

After 2001, in the face of new disputes, confrontations, and threats both general and specific for Japan, the political leadership changed direction toward a greater role for Japan's military at home and abroad. The strengthening of the military was possible as part of broad and deep reforms that increased the role of politicians and diminished diplomatic and bureaucratic opposition to expanded military strength. The book details the precise reconfigurations that enabled Japan to support U.N.-authorized forces in Afghanistan, to expand Japan's military power in space, and to support a ballistic missile defense program not simply as a response to greater pressure from the United States.

With respect to the comprehensive changes under way across every dimension of security policy, both in content and process, this painstaking consideration of Japanese policy discussions gives a fixed shape to the complex contours of the discourse. While the author gives no single answer about future directions, this book establishes why the debate is polarized the way that it is, and it identifies the people and policy levers that may push Japan in (often contrary) directions in the near future.

**Abdulkader H. Sinno. *Organizations at War in Afghanistan and Beyond*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0-8014-4618-4 (Hbk.)  
Reviewed by Christian Bleuer, Australian National University**

With *Organizations at War in Afghanistan and Beyond*, Abdulkader H. Sinno has made an important addition to the literature on insurgency and civil war. Sinno applies organizational theory to the conflict between the mujahideen and the Afghan communist government and then to the various factions who fought for control of, or survival in, Afghanistan throughout the 1990s. The choice of organizational theory as a tool to analyze group conflict in Afghanistan is quite justified, and in the final chapter Sinno demonstrates how his approach to a specific case study may be relevant to other conflicts throughout the world.

Organizational theory, well known to those in the world of business, and in a similar form to those who have studied insurgent organizations (especially of the communist variety), is used here to explain the failures and successes of various organizations during 1979–2001 in Afghanistan. Some of the variables seem quite obvious, while others have been mostly neglected or even completely ignored. Sinno's criticism of other authors' explanations for the rise of the Taliban is especially useful, and his version of the reasons for the Taliban's initial success is quite original. Furthermore, his analysis of the Soviet-Afghan war is a valuable contribution to the literature on that era, especially considering that the conflict dynamics of the communist era in Afghanistan are now seldom discussed despite the lack of consensus on that period and considering the relevance of that conflict to the current situation in Afghanistan.

The organizational theory of group conflict, as advanced by Sinno, provides a welcome focus on the organizations that engage in conflict, rather than the groups that they claim to represent. As Sinno notes, in terms familiar to many social scientists: "Ethnic groups, social classes, civilizations, religions, and nations do not engage in conflict or strategic interaction—organizations do"

(p. 3). Sinno's framework starts with the structure of the organization (centralized, various forms of noncentralized, or fragmented) and then matches the appropriateness of the organizational structure to the main contingency, namely, the availability of a safe haven. From here Sinno analyzes the organization's processes, some of which are familiar variables, such as resource mobilization and foreign aid, but most of which are rarely analyzed outside of the business or military world: strategy, coordination, control and discipline, resilience, and intraorganizational competition and cohesion, as well as the generation and preservation of knowledge. Sinno convincingly uses this framework to explain the outcomes (supremacy, elimination, or compromise) for the various organizations that have contended for power in Afghanistan.

Concerning the contribution to the literature on Afghanistan, *Organizations at War in Afghanistan and Beyond* is of mixed value. Sinno strongly states the case for the Soviet withdrawal being due to the resilience of the mujahideen while downplaying factors such as new domestic economic and political priorities in the Soviet Union as well as its leadership's desire for better relations with the West. While providing a reasonable argument, Sinno does not settle the issue, leaving this debate still open to varied interpretations.

The most valuable contributions to the literature on Afghanistan are Chapters 6–8, which focus on the organizations in competition for supremacy or survival during 1979–2001. Sinno is at his most convincing in explaining the fate and activities of the various organizations of this era. Especially relevant to today's conflict is Sinno's explanation of the Taliban's rise to power. By comparison, most other explanations seem like mere descriptive narratives. These chapters should be essential reading for Afghanistan-watchers. However, in regard to a post-2001 examination, this book disappoints. Much of the analysis is out of date when compared to other books published recently. While it is mostly correct aside from a few poorly substantiated points and questionable generalizations, it does not have the original quality and explanatory power that is present in the rest of the book. It seems as if it was added as an afterthought, or possibly as a request by the publisher to bring the reader "up to date." But even considering this one deficiency, *Organizations at War in Afghanistan and Beyond* should be mandatory reading for Afghanistan analysts, counterinsurgency specialists, conflict and civil war scholars, and even for the leadership of groups that are engaged in conflict.

**William Gould.** *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

**Reviewed by Yamini Vasudevan, National University of Singapore**

In this book, William Gould touches upon one of the key political issues in Indian history, Hindu nationalism and its impact on political identity and consciousness, by focusing on the United Provinces (UP) in the 1930s and 1940s. Gould has chosen to focus on the UP Congress, the "secular" political agent in the Indian national movement. He argues that despite its secular credentials, the congress was party to the use of Hindu symbolism in its political propaganda. This greatly