

BOOK REVIEWS

H. John Poole. *Tactics of the Crescent Moon: Militant Muslim Combat Methods*. Emerald Isle (North Carolina): Posterity Press, 2004, 249 pp. + notes, bibliography and index.

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Since the attacks launched on the United States mainland on September 11, 2001, the profile of the Global War on Terrorism has highlighted the issue of what has been called by some as the new threat of the 21st century (fascism and communism being the threats of the 20th century). This issue or threat is the phenomenon known as terrorism, which has steadily evolved from local or national struggles for independence or liberation, such as the Basque Separatists, IRA, and the various colonial wars fought in the post World War Two era. Today the threat of terrorism has developed into something that transcends national, political, and religious boundaries. New concepts have crept into the political dictionary – *jihad*, *suicide bomber*, *world caliphate*. In spite of the great amount of media coverage that is generated by such news-worthy events such as this, there is still relatively little coverage or understanding of how terrorism has managed to grow into such as threat.

John Poole is a retired lieutenant colonel from the United States Marine Corps and author of military books that specialise in the study of small unit tactics. In this book he explores the combat tactics employed in Gallipoli by the Ottoman Turks and by militant Islamic groups in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Chechnya. It is a study of the relatively new (post World War II) Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW). This involves blurring the lines between war and politics, civilians and soldiers. It is in essence the decentralisation of warfare, where the state is no longer the sole actor that is fighting another state. It involves a number of elements to it: high technology, a non-national or transnational foundation, use of terrorism, very developed psychological operations aspect (including media manipulation) and cultural conflict.

One of the points made by Poole is the need to understand and adapt to the new type of warfare if there is any chance of victory in this conflict. He contends that all too often short term political goals, often linked to election cycles, are counter productive in counter-insurgency (COIN) operations. Insurgency wars are often very long and enduring conflicts that can last for decades, which is beyond the political map of national politics in many countries. This implies a need for a deep reflection of two different themes; 1) institutional reforms of the political and military structures and 2) state capacity in terms of how well equipped

the “modern”state is to take on the threat of terrorism.

A criticism of the way in which modern COIN is conducted is the over-reliance on modern technology and the disproportional level of response. This has the effect of alienating the authorities and boosting support in the community for the insurgent group(s) that live among the civilian population. It is above all a war that involves the issue of legitimacy, which is often measured in the ability of one side to demonstrate its capacity to provide for the “common man”.

To a large extent this is guided by perception, e.g., which actor seems to be doing the better job at the time. In practical terms this means being seen and heard in the community, providing the necessities of life to the civilian population – food, water, shelter, education and health care, for instance. 4GW involves the aspect of hearts and minds, which Poole thinks the insurgents are better at, due to understanding the local situation. Coalition Forces’ political and military structures are very complex and bureaucratic, which makes quick decisions impossible and therefore unable to take advantage of opportunities that may briefly arise. Whereas the structure of the insurgent organisations is very localised and flat, enabling a rapid decision making process.

An unconventional response is proposed by Poole (see especially

chapter 11). One point is that military force should be proportional and authorities should not respond to evil with evil (215). That means the moral high-ground should be taken and kept. He also states the need, with regard to institutional reforms, which come with regime change that is forced from the outside that local conditions need to be understood and respected when nation building (217-218). The important point that some wars cannot be won by force of arms alone is made (221), stressing the need to realise and use alternative ways to sap the strength of the insurgency movement. One of these suggested means is that of religion (222). I agree with Poole on the importance of culture and restraint in insurgency warfare; this is often overlooked.

The book ends with a number of well-defined and formulated suggestions on increasing the capacity to deal with the insurgency problem, which among other things involves being more flexible in nature and structure. By retreating into fortified areas, Poole rightly argues that the state capacity is actually significantly reduced, which is one of the reasons why this is an aim of the insurgent (to induce the authorities into a defensive stance) and to gradually reduce the will of their opponent to fight over time (pp. 237-240). A particularly useful aspect of this book is that it gives the perspective and goals of both sides to an insurgency style conflict (that of the authorities and the insurgents). This has the effect of

creating an improved wider understanding of these complex events.

Perhaps as a reflection of his background, the book has a strong empirical focus and thus from the point of view of theory, it is somewhat lacking. But the method he uses and the conclusions he reaches are well backed by solid examples. There is maybe potential here, using this book as the basis, to set about developing a theoretical perspective of the situation and problems outlined.

This work is not only an interesting and valuable read for those in the security and military field, but also those who have an interest in the current world events unfolding around us. It is well formulated in written in a manner that is easy to understand, even for someone that is unfamiliar with military tactics and terminology. It is a refreshing, well timed departure from a lot of literature that can have a tendency to ignore the cultural aspects of warfare and focus on the political and military. Finally, it should indicate to those in power the needs for a number of institutional reforms that are badly needed to increase the capacity of dealing with the threat. The author makes a valuable point throughout the book, which is often overlooked. That is, the “Western-style” of warfare (involving use of mechanisation and firepower) has been adapted to by insurgent forces that face them, however Western forces have thus far seemed unwilling or unable to evolve further. This book is neither “mainstream” nor a deeply theoretical

piece; it is descriptive and instructive, but is interesting and valuable nonetheless.

Jörg Friedrichs. 2005. *European Approaches to International Relations Theory. A House of Many Mansions.* London and New York: Routledge.

(206 pages, including Bibliography and Index)

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Describing and conceptualizing the configuration, development, and prospects of world politics is an ongoing academic effort. Scholars provide valuable results, one of them being represented by the history and theoretisation of International Relations. As any story-telling, the intrigue is biased towards its narrator's choice of words and facts. Jörg Friedrichs' *European Approaches to International Relations Theory* is a plea for a Euro-centric revision of International Relations historiography. The author provides a critical overview of the European contributions to the IR theory, currently under the spell of an American “intellectual hegemony”. His core hypothesis is that the relationship between the American and the European knowledge productions abides to the logic of a centre-periphery arrangement. Consequently, European scholars have been developing diverse strategies of survival that range from

resignation to peripheral mobilisation and from gradual alignment to the mainstream to manifest independence.

The author aims to find a shiny new key to the rusty old door of the IR labyrinth. He contends that an accurate map of the maze relies on European estimations. Advocating for a “Eurodiscipline” of International Relations implies a two-way stratagem: a simultaneous de-Americanisation and Europeanisation of this field of study. In his seven-chapter essay, Friedrichs divides his argumentation in three sections: the first consists in the analysis of three traditions of European IR research, the second accounts for the construction of an IR “third way” made-in-Europe, while the latter third proposes a self-claimed original and constructive tactic to create a fully-fledged “Eurodiscipline” of IR under the form of new medievalism. The book is dedicated to the transatlantic audience, as the confessed intention of the author is twofold. On the one hand, he is keen to assist the European academic community in its contribution to the IR discipline as a whole by mapping out several patterns of co-habitation with its American counterpart. On the other hand, he wishes to raise awareness about the European scholarly service in this field on the other shore of the Atlantic and beyond.

Friedrichs argues that the IR discipline is under a strongly entrenched American epistemic hegemony. This claim is supported by three pieces of evidence: the use of English as a lingua

franca, the process of editorial selection, and the overwhelming quantity of American IR literature. Despite this state of the art, Friedrichs is optimistic in evaluating the chances of a European emancipation. In doing so, he departs from the analysis of the specificity of IR research *à l'eurodisciplinaire*, selecting three strategies adopted by three geographically and culturally distant academic traditions as a response to the hegemonic American mainstream. The French self-reliance and self-encapsulation (30) resulted in an egocentric and insulated research community. For their part, Italian scholars placed themselves at the marginal periphery of IR, compliant towards the American parochialism and disconnected from other peripheries. In contrast with both French and Italian traditions that have failed to yield a substantial contribution to European IR, the Scandinavian multi-level research cooperation based on intense networking is estimated to have created a constructive strategy to cope with the American monopoly. The Nordic strategy is praised to be inductive of an original and integrated “Eurodiscipline” of IR.

For the second part of the book, Friedrichs walks the path of “triangular reasoning”, identifying two opposite attempts to establish a European theoretical “third way” as an alternative to dichotomous cleavages characteristic of the American academia. Namely, the English school’s approach of international society spells equidistance from the confrontation between

realists" obsession with national interest and idealists" dream of world society and perpetual peace (103). Conversely, middle-ground constructivists" understanding of the European polity as a socially-constructed reality sounds like a disguised rapprochement towards the mainstream. Finally, the third section of the book introduces new medievalism as a test for "theoretical reconstruction" that seeks to bring the antecedent disparate and non-hegemonic approaches under the same roof in order to generate innovative theoretical synthesis.

At the end of the day, is Friedrichs" study a successful endeavour? The short answer is "yes", but the long one is more challenging. Particularly, he provides a comprehensive, well structured, balanced, and very readable comparative literature review that can be rightfully arranged on the historiography of IR bookshelf. Each chapter is written to be read on its own, to the greatest benefit of selective readers. Moreover, the author goes well beyond descriptive narrative, launching a revisionist examination of IR theory from a European standpoint. Friedrichs" interpretation of new medievalism as an adequate macro-analytical lens over flying contemporary world politics represents a considerable added-value of the essay. He successfully attempts to go beyond the traditional definition of new medievalism as "a system of overlapping authority and multiple

loyalty" (133) through the consideration of "a duality of competing universalistic claims" (p. 134). Echoing the medieval Empire-Church couple, the author convincingly argues that the emergent "post-international" system (137) is characterised by a novel duality formed by an enduring nation state and the transnational market economy.

Beyond the evoked intrinsic qualities of the essay, enhanced by a charming style, the IR readers may confront two interrelated difficulties. First, in his disciplinary approach to the epistemic potential of the Euro-branch of IR, the author seems to unfairly neglect the European integration theory (although it is analysed separately as one of the case studies). Specifically, one does not gather a clear-eyed impression of the relationship between the IR theory and the European integration theory. If one concedes that European studies form an autonomous and legitimate field of study centred on the institutional and identity construction of a Euro-polity, what relationship does it establish with the IR discipline? If the IR is a house of many mansions, is integration theory a tenant or a neighbour, a guest or the spouse? Irrespective of the exact answer to this question, it seems reasonable to estimate that, at least due to geographical proximity, the flourishing research agenda on European integration allowed for a situation where the snapshot was preferred to the larger picture.

Second, given the plea for a Euro-branch of the IR, the author under-

develops the potential of a pan-European research community able to compete with the American establishment. While Friedrichs opens up the discussion with an appraisal of the Scandinavian multi-level cooperation as an opportune model to learn from, he leaves the Euro-enthusiastic reader unfairly frustrated. How pertinent is the project of a pan-European research community in the light of enduring national identities within the European continent? Would regionalism (of which Nordic cooperation is a materialisation) constitute an advantage or rather an impediment for a nascent pan-European scholarly community? Could an EU policy approach genuinely contribute to its emergence or the educational technocrat and the scholar are unable to forge a constructive dialogue? Regretfully, the author does not explore these questions, the answers of which might have strengthened his analysis of the “Eurodiscipline” of IR.

The interrogations that spring out of Friedrichs’ stimulating book blunt by no means the sword of his quest for an ever discernible European insight into the IR theory. A detached observer will readily acknowledge author’s remarkable success in paving the way for a clear and comprehensive guide to Euro-IR.

Warwick Armstrong and James Anderson, *Geopolitics of European Union Enlargement: The Fortress Empire*, Routledge: London and New York, 2007

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Borderlands are related with security, sovereignty and identity. Carrying the tracks of the past, they are areas in which it is difficult to draw clear-cut distinctions about local, national and cultural affinities. They involve both elements of cooperation and conflict between the countries that they transcend. *Geopolitics of European Union Enlargement*, edited by Warwick Armstrong and James Anderson, gives a thorough insight into the borderlands within the EU by discussing their implications at different levels. The book is structured in 13 chapters, some of which discuss the border issues specifically from historical, political, ethno-political and anthropological point of views and the others deal with more general questions. The elimination of borders within the EU with the enlargement is the main point of departure of the book. The analysis on the affects of the transformation of borders depend upon local, bilateral and regional dynamics.

The book combines different methodological approaches in examining border issues. The borders

are depicted as lines which delineate not only territories, but histories, identities and languages. However, borderlands are areas in which this division becomes less clear. In their discussions, the authors draw on ethnic, identity and historical studies. Particular attention is paid to the historical process of the borderlands so that we can better understand the changes brought by the EU and single out certain characteristics of their culture and identity. The chapters of the book are both informative and analytical. All chapters are linked in different ways to the European integration and transformation process brought by it.

The chapters can be differentiated as specific, dealing with borderlands in general, looking at the EU from a broader perspective. Furthermore, while some chapters are devoted to the borders within the EU, the others deal with the borders that delineate EU and non-EU countries. The chapters of the first category make a two-way analysis. By studying the implications of the borderlands for the EU, they also emphasize what kind of affects the EU has over them. The chapters of the second category give a glimpse of the EU's international relations. Considering the EU's role in the regional and international arena, immigration, regional policies and enlargement become central points of analysis.

The fundamental argument of the book is that while the elimination of the

borders was aimed at bringing unity in Europe, it has exacerbated division between Europe and "others". The chapters try to prove that by revealing the distinction between the borders which have different geographic locations and historical backgrounds. For example, while examining the Irish border, a particular attention is paid to ethnicity and local nationalism. On the other hand, immigration becomes a central point of departure in examining the Spanish-Moroccan border. Thus, different dynamics whether socio-economical or political, determining border relations, are taken into consideration.

While some chapters study the border lands from the aspect of international relations, others focus on local level analysis, including interethnic relations across the borders. It is stressed that local cultural dynamics should also be analyzed in border studies, as macro level analysis may overlook certain characteristics of border relations. Bottom up approaches make us see the effect of the border changes on the local people living across the border. The book touches upon different identities and the sense of belonging developed in the borderlands which make it difficult to draw a strict line between EU and non-EU countries in terms of identity, since the other exist even inside the EU, but differs in degree.

Macro-level discussions help us understand the status of the EU in a global environment. The chapters dedicated to policy analysis are helpful

in locating the border issues in a broader perspective. Focused on regional relations of the EU, they give a glimpse of how the EU perceptualizes “the other” outside its borders. For example, George Joffé focuses on the Mediterranean policies of the EU after the Cold War under the frameworks of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the European Neighborhood Policy. However, the heading “Europe and Islam” does not match well with the context of the article, considering the membership of Israel, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova in the EU’s Mediterranean policies.

In terms of structure and context, the book has certain weaknesses. First, the chapters of the book do not follow a sequential approach. It is mixed with chapters dedicated to micro-level and macro level analyses. Division of the book into two parts could have solved this problem. Second, the attention in the book towards borderlands is not dispersed evenly. Instead of three chapters devoted on the Irish borderland, more articles on the borders in Central Eastern Europe could have been included. Additionally, an article which focuses on the Republic of Cyprus after its EU membership and its border relations with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and policies of the EU could have suited the book.

However, the merits of the book outweigh its shortcomings. A wide range of methodological approaches are used skillfully to cover border issues

which have different dynamics. By doing so, particularity and uniqueness of each border region and border relations is stressed. The case studies allow us to make comparisons and distinguish the characteristics of each borderland according to their location, identity and ethnicity. The issues are articulated in a smooth way. The arguments derive from detailed research conducted in specific border regions. And, field work observations contribute to the originality of the book.

Macro level discussions help unfold the points raised in the introduction. The discussions prove to be helpful in locating the EU on the new international environment emerged after the Cold War. Based mostly on the EU’s regional policies, the arguments are illuminating and persuasive. The conclusion contributes to the strengths of the book. It benefits from the argumentation of each chapter and uses them in a compatible way to find out what the future EU may look like.

Considering its richness in methodological approaches and case studies, the book enlightens our understanding in borderlands and their implications for the future role of the EU on regional and global levels. The book helps us understand nationalism, ethnicity and the EU from the eyes of the people living in the borderlands. It helps us see how the EU looks in the lands where there is no clear cut division of language and sense of belonging. It is differentiated from other books that study the EU from an

institutional or policy based approach. Blending approaches from political economy to anthropology, the book demonstrates that the EU is an ever changing entity which is making it difficult to grasp it from one angle. Left behind the moribund discussions of intergovernmentalism and supranationalism, the book makes clear that the EU is heading towards a new path determined by multiple dynamics.

V.V. Kostyushev, *Institut ombudsmana i prava cheloveka v regionalnom pole politiki (sociologicheskoe ponimanie)* / Pod redakciey A. Sungurova (*The Ombudsman in the field of regional politics (sociological approach)*) / Edited by A. Sungurov), Sankt-Peterburg: Norma, 2007.

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Many research papers on Russian civil society, regional politics, and human rights have been published in the last 20 years. Arguments partly founded on facts about politics, NGOs, and the activities of municipal authorities are used in the discussions on democratization in Russia. Much less attention is paid to the development of judicial institutions and practice, non-judicial institution of human rights

structures. As far as the human rights ombudsman is widely recognized as one of the facilities to build more transparent government and increase the power of citizens, the study of this institution could be a good source for a deeper understanding of the transformation of the Russian political system.

The book of Sankt-Petersburg's sociologist Vladimir Kostyushev analyzes the human rights situation in Russian regions. The goal of the book is to build a theoretical framework for analysis and it is structured accordingly. There are three chapters: "The Theoretical Foundations of an Inquiry", "The Ombudsman and Human Rights in the Regional Politics" Field: An Empirical Study", and "Development of Theoretical Model". The author's effort is based mainly on the theoretical framework of Pierre Bourdieu and the neo-institutionalists. The first main concept is "human rights' field". It is defined in a preamble to the book by the scientific editor Alexander Sungurov as a "social reality of everyday life where people do some actions to defend their rights" (p.5). The second relevant concept is "actor" and involves guardians, violators, victims, defenders or governmental business and non-governmental activists in the human rights domain. Another important concept and a key point of investigation are practices (i.e. observance, violation, defense, and rights' recovery).

Each actor has his individual repertoire of practices. He also suggests that when analyzing human rights we should take into account three types of tensions: deprivation, information, and action (142-146). This model is tested with some empirical evidence. The second chapter is based on a survey with 80 interviews conducted during 2004 in three Russian regions (Kaliningradskaya oblast, Smolenskaya oblast, and Krasnodarskiy krai) which represent different Federal Districts (North-West, Central, and Southern). They are substantively different in terms of their local history, economic characteristics, and the types of regional political regime. One of the author's main arguments is that all the investigated regions have mainly the same set of actors and structure of practices. It shows that the theoretical framework is suitable for employment in Russia.

The second chapter provides some unique material as it is based on interviews with different types of actors: people from the regional and local administration, members of regional parliaments and local representatives, ombudsmen and members of his office, human rights activists, members of trade-unions, journalists, social scientists; businessmen, and lawyers. As far as it was very problematic to organize interviews with most of these people, the author and his colleagues used snowball sampling. Interviews were half-formalized with 100 points to check. One can imagine how hard it

was to obtain relevant data from so many people, from state institutions in particular, because they get in contact by a narrow margin. However, the data has not been analysed completely as far as no in-depth investigation of every region has been made. The description of the regions does not seem regular as can be seen from the structure of parts in the second chapter. The first section provides the analysis of the situation in Kaliningradskaya oblast and contains data on various incidents of violated rights (with quotes from interviews which are extremely helpful for qualitative analyses as they illustrate how the fact of rights' violation is being reported). The description of the two other regions contains no information of the same value, but only a general report on the situation with human rights. There is no attempt to analyse the causes of different practices in every region. The comparison of regions at the end of the second chapter (111-130) gives us figures and tables. However, although it could be useful to know how many organizations violate human rights, it does not help us to understand the causes and motives of these actors. At the same time placing these figures in a broader context provides a deeper comprehension of regional political systems in Russia.

The most intriguing and useful data one can extract from the book are the lists of actors in the "human rights' field". In Kaliningradskaya oblast there are 44 actors in total with 15 of them being influential, 55 and 13 – in Smolenskaya oblast, and 34 and 12 – in

Krasnodarskiy kray. Some of these institutions represent civil society. The greatest number of influential non-governmental organizations among them is based in Kaliningradskaya oblast; and Kostyushev supposes that these figures show that in that region civil society is better developed (150). Another detailed list that may be of interest is a roster of rights' defending practices including up to 40 types of actions. However the roster itself does not look complete so we cannot understand in what situations these practices are used.

Another relevant observation is that there are seven main actors in the "human rights' field": executive, legislative, and judiciary, the mass media, employers, and the human rights ombudsman. The latter is recognized as an independent and significant actor by most of those interviewed. Apart from the ombudsman, all these actors are simultaneously violators and defenders of rights (116-117).

Kostyushev argues that the ombudsman is inappropriate for the current political regime in Russian regions as the state system is not traditionally oriented towards the significance of a person. The ombudsman belongs to another type of administration because of its ideology concerning human rights and its way of functioning (140). But in the second chapter we see that the ombudsman is recognized as an independent and significant actor by most of interviewees. The fact that such a new institution as the ombudsman is

widely recognized as one of the main defenders shows that in many cases it has a good chance to influence the situation. This means that the ombudsman is a forceful institution and gradually it may become more incorporated into the institutional structure of Russia. But this topic does not receive much attention. It seems odd that the concept of ombudsman, placed in the title, does not get theoretical consideration or attention paid to it in the empirical survey. Consequently the institution of ombudsman is perceived as an ordinary element of the model thus placing the book among many other publications dedicated to human rights in general. Moreover, research on the ombudsman from the position of political science is rare.

This book is aimed at social scientists who seek a suitable model to carry out investigation of the political process in transitional political systems. It also supplies genuine data on Russian regions, which may be of interest for research of regionalism. The important question that can be raised while reading the book is, what should we do with the formulated formal model of "human rights' field" description? On the one hand it gives us a fine structural framework where every actor may be placed, and, on the other hand, it has not been used or criticized so far. There, we can join the author's aspiration for further in-depth exploration of this issue in Russia.