

government of Myanmar, and on the Karen in refugee camps along the Thai–Burmese border.

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DOI: 10.1355/sj33-1k

War and Peace in the Borderlands of Myanmar: The Kachin Ceasefire, 1994–2011. Edited by Mandy Sadan. Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2016, 517 pp.

In 2011, as a new, semi-civilian government came to power after decades of military dictatorship in the country, a ceasefire between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and Myanmar Armed Forces, or Tatmadaw, collapsed after seventeen years. Instead of considering this collapse as a single, sudden event, this book — the product of a seminar held at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London in 2013 — proposes to contextualize it as part of a long historical continuum.

Fascinating, multifaceted and authoritative, this book will be warmly welcomed by readers seeking a deep understanding of the political, social and economic dimensions underlying the conflict between the KIA and the Myanmar state. No writer has probed the unhealed wounds of the Kachin people's long history with more subtlety and rigour than the volume's editor, Mandy Sadan, an established authority on social and cultural aspects of the Kachin history. Through various perspectives, the contributing authors demonstrate that the collapse of the ceasefire resulted from a multifaceted deterioration of the situation in Kachin State and that it had become inevitable, at least from the Kachin perspective, by the time that it occurred.

The first part of the book focuses on historical perspectives. It includes a chapter co-authored by the editor and Robert Anderson examining the conflict in long-term perspective. Martin Smith then

provides a reflection on the mistrust felt by Kachin leaders and the challenges faced by peace negotiators during the 1990s. The following section of the book focuses on political economy, with Lee Jones describing the economic dimension of state building in ceasefire areas and Kevin Woods elaborating on his notion of “ceasefire capitalism” (p. 166). Woods explores the ways in which Kachin and Bamar elites collaborated economically and thus participated in the extension of the state into border areas. The next two chapters explore cross-border diplomacy with China. Han Henze looks at the diplomatic dynamics and power relations with the Chinese neighbour, while Ho Ts’ui-p’ing considers dynamics at the community level through the Chinese incarnation of the Manau festival. The following chapters deal with the cultural intimacies of nationalism. Laur Kiik looks into the narratives of Kachin nationalism, while Jenny Hedstrom focuses on the perspective of female KIA soldiers. Helen Mears’s contribution treats the counter-narrative developed in calendars to emphasize the role of the new print culture and its impact on the representation of the Kachin ethno-political identity.

The third — less academic but more original — section of the book gathers personal experiences and narratives of the armed peace. Nhkum Bu Lu provides a poignant illustration of the impact of conflict on her life. Hkanhpa Tu Sadan writes about the politicization of Kachin Students. And Duwa Mahkaw Hkun Sa details the founding and development of Kachin nationalist networks in the diaspora. The final section of the book provides perspectives drawn from knowledge of other ceasefires in Myanmar and neighbouring areas. Patrick Meehan explains the anatomy of the Palaung ceasefire with the Tatmadaw, while Mikael Gravers examines the Karen case with a focus on the complexity of fragmented internal views. Reshmi Banerjee looks at the lessons learnt in Northeast India, where she places the roots of conflict in the issue of land ownership. Joy L. Pachau’s and Mandy Sadan’s chapter focuses on the Mizo peace accord, and the process of memorialization. Finally, Matthew J. Walton’s conclusion draws the lessons learnt from the preceding

contributions to the book, including the role of trust and the importance of local perceptions.

One of the essential strengths of this book lies in the diverse background of its contributors. They hail from various geographic areas — from Estonia to Taiwan and across the Kachin diaspora — and with a range of expertise; some contributors are academics, and others are better described as activists. Through these varied perspectives, the book clearly demonstrates the obvious consistencies in Kachin experiences of the no-peace-no-war period.

The chapters whose authors reflect on personal experiences are well articulated with other, more academic, chapters, to which they provide an enriching dimension. These former narratives supplement theoretical aspects with hints of human existence to demonstrate the connection between the experiences of daily life and communal or nationalist narratives. Such personal experiences are often disregarded in academia. They nevertheless have great value in explaining the dynamics of peace and conflict at the community level.

This is an original, well-documented and comprehensive book. The diversity and richness of the areas on which it focuses, from personal to inter-state levels, seem mutually to reinforce the Kachin narratives. Nevertheless, one important piece of the puzzle is missing, as no contribution looks at the “other” narratives. We do not learn how members of the Bamar majority relate to this conflict or gain exposure to the narratives created by the Tatmadaw itself. This gap leaves the other protagonist in the conflict under study largely absent from the contributions to the book. There are very good reasons for this absence, however, as the Tatmadaw did not, until very recently, communicate its positions or perspectives openly.

Much has been written in the media about the triggers of the current Kachin conflict, but academic sources providing well-informed analysis remain scarce. The untidy descriptions widely available today lack deep understanding. Both in Myanmar and beyond, they shape erroneous perspectives. This book serves, in contrast, to unveil links between the contemporary political claims of Kachin nationalist leaders and the unresolved issues inherited from the former ceasefire

period. As the Myanmar people grapple with the events unfolding elsewhere in the country, a nascent peace process and a fragile transition, researchers and policymakers would be wise to seek a fuller picture than this book alone offers. But make no mistake: this is an unusual and refreshingly unequivocal book.

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DOI: 10.1355/sj33-11

Pan-Asian Sports and the Emergence of Modern Asia, 1913–1974.
By Stefan Huebner. Singapore: NUS Press, 2016. xiv+397 pp.

In early 1913, Asia's first international sports meeting, the founding Far Eastern Championship Games, was held in Manila. The driving force behind this important initiative was Elwood Stanley Brown of the American branch of the YMCA, who, in 1910, had taken up the position of YMCA physical director in the Philippine capital. Elwood Brown's vision, clearly reflecting core values of Protestant-Evangelical America represented by the YMCA, was to promote internationalism, egalitarianism and economic progress. The last was to be achieved through increased public participation in sport, encouraged by the games, and thus to promote improved public health. In the following two decades, a further nine instalments of the Far Eastern Championship Games were held, alternating among Manila, Shanghai, Tokyo and Osaka. Until the 1930 games in Tokyo, when three athletes from India participated, all the athletes in these games came from the Philippines, Japan or China. In 1934, the year of the last Far Eastern Championship Games, held in Manila, the Western Asiatic Games were held in New Delhi and Patiala, although relatively few athletes — from India, Ceylon, Afghanistan and Palestine — participated. After the war, the major international sports meeting returned to Asia — on a substantially larger scale