Comparative studies would be useful for exploring such questions and for developing or challenging Gerlach’s theoretical framework.

Helge Holtermann


As’ad Ghanem has written a book with an enticing title, but which fails to deliver. One would think that a book titled *Palestinian Politics after Arafat: A Failed National Movement* would focus primarily on the period starting with Arafat’s death, November 2004, and finishing as close as possible to the current situation. On the contrary, of the six chapters only the last two deal with the post-Arafat period. And, with the exception of the Epilogue and some sentences in the conclusion, the analysis ends in 2006. The lack of in-depth analysis of the later period (2007–09) is understandable as these events are still unfolding and research takes time, but the fact that the early post-Arafat period (2004–06) is given such little space is puzzling to say the least. There is no doubt that the author raises a series of interesting broad questions regarding Palestinian politics, but the book lacks a clear focus. One is often left with the impression that some of the chapters stand better alone than in such a book, as it is often unclear what purpose they serve. One example is the chapter ‘Israeli Public Attitudes toward Peace with the Palestinians: Which Peace?’ The findings are very interesting, but they relate to Israeli politics (not Palestinian) and almost all the findings are from the period before Arafat died. This in itself does not mean that Israeli views on the peace process during Arafat’s reign is irrelevant for Palestinian politics after Arafat, but the author does not make that connection in a convincing way. A reader should not judge a book by its cover, but an author should avoid promising something that cannot be delivered.

Jørgen Jensehaugen


By relating emerging literatures on international state-building, peacebuilding and global governance to established literatures on the state, risk, development and international relations, this little masterpiece makes a difference to all of these theoretical arenas. Combining empirical oversight with an impressive overview of contemporary debates on international intervention, Hameiri makes sense of what has so far been characterized as irrational shortcomings. By replacing the standards that state-building efforts are usually measured against (‘capacity building’ or ‘liberal peace’) with the actual drivers of these practices (hegemonic risk management through prevalent norms of state governance), he recasts considerations on both efficiency and legitimacy. Instead of temporary interventions, he sees peace operations as part of a general transformation of states towards a permanent reliance on transnational regulation and support. This is not presented as mere foreign imposition, but as a way for certain domestic actors in the intervened states to take advantage of the interventions. Hameiri’s analysis is consistent with the turn in the critical literature on liberal peacebuilding from an emphasis on flawed conceptions and results of past operations to a focus on what the actual dynamics and impact of these operations have been (‘hybrid political orders’). *Regulating Statehood* contributes to this evolving literature both by conceptualizing what kind of hybridity the state-building dimension of peace operations has entailed, and by connecting this kind to more general developments in global politics like development policies, risk management and state regulation. Inspired by the work of Kanishka Jayasuriya in particular, Hameiri thereby develops a mid-level theory that fills the gap between general theories of global governance and empirical studies of the local manifestations of international state building.

Kristoffer Lidén


Modern social science sometimes has to rediscover key insights known by older scholarship. One such neglected insight is the importance of the pursuit of status, reputation, and identity to the outbreak of war. Lindemann’s book contributes to our appreciation and understanding of these motives. Lindemann draws on theory from a variety of disciplines and national traditions to establish the importance of recognition to interstate relations. He hypothesizes that ‘histrionic identities’, the absence of a positive identity link between countries, attacks against a state’s universal dignity, and ‘attacks on specific identities . . . or a lack of empathy’ promote the outbreak of war (p. 31–40). Lindemann informally assesses the relationship between variables related to his four hypotheses (including his creative use of architectural grandiosity as
a proxy for hubristic national identity) and system stability (peace) under four ‘great power systems’. He then investigates whether the presence of a ‘politics of recognition’ can account for variation in the outcome of four interstate crises. In these chapters Lindemann also provides a historical interpretation of events that highlights the role of recognition and identity. As a comparative research design, the empirical work suffers from underpowered and opaque selection of cases, the testing of a dyadic theory on system level data, and the risk of the independent variables being too flexibly coded and proxying for other important processes (e.g. ‘identity’ might proxy for interests). Overall, Lindemann’s book succeeds in sketching a macro-historical connection between periods of conflicting identity claims and war, in illustrating how several crises and relationships could have been driven by concerns about recognition, and in bringing together a breadth of scholarship relevant to the study of recognition and war.

Allan Dafoe


The run-up to this year’s election in Nigeria once again highlighted the religious fault lines running through Africa’s most populous nation. In Political Spiritualities, Ruth Marshall explores the links between politics and the explosive growth in Pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria. The Pentecostal movement feeds on popular discontent with elite predation and violence and promises to liberate people from old distinctions and hierarchies. This political critique finds its expression through a program for personal mastery, including bodily asceticism, self-examination, and public witness. Marshall argues that the twin quest for a more equitable society and moral rectitude characterizes religious revivalism in post-colonial Nigeria more generally, figuring clearly in the program of reformist Muslims as well as among Pentecostals. Images of spiritual warfare that extend from the individual to the global scale prepare the ground for violent mobilization and have resulted in a series of deadly confrontations between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria since the 1980s. At the same time, religion often fails to become a common rallying point for groups of different geographic and ethnic origin. Marshall’s study, although based on extensive fieldwork, is not offered as a traditional ethnography. She grounds her analysis in the Foucauldian problematic of ‘subjectivation’ and makes a case against tacitly or explicitly employing functionalist paradigms to understand Pentecostal practices. Political Spiritualities has received favorable reviews for its theoretical contribution to the study of religion. However, its richness in ethnographic and historical detail makes it equally relevant to readers whose primary interest is to learn more about Nigerian politics, religion, and everyday life.

Heidi Østbo Haugen


The theme of this elegantly slim book is so obviously interesting and important that it is astounding that Mearsheimer is a pioneer in examining it systematically. He certainly draws on a wealth of research in history, psychology and law, but political science tends to accept for a fact that deception and bluffing are common practices in interstate relations. The key argument of the book is about disproving this assumption and asserting that state leaders resort to outright lying rarely, except for the particular situation of waging a war. Mearsheimer freely admits his own surprise at this research result, which has been achieved not by testing systematically historical evidence but by gathering cases primarily from US policymaking. He works with a narrow definition that does not include concealing the truth and excludes lies told for personal benefit rather than strategic interest. That leaves five kinds of behavior – interstate lies, fearmongering, strategic cover-ups, nationalist mythmaking, and liberal lies – that are examined systematically and even pedantically. The conclusions that domestic audiences are more often the target of lies on foreign policy matters than leaders of rival (or allied) states, and that democratically elected leaders are more often compelled to lie than autocrats, come out as logically proven. The case of the George W Bush administration producing a pack of lies for getting the USA into the war of choice with Iraq gets the most of the author’s attention, and his final point about fearmongering as a constant feature of the US ‘national security discourse in the years ahead’ (p. 102) is a warning about new humiliating failures.

Pavel Baev


Since the collapse of Saddam Hussein’s regime, a considerable number of US troops have been engaged in