

with the classical position of Alex P. Schmid (“Links Between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorist Crimes,” *Transnational Organized Crime* 2[4], 1996), rather than with the dominant view in contemporary terrorism studies. But the picture is not clear-cut. Ahmad acknowledges that the borders between the two actors can be blurred, for example, in the case of Mokhtar Belmokhtar, an Al Qaida leader in Mali who was also big in the cigarette trafficking business, and who therefore earned the nickname “Mr. Marlboro” (p. 176).

On a theoretical level, the book lies at the intersection between international relations and comparative politics, and is a pioneering attempt at bridging the gap between the literatures on civil war and state formation. If there is anything to criticize in this otherwise excellent study, I would suggest that it does not quite fully succeed in its theoretical ambitions. According to the author, the book’s general contribution is that it provides a “theoretical framework to help explain the rise of modern jihadist-created polities across the world” (p. 13). To achieve this, Ahmad develops a hypothesis from the Afghanistan and Somalia cases and then validates it externally by including three additional “mini-case studies” of contemporary jihadist proto-states (ISIS, Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan). The result is not entirely convincing. While the mini case studies show that business–Islamist relationships are present in contemporary conflicts, they do not go deeply enough to validate the more fascinating parts of the author’s hypothesis—namely, that there is a two-stage dynamic at play that helps explain how militant Islamists suddenly and unexpectedly rise to power.

Having said that, Ahmad’s work taps right into current political debates about how to deal with jihadist proto-states. Such “states” are seen as highly unwanted, due to their ultraviolent behavior, disregard for international law, and support of international terrorism. The billion-dollar campaign against ISIS is the latest in a series of international military interventions designed to defeat jihadist proto-states. Despite the enormous amount of resources spent on fighting such entities, surprisingly little is known about them. It is also not clear-cut what it would take to defeat them, or prevent them from reemerging somewhere else.

*Jihad & Co.* is one of the first to provide research-based knowledge about the dynamics of Islamist proto-state emergence. It should therefore be required reading for all professionals dealing with issues of state security and foreign policy. Just be warned that the book contains no magical solutions or quick fixes to the security challenges posed by such states. It does, however, provide unique insights into the factors leading to their emergence in the first place. This book is bound to be a classic within the emerging theoretical field of state formation in civil wars.

**Nuclear Politics: The Strategic Causes of Proliferation.**

By Alexandre Debs and Nuno P. Monteiro. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016. 664p. \$105.00 cloth, \$32.99 paper.

**When Proliferation Causes Peace: The Psychology of Nuclear Crises.**

By Michael D. Cohen. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017. 301p. \$104.95 cloth, \$34.95, paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592719001051

— Or (Ori) Rabinowitz, *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

Nuclear weapons are still relevant in the twenty-first century, that much is clear to anyone who followed President Donald Trump’s 2017 Twitter war with the North Korean despot, Kim Jong Un. On the one hand, Trump’s agreement to meet Kim at the Singapore Summit in June 2018 served to underline these weapons’ almost mythical ability to grant those who acquire them a proverbial “seat at the table.” On the other hand, Trump’s decision to withdraw the United States from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (the official name for the Iran nuclear deal) in May 2018, while other world powers decided to remain in it, brought to the fore the limits of power when nuclear weapons, and the prevention of their possible acquisition, is concerned. The United States withdrew from the agreement, placing sanctions on Iran, but the agreement persisted nonetheless. If these weapons are so potent, why then have only 10 countries developed them to date, and why did many countries consider their development, only to abandon the idea later on? Why have the majority of actors in the international community decided to eschew them?

During the Cold War, scholarly writing on these questions focused on security-related explanations, with a special emphasis given to deterrence theory. Following the end of the Cold War, several competing explanations were introduced. Largely focusing on nonsecurity-related approaches, these explanations examined such factors as economic liberalization, domestic politics, bureaucratic dynamics, norms, status, and prestige. Some of these explanations overlapped with leader-based theories centered on psychological attributes.

In *Nuclear Politics* Alexandre Debs and Nuno P. Monteiro introduce “a more refined security based theory of nuclear proliferation” (p. 6), refocusing the debate around the security model. They present a well-balanced, well-developed, theoretical framework that examines factors they identify as pertinent to countries considering nuclear development in the context of “a process of strategic interaction” involving not only the state actor considering nuclear acquisition but also that actor’s regional adversaries and allies, if they exist (p. 4). As the authors explain it, since the adversaries of any potential proliferator would “face a loss of relative power,” their inclusion in the process is rather intuitive. The inclusion of

the proliferator's allies in the process, a less intuitive move perhaps, is based on the assumption that such powerful allies may "lose some of their influence and face higher odds of entrapment" should the weaker protégé "go nuclear" (p. 5).

The book consists of a theoretical exploration and an empirical exploration of this thesis. Chapters 2–3 serve as the theoretical core of the book, outlining the strategic theory of proliferation and the associated historical patterns of nuclear proliferation. Chapters 4–6 discuss 16 comprehensive case studies. Significantly, when analyzing a state's willingness to develop nuclear weapons, the authors compare the "security benefit," which that state would potentially reap, with "the cost of the nuclear program" (p. 6), thus including in the proliferation picture only those states that face a high level of threat.

The balance of conventional power between the proliferator and its adversaries is also taken into account. According to the theory, if the proliferating state is relatively strong, its adversaries would struggle to launch a strike against it due to the high costs such a strike would incur, enabling the proliferator to effectively deter such an attack, and rendering such threats not credible. Conversely, weaker states would face problems deterring such strikes, increasing the potential cost of "going nuclear" to reflect this risk, making such threats more credible. Accordingly, allies can impact the decision to go nuclear in two distinct ways. They can either address the security concerns that caused the potential proliferator to consider nuclear weapons in the first place, thus alleviating the concern, or they can effectively protect the program, thus deterring potential strikes while the program advances. Such protection may enable the protégé to pave its way to nuclear acquisition.

The framework leads Debs and Monteiro to identify several empirical trends in nuclear proliferation, which they distill into two "causal pathways to proliferation" (p. 57). First, they find that among states that do not enjoy the protection of a powerful ally, only those that are strong enough to deter their adversaries have developed nuclear weapons. They explain that so far, "no weak unprotected state has ever managed to obtain" them (p. 11). Second, among protégé states that do enjoy an alliance with a powerful ally, the willingness and the opportunity to go nuclear depend on the existence of external security threats, coupled with unreliable or unsatisfactory security commitments by the ally. From the ally's perspective, while threats of abandonment could be useful when trying to influence conventionally weak states, offering security guaranties is a more effective tool when dealing with conventionally powerful protégés.

The authors note that the covert development of nuclear capabilities by a weak, unprotected state could potentially void the entire theory, but they stress that it is an "exceedingly unlikely" scenario (p. 444). In this

context, it is interesting to raise the case of the secret Syrian nuclear reactor that Israel bombed in September 2007. According to revelations from March 2018 published in the Israeli media, the discovery of the Syrian reactor happened almost by chance. It was an extremely "close call," and not much was missing for the program to go undetected by Israeli intelligence, as were the previous Libyan nuclear efforts. Detection, when it occurred, happened late in the program, when the reactor was nearing completion. The Syrian case shows that "stealth programs" are not fantastic to imagine. It underscores the importance of early detection, a point noted by the authors.

*Nuclear Politics* makes a unique and singular contribution to nuclear studies and to political science more generally. Its scope lends credibility to the argument the authors put forward, making it a must-read for policymakers as well as students of the field. It also makes an important methodological contribution to the academic debate on the role of comparative, historical case studies in political science, a field that is currently experiencing a significant tilt away from qualitative analysis and toward quantitative analysis. However, one point of weakness in the theory is the relative marginalization of leader-based concepts and the psychological makeup of individual leaders. The authors concede that they have "little doubt" that "a leader's psychological makeup" may influence decision making, but they qualify this by stating that they believe that "more explanatory leverage can be obtained by focusing on the features of the security environment a state faces than on the psychological makeup of its leaders" (p. 19).

Michael D. Cohen's *When Proliferation Causes Peace* offers an opposing view on the importance of the psychological component in nuclear statecraft. This book is an original, innovative contribution to security studies, and to contemporary attempts to develop leader-based theories of nuclear behavior. It charts a new path for scholars interested in pursuing the application of cognitive biases in nuclear studies. Specifically, the book focuses on the "availability heuristic," which posits that people tend to rely heavily on information that is "cognitively available" for them to recount when making judgments, such as recent information or firsthand experience.

Cohen raises the following, important, question: Does nuclear possession make leaders more, or less, aggressive? He argues that the effect nuclear weapons have on leaders develops over time, and hinges on the kind of experience the leader derives from their possession. A traumatic experience such as a fear of a nuclear war, he argues, is likely to have a considerable impact. Leaders of new nuclear powers are likely to be initially more aggressive in advancing their foreign policy agenda, but at a certain point, if this aggressiveness is countered by a nuclear-armed adversary, then the leader of the aggressive state

will likely experience a deep, traumatic fear of nuclear war. For Cohen, this experience would shape the leader's nuclear behavior in the future, causing the abandonment of his or her previously aggressive stance. Chapters 1–2 present the theoretical exploration and its contextual background, and Chapters 3–5 present the empirical exploration, which includes two large case studies, of the Soviet Union and Pakistan, and four short case studies.

While Cohen's model is interesting and original, it does have certain weaknesses. It is only applicable for actors facing other nuclear-armed adversaries, and consequently is not relevant to attempts to study the nuclear history of Israel and South Africa, which did not face regional nuclear adversaries during the Cold War. In the Israeli case it would be interesting to explore whether the deep trauma caused by the Holocaust had a similar effect on Israeli decision makers, causing them perhaps to adopt a similar nonaggressive nuclear posture.

A second problem is the causal connection between the change of the policy and the traumatic experience that theoretically drives it. How can we determine that a certain policy shift was indeed caused solely due to trauma related to a nuclear crisis, and not due to other factors? Moreover, a deeper exploration of the intellectual history of the availability heuristic, in the larger context of psychologists Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman's work on decision making and prospect theory, would have been helpful for readers interested in understanding the importance of these concepts, as well as the potential pitfalls associated with them. Notwithstanding these criticisms, however, Cohen's is an important book that contributes new insights to the field of nuclear studies.

**Contestation and Constitution of Norms in Global International Relations.** By Antje Wiener. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 276p. \$99.99 cloth. doi:10.1017/S1537592719000707

— Audie Klotz, *Syracuse University*

Anyone following the myriad “turns” in constructivist international relations over the past few decades may be forgiven for feeling intellectual whiplash. Norms, discourse, practices—Foucault versus Bourdieu—what difference does it really make? Fortunately, Antje Wiener provides a valuable remedy for this affliction. Tackling complex terrain, *Contestation and Constitution of Norms in Global International Relations* sorts through the theoretical stakes of these debates and distills an ambitious agenda for future research.

Chapter 1 sets the stage by asking “Whose Practices Count?” and then by calling for the inclusion of a wider range of actors in the analysis of normative change. Wiener's agenda to develop a global “multilogue” (p. 4) opens an avenue for more nuanced understanding of recursivity, a conceptual and methodological issue that

has dogged researchers for decades. Norms structure practices, while practices recreate norms, and so linear arguments necessarily bracket one or the other process. Consequently, no single theory or method suffices, leading to the proliferation of “new” approaches and their corollary, academic mud slinging (hence, intellectual whiplash).

To circumvent this bracketing problem, which underpins debate over norms versus practices, Wiener builds on her own earlier empirical work on meaning-in-use to concentrate on contestation. In contrast to conventional discourse analyses, which typically privilege visible texts (whether documents or physical actions), contestation as a methodological focal point helps to illuminate taken-for-granted ideational structures that otherwise remain hidden. Going a step further, to capture inherent tensions between ethical principles and everyday practices, this chapter previews a helpful distinction between proactive critiques and reactive objections. This distinction features prominently in both the framework and illustrations that follow.

Because the book features two distinctive parts, half framework and half illustrations, readers can approach it in multiple ways. Those familiar with theoretical disagreements about norms in IR might plunge directly into Chapters 2–4, where Wiener presents a multifaceted grid framework to untangle the ways in which recursive processes operate. Alternatively, those concerned with how these theoretical nuances manifest empirically might prefer to read one or more of the illustrations offered in Chapters 5–7 before engaging the framework.

Not a book to skim, *Contestation and Constitution of Norms* never claims to be an introduction; people less familiar with these literatures should start with one of the illustrations, each of which includes a summary table linking it to the framework. In the context of counterterrorism, Chapter 5 examines due process for individuals as central in disagreements between the European Court of Justice and the United Nations Security Council over the enforcement of targeted sanctions. Rather than viewing legal objections as an example of compliance failure, Wiener concludes that the European Union prioritized what it viewed as more fundamental rights. Yet she does not blithely conflate norms with ethics, as Chapter 6 offers sharp criticism of attempts by the United States to redefine torture. Nor does ethical agreement preclude other types of contestation, as illustrated in Chapter 7, which explores disagreements over the implementation of the widely endorsed prohibition on sexual violence during wartime.

These cases illustrate merely three of nine types of contestation that Wiener explains in Chapters 2–4 and encapsulates in a synthetic grid framework summarized in Figure 2.1 (p. 44). Sifting deftly through dense philosophical and legal literatures, she disaggregates two distinct dimensions—scales and phases—to provide nine potential