The book under review is a collection of essays stemming from workshops involving the South African and Netherlands Pugwash groups and is split into two sections. The first is more general and theoretical, whilst the second is more practical/empirical in nature, dealing with issues specific to southern Africa.

The volume’s aim is to develop a methodology of study to address the diverse array of insecurity problems in the region. The first chapter, by co-editor Bas de Gaay Fortman, seeks to draw a connection between democratization and development by advancing the connections that link human security with development and rights. Fortman draws out the ties between human security and human rights by use of the Human Development Index. Fortman’s discussion is implicitly liberal in its approach as he highlights the importance of the rule of law, individuals and civil society, as well as liberal institutions and structures. Chapter 2, by Sverre Lodgaard, discusses ideas around state security and the broad security agenda, with an application of his theorization applied to peace operations and the various constraints that might be used to rein in malefactors. Chapter 3, by Marion Kappayne van de Copello, asserts that conflict and development are interrelated and, as Charles Tilly notes, conflict and war are part and parcel of the development process vis-a-vis state making. Van de Copello makes the important point that early warning is sufficient, but what is lacking is political will at the international level to respond sufficiently. The author notes that state sovereignty and a of interest compounds this.

Chapter 4 is by Sylvia Borren and discusses the failure, thus far, to move towards the Millennium Development Goals. Problematically, Borren seems to hinge a lot of her hopes on aid and expenditure to reach these goals, rather than focusing on what has held Africa back so far, which is not a lack of resources. The whole chapter basically focuses on the perceived external constraints, which is misguided.

Chapter 5 is by the South African scholar Maxi Schoeman and explains what the new security agenda is and who is accountable. Schoeman provides an interesting investigation of the link between development and security, using critical theory. The challenges that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) faces in advancing security and development are examined. Schoeman is spot on in identifying a lack of political will by the elites as a key issue. Combined with relatively fixed notions of what constitutes state sovereignty and “national interests,” this creates a powerful block against both innovation and moves towards human security.

Hussein Solomon, in chapter 6, provides an overview of SADC, with a view to what the international community can do to help. The chapter is interesting, but ultimately security within the region must surely be first and foremost a responsibility of the region’s own leaders, peoples and structures? Chapter 7, by Lala Camerer, talks about how crime and corruption are undermining human security in southern Africa. With regard to the “new” security issues, this chapter is particularly apposite. Camerer rightly notes that the South African government’s political will to tackle corruption is questionable. However, the chapter is excessively short. Jakkie Cilliers, in chapter 8, wraps things up with an overview of the security situation in southern Africa. Whilst noting the (formal) end of wars in a variety of states, Cilliers reminds us that the new security agenda of HIV/AIDS, repression, food insecurity, government highhandedness and elitism all are factors in continuing a state of insecurity in the region.
The book overall is a good addition to the literature. It clearly draws out the lack of human security in a region usually held up to be the most "advanced" in Africa. Having said that, the diversity of theoretical reflections makes the book somewhat incoherent. Schoeman for instance (rightly) adopts a more critical stance with people as her referent object whilst the chapters by Camerer, Cilliers and Solomon are very state-centric. This is a problem given the uselessness of SADC as a guarantor of regional security, surely. I would also have liked an index.

But, it is a good read and there are some useful chapters in it that could be profitably used for courses about Africa, Development and/or Security.

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