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David Malet, Miriam J. Anderson, eds. *Transnational Actors in War and Peace: Militants, Activists, and Corporations in World Politics*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017. 244 pp. \$34.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-62616-443-7; \$69.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-62616-442-0.

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There is an established interest in actors that operate between and across states, whether the focus is on international organizations, migrant communities and diasporas, multinational corporations, social and revolutionary movements, or foreign fighters. Meanwhile, scholarship and academic debates about the waning and changing dynamics of the state have emerged over the past few decades in a variety of disciplines as state boundaries and control have shifted in influence based on a variety of factors. Transnational actors are perhaps best at bringing this to the forefront.

David Malet and Miriam J. Anderson's insightful volume, *Transnational Actors in War and Peace*, makes this discussion central, weaving together academic debates on security, non-state actors, contentious politics, and war and peace through comparative case studies focused on a multitude of transnational actors. Each chapter elaborates on a particular transnational actor or community, analyzing how it attempts to influence but is also influenced within the international political system when it comes to questions of war and peace. The comparative element of the book brings to light the similarities of transnationalism as diverse as Catholic recreation clubs and private military contractors, examining both the cooperation and competition within interconnected processes and state relations. The editors posit a definition of "complex transnationalism" as "*the increasing number, scope, interactions, and influence of transnational actors on diplomatic and governance processes where states have invited as participants, been forced to respond to, or have become increasingly reliant upon the expertise of transna-*

tional actors and where transnational actors increasingly interact directly with each other" in their introductory chapter, which also provides a literature review that incorporates a discussion of the variety of transnational actors examined (p. 5). Each of the following chapters focuses on these aspects through particular examples before concluding with reflections about the direction of transnational politics and scholarship from here on out.

Luke Flanagan's chapter provides a historical examination of the Knights of Columbus, comparing the approaches of the American Knights and the Canadian Knights during World War I and the organization's turn toward more transnational work throughout the twenty-first century. He juxtaposes the American Knights' national orientation, which limited transnationalism, with the Canadian Knights' transnational collaboration with a British non-state actor. The chapter's strength lies in its comparison of the ways that similar organizations mobilize in different national settings and transnationally based on the particular environment in which they operate. Thus, he notes both the limitations of national environments for certain transnational activities and the continued importance of the national level for transnational activity.

In contrast to the first chapter, Catia Cecilia Confortini's historically focused chapter on the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) examines how the organization's concern about intersectional approaches in its activism developed, in turn increasing transnational interactions, and ultimately challeng-

ing the very contexts in which the organization was embedded. This chapter sets the stage for Anderson's chapter about transnational feminist networks, local women's peace groups, and the spread of global norms favoring women's participation in peace processes. She stresses the importance of gender-based identities in propagating international norms on women's rights and ultimately creating opportunities for women to be present at peace negotiations. Thus, she demonstrates that the role of transnationalism in creating opportunities at the national level through a "boomerang" effect, as noted by several of the other actors, was highly relevant for transnational engagement.

Jennifer Brinkerhoff's chapter on diaspora participation in post-conflict reconstruction makes for an invaluable read about the influence of individual diaspora agency on a transnational level using examples from two cases in Africa. She is careful to note that while there is much potential benefit of these diasporans in encouraging good governance in their fragile home states during the post-conflict period, there are also often challenges to be overcome by the same, including whether they are seen as legitimate and how sustainable individual efforts are in the long term. Further, this chapter asks relevant questions about the limits of transnationalism for diasporans and other transnational actors who become part of governance structures, either by returning or by taking over particular functions, such as humanitarian assistance.

In chapter 8, Phil Orchard continues this focus on humanitarian assistance by examining the transnational humanitarian community's response to the Syrian war, as well as its limitations while operating under international humanitarian and internationally displaced persons regimes. He teases out comparisons delicately among different actors providing humanitarian assistance within these two complex regimes within a multifaceted conflict. In contrast, chapter 6 by Malet disaggregates foreign fighters within the Syrian conflict and examines not only their influence on conflict and peace within the country but also the ways in which these transnational networks of jihadis interact with one another and transnational civil society, identifying a valuable research gap worth pursuing in future research, both theoretically and empirically.

One of the strengths of this volume is that chapters reinforce each other and note interconnections to other chapters in the volume. For instance, Kate Macdonald speaks strongly to Virginia Haufler's work about

transnational business actors' influence over company-community conflicts and the conditions under which they are able to interact more closely with different constituencies and draw support from both state and non-state actors. The chapter thus further confirms that there are particular opportunities for further research on the intersection between corporate social responsibility and transnationalism as well as conflict governance. In effect, through each empirically focused chapter, avenues of theoretical interest for the study of transnationalism are expanded on. For example, the aforementioned chapter by Haufler examines transnational business governance institutions with a particular focus on conflict minerals and the collaboration regarding regulatory schemes on a transnational level that have helped to set standards beyond the initial industries focused on minerals to sustainable forestry and fair trade schemes.

In an examination about exiles, chapter 5 compares Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's rejection of a transnational pan-Islamism with Osama Bin Laden's embrace of the same, tracing their different exilic experiences and how they shaped the development of political Islam. Ariel Ahram and John Gledhill reiterate the continued importance of the state amid scholarship on transnationalism by comparing how Iran and Saudi Arabia influenced the transnational political activities of Khomeini and Bin Laden, both limiting and providing opportunities for them in varied ways. "Although states undoubtedly influence the impact of exiles on the domestic politics of their homelands (or lack thereof), our study also suggests that state authority diminishes when it comes to the transnational political activities of exiles" (p. 118). The chapter not only provides an informative overview of how political exile shaped each of the actor's political careers but also reinforces the importance of nuanced narratives evidenced throughout the book. These seek not to place normative value on transnationalism but rather to examine under which conditions and in which ways it can shift in productive or destructive directions.

Matthew LeRiche's chapter on private security firms and their interaction in transnational politics regarding the increased privatization of security and development policies provides an insightful read into how these transnational actors perceive themselves and in turn tailor their image and communicate with other actors across space. In a sense, LeRiche's point about transnationalism being increasingly commodified by way of the private security industry through neoliberal privatization and globalization is well taken as both an assessment and a reflection that transnational actors have the potential

to be supranational actors in such settings, for better or worse.

Individual chapters are exemplary at demonstrating how transnational political activities of various actors help to shape and are in turn shaped by states that are at various points within conflict cycles. The continued tension of transnational actors to undermine state sovereignty (on their own or with other transnational actors) on the one hand, while on the other seeking out, using, and mobilizing various state resources and being reinforced by states is explored well throughout the book, and noted by the editors in the conclusion as well. Moreover, the majority of the chapters provide comparative analyses within the chapters themselves focused on two similar transnational actors or tracing the behavior of one transnational actor historically.

Several chapters discuss how relevant transnationalism is to post-conflict governance, how weaker states are less able to limit transnational activities attempting to influence local politics, and how there are opportunities for transnational activity to play a role across boundaries both leading up to and after conflict. One potential aspect of the conflict cycle the book does not engage with in detail is transitional justice approaches and perspectives. As non-judicial and integrated approaches to transitional justice become increasingly relevant, and as this

field increasingly engages with non-state actors, including diasporas, on a transnational basis, a chapter with such a focus would have rounded out the book further. It provides a valuable avenue to explore for future research.

Overall, the book maintains a unified narrative throughout, is presented clearly, and can be read either as a cohesive whole or by individual chapter. The editors have clearly invested time in ensuring that each chapter speaks to at least one other chapter, thus bringing together ideas examining different aspects of transnationalism both theoretically and empirically. This helps to illuminate the relevance of transnationalism scholarship, charting its relevance for international politics and providing numerous potential avenues to examine in future research. Questions about the importance of territory amid transnational politics as well as the legitimacy of transnational actors will continue to play a role in this scholarship, in addition to the examination of individuals, groups, and communities that operate transnationally in varied ways. This book would be suitable as both a reference work on transnationalism and an undergraduate reader for an advanced seminar course. Ultimately, it also provides policy value through its numerous empirical examples and applied knowledge from the field and is a valuable read for social scientists concerned with international politics and peace and conflict more generally.

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