisms and structures. For example, China is now undertaking initiatives such as the China Development Bank (CDB) and

Book Reviews

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to end reliance on the Western financial systems:

...despite an intense campaign by Washington to pressure nations not to join China's bank, fifty-seven signed up before AIIB was launched in 2015 – including some of the America's key allies, with the UK in the lead... and even before the AIIB was established, the CDB had surpassed the World Bank as the biggest financier of international development projects (p. 32).

The Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) coalition and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) are the other examples. Allison considers these instances as moments when China decided to start its own club rather than play by the rules of the West.

Apart from structural stress, Thucydides identified three primary drivers fuelling the dynamics that lead to war - interests, fear and honour. In this regard, the author comes up with two terms - 'rising power syndrome' and 'ruling power syndrome' (p. 50). He highlights a common characteristic of the leaderships of both the countries i.e., to make 'their states' great again. While comparing President Jinping with leaders of the US such as Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt (since his vision shares parts from theirs), he states:

Xi's China Dream is a combination of power and prosperity and captures an intense yearning of a billion Chinese i.e. to be rich, powerful and respected. Xi exudes supreme confidence that in his lifetime China can realize all three by sustaining its economic miracle, fostering patriotic citizenry and bowing to no other power in world affairs (p. 103).

China's view of the world and foreign policy is based on three key tenets - demand for regional dominance, recognition of and respect for its inherent superiority and idea of harmonious co-existence with its neighbours (p. 104). However, the message for the US differs when it comes to China's neighbourhood. As analysts translate, it is a clear, 'back off' message (p. 118).

In the last chapter, by referring to case studies of wars between Spain and Portugal; Germany against France and Britain; the US against

Book Reviews

Britain and the Soviet Union, Allison identifies 12 clues for peace for the leaders seeking to make the rise of China, a fifth case of no war (p. 165). According to estimates, China by 2040 will be three times larger than the US which means that it will have triple resources to use in influencing outcomes in international relations. At this point and time, policymakers in the US by taking clues from the past need to answer three questions:

1. What is the China-US competition like?
2. How did we arrive at what we now call the ‘China Challenge’? and,
3. How do foreign stakeholders perceive the same evolution of events?

Further, it has been argued that US’ post-Cold War China strategy is fundamentally contradictory. This strategy is known as ‘engage and hedge’. By engage, the US means to welcome China as a member of the alphabet soup of international agreements and institutions; while hedge is the US’ strive to maintain military superiority and strengthen defence ties with key allies and friends and develop intelligence assets the world over (p. 191). There are two flaws in this strategy i.e., i) China is not about to become a democracy; and, ii) China as a state has no comparison with Germany or Japan but it will insist on ‘being accepted as China but not as an honorary member of the West’ (p. 192).

Since President Xi and his wife sent their only child to not any college in China but Harvard University, Allison ends the book with a question about how the views of an emerging generation of ‘internationalists’ can be reconciled with the more nationalistic or populist inclinations of their fellow citizens. Suffice to say that Allison has put in extensive effort to offer as many perspectives as he could in order to weigh the probability of war in the future. This book is indeed an in-depth analysis of the US policies vis-à-vis the rise of China, as it provides a review of the latter’s domestic situation and external policing, and facilitates an understanding of how the current system has evolved over the years. ■

Steven A. Cook, *False Dawn: Protest, Democracy, and Violence in the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 360.

Reviewed by Iqra Mobeen Akram, Assistant Research Officer, Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), Islamabad, Pakistan.

Steven A. Cook, Eni Enrico Mattei Senior Fellow for Middle East and Africa Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), in his latest book *False Dawn: Protest, Democracy, and Violence in the Middle East* provides an insight on four countries, namely Tunisia, Libya, Turkey and Egypt in the backdrop of the Arab Spring, along with West's faltering attempts to establish democracy in the tumultuous region. The main theme is to identify the causes of dashed hopes vis-à-vis expected outcomes attached with the Arab Spring. The institutional changes, for example, expected to bolster the democratic process and the identity crises are seen as the main impediments. On the United States' (US) role, the author advocates for technical assistance and appears pessimistic about its role in shaping the future politics of the Middle East (ME).

The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter provides context of the relevant events and circumstances which led to the uprisings in the ME as well as discusses Washington's concerns and interests in the region (pp. 15-16). In the second chapter, the author underlines how socioeconomic grievances and lack of freedom contributed to the revolutions in the various states. The third chapter looks at the wide gap between hype of the so-called 'revolution' and the deplorable ground realities of the post-uprising period. The fourth chapter elaborates how weak governance is the main cause of failed democracy rather than weak security or emergence of the Islamic State (IS). In the fifth chapter, Cook acknowledges the discrepancies in the US foreign policy towards the ME (p. 204). The final chapter explains that the non-revolutionary nature of the uprisings, lack of institutional structures and quest for identity will continue to destabilise the region (p. 241).

By evaluating the four case studies, the author equips the readers with requisite information in terms of providing a survey of the significant events leading up to the Arab uprising, while underscoring the drawbacks

Book Reviews

of inflated outcomes attached with the democratic changes. Despite the projection of Tunisia as a success story, the impact of the various actors in the erstwhile power structure of the country cannot be denied. More so, Libya has drifted towards anarchy and is being called 'a failed state'. According to the author, in Turkey, although the attempts of coup have been thwarted, the likelihood of misuse of power by Turkish President Recep Erdoğan cannot be ruled out. Also, the level of violence and terrorism in Egypt has deteriorated its security, writes the author.

The book provides readers with a well-researched timeline of the important developments contributing to the Arab Spring. Additional data about the important personalities and individuals, in the beginning of the book, is a good source for beginners or students new to the subject. Cook also questions whether democracy as the 'best' form of governance for all societies or regions is a valid assertion or not (pp. 216-222). He elucidates, for example, how revolutions or protests are constructed on lofty ideas and misplaced expectations (pp. 231-232). This implies that when structural changes are not internalised in terms of integrating the marginalised segments of a society or addressing the grievances of the people, they are bound to fail.

The author has also discussed the broad contours of the agent-structure debate in the book (pp. 151- 153). For instance, most of the reasons associated with the Arab Spring's failure are seen from a structural lens at the expense of agents. Therefore, it would not be wrong to assume that failure on the part of researchers and policymakers to foresee the electoral victory of Donald Trump in the US, and failure to assess the impact of the Arab Spring is also a result of this flawed approach. This means that the role of agents or specific actors in the post-Arab Spring period needs to be explored further. Moreover, when it comes to drawing parallels of the aforementioned case studies, readers may expect in-depth insights on each country, which is missing due to greater focus on the broad theme of the Arab Spring. Hence, some of the readers may be disappointed in that regard.

The author rightly emphasises the will of the people in the ME as the main determinant shaping its future. The unprecedented shift of the US on the Israel-Palestine conflict, for instance, is a clear demonstration of the desperate attempts made by Trump to influence the dynamics of

Book Reviews

this area. Likewise, the grievances of the people emanating from weak socioeconomic structures have not been addressed yet. Therefore, it is safe to assume that stability in the ME hinges on people rather than extra-regional players, among other factors.

Even though this book provides a broad overview of the Arab Spring and its repercussions in the ME, a more focused study on one country could have provided informed analysis, especially for the readers interested in in-depth understanding of the region. On the plus side, the author lays out clear policy directions for the US to improve its policy toward the ME by underscoring a shift from good governance programmes to technical assistance (p. 233).■

Sayeeda Warsi, *The Enemy Within: A Tale of Muslim Britain* (London: Penguin, 2017), 353.

Reviewed by Amna Ejaz Rafi currently pursuing her MPhil degree from the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

The Enemy Within: A Tale of Muslim Britain written by Baroness Sayeeda Warsi gives an insight into the lives and journey of British Muslims - their sociological, psychological and political experiences, past and present challenges. The author states that it is a 'well-known fact' that Muslims in Britain have diverse cultural and ancestral backgrounds, hailing from Africa, Europe and Asia. She does not see them as a monolithic bloc, and opines that despite having the same religion, Muslims do not follow a similar code of life. Some are conservative, while others are liberal and even when it comes to marriage or maintaining friendships with the opposite sex, they have their own preferences (pp. 3-4). While looking at the political standing of Muslims in Britain, it has been reiterated that, over the years, they have progressed professionally as doctors, lawyers, politicians and law enforcement officials. However, despite being economically strong, a level of negativity exists in British society towards them since it is claimed 'that they are involved in wrong doings and have caused harm to the British society' (p. 5). Therefore, despite their relative progress, British Muslims and their children lack the same status vis-à-vis the 'White' and other races. To entirely blame Western bias about this discrimination would not be correct. Muslims, living abroad, also need to look into their conduct as well. The author writes:

Islam was a religion that championed gender equality and equal worth, and yet so often it appears to have lost its way. The ill treatment of women in matrimonial matters, unregistered marriages, multiple marriages and financial, emotional abuse within marriages are a regular feature (p. 173).

This observation by the author reflects presence of discrepancy in teachings propagated by Islam and the larger set of practices adopted by Muslim communities in the West.

Book Reviews

In the UK, Muslim children study in private, state as well as ‘faith schools’ (p. 4). The education in school coupled with the societal exposure frames the mind of a child. In the process, the child cannot entirely isolate him/herself from the Western way of life. Here the role of parents is important and they need to look beyond cultural parameters when it comes to their child’s freedom, and instead of confusing him/her about Islam and the West should teach their children to live in peace with other identities/cultures (p. 162). In this context, Muslim parents need to educate their children on religious matters. They should be told to have pride in their Islamic values and be tolerant of other cultures. This will allow the child to see the world from a broader perspective. According to the author, the growing marginalisation of Muslims and the hatred against them can be pacified - ‘multiculturalism is the very essence of being able to adopt many identities and combine them in ever-creative ways’ (p.163). The author does acknowledge that this is difficult since British Muslims fearful of losing their Muslim identity might not like the idea, and would argue ‘are you a Muslim first or British first?’ The author discusses the politicisation of religion by Muslims and how it is being manipulated to instigate sectarianism and divisions:

We should practice what we practice and preach our version of the faith but we must stop preaching hate against another version of our faith or indeed any other faith (pp. 163-164).

The book also refers to the plurality of religious practices, and how Islam as a religion is flexible and allows diversity in clothing, worship and prayer. This variation should be used to promote inter-sect harmony and to strengthen linkages with other religions/cultures (pp. 165 & 186). While discussing the role of Muslims in UK politics, the author appears pessimistic. She sees the political affiliation of Muslims as a source of division. Their ties with the Labour Party date back to the first generation South Asian Muslims who came to the UK as migrant labourers. Since then, they have continued this affiliation, while the Conservative Party continues to look at them as ‘newly arrived foreigners’ (p. 168). The author also highlights the damaging role of self-nurtured sectarianism employed by the British Muslim communities in politics to ‘become the

Book Reviews

government's favoured Muslims and diminish the space for other sects – other Muslims' (p. 169).

Baroness Warsi also sheds light on the UK government's decision to send troops to Iraq and Afghanistan, and the public's response. The citizens opposed this decision and took to the streets (p. 192). The July 2005 terrorist attack in London sent shock waves across the country. Young British Muslims born and raised in the UK were behind the attack, and it not only provoked anti-religious sentiment, but also reinforced the perception of Muslims as violent extremists (pp. 56-57). The author opines that the British Muslim population dissent over the UK government's involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan should have been contested democratically and legally. The use of force to kill civilians should not have been undertaken. Further, she argues that it is also the responsibility of politicians to make foreign policy in line with the wishes of the people, including the immigrant class (pp. 192-193).

While discussing the wars in Iraq, Syria and affiliation with extremist factions, the author shares that 'Fighting for Britain' should be a priority for all (p. 192). Here, one is forced to reflect on what should take precedence – loyalty to the crown as citizens or loyalty to one's faith and *Ummah* as Muslims.

The negativity towards Muslims in Britain is a combination of racial, cultural and religious clash. The Muslims who migrated to the UK in search of a better life also brought their cultural identity and affinities along. Their next generations born and raised in Britain may not have the same kind of affiliation to their ancestral lands as their parents. While British Muslims are trying to be British first, they are not getting an encouraging response from their 'White' fellows, who continue to treat them as immigrants, and hence, they grow up confused, disillusioned and disenfranchised. Muslims should focus on improving themselves socially; and on the religious front, they need to give space to other religions as well, so that in the advent of an unforeseen terrorist attack, they are able to offer a counter-narrative which is genuine, true and believable (p. 181).■

Benjamin Miller, *International and Regional Security: The Causes of War and Peace* (London: Routledge, 2017), 294.

Reviewed by Gulshan Bibi, Assistant Research Officer, Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI).

The book *International and Regional Security: The Causes of War and Peace* is a collection of the essays by Professor Benjamin Miller on global and regional security. The author's work centres on international conflicts and collaboration and the causes of 'war and peace'. He discusses progression and change in global and local security by integrating his analysis with the global frameworks and states' internal issues, which led to war or peace. The idea is to connect the paradoxical variations in international relations (IR).

Miller believes that both structural and domestic factors lead to competition or cooperation among states. Cooperation exists either through crisis management (CM) or conflict resolution (CR). In the process of CM, adversaries reconcile between two potentially competing goals by avoiding war and protecting their interests by coercive means. However, failure to manage the crisis results in war between similar powers. In CR, to avoid a dangerous crisis in the future, adversarial states resolve their core issues through diplomacy. The author assumes that failure to resolve issues by equal powers may result in unintentional wars which are especially likely under 'multi-polarity.' On the contrary, success by dissimilar powers might generate implicit rules provoking use of force, more likely in a bipolar world order.

Precisely, the book develops new theories and concepts as sources of regional war and peace, such as cold/hot peace and state-to-nation (s/n) balance/imbalance. Miller divides regions into distinctive categories: unstable and stable. He believes that the sources of regional wars as well as peace are regional and domestic, rather than global. Subsequently, there is only limited influence of great powers on stable regions. However, global factors can make a difference with regards to war and peace in unstable regions. For instance, they can facilitate a lower level of 'cold peace' through conflict reduction if their intervention is hegemonic or

Book Reviews

cooperative. They can also aggravate the situation by erupting local wars if their engagement is competitive. He quotes examples from the Cold War when because of two competing super powers the Arab-Israeli conflict became prolonged and could not succeed in preventing the eruption of 'hot wars' in the region. While during the post-Cold War, the United States (US) with its hegemonic designs gradually tried to manage the Arab-Israeli conflict through mediation and financial assistance (p. 83).

The author seeks to combine causes of war and peace introduced by realist and liberalist schools of thought. According to the former, the intervention by a great power over time is considered a structural force, while the latter regards s/n balance as a domestic factor. Realists believe that the effects of the anarchic international system and distribution of capabilities among states influence the key frameworks of conflict and collaboration and determine the outcome of war and peace among states. Liberalists, on the contrary, focus on unit level factors such as the type of regime in a state as well as its economic structure (p. 107). For instance, European countries transformed conflicts into cooperation because of their democratic and economic values.

The book highlights that there are only two variables – 'great power involvement' (p. 70) and 's/n congruence' (p. 104) – which affect regional security. The s/n balance determines whether a state is a *status quo*, revisionist, failed or frontier. The revisionist states are strong but 'nationally incongruent states,' (p. 115) which as a result initiate hostile or expansionist wars. On the contrary, the coalescence of strength and 'national congruence' of a state, make it a *status quo* state, while weak and nationally incongruent states cause 'civil wars and foreign interventions in failed states' (p. 113). However, fragile but nationally congruent states become the 'frontier states with boundary wars seizing the territories belonging to their neighbours' (p. 123). Miller believes that the s/n incongruence explains the causes of interstate territorial conflicts. The lower s/n congruence augments the possibility of war. The states which are incongruent internally have a number of national groups living in a territory, while one national group residing within several state territories produces externally incoherent states such as the Kurds in the Middle East (ME).

Book Reviews

While discussing the dynamics of conflicts in South Asia, Miller states that ‘the Indo-Pakistan conflict is another case of state-to-nation conflict revolving around Pakistan’s irredentist demands vis-à-vis India’s Kashmir’ (p.131). He inaccurately assesses the dispute of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and refers to the disputed territory as ‘India’s Kashmir’. It is a disputed territory whose resolution is agreed in accordance with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. Its boundaries are not completely demarcated and they are still disputed. It remains a major source of conflict between India and Pakistan to date. Pakistan believes in the resolution of the J&K dispute in accordance with the UNSC resolutions, which call for a solution as per the aspirations of Kashmiri people themselves.

The author opines that for peace and security in a region both internal and external congruence are equally essential. Global elements can only produce ‘cold peace’, while domestic regional factors produce ‘warm peace.’

Furthermore, Miller creates a distinction between cold and ‘warm (high-level) peace’ (p.149) by analysing the risks due to which the conflict can recur. ‘Warm peace is a situation in which war is virtually unthinkable’ (p.189). For warm peace and absence of war, state congruence and democratisation are of vital importance. For cold peace, the risk for conflict is less in case revisionist states arise. Moreover, he debates a model which gives reasons for the changes in the grand strategy of the US in the ME. History witnessed two types of changes in the US’ grand strategy. From the Cold War period to the 1990s, the US strategy for intervention was in the guise of humanitarianism. The second transition followed by 9/11 was to promote democracy by the use of force. The strategy of transitioning ‘from peaceful democracy promotion to forcible regime change and imposed democratization’ (p.241) was augmented with the Iraq invasion in 2003. The author believes that the post 9/11 country’s grand strategy was offensive liberal in nature because Iraq’s domestic regime was the source of its international behaviour and the US wanted to bring about regime change by the use of force.

Moreover, Miller asserts that in the future a defensive liberal approach might replace offensive liberal strategy employed by the US as the former advocates the promotion of democracy in the ME through

Book Reviews

peaceful means i.e., multilateral diplomacy and economic development. The author proposes that the classic concept of security should be revisited and redefined. According to him, a new approach to security should ‘focus on both non-military causes of war and on the factors and conditions which affect peacemaking as a major security strategy’ (p. 191).

Finally, the author while searching for a new agenda to explain war and peace in the Twenty-first century argues that combined effect of the two components of the s/n balance—state strength and national congruence—are the most important contours of peace as they can stop foreign intervention. He recommends academicians should play a role in peace promotion in the various domains of policymaking (p. 283).

Although the author expounds new concepts and theories, yet he fails to create a difference between the core and peripheral elements of incongruence. Nevertheless, he successfully identifies expected conclusions based on qualitative and relative case studies. Especially the ME and Western Europe (WE) case studies justify author’s assertions as he tries to prove that, in a given time, great powers execute a single strategy in their regional politics. However, an assessment of European case of integration during the Cold War implies that though the US followed a cooperative strategy over political and economic integration, it discouraged collaboration and support in the security sphere.

The author also suggests that democracy resolves s/n imbalance. However, if democratic values are not accurately systematised and coordinated to resolve the s/n incongruence through equal representation, they result in unification of nationalists groups against the government and state. Additionally, he refers to the case of South America where democracy settled the issues of s/n incongruence by diminishing the dangers leading to conflict. However, it can be argued that democracy alone has not played its role in reducing the possibility of conflict; instead the US’ reluctance to alter the ‘balance of capabilities’, the inability of other countries to invest in capabilities internally, and finally disunity among other states have narrowed the ability of relevant stakeholders to challenge the s/n incongruence.

International cooperation was strong during the post-Cold War era which prevented states from acquiring nuclear weapons and fighting

Book Reviews

against terrorism after 9/11. The levels of interstate warfare declined and states gradually adhered to territorial integrity. Globalisation in the economic field, also reached unprecedented levels. But, contrary to that, violent conflicts persisted or re-emerged in several regions i.e., great powers' competition, the US and the European Union (EU) conflict with Russia over Ukraine, Syrian civil war, and the US-China competition in South China Sea.

Even though the book has a few shortcomings, the author comes up with an interesting concept which explains both domestic and regional conflicts within a practical context by surpassing the 'classic levels of analysis' divide. The author's listing of global and local reasons for war and peace are quite useful in understanding the crises from Ukraine to Syria. Therefore, the book is a useful addition to the existing literature on international security studies. ■