

Battistella, Dario, 2008. *The Return of the State of War: A Theoretical Analysis of Operation Iraqi Freedom*. Colchester: ECPR. viii + 204 pp. ISBN 9780955248856.

This book – the author's own translation of *Retour de l'état de guerre* (2006) – presents a clear-sighted theoretical account of the 2003 Gulf War. The author combines rationalist and constructivist approaches in order to explain foreign-policy decisionmaking. His historical overview of post-Westphalian developments in international affairs in the book's first part is worth almost as much as his analysis of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Indeed, the book works well as a textbook introduction to theoretical perspectives on post-Westphalian history and the employment of armed force. The author's main contention is that the 2003 Gulf War represents a return of a Hobbesian at the expense of a Lockean view of international politics. He ends the book with intelligent speculations as to why this happened. His use of Hobbes as a paradigmatic figure is conventional but certainly to the point; his use of Locke is nuanced and useful. One may argue that the book's theoretical rationalism limits the author's analysis of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. The Cold War, for instance, is mainly described in realist terms as a power struggle between two superpowers with alternative visions. The pathology and brutality of Hitler's National Socialism or Stalin's Communism are just barely touched upon. Some may think that the author's lack of such normative judgement of regimes also applies to his treatment of Saddam Hussein and the explicitly critical stance taken towards the Bush administration for breaking with the Lockean balance-of-power paradigm. However, the theoretical ground that is covered by this book is analyzed cogently and clearly, and the secondary literature is treated fairly and used in an enlightening way. Hence, this comes across as a balanced treatment from which there is much to learn.

Henrik Syse

Blix, Hans, 2008. *Why Nuclear Disarmament Matters*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 95 pp. ISBN 0262026449.

This pamphlet-sized book provides a short, yet concise, introduction to the history, state of affairs and continued relevance of nuclear disarmament. It also presents concrete ideas on how to move the disarmament agenda forward. Blix approaches the topic from a legal point of view, and he dedicates a separate chapter to what he calls the *globalization of law*. He states that 'since World War II there has been a tremendous consolidation and expansion of international law in general' (p. 20), and as a consequence, ever more issues, including those of hard-core security, are settled through the international legal system. Yet, Blix does not dwell much on the legality of nuclear weapons as such. The main focus is rather on the structure of the international system and, in particular, on the role of the UN and the Security Council. While he recognizes the obvious security threats posed by the spread of nuclear weapons

to so-called rogue states, he cautions against pre-emptive military action aimed at stopping such proliferation. His logic is that an over-stretch of legal prerogatives, by either the UN or individual states, would weaken the international rule of law and thus undermine the shared security of all in the long term. Instead, 'states must be ensured security without nuclear weapons' (p. 48), thereby removing the incentives to acquire them. This can only happen, it is presumed, in a world where the rule of law has been *globalized*. It remains somewhat unclear, however, whether Blix sees this globalization of law as a *tool* for nuclear disarmament or as a *precondition* for it. In any case, nuclear disarmament is back on the international agenda, and this book provides a great introduction for anyone who wants to understand what the debate is all about.

Torbjorn Graff Hugo

Bobelian, Michael, 2009. *Children of Armenia: A Forgotten Genocide and the Century-Long Struggle for Justice*. New York: Simon & Schuster. 308 pp. ISBN 9781416557258.

The topic of the book *Children of Armenia* – the Armenian Genocide and its aftermath – is more often treated as the subject of political maneuvering than as a source for important lessons from that grim period in history. Michael Bobelian is a diaspora Armenian, born into a group that has worked tirelessly to legitimize their claims of genocide. Yet, Bobelian offers a remarkably even-handed account of the quest for recognition of the Armenian genocide. His interwoven tales range from the misguided and tragic to the noble, from the story of Gourgen Mkrtich Yanikian, who killed two Turkish diplomats in his personal search for justice for the Armenian people, to Van Kirkorian, a lobbyist who pushed for a resolution in the United States Congress recognizing the Armenian Genocide. In the latter instance, politics got in the way, as many members of Congress were afraid of offending Turkey. Amid ongoing political jockeying, the quest for justice continues, and Bobelian's book stands as a fine documentation of the genocide recognition movement. Today, when Turkey has just announced that it will formalize relations with Armenia, the search for shared understandings of the past takes on new significance. Bobelian offers insight into the Armenian understanding of the genocide and its significance today. His contribution is to document the ongoing quest of a movement that seeks to rewrite an important part of history.

Jason L Miller

Carey, Sabine C, 2009. *Protest, Repression and Political Regimes: An Empirical Analysis of Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa*. London & New York: Routledge. xii + 138 pp. ISBN 9780415424844.

Political regimes react differently when challenged by popular protest. What is it that leads some governments to respond with violence against their own citizens? And conversely, how